



- HPC Response. *We will cover this in Item 17 of the agenda.*

A few years ago, the village commissioned a Housing Need Survey. Can we ask for this to be redone to provide empirical evidence to assist in our response to the Strategic Local Plan Consultation?

- HPC Response. *We will cover this in Item 17 of the agenda.*

There appears to be a disconnect between what TBC and HPC and an element within the village that holds the view that 'it doesn't matter what we say as it all seems to get steam rolled'. How do the HPC plan to get back the trust of the 2,500 village residents who feel that there is no point saying anything as the landowners can do what they want. How do we get the residents onside?

Given there is a need for more Parish Councillors but there is a lack of volunteers, is there a role for residents to support the HPC on specific projects as there is no one coming forward. Some of us would only be too willing to help.

Following the public meeting to discuss the Strategic Local Plan (SLP) there was a lot of questions. Some members of the public would not be able to put their comments into writing. Is there a plan to raise a petition that people can sign as one rather than individually.

- HPC Response. *This will be mentioned later*

**1. To receive apologies for absence**

There were none

**2. To approve minutes of meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

PC approved the Minutes without amendments. The Chair signed the minutes.

**3. Members of the PC are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out below.**

There were none.

**4. To consider and agree any dispensations.**

There were none

**5. To receive the following reports:**

- a. **County Councillor report.** No report received.

**b. Borough Councillor report.**

*The public consultation on the Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) is ongoing until March 12th 2024. This primarily looks at development and infrastructure needs across the three Councils, Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City and Tewkesbury Borough. You can feedback online or attend one of several workshops or consultations being run throughout the month in different locations. These are on the TBC site and have been communicated out to the Parish Council's. The maps attached are only illustrative at this stage, and no land allocations or preferences have been stated, as public views have not been heard yet.*

*There is a dedicated site that it would be worth everyone looking at on [strategiclocalplan.org](http://strategiclocalplan.org) or contact Ian Bowan, Planning Policy Manager on [ian.bowen@tewkesbury.gov.uk](mailto:ian.bowen@tewkesbury.gov.uk).*

*The three Councils in the Strategic and Local Plan are looking to pool their Community Infrastructure Levis (CIL) for larger more cross-boundary strategic projects. This will be managed by a committee from all three councils to ensure fairness. This is only the Council's part of any CIL monies and the parishes will still receive their quota.*

*A statement of Common Ground has been agreed across all 6 Councils. This lays out the revised general rules that all 6 Councils have to operate under. In preparing local plans, local authorities are required to work together on strategic cross-boundary issues.*

*Polling District boundaries and where we vote, have all been reviewed. Nothing will change in our Ward.*

*TBC has had a lot of properties flooded within its Borough. Helpful surgeries have been run to help affected people. A review of all the flood areas and better contingency plans will be made for the future, as climate change is not going away. A separate budget is to be earmarked for this work. Anyone affected by flooding that haven't told the Council are encouraged to do so, in order to create a full and detailed report and produce actions for the future.*

*Officers have been again out knocking on doors this week to check people are ok in Sandhurst, Longford and Haw bridge.*

**c. Chair's report.**

*Most of the matters I would normally be referring to crop up elsewhere on this agenda so do not need repetition. Nevertheless, there are a number of general thematic issues which I feel warrant reflecting on, namely:*

*New Cllr Recruitment: Putting it bluntly, it is disappointing that no one has so far come forward to volunteer their services to join us. Our workload is increasing both in volume and complexity, and we desperately need to spread our democratic mandate to ensure we continue to be truly representative of the community and have the necessary pairs of hands to cope. How do we make the Council a more*

*attractive organisation which people wish to join? We need to discuss. **'Friends of HPC could be a way forward'***

*Strategic Local Plan: We will deal with our formal response in more detail later in the meeting, but it is clear that shaping our community, ensuring we protect what we cherish, and fully engaging with the ongoing Consultation exercise over the next two years and beyond will be, bar none, our most important focus of attention. We also need to decide whether starting work on preparing a new NDP or addressing our future in a more focused way is the best approach. I suggest the Planning Committee be asked to review this.*

*Community Engagement Strategy: This recently approved strategy is now been rolled out to all village societies, clubs and organisations. It will be interesting to see what response we get from this.*

*HCCT: The new Board of Trustees and Halls Manager are quickly finding their feet. At its next meeting in April the Board will start to prepare a management strategy for the whole Complex, something the Council also needs to address. In my view there is much more we can collectively do to exploit its potential and to ensure its continued commercial viability. I suggest a joint meeting between the two bodies later in the year to work on this.*

*Traffic and Transportation Issues: Considering speed limits, provision of entrance white gates, provision of speed cameras, and road safety generally throughout the village are matters which continue to require our attention, which regularly get raised by residents, but which have recently slipped down the priority order due to pressure from other competing issues. I propose we re-establish the Working Group which previously started to look at this in order that we consider this in a holistic way.*

