

Cllr Nick Cook made a motion to amend the adopted agenda – the Chair was asked to move item 6 to item 5 and item 5 to 6, also to co-opt 2 instead of 1 new Councillor. This was discussed and voted upon with a unanimous decision by the council.

5. (was item 6) Co-option for 2 of 3 vacancies

Cllr Charlie Coats proposed Russell Bailey, seconded by Cllr Nick Cook all in favour Russell Bailey was duly co-opted onto the council

Cllr Nick Cook proposed Mark McGillion, seconded by Cllr Bill Badham all in favour Mark McGillion was duly co-opted on to the council

6. (was item 5) To receive the following reports:

County Councillor report.

As well as dipping into the attached report, I've highlighted some key points here: the council's decision to provide 150k in upfront grant support for properties eligible for central govt flood relief. As councillors will know, the govt scheme requires the householder to put up the cash in advance before then being reimbursed. The GCC approach will allow householders to access the necessary cash without having to worry about dipping into savings or battling with insurance.

Also delighted to see funding for a range of flood alleviation schemes. £2m for solar panels for grant-maintained schools which should help with energy costs and carbon footprint going forward- I have already let our local ward schools know.

As mentioned previously, please can I encourage councillors to have a look at the Building Back Better Fund at GCC which I've picked up. There is still some funding available for our area - very simple application and eligibility criteria. I've recently supported a defibrillator, new play area surfaces, specialist reading sessions (in Highnam school), bus shelter, new parish noticeboards, flooding kit and a new village clock face. Please do have a blue-sky brain storming session. I'm working on a bid from Cheltenham Civil Service/ Norton RFC for a new mixed ability rugby team, so very wide ranging!

Borough Councillor report.

TBC name change – there has been no decision yet. I wrote to the leader of the Council as did the Parish Council separately to express your views. The response I received, said that they had looked at other districts and there was not a great cost to doing this, as a lot of the changes would be digital. They felt people in the wider country didn't know where Tewkesbury was and that a possible change to North Gloucestershire would reflect its key strategic location and attract more people into jobs and investments in the area.

The Council has had some more internal reorganizations with grades of posts and titles changed to reflect their roles. HR has staff shortages due to Maternity leave and staff leaving for genuine reasons, so HR will be run from GCC for the next 6 months.

A new customer portal has been launched to provide digital access to council tax/business rates information. This will reduce postal costs. To access this area, you need to click on the self-service area on the TBC website.

A Garden Communities Charter has been agreed at Full Council. This is not a legal planning document, but a way of viewing these communities and for developers to be guided towards TBCs approach. It is very much based on Ashchurch Garden Community (Garden Town's new title).

Mark Harper MP has written to TBC, to strongly object to the proposed Garden Community Development between Churcham and Highnam, stating the many good reasons we all know and the reasons why it was rejected by the Forest of Dean Council previously.

TBC are reflecting on the flooding responses they provided and the plan going forward. From a ward perspective, I commented that I felt Minsterworth, Maisemore and Highnam were not included or had very few issues addressed, and they had not been proactive in this area. They have offered to do a drop-in surgery as they have in other areas in Minsterworth village hall if it was felt this would be of value? Happy to hear your views.

The budget has been set for TBC and it was not as bad as originally anticipated. Full details can be found on the TBC website under February's Full Council Agenda and papers.

10/3/24 JKS

Chair's report.

Another busy month: aren't they all! with plenty going on behind the scenes to report on.

Our formal submission to the Three Council Strategic Local Plan Consultation Initiative has now been submitted and has been posted on our website and on local Facebook sites. This has involved a great deal of work and research to ensure we effectively represent the views of the community. My particular thanks to Cllrs Nick Cook and Jill Smith for their tireless support in pulling this together. We now await the next stages in what will be a protracted exercise stretching out over the next three years or so.

It was pleasing to see the B4215 road resurfacing works completed on time and with relatively minimal disruption. My thanks in particular to Co Cllr Paul McLain for facilitating this.

