

**MINUTES OF THE HVRA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7.30PM ON TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2023 IN THE SMALL HALL
CONFIRMED MINUTES**

Peter welcomed everyone and was pleased to see so many at the meeting.

PRESENT

Peter Spence (Chair)	Paul Woodford (Treasurer)	Rosemary Hewitt (Secretary)
Jill Armshaw	Peter Cannon	Sue Grace
Catherine (Cacs) Hinds	Janet Howe	Janet and Angus Idle
Elaine Merrilees	Nancy Pomfret	Louise Jones (Shop)
Michael Sole (Village Hall)	Cllr Simon Kearey (HPC)	

- 1.. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Andrew Capey, Jerry Morley, Cllr David Carroll (Bucks Council) and Kate Messenger (School).

Road Reps who do not attend meetings: David Mynors and Mary Wright.

Reports, written or verbal, are welcome from all members whether they attend meetings or not.

2. **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2023** were circulated and read prior to the meeting and it was proposed by Elaine Merrilees, seconded by Paul Woodford, and agreed that they be approved and signed as a true record of the meeting.

3. **MATTER ARISING –**

4biii) Memorial Plaque in Bryants Bottom – Cllr Kearey said the Service could take place on the grass verge where it is hoped the Memorial Plaque will eventually be located.

6d) Road Rep Vacancies – PS confirmed that a Road Rep for Frogmore Close has not been found.

13. AOB, a) Glis Glis update – PC had passed his request for a cull to Cllr David Carroll for passing on to Environmental Services. A response is awaited.

DC

4. **COUNCILLORS' UPDATES**

- a) **Bucks Cllr Carroll** – No Report
b) **HPC Cllr Simon Kearey** –

- It was agreed at the last HPC meeting on 19 September to purchase the multi-play equipment for the Hughenden Valley playground and MS confirmed that it had been installed.
- The Chiltern Rangers have carried out some restorative work surrounding Cockpit Hole to make it viable and crucial to sustaining a range of wildlife that relies on pond habitat.
- **Heritage and Nature Walks** - Gt Kingshill have found an old map showing a 3-mile route that SK will walk on Christmas Eve. He hoped Hughenden Valley had made progress with this Heritage/Nature Conservation initiative and will see how we are getting on in the New Year. PS confirmed 10 expressions of interest in mapping some nature walks but deficient in those wishing to contribute towards heritage . He intends to add OS and post codes on Google Maps for ease of reference.
 - JA asked if this is SK's project alone, and he confirmed that HPC had resolved for it to go ahead on 19th September and that Little Burnham Field was not connected.
- Debra Main, the Finance Lead, has resigned, hence SK and Linda Derrick are the only signatories which has posed challenges at times. The Parish Council is very short of Councillors and needs people to come forward.
- The Parish Office has six wreaths and SK needs someone to lay a wreath on behalf of HPC at St Michael & All Angels' Service of Remembrance on Sunday because he will be attending one at Bryants Bottom conducted by Major Glem Ridgley [Please see **3, MATTERS ARISING, 4biii**] above for further details]
 - RH to contact Julia Grant, Church Warden at St Michael & All Angels for help.
- **HPC will hold a Christmas Drinks & Nibbles event** at Church House when dignitaries, Chairs of Residents Associations and Village Halls will be invited and thanked for all their hard work. The date is tbc.
- HPC is looking for an Admin Clerk to assist the Locum Clerk who is finding his role challenging.
 - PS thanked SK for his update.

**Councillors
needed**

RH/JG

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

PW reported that at the end of October the closing balance in the Current A/C was £3,052.24, slightly down on the previous month by £164.31. Advertising income is unchanged and one bill of £100 is outstanding. £480 has been received in subs bringing the total to £2,375 for the year, which is 65% of households. This will now increase due to receipt of subs from AI.

Expenses this month are mainly for plants, £25 fee for a stall at the Christmas Gift & Craft Fair plus £391.10 for providing the Autumn Afternoon Tea and the room hire for our meeting. There is £11,455.30 in the Deposit A/C which accrues interest of £10 each month.