*Communications Strategy: Effective and timely communications is vital to any organisation. It lies at the heart of everything we do. In my view we have made great strides in recent months in making ourselves more accessible in a number of important ways. However, we could, indeed should, do more. Several years ago, with the enthusiastic support of former Cllrs Kelvin Ashby and Terry Talbot, we put in place a comprehensive plan to address this. It warrants revisiting in order that we utilise social media and other mechanism opportunities in the most appropriate and proportionate way. **Mailchimp is possible solution to contact residents (This is £50 monthly). There is good energy around so an ideal time to join the council***

6. **Finances:**

Ser	Item	Expenditure	Payment Method	Power to Spend	Comment
1	Salaries	751.32	BACS	LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Salaries
2	Currys	7.20	DDR	LGA 1972 s. 111	Laptop Insurance
4	FastHosts	22.37	DDR	LGA 1972 s. 142	emails/FastHosts
5	GiffGaff	6.00	DDR	LG(FP)A1963s 5	Mobile Phone
6	HMRC	212.79	BACS	LGA 1972 s. 112(2)	Tax/NI
7	Bill Badham	30.00	BACS	Highways A 1980 s.156(1)	Wood Chippings
8	HCCT	18.00	BACS	LGA 1972 s. 134(4)	Room Hire x 1
9	Unity Bank	500.00	BACS		TFR to open new bank acct
10	SLCC	183.00	BACS	LGA 1972 s 143 (1) (b)	Society Of Local Council Clerks
	Total	1730.68			

7. **To consider planning applications received.**

**Application No:** 24/00028/FUL

**Description:** Erection of a single storey front and side extension and front porch

**Location:** The Old Bakery, Two Mile Lane, Highnam, Gloucester GL2 8DW

**Parish Council have No Objection**

**Application No:** 24/00106/FUL

**Description:** Erection of proposed single storey rear extension including internal alterations. Demolition of existing conservatory.

**Location:** 33 Williams Orchard Highnam Gloucester GL2 8EL

**Parish Council have No Objection**

8. **Over Field Tipping & Burning - To discuss a way forward as there seems to be no movement from the authorities.** This has been an issue over the last 4 yrs and the Parish Council have periodically raised concerns with no response It was agreed that a press release is prepared setting our concerns. There is uncontrolled tipping and burning, the responsibility lies solely with the Environment Agency. There is a meeting with Mark Harper shortly and the Chair will be making him aware there is nothing happening and it is extremely disappointing that there is a blatant disregard to planning breaches.

*Member of Public (MOP) – Perhaps the DVSA should be involved as they are very keen on uncontrolled tipping being stopped?*

9. **Update on land off Maidenhall.** The new owners had to apply for retrospective planning consent for the length of fencing which they have now done but this has not yet been registered so we are unable to comment as of yet. This will be openly discussed at the next meeting and if needed we will apply for an extension to comment in order to allow us to demonstrate the village strength of opinion on this matter. We need to insist it goes

to committee and have a site inspection. This can go on for months, the village green application is still ongoing which can also take 18months.

It was noted that there is a need to appraise the rest of the open spaces to find out who owns them so we are not in this situation again. The clerk is looking in to this, there is a database and will revisit for clarification.

The land can only be used for agricultural or open space purposes but they do need planning permission for the fence. If we do not hear from TBC, we will chase them up. There is no real deterrent to stop them contravening Tree Protection Orders (TPOs).

*Member of Public (MOP) – Which takes precedence in being dealt with first; is it the village green application or the Planning Permission. i.e. Do they have to decide on the one that was submitted first before they decide on the other?*

**10. Shall we join the Open Space Society at a cost of £45 per Year to help with any issues in the future.** This would be a useful society to join to help with any future issues that may occur. All HPC Cllrs were in favour.

**11. Benches - To adopt a procedure for the request of benches. As the PC are responsible for the upkeep of any benches any applications should be agreed by the council first before being submitted to the BC.** A member of public has asked for a bench for their parents to use on walks round the village, it was recognised that it is a welcome addition to the village. In future this procedure will be followed as in the long term the Parish Council are responsible.