We continue to become aware of grant funding opportunities which I believe we should be fleeter of foot in exploiting. The secret is to have prepared a number of "oven ready" projects we can submit at short notice. Volunteers are sought to sit on our Projects Working Group to develop them. Need they always just be councillors or should we look to expand our reach to bring in other willing village residents?

On Friday Cllr Nick Cook and I will have our long-awaited meeting with Mark Harper MP. We will show him the fruits of the DEFRA funded work in the refurbishment of the Old School. We will discuss with him our concerns about the SLP, localised flooding, traffic congestion, and the illegal tipping to the rear of Over Farm. Are there any other strategic issues we should be raising with him?

It is beyond disappointing to see several instances of thoughtless driving over the green central reservation "opposite the Shop. This has caused unsightly rutting which will be difficult and costly to repair. We need to consider a long-term solution to stop this happening again.

It is highly pleasing that we are able to welcome a new Councillor to our ranks. Now to continue our efforts to recruit another two to complete our complement.

We have discussed on numerous occasions the need to resurrect our Transportation and Traffic Management Working Group in order that we can take a coordinated approach to tackling the various issues which need to be progressed. I am seeking volunteers to take this forward.

Tonight, we will be discussing the Land South of Maidenhall retrospective planning application for the retention of close board timber fencing. I cannot remember another issue which has so galvanised local opposition and concern. I hope we will agree to submit a very robust response to this highly inappropriate use of land.

Cllrs will note the new highly informative displays recently erected in the Old School by Highnam Heritage. This has come about following productive working with the Council and HCCT to celebrate our collective history and is an example of our new Community Engagement Strategy working in practice.

In subsequent discussion

Cllr Bill Badham commented that the B4215 used to have pot holes that slowed the traffic down, now they have a nice smooth service they are speeding up.

Chair replied that this will be resurrected in the Speed, traffic management working group.

Cllr Bill Badham raised the fact that the rutting on the grass opposite the shop is a continued problem and needs to be addressed.

Chair suggested that this should be taken up with the Borough – clerk will contact them

Cllr Russ Bailey complimented the management of the resurfacing of B4215 and how well it was publicised. MOP commented that there was no communication on whether you could access the village.

7. 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	HCCT	30111.62	BACS	S137	Last instalment of old school refurb – from PWL
8	HCCT	65.75	BACS	LGA 1972 s. 134(4)	Room Hire x 2
9	PATA	31.05	BACS	LGA 1972 s. 143	Payroll Services
	Total	31208.10			

8. To consider planning applications received.

Application No: [24/00109/FUL](#)

Description: Retrospective permission of the erection of a boundary fence

Location: Land to the south of Maidenhall, Maidenhall Highnam

There are currently 32 letters of objection. The PC need to make a comprehensive, robust objection to TBC which the Chair will put together. The chair articulated how HPC were to evidence their objection that they were going to lodge on behalf of the Parish. It is disappointing that TBC have let the applicants apply retrospectively and not taken enforcement action when the fence was erected. There was a letter from the enforcement officer stating the fence was in breach of planning It would be the PC advice for the application to go before committee with a site visit, which the Borough Councillor will request and that will provide the PC and one resident the opportunity to speak at the committee. In tandem we have also submitted a village green application which we are lobbying for to be presented to a planning meeting rather than through delegated officer powers. We should send out a clear message that as a community we do not support this type of anti-social activity going on in our village.

Cllr Nick Cook surmised that we must ensure that we view our objection through 'planning eyes' and we support the grounds where the law has been broken rather than being too emotional in our response.

Cllr Bill Badham stated that not all documents are on the planning portal for viewing which TBC should be made aware of.

Cllr Charlie Coats proposed that he will draft a response that robustly objects to this retrospective planning application which will then be circulated before being sent in. All in favour.

