

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9TH MAY 2024 COMMENCING IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AT BROADWAY HILL METHODIST CHURCH, HORTON.

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PUBLIC FORUM 2 members of the public were in attendance at the meeting. Cllr Sue Osbourne (Councillor – Somerset Council) was also in attendance. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for Cllr Osbourne’s monthly report.

4186 ATTENDANCE Councillors Ray Buckler – Chair, Barry Mosley – Vice-Chair, Ann Winter, Mike Schmidt, Rob Hutchinson, Peter Babbington and Andy Johnson.

4187 APPROVAL OF APOLOGIES Councillor Julie Layzell.

4188 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON Cllr Ray Buckler is currently Chair, and it was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that he will remain in this position.

4189 COMPLETION OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORMS Duly completed.

4190 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR Cllr Barry Mosley is currently Vice-Chair, and it was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that he will remain in this position.

4191 COMPLETION OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORMS Duly completed.

4192 CO-OPTION – PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY No applications received.

Action: Cllr Ray Buckler to publicise the vacancy on social media and display a notice in the noticeboard.

4193 DECLARATION OF INTEREST None.

4194 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (APRIL) The minutes of the meeting held in April having previously been circulated, were approved, seconded, and unanimously agreed upon.

4195 CHAIRPERSONS ANNOUNCEMENTS Please refer to **Appendix 2**.

4196 AMENDMENT TO MARCH 2024 MINUTES A proposal was made to correct the March 2024 minutes. The following was proposed and agreed to be included in the March 2024 minutes:

“23/01649/FUL - Land North Of Broadway Hill Broadway Hill Horton - Construction of 49 dwellings and formation of vehicular access - Communication dated 1st March 2024 from Somerset Council concerning the planning application was received by the parish council and residents notifying of amendments to the application which implied that the application had reduced to 32 open market houses. A second letter was issued by Somerset Council on the 15th of March 2024, clarifying the application was still seeking consent for 49 houses and that the proposed amendments to the scheme related to the 32 open market dwellings only. Somerset Council have since said that the letters did not cause material confusion over the proposed number of dwellings however, Horton Parish Council considered the proposed amendments in the March 2024 meeting and there was significant confusion over the amendments and the total number of houses proposed, it was assumed that the application sought a reduction in numbers. There were also similar comments on social media from residents assuming the same.”

The parish council refuted Somerset Council’s comment that there was no material confusion, there category was.

4197 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE UNDERMENTIONED

- 10.1 Village Hall - Cllr Ann Winter
- 10.2 Playing Field – Cllr Ray Buckler and Andy Johnson
- 10.3 Footpath Working Party - Cllr Mike Schmidt
- 10.4 Area South Planning Committee – Cllr Julie Layzell
- 10.5 Police Liaison Officer – Cllr Peter Babbington
- 10.6 Horton Charities - Cllr Ann Winter
- 10.6 Defibrillator – Cllr Ann Winter (village hall) and Barry Mosley (Horton)
- 10.8 Speed Indicator Device – Cllr Barry Mosley and Ray Buckler
- 10.8 Village Maintenance – Cllr Andy Johnson/Rob Hutchinson
- 10.9 Local Community Network - Cllr Ray Buckler

4198 PLANNING APPLICATION(S) /APPEAL(S) UPDATE

- 11.1 23/01649/FUL - Land North Of Broadway Hill Broadway Hill Horton - Construction of 49 dwellings and formation of vehicular access.
 - FOI Request
 - Complaint to Somerset Council
 - Next steps

Update from Cllr Sue Osbourne – Nothing to report at this time.

Update from Cllr Ray Buckler – A response from the complaint submitted by the parish council has been received, Cllr Buckler has since replied to this with further comments/concerns and concentrated on the procedural errors by Somerset Council regarding ‘material confusion’/two letters sent by Somerset Council. Cllr Buckler has now taken the complaint to Stage 2 which will now be reviewed by senior management at Somerset Council. Please refer to **Appendix 3** for a copy of the complaint.

Somerset Council should provide a response to the FOI by the end of the month.

Next steps – wait until the end of the month and if no response to the complaint or FOI, Cllr Ray Buckler will chase on both accounts.

- 11.2 **Amended Plans** - 24/00301/HOU - Stonegarth, 7 Goose Lane, Horton - Reduction in width of the front elevation two-storey extension. The roof of the single-storey front extension was altered from flat to single-pitched. Extended flat roof on existing side garage removed. 45-degree schematic of the OLD proposal included.

The applicant was in attendance at the meeting and explained the proposed amendments to the council. The applicant advised that they submitted a pre-application request to Somerset Council before the submission of the application. Somerset Council stated they had no objections to the proposal. From the outset, the applicant advised that they were very conscious of neighbouring properties and sought to keep the proposal in keeping with neighbouring properties.

Following the objections submitted by neighbours/parish council, the applicant requested that their architect provide a 45-degree schematic drawing which shows no interference with neighbouring properties' light. Nevertheless, the extension was reduced in scale due to the objections. Somerset Council have advised they are looking to approve the application however, the applicant would like parish council support of the amendments first.

