

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11th APRIL 2024 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM
AT BROADWAY HILL METHODIST CHURCH, HORTON.

Page 1326

PUBLIC FORUM 11 members of the public were in attendance at the meeting. Cllr Sue Osbourne (Councillor – Somerset Council) was also in attendance.

4172 ATTENDANCE Councillors Ray Buckler - Chair, Ann Winter, Peter Babbington, Mike Schmidt and Robert Hutchinson.

4173 APPROVAL OF APOLOGIES Councillor Barry Mosley – Vice-Chair.

4174 DECLARATION OF INTEREST None.

4175 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (FEBRUARY & MARCH) The minutes of the meeting held in February and March, having previously been circulated, were approved, seconded, and unanimously agreed upon, subject to the inclusion of an update to state that planning comments concerning the Galion planning application and appeal were not submitted to PINS or the LPA due to a technical error.

4176 PLANNING APPLICATION(S) /APPEAL(S) UPDATE

5.1 23/01649/FUL - Land North Of Broadway Hill Broadway Hill Horton - Construction of 49 dwellings and formation of vehicular access

The above application was approved by Somerset Council at the South Planning Committee meeting. The vote was a 4 – 4 split and was approved on the chairman's casting vote. The parish council discussed the outcome of the planning application and it is considered incandescent concerning the timeframe in which this has been approved.

Significant concerns have been raised regarding the last set of amendments and the poor description outlining the amendments as this suggested a reduction in the number of proposed houses however this was not the case and subsequently, the planning officer issued a second letter clarifying the number of dwellings proposed; A “significant” amendment was made to the 2023 application resulting in a letter from planning on 1st March 2023 to notify all interested parties. A clarification letter was sent from planning dated the 15th of March 2023, advising the interested parties of a material error in the original letter. Both letters took nearly a week from the date on the letter to reach residents. With the date of the committee meeting, there wasn't sufficient time for further comments from interested parties to be submitted.

Since the committee meeting members of the public have been in contact with their MP and Cllrs Sue Osborne and Val Kietch.

Cllr Sue Osborne provided the following update to the parish council and members of the public during the meeting:

- Cllr Osborne will be taking the issue of the confusion over the number of dwellings proposed further.
- The only option going forward concerning the decision is for a Judicial Review to be applied for however this needs to be done within 42 days from the date of decision but a Judicial review could cost 10's of thousands of pounds. A Judicial Review seeks to quash a decision and for the application to be reconsidered with no guarantees it wouldn't be approved again.
- The recording of the committee meeting is on YouTube.
- It has been questioned if it is normal for a second application to be considered if one is already at appeal.
- Suggests submitting a Freedom of Information request requesting information relating to correspondence between the applicant/agent and planning officer.
- Also suggests writing to the Secretary of State requesting that they call in the application but this needs to be done via the MP, Marcus Fysch.

Councillors raised the following concerns/questions:

- Is the original appeal continuing? Cllr Osborne confirmed she has sought clarification and no answer was given and requested a deferral of the planning application being considered at committee on this basis.
- Only one week's notice with the date and time of the committee meeting. A lot of the public was not notified of the meeting details. Circumstances meant that most Councillors were unable to attend the committee meeting. Cllr Robert Hutchinson was the only Councillor who was able to attend the meeting.
- If the planning officer didn't think the confusion was caused concerning the reduction of the number of houses, why did they send a second letter clarifying the matter?
- 540 residents live in Horton, and 220 object to the planning application. In Horton, 220 written in on the application. The significant number of objections was not considered by the committee/chair which is not in line with the guidance of the NPPF.
- MP Michael Gove has taken away the 5-YHLS supply. Cllr Osborne confirmed if you have less than 5 years but not below 4 there is some room for manoeuvre.

Members of the public raised the following concerns/questions:

- Concerns were raised that the YouTube recording has been edited and is not a true copy of the meeting. PC to review the transcript also.
- Over-development was considered in the first application, however, the second application didn't consider this matter.

Proposed actions going forward:

- Make a complaint to Somerset Council (monitoring officer)
- Submit a Freedom of Information request
- Speak with CPRE in terms of case law and anything else that can be done.
- The parish council to arrange an information meeting to discuss the next steps. The meeting is to take place on the 18th of April 2024 at 6.30pm.
- Speaking with CPRE in terms of case law and anything else that can be done.

4177 PLAYING FIELD UPDATE Still no response to date from GB Sports concerning the provision of a new hardstanding. No further updates.

4178 SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE – UPDATE No updates.

4179 DEFIBRILLATOR The Village Hall Committee will pay for defibrillator training if free training cannot be obtained. Cllr A Winter still working on finding a training provider.