6. HVRA REPORTS/UPDATES

Chairman –

a) **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE GROUP - Recommendations for Discussion (Paper attached)**

PS informed the meeting that the Sub-Group consists of Jill Armshaw, Jayne Birkenhead, Andrew Capey, Sarah Mustapha, Rebecca Rycroft, Michael Sole and Peter Spence although not everyone has attended both meetings, but they all contributed to the Discussion Paper that has been circulated covering:

- **Membership Model and Subs** – PS and all group members.
- **Review of Hughenden News** – AC leading, with SM
- **Expansion of Community Events in the Village Hall** – MS has listed several events for consideration.

i) **Membership Model and Subs** – Recommend removing the requirement to pay an annual membership subscription fee of £5.

- 1) PS received 5 written responses, most of which were **not in favour of the recommendation** citing numerous reasons why this is not the way forward.
- 2) PS asked those present who had not written what they thought of the proposal?
- 3) JA stressed her desire for **increased inclusivity**, so everyone is a member of the HVRA.
- 4) SG asked what do the other Residents Associations do?
- 5) JA: There is no charge in Gt Kingshill and Widmer End, but Naphill charge £8 for the *Naphill Gazette* and Gt Missenden charged £10 for the HS2 Fighting Fund.

AI asked what the Treasurer's point of view is?

PW read out his lengthy written response against the recommendation for the following reasons after explaining that some small RAs, e.g., for a block of flats, a group of caravans or set up to fight a single issue are not like our Association. He continued:

- 6) In setting up a Residents' Association the subscription model is commonly mentioned.
- 7) HVRA has operated successfully for 60+ years collecting subs and using the funds to produce the magazine and to support good causes, fight contentious planning applications and to run social/community events.
- 8) It would cause a catastrophic fall in revenue. It costs £4,000, plus the HPC grant of £900, to print the magazine 3 times pa against receipts from advertising of £4,800 that just covers the cost, resulting in almost zero funds for all other expenditure including chosen good causes and running social events.
- 9) Enabling everyone to become a member would not increase the number of members as it is a fudge of the numbers.
- 10) With reference to the Parish Council grant, he recalled that **it was agreed that *Hughenden News* be placed in the village shop free of charge to non-members and that the £2.50 fee is removed from the front cover.**
- 11) Despite the limitations of the Covid period with lockdowns, limited advertising and nil social events, the HVRA was able to maintain a sound financial organisation, with a 75% penetration of households in our area.
- 12) The recommendation to abandon the successful subscription model in order to reduce the workload of existing volunteers (Road Reps) does not suggest what model would replace it, and how many more new volunteers would be recruited to run the many fundraising events needed year upon year to become financially viable.

- 13) The recommendation does not address the biggest problem of all, and that is of inertia. The lack of inertia is affecting most voluntary organisations.
- 14) His recommendation is to retain the subscription model and engage a task force to recruit more volunteers and to find ways of reducing the workload of Road Reps long term by alternative methods of payment, perhaps introducing Standing Order payments, possibly trialing one road, and noting its success or otherwise.
- 15) For some Road Reps collecting subs is a chore, eg making repeated visits but for others meeting residents face to face is worthwhile; they get to know them, note their concerns and act as a conduit by passing them on to the right person or organization which is worthwhile and greatly appreciated.
- 16) LJ agreed with PW's comments/concerns, believing there is more engagement when being a member and paying a sub.

❖ A multitude of questions, comments and suggestions arose during the course of a very lengthy, robust discussion. PS wants the HVRA to be more ambitious, **but he did not see any agreement among the Committee and asked if we wished to keep thinking about this recommendation?** JA believed tonight's meeting, with more people involved, had been a more useful discussion than with the small Group, and queried why **all** the Officers were not invited to join the Group?

❖ In conclusion, **PS believed nothing would be resolved this evening and all that had been discussed should be passed back to the Sub-Group for further discussion.**

Pass back
to Sub-
Group

ii) **Review of Hughenden News** – AC is leading with this but there is nothing to report.

iii) **Supporting the Expansion of Community Events in the Village Hall** – MS has drawn up a list.

1) MS asked how the profile of the HVRA could be raised? Perhaps holding occasional HVRA events in the Village Hall, e.g. a Film Night or a Burns Supper. **Consideration needs to be given to the availability of the Hall and whether we have the resources to put on an event.**

2) JA reminded the meeting of the Aims and Objects in the Constitution, in particular the first item: *to promote and encourage community spirit and social activities*.

3) LJ suggested having a day set aside in the village shop for the HVRA to meet residents in the same way that the vicar chats with residents or have a flyer in the shop stating the benefits and what the HVRA does for the community, with a tear-off slip for questions and concerns that could be popped into a box in the shop.