The councillors reviewed the amendments and a discussion was had. A vote to approve the application was proposed. 5 councillors voted in favour, and 2 voted to object.

Action: Clerk to confirm the parish council position to Somerset Council.

11.2 24/00660/FUL - Wellbridge Cottage, Old A303, Horton - The erection of 1No. new dwellinghouse.

The parish council considered and discussed the proposal. A vote to approve the application was proposed and it was unanimously supported.

Action: Clerk to confirm the parish council position to Somerset Council.

4199 PLAYING FIELD UPDATE Grass has been cut twice recently in the last 3 weeks. Maintenance of the boundary is currently been undertaken. Equipment - no issues noted. Cllr Ray Buckler to re-issue contracts to current maintenance contractors for another 12 months.

4200 SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE – UPDATE Both devices working, and no issues reported. Consider purchasing 3d SID to cover the third point of entry to the village from Crock Street.

4201 DEFIBRILLATOR Cllr Ann Winter advised a training session has been booked with a company called Community Heartbeats and will take place on the 25th of July 2024. 40 Spaces available on a first come first served basis.

It has been noted that the light above the defibrillator in the bus shelter has been removed.

Action: Cllr Barry Mosley to have a look and replace it.

MAINTENANCE AROUND THE VILLAGE – UPDATE GD Spiller has carried out further works, invoice for works received. Cllr Robert Hutchinson has been spraying weeds with salt and vinegar which seems to be working. Cllr Ray Buckler to issue maintenance contract to GD Spiller.

On a separate issue, complaints have been received by residents about recent works carried out in the local fields and the mud left in the road which is causing a hazard, Cllr Hutchinson will speak with the landowner.

4202 LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK – UPDATE At the last meeting Cllr Val Keitch was present and Cllr Ray Buckler highlighted a few issues that needed addressing concerning the LCN meetings. Cllr Keitch disagreed and it was resolved to agree to disagree. Cllr Buckler is to attend the next LCN meeting with evidence relating to his concerns.

4203 FUTURE HORTON PROJECTS – UPDATE – BEE KEEPING Cllr Ray Buckler provided an update on the proposed project, please refer to **Appendix 3**. It was confirmed that the proposed hives are to be spread out throughout the village. And that existing beekeepers in the local area are to be the point of contact for potential candidates. A motion to support the proposal was proposed and it was unanimously supported.

4204 FINANCE

Proposal – To approve the following:

18.1 2024/25 financial statement – Unanimously approved.

Proposal – To approve the following cheques:

18.2 SSE Energy Solutions – Electricity - £14.58- Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000896.

18.3 D White – Wages and Expenses - £727.31- Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000897.

18.4 GD Spiller – Village Maintenance - £140.00 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000898.

18.5 A J Gallagher – Parish Council Insurance - £1053.83 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000999.

Income

18.7 Somerset Council – Precept – Noted.

4205 CLERK’S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE None.

4206 ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRMAN None.

4207 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 13th of June 2024 commencing at 6.30pm.

Meeting Closed: 20:33

Appendix 1 - May 2024 Councillor Report - Sue Osborne Ilminster Division

SUEZ waste collection contract: The Council's waste contractor, SUEZ, has disclosed figures showing significant annual losses on its £24m a year contract. It has made a number of contractual claims seeking adjustment to payment and while these are in dispute, without an increase in payments there is a risk that SUEZ may exit the contract, to limit its losses over the contract's remaining six years. A report to the Council's Executive Committee meeting recommends giving the Council's Chief Executive a mandate to negotiate with SUEZ to broker a deal which would stop SUEZ exiting the contract. The ongoing rerouting of collections is helping make rounds more efficient and as cost effective as possible, but even with this SUEZ considers the contract unviable.

Revised waste collection routes: Recycling and rubbish collection days are changing for 92,000 households in eastern parts of the county in June following changes made to the rest of the county earlier this year. From Monday June 17th, new collection routes are being introduced for many homes in the former South Somerset and Mendip districts. The new routes will make rounds more efficient, more manageable for crews while reducing mileage and carbon emissions. The changes come at no additional cost to the council.

Roadside grass-cutting: From May 2024, where safe to do so, mowing routines across managed highway verges, open spaces, country parks and council property grounds will be reduced although safety and visibility around verges and public spaces such as play areas will be cut more regularly. On wider verges, only a 1-meter swathe is mowed, leaving the rest untouched to maintain biodiversity. Further information on the cutting schedule can be found at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/grass-cutting/>

Subsidised Bus Fares in Taunton: Somerset Council has announced revised bus fares for the Taunton Town Zone to keep services sustainable. From 1 June this will be £1.50 for any adult single fare and 80p for a child. The new fares will be reviewed at the end of this year. Across the rest of the county the cost for any single fare will stay at £2 until December 2024, part of the national Government-funded initiative. The fare for the Park and Ride service in Taunton remains £1 for a single fare.