4180 MAINTENANCE AROUND THE VILLAGE – UPDATE GD Spiller has been appointed to carry out all necessary verge maintenance, awaiting for written agreement to be signed, Cllr Robert Hutchinson to chase GD Spiller for this.

Action: Cllr Robert Hutchinson to chase GD Spiller for this for written confirmation.

4181 LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK – UPDATE Cllr Ray Buckler has recently sent an email chasing for a response to the concerns raised about the Creating Places for People Consultation. Email sent as follows:

"It's now almost three months since our last communication, I trust you have completed the report on the consultation and I would be grateful if you would forward to me a copy, else point me at a web page that has the relevant results.

Now you have the replies, I would also wish to know how many developers and builders responded to the survey."

Action: Cllr Ray Buckler is to attend the next LCN meeting to push the matter further.

4182 FINANCE

Proposal – To approve the following:

11.1 2023/24 financial statement – Unanimously Approved.

Action: Clerk to check the status of bank signatories with Natwest.

11.2 2023/24 Audit Arrangements – As per previous years, the clerk will contact David Ireland to see if he can undertake this year's internal audit - Unanimously Approved.

Action: Clerk to contact David Ireland.

Proposal – To approve the following cheques:

11.3 SSE Energy Solutions – Electricity - £7.06- Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000894.

11.4 Monthly payments to SES – The clerk requested permission to issue payment for the monthly electricity bill as and when the bill is received, which was unanimously approved. However, the electricity contract is due for renewal and it was unanimously agreed to stay with the current provider subject to paying the bill annually upfront.

Action: Clerk to contact energy provider.

4183 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE None.

4184 ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRMAN

- Ideas for potential Horton Projects 2024/25: – Refer to **Appendix 1** for a copy of the proposal. Include it on May's agenda.
- Crock St to Pottery Road – No welcome to Horton sign, all other access roads into the village have a sign. Request to be made to Somerset Council that a sign is installed.
- Cllr Peter Babbington to install a shelf in the bus shelter so it can be used for a book exchange.

4185 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 9th May 2024 commencing at 6.30pm.

Meeting Closed: 19:53

Appendix 1 - Ideas for potential Horton Projects 2024/25**Draft Project proposal for improving pollination of gardens in Horton****09/04/24 RB****Overview**

My brother is a beekeeper resident in Ashill for the last four years, and we have had general conversations about this activity/hobby for a while.

I have also noted that the bee population in UK is under threat from hornets, disease, and chemical spraying.

Part of the Horton Parish Council remit is to support projects that will directly benefit Horton residents, their families, and the local environment.

Therefore, I researched whether we could do something to encourage more Horton residents to take up beekeeping which would improve flower and fruit pollination, be a worthwhile and environmentally positive activity, plus provide the local area with more honey.

To be a beekeeper requires some specialist knowledge and skill, a training course, plus you should be registered officially by a recognised beekeeping association.

Outline proposal for discussion.

1. Offer to pay for the "novice" initial annual beekeeping membership £60.
2. If, after the first year, or before, they wish to continue and be active also offer to support the cost, suggestion of the value of an entry level hive at £130.