4) RH has a **Welcome Pack** that includes a letter of introduction for newcomers which she will pass on.

RH

b) **HVRA Response to Bucks Council – Poor State of Verges etc.**

RH has assimilated all the comments received from Road Reps, together with the Guidance that JA had written in 2017, when she was Deputy Clerk, for members of the public about the responsibilities of the Parish Council and the LA. She will pass the report on to JA for discussion so that progress can be made on its implementation.

RH/JA

7. **MAGAZINE – Hughenden News**

In AC's absence, RH reported that copy is with the printer for delivery back to him by 17th November, and AC expressed his thanks to the contributors and the editorial team.

8. **HVRADIG**

PW's Report had been circulated and read prior to the meeting.

9. **ROAD REP REPORTS**

As the new Road Rep for Friars Gardens (south/west) SG thanked PW for sending her subs' updates which she very much appreciated.

10. **OTHER REPORTS**

a) **Village Hall**

▪ **The AGM will be held on 4 December at 7.30pm in the Small Hall** to include Drinks & Nibbles. The Chairman and Secretary will be standing down and their replacements are sought. Having reviewed their hire tariffs there will be no change for 2024. They will continue to apply a discount for the HVRA and other local organisations when they lose money which is offset by the weekend rates.

- **Christmas lights** around the Hall to be installed later this week.
- **The Christmas Gift & Craft Fair takes place on 25 November.**
- **Next year's Summer Fete**, postponed this year due to an extreme weather warning, will be held on **Saturday, 29 June** providing sufficient volunteers come forward. 4 out of 8 of the organizing team have stepped down. Please get in touch with MS if you would like to get involved.
- **Pantomime tickets** are on sale for **Robin Hood** for December 7th, 8th and 9th at Hughenden Valley Village Hall via www.valleyplayershughenden.co.uk or email contact@valleyplayershughenden.co.uk
- After a 5-year battle, the Parish Council finally agreed to replace the multi-play equipment which was installed last week - the children will love it. A review of other play equipment will take place shortly.

**HELP
NEEDED**

b) Village Store & Coffee Shop is desperately short of volunteers.

- Carols not around the tree but the Hall on Sunday, 3 December, 4.30 for 5pm. The School and Shop Choirs will be singing carols.
- Two gazebos have been delivered and will be installed shortly.
- Volunteers are needed because it is a challenge to pay Supervisors and to cover the cost of the enormous monthly energy bill of circa £2,650. Please ask your friends and neighbours in case they may be interested in sparing a few hours each week to help, plus it's a wonderful way to get to know people.
 - PS believed there are consultants who have the expertise to engage with communities in finding volunteers.

**HELP
NEEDED**

PS

11. PLANNING

Country Supplies – On 26 May 2023 the owner Appealed the Refusal by the Local Planning Authority of the Application for a Lorry Park on an adjacent field. **The Appeal was refused** by the Government Inspectorate on 14 September 2023.

**Appeal
Refused**

12. FUTURE EVENTS

a) Christmas Gift & Craft Fair on 25 November - Re-gifting Stall and Santa's Grotto.

- PC had re-jigged his flyer seeking items for his **re-gifting stall** that RH agreed to pass on to all Road Reps for distribution. He will print off extra copies for those Road Reps who cannot pass them on via email.
- All donated items must be in very good condition, otherwise they will be given to a charity shop etc.
- As there are no volunteers to organize **Santa's Grotto**, RH will get in touch with Rev Keith Johnson and inquire if the Church would like to organize the event.

RH/KJ

13. AOB

- As RH was very impressed with the professional design and presentation of the Church magazine **Outlook**, she queried why **Hughenden News** could not be produced using a similar package, and that the St Michael's Editorial Team could be approached for help.
- AI expressed concern that the reflective road studs on the A4128 are not as effective as they used to be and that in wet weather many large puddles form because of poor drainage, potentially dangerous as drivers often swerve to avoid them in the face of oncoming traffic. AI needs to report this on FixMyStreet.
- AI complained that finding a parking space in the carpark at Wycombe Hospital is very difficult, hence he has had to be dropped off nearby and then walked in.
- JI advised that the Chiltern and the Shelbourne Hospitals are closed for refurbishment until 4 December.

AC/PS

AI

The meeting closed at 9.17pm

The date of the next meeting is 5 December 2023.

Signed.....

Date.....