

Highnam Parish Council
Highnam-Linton-Over-Lassington
Tuesday 19th September 2023

Public Forum: Concerns over the triangle of land off of Maidenhall. Can we apply for village green status. If PC is to do this, it needs to be done before any type of planning permission is applied for on the land. Purchase completion is thought to be on the 10th October.

A Parishioner asked who would maintain this if privately owned as this would not fall under TBC or GCC. The land was to be transferred to TBC following the building of the estate but this never happened.

The chair was asked if the village could be checked for other areas in the village that this may happen too. PC to check, but didn't know of any. GCC and TBC are responsible for cutting their own areas as identified on a map, and not cutting each other's areas.

Enquiry was made as to whether we would get white gates for the village, like many other villages, as these can also help slow down the traffic. The Chair responded that options and costs had been looked into and the speed awareness team had agreed for us to have a speed camera. Location agreed but forms to be signed for this.

Enquiry was made as to whether the bottom of Monkey bank (as locally known) could be made an historical right of way and access to walk it can be maintained, as many have walked this for years. The landowners were approached some time ago, and the private land signs were put up as it is private farmland.

1.Apologies for absence – Cllr Bill Badham

2.Approval of the minutes – The last full PC meeting of 18/7/23 was proposed as accurate by Cllr Phil Sherratt and seconded by Cllr Bill Nicol. Agreed unanimously

The extraordinary meeting on 11/8/23 was proposed by Cllr Phil Sherratt and seconded by Cllr Valerie Tustin Smith. Agreed unanimously

3.No declarations of interest

4.No dispensations

5.County Councillor Report – none

6.Borough Councillor Report – See appendix 1

7.Financial Report – The Chair read through the financial report in the absence of the clerk. All had been seen in advance and was clear and accepted.(usually this is projected onto the wall so that the public can see this). Proposed Cllr Nick Cook, Seconded Cllr Valerie Tustin Smith.

Bank Reconciliation was felt to be fine but needs clearer laying out for easier understanding.

8.Planning Applications – 23/00703/FUL 3, Clayburn Close, Highnam. Planning Councillors have been to look at the property in question and were happy that there were no concerns, or objections. PC is happy to support the application. Proposed Cllr Phill Sherratt, Seconded Cllr Nick Cook.

Planning decisions – Those determined in the last month were on the agenda with outcomes.

Enforcement – there are none at present

9. Environmental Working Group – There was no report as Cllr Bill Badham was away. The group continues to do a lot of excellent work on behalf of the village.

10.Land Oakridge/Maidenhall – Lots of representations and concerns were voiced to the PC Chair over the last few weeks. A briefing paper was sent out after discussions with the PC members with 3 options. As the auction happened last week these were no longer relevant. The triangle of land was sold last week for £500 with a lot of conveyancing costs on top of this sum. The completion is due to be on 11th October, so we won't be able to find out who has bought the land until then, from Land Registry. There are conditions and constraints associated with the land and some services run across it.

It was suggested and agreed that a village green application as the land is a village asset and this year had a pollinator patch on it.

Cllr Paul McLain was asked who the PC needs to contact on GCC to apply. It needs to be demonstrated that the land has community value.

We are able to apply even if the PC does not own the land. The purchaser would still need to apply for a change of use or planning permission to do anything with it.

This is a learning curve for the Council to look at the rest of the village to see if there are any more plots not owned by the Councils and to act more quickly.

PC to apply for village green status. Proposed Cllr Mike Welch, Seconded Cllr Rees Keene.

11.Gloucestershire D Day Celebrations 6th June 2024 – This was supported in that the Council is happy to contribute to supporting an event or landmark in the village. The beacon was not wholeheartedly supported, as they are expensive, there isn't an obvious place to put it, and not much use afterward.

Proposed Cllr Jill Smith, Seconded Cllr Charlie Coates

12.Update HCCT and Old School Refurbishment – the second phase of the work has been restarted. The PC has the £ 110,000 needed to complete the works from various sources and a loan. Looking for completion by the end of November/beginning of December this year. There needs to be an opening ceremony.

The direction of the HCCT needs to be looked at, as a lot of future work need to be done to maximize the use of the hall's facilities. The three individual Trust members wish to step down, leaving just the two PC members on the Board. At least 3 new Trustees are needed. The regular user groups could be approached to provide a member for the board. Without a board, the management responsibility of the halls will go back to the PC.

The halls may need to close if no one is willing to come forward. It may be that we need to get Professional paid people to run the site. A caretaker and booking clerk are paid at present.

It was mentioned the pressure points at the complex, in particular parking if all the facilities are in use. Need to look at the site as a whole and see how best it can be run and marketed for the future.

13. Recruitment of Clerk and Responsible Financial Person – After advertising in a number of places for a new clerk there have been no applications. There is one locum clerk available on the GAPTA system who has been interviewed and seems very experienced and is willing to help out in the interim. Locum Clerks are expensive, so it has been proposed that they be taken on for 3 months to tide over the Council in the interim. The post can then be re-advertised as a permanent position. The advert and making it attractive needs some work, and to look more closely at what is expected of the role, and the salary. It was suggested as a locum is more expensive and experienced, that 12 hours may not be needed. The chair suggested 9 hours, but to be reviewed if this is not enough.

Proposed Cllr Charlie Coates, Seconded Cllr Mike Welch

14. Correspondence – The inquiry into additional houses off of Lassington Reach is to take place from 14th November and is expected to run for 6 days. Further details to follow next month, so that Parishioners can support it. One of the concerns to be addressed is insufficient educational provision from the developer, by GCC.

Many local concerns.

15. Residual Items – Cllr Bill Nicol pointed out that in Slimbridge parish, they have been pushing to make the village 20mph, and have been able to get double yellow lines as a result of too much parking. How did they get them? Perhaps we could do the same around parts of Oakridge.

Cllr Jill Smith pointed out that County and Borough Councillors need to be invited to attend PC meetings. If they are not, they may not know about them, as they have a lot to attend. An update on the play park was also requested. The work has started but has been slow due to delays in the manufacture of the new play equipment. To be chased up with TBC.

Cllr Rees Keene mentioned the water running off of their fields onto the road, and they were looking at the ditches in the area to try to alleviate the situation.

JKS 20/9/23