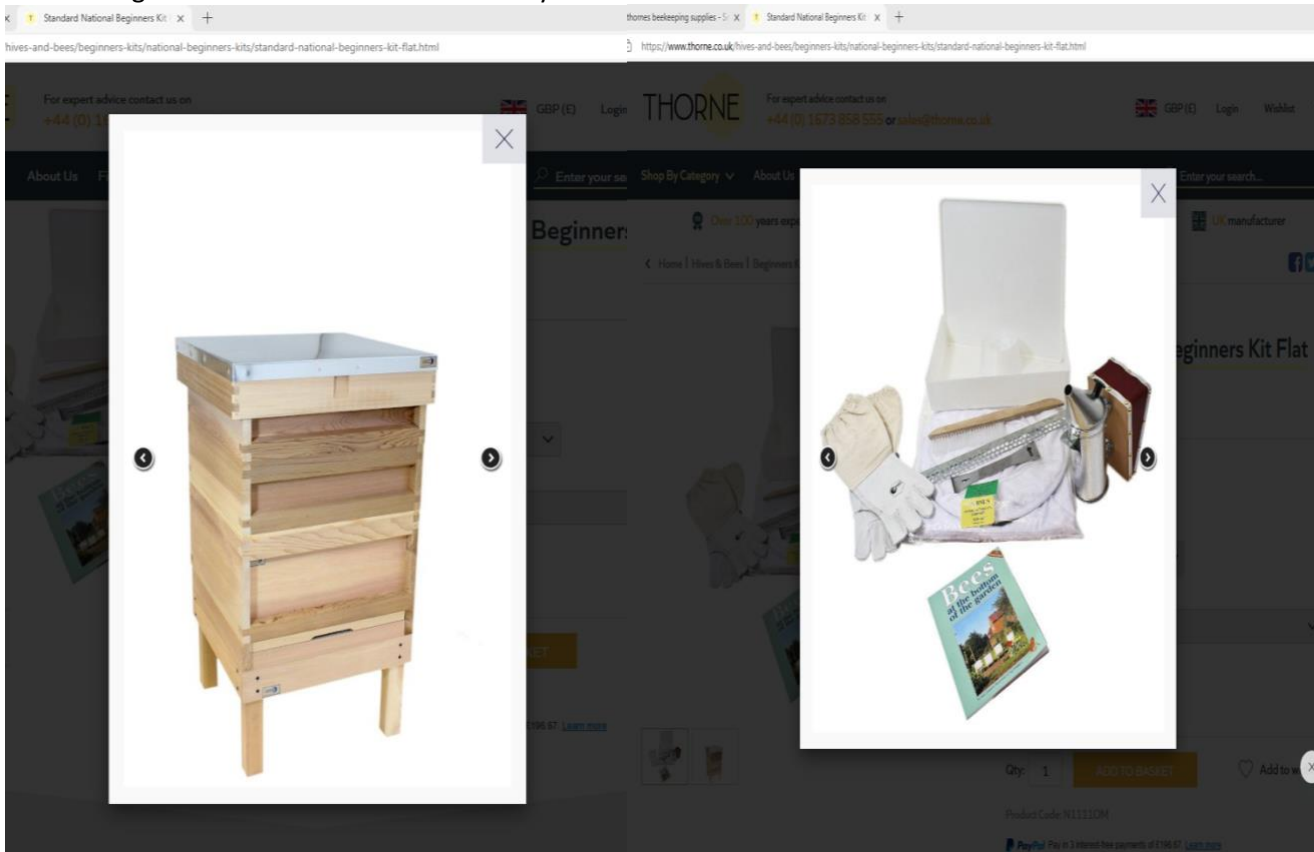
Considering the population of Horton, I would not expect more than 10 requests for Stage 1, following on to 5 requests to take it to stage 2. We could cap the numbers of applicants to be within our budget, which on the above numbers would be £600 for year one and up to £1,250 (max) in subsequent years, if we refreshed the offer each year.

Typical costs for a beekeeper....

Equipment	Entry-Level	Good Quality
National Hive (Brood box and 2 supers)	£130	£230
Frames	£50	£75
Wax foundation	£24	£30
Bee suit	£30	£65
Gloves	£6	£9
Hive tool	£3	£7
Bees (5 frames in 'Nucleus' Box)	£200	£230
Total	£443	£646

RTB04/24

- Beekeepers should be members of a BBKA association of which Somerset Beekeepers have several branches including one at Yeovil and the South West Branch. This covers Insurance, continued education and support. Pending the branch costs vary slightly but the South West cost to join is £46 this year – covers 3 Hive more are extra cost).
- Beekeepers will need correct kit and tools along with a Hive if intending to keep Bees (Starter kits are available at main dealers such as Thorne or Easibee. Starter kit Thorne is currently £590, Suit, Hive, Tools and book etc.
- Suggest that pure beginners attend a starter course available via SBKA or others. Allows them to experience being amongst many thousands of bees and if they find this acceptable – some do not and some embrace. Beginners course in Yeovil is currently £67



DEFRA launches the Healthy Bees Plan 2030 to help protect honey bees.
Please see further information on the DEFRA Government website.

This plan is aimed at sustaining the health of honey bees and beekeeping in England and Wales over the next decade.

The four key outcomes are,

Effective biosecurity and good standards of husbandry, to minimise pest and disease risks and so improve the sustainability of honey bee populations.

Enhanced skills and production capability/capacity of beekeepers and bee farmers.

Sound science and evidence underpinning the actions taken to support bee health.

Increased opportunities for knowledge exchange and partnership working on honey bee health and wider pollinators needs.

Defra 'Bees' Needs week 2024: 8th to 14th July

Annual event coordinated by Defra.

The aim of the week is to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators and highlight the ways in which everyone can help Bees and other pollinators thrive.

5 simple actions.

Grow more nectar flowers, shrubs and trees.
Let patches of garden and land grow wild.
Cut grass less often.
Do not disturb insect nests and hibernation spots.

Think carefully about whether to use pesticides.

UK Government emergency use of pesticides (wildlife trusts)

The UK Government has approved the use of highly damaging neonicotinoid, Thiamethoxam, on sugar beet for the fourth year in a row. This has been banned in the UK since 2018 but has been approved for use on sugar beet crops in England, despite an industry commitment to end reliance on the banned pesticide by 2023.