Application No: [24/00080/FUL](#)

Description: Proposed extension to existing approved grain store (ref:21/01142/FUL) 43m x 30m

Location: Linton Court, Linton Farm, Highnam

It was agreed that HPC would ask TBC to commission a specialist report to assess the amount of grain likely to be grown on the farm in an average year to determine whether additional storage facilities are actually required. The proposed building extension does though sit well with current storage facilities at Linton Farm.

Cllr Cook added that it is a common occurrence that if the store may well be used for other uses if not enough grain is produced.

Cllr Charlie Coats will draft a response asking that TBC investigate further whether the average level of grain production warrants a larger storage facility. All in favour.

Application No: [24/00157/FUL](#)

Description Single storey rear extension and insertion of new external door to side

Location: 5 Mimosa Avenue, Highnam, Gloucester

THE PARISH COUNCIL HAVE NO OBJECTION

Application No: [24/00120/FUL](#)

Description: First Floor Extension to dwelling

Location: 68 Maidenhall Highnam

THE PARISH COUNCIL HAVE NO OBJECTION

Application No: [24/00146/FUL](#)

Description Proposed Single Stoey rear extension.

Location 14 Mimosa Ave, Highnam

THE PARISH COUNCIL HAVE NO OBJECTION

9. **A40 cross hatched junction box** – This is currently with Highways who will assess the need for one. Cllr Bill Badham asked what would be the deterrent for drivers if a box was installed, there would be a need for a camera.
10. **Kings Portrait – should we apply for a free portrait of The King to be hung in The Old School**
It was noted that not all residents would be happy but as a council we are representing our civic commitment to the King. Council agreed that an application would be made to accept this free portrait and it would be hung in the old school. All in favour.
11. **Bins – It has been proposed that a dog waste bin be placed closer to the entrance of the woods. Although UBICO will not empty them it would be up to the Parish Council.**
Highnam Football Club would support these bins as it is a common occurrence that dog waste is left on the football pitches, which is a health hazard to the footballers using the pitches. Dog walkers need encouragement to use the bins provided. It would be useful to find some volunteers to empty the bins and bags left by the bins that will be emptied by UBICO. This would be looked in to further regarding costs by the clerk.
On another note, it has been mentioned that some residents have complained of dogs barking and the residents are encouraged to report to [Environment - Tewkesbury Borough Council](#)
12. **Update on illegal tipping and burning of waste on Over Field** – This a live investigation and has been registered with the Environmental Agencies legal team. The clerk is in contact with them regularly and they encourage the public to report any burning/tipping they see by photographic evidence being either sent to the parish clerk or directly to the EA.

Call the National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506506 who will transfer you to the area team.
Please quote enquiry reference 240126/JH25, in any correspondence with us regarding this matter.

enquiries_westmids@environment-agency.gov.uk -
13. **White Village Gates – the position of the gates has been agreed with highways and the clerk is currently obtaining quotes.**
There has been development and the clerk has had a quote, GCC Highways match 50% of the costs. The site that has been chosen and the style of gate can be viewed on the PC website along with costs involved.

14. To agree and adopt Risk Assessment & Management procedures.

This was deferred to the next meeting

15. Dates of Annual Parish Council Meeting – it may be an opportunity to have this on a Saturday.

As previous meetings have been uninspiring and not very well attended, it has been suggested that The Good Neighbour Café supply refreshments on the day and local clubs and societies be contacted to give residents and opportunity to chat and see what happens in Highnam.

The 18th May 24 has been pencilled in the diary. All in favour.

16. Newsletter – shall we build on this.

This is a great opportunity to communicate with the residents and update them on what the Parish Council have achieved. It will modernise our communication strategy, Cllr Coats suggested Cllr Mcgillion could assist in developing our strategy with a view to producing a quarterly newsletter.

17. Correspondence - To receive and note any correspondence.

The clerk had heard back from Highways concerning the pedestrian crossing on the A40/B4215, this should have been fixed on 18th March 24

18. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 16th April 2024, The Old School Highnam, 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 2100 hrs.

Signed Chair Highnam Parish Council Date.....