**12. Environmental Working Group wish to hire a Woodchipper at the cost of £125**  
The PC received correspondence from a resident which was read out by Cllr Cook:

*If this is voted through it would (in my opinion) be a misuse of local public tax payers' money. My reasons:*

*a) The desire to chip debris from areas NOT owned by HPC. These areas are either directly owned or leased from Gloucester City Council and is the initial responsibility of TBC.*

*b) Perhaps the items could be built into CORRECT dead hedges and used for wildlife conservation.*

*c) If chipping is deemed necessary TBC are initially (as stated) responsible for the maintenance of areas cut by the EWG therefore UBICO on instruction of TBC could use their magnificent woodchipper thus assisting the Parish against unnecessary costs.*

*(It's funny really that the stated woodchipper was in Highnam 19/02/2024 at 1030hrs!)*

*d) How many of the EWG are trained on the use of this dangerous piece of equipment for H & Safety issues. (It only needs a loose piece of material to catch in the inlet and its Goodnight Vienna)*

Cllr Badham responded, the money would be used from S106 that was put aside for use by the EWG as part of The Parish Plan, with reference to a) The Environmental Working Group have a license to maintain the woods, which is held at the HPC office. b) The EWG have thinned out the saplings to let the light through to help the ground revive. There is a

lot of saplings, twigs etc even though the EWG have made a lot of wildlife piles but there are only so many. The chippings will then be used for pathways around the woods. TBC do not maintain the woods only if a large tree is in need of work. c) As stated, TBC have not maintained the woods for many years, it is only the EWG that have helped keep the woods in a good state. For instance, when a tree was felled, TBC left the debris and was cleared by EWG d) The Woodchipper is being hired from B&Q, has a hopper and the largest piece of wood that can be chipped is a 2inch diameter. B&Q would not let anyone hire the equipment without the necessary health and safety brief and equipment. Charlie Coats asked the question that the relevant H & S would be in place, and this was agreed. On voting all were in favour with one abstention. A woodchipper would be hired.

13. **Renaming of TBC to North Gloucestershire Borough Council.** TBC has had its current name for 50yrs, a lot of people have said they cannot relate to it so the Borough have gone out to consultation with the idea to change the name to North Gloucestershire. The Chair noted that the concept of Highnam and Minsterworth being known as North Gloucestershire when we are in the most southern area was not compatible with the region. It was noted that they could just be changing the name as there is a new administration. It was agreed that the Chair would write to TBC and state the HPC felt it would be inappropriate and a waste of money.

14. **To discuss the possibility of the B4215 speed limit through the village being reduced to 20mph.** The speed problem is increasing and putting pedestrians and residents at risk. The footpaths need clearing as the pedestrians are now walking on grass verges to avoid the draught of HGVs. Mark Harper (MP) will be visiting soon as will Max Kelly, Glos Highways and this will be discussed with them.

15. **SLP response** We are putting a number of documents together which have been circulated to Cllrs and reflects the views of the public made last week at the public meeting. Cllr Smith is looking at the scenarios and Cllr Cook is answering the questions so we can put a consolidated response together. Hopefully this will be complete in the next week and will be published on Facebook and the website to give residents the opportunity to provide further comment. The Chair has also taken the response from the 6-parish council consortium regarding the Development option straddling Churcham and Highnam. This submission has not changed and can be resubmitted as it is. It is pointing out the constraints and issue so, these same issues need to be taking in to consideration. This process will take 3 yrs. and we need to make sure we are heard as we still remain very vulnerable to further speculative planning. Cllr Welch noted TBC didn't do anything when they had the chance and have ignored previous requests regarding the Churcham development. Cllr Cook stated the SLP questionnaire ask the questions in a certain manner to garner a certain response to the focussed questions. Navigation is challenging between the questionnaire and the relevant documents you need to read to complete the questionnaire. You also are unable to save your progress. It is challenging to fill in and is evidence to why only 20 questionnaires responses have been completed to date for the whole Borough. Cllr Badham pointed out the Slide document put together TBC was badly put together and failed to include the woods on the A40 where they want to build 4000 houses. Cllr Smith went through the 6 scenarios that have been put forward for consideration and can be viewed on the SLP website.

16. **Building Back Better – consider applying for relatively modest funding for any community project.** Cllr McClain suggested that small grants are available (£2,000 -

£5,000), for small community projects. It is suggested that grants could be used for more grit bins or landscaping between the halls at the community centre. This is something that will be looked in to as the community centre project needs to be reviewed to make it a more attractive proposal for hirings and events going forward.

17. **Correspondence - To receive and note any correspondence.** The road being re-laid is an issue that the residents are concerned about. The road definitely needs doing and Highways have stated that they will endeavour to keep one entrance open. The new bus timetable will not be any good for the residents as the road will be closed. The PC will look in to how this will affect the residents.

The PC received a complaint about the Waste Operatives relieving themselves in public places in and around their routes in Highnam. Cllr Smith has spoken to UBICO and they were apologetic. It was suggested that perhaps they could use the toilet at the community centre or consider speaking to the football club as they have visitors' toilets. Keys issued to the lorries are handed out in the morning and returned at the end of the run.

18. **Date of Next Meeting**

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024, The Old School Highnam, 7.30pm**

**The meeting closed at 2100 hrs.**

Signed ..... Chair Highnam Parish Council Date.....