Children and Young Peoples Plan : The new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for Somerset sets out the Council's aims for 2024-2030 including how services and communities are accountable for children and young people and how they will work together to ensure the ambitions of the plan are achieved. Members of Somerset Youth Forum have suggested that the most important priorities are:

- Having a better experience in education
- Leading healthier lives
- Help to improve your mental health
- Living in safer communities
- Building better relationships
- Being prepared for adulthood

The Council wants to encourage all individuals under the age of 25 to share their thoughts on these priorities via the online survey: <https://forms.office.com/e/dNHR44HCfn>

Volunteer Drivers: Since Covid-19 the numbers of volunteer drivers in Somerset has reduced by about 67 per cent. These dedicated drivers play a pivotal role in the community, providing essential transportation services to residents so the Council are calling out for new volunteers. Many residents who need the service live in rural areas with little or no access to public transport and are unable to drive. If you are working part-time, a parent, retired or just have some spare time on your hands and you have a car and at least half a day to a day to offer then you can get involved and make a positive impact on people's lives. Volunteer drivers receive training and are reimbursed expenses at 45p per mile (or 50p per mile with passengers).

Sue Osborne Somerset Councillor Ilminster Division
07843341603
9th May 2024

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Appendix 2 - CHAIRPERSONS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Another year has passed, and we are almost into the second half of 2024.

While councillors are still adjusting to the move to unitary council for Somerset in April 2023, we have continued with the regular items that come before the parish such as planning, village maintenance and local events.

I hope my fellow councillors will agree that, for this coming year, Horton Parish Council will need to be more proactive with its agenda, despite the disappointing results from the questionnaire all the councillors hand delivered to every Horton resident in July last year. So, with that in mind I am just going to headline some things we **have** achieved over the last year or two and look forward to new ideas and initiatives from councillors and residents that will further enhance and support Horton and its residents.

Common to all councils with a budget, there needs to be a balance between having Parish funds to cope with an emergency vs approving new spending to benefit the Horton Community for the future.

Projects Horton PC have been involved in:

- Improving Pathways and verges.
- The five dials fingerpost refurbishment.
- Purchase and installation of two SID units to address some speeding issues.
- Ongoing objections to the large-scale development of 49 houses at Broadway Hill.
- Installation of two defibrillators – along with electrical power.
- Co-operation with other local Parishes to address issues with the now stalled A358 upgrade.
- Adding a book exchange to the Five dials shelter.
- Providing regular maintenance for the Horton playpark.
- Providing grant and equipment support to the new Horton youth group.

2024/5 will be another tough year for getting grants for new projects, and there will be less support from Somerset Council for anything other than essential services.

Finally, we are a councillor short of a full team and this needs to be addressed as soon as possible. With the recent announcement that the Horton Gazette has stopped publishing in its usual form, we have one less medium to advertise the vacancy to the residents. After the AGM we need to spend some time on how we improve Parish Communications, both online and offline, so all ideas are welcome.

Ray Buckler

Chair- Horton Parish Council

07/05/2024 v3

Appendix 3 – Stage 2 Complaint to Somerset Council

“Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the development of houses in Broadway hill, application 23/01649/ful.

I am in receipt of a reply from John Hammond of Somerset Council planning, which seeks to justify the decision to bring this application to the planning meeting of 26th March at Yeovil.

I am extremely concerned that the planning office appear to be both judge and jury to refute any errors or problems regarding the tabling of this application on the above date (26th March). I also note that supporting responses from other planning staff to county councillors are factually incorrect. My issue is with procedural matters, the 200+ residents’ objections to this application are a separate issue.

In summary:

1. There is an almost identical application (20/03277/ful) from 2020 that was refused in May 2023 and is currently awaiting appeal. There does not appear to be a planning precedent for allowing a further re-try before the appeal.
2. A “significant” amendment was made to the 2023 application resulting in a letter from planning on 1st March 2023 to notify all interested parties.
3. A clarification letter was sent from planning dated the 15th March 2023, advising the interested parties of a material error in the original letter.
4. Both letters (items 2 & 3), took nearly a week from date on letter to reach residents.

I enclose a copy of the response from John Hammond re above and associated points. I am responding to the following 7 statements given by Mr Hammond.

1. Efficiency of postal service
2. Amount of notice given
3. Availability of parish council representatives
4. Confusion over a re-consultation
5. Relationship to the scheme currently at appeal
6. Sending of multiple letters
7. Timing for the committee

Statements in point order extracted from John Hammond email:

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1. Firstly, in relation to the quality of postal services, this is an issue outside of the planning authority control. For Area South Committee meetings letters are sent first class and are sent 8 days before the committee meeting. Over the past year as Somerset Council, where we have notified the public of upcoming committee meetings we have not to date seen any evidence that this timetable does not provide sufficient notice of the upcoming meeting. Generally, it would seem that the public are receiving notifications with sufficient time to make arrangements to attend committee if they so wish. Because the public do not attend a committee meeting is not however a ground to defer decision making.

2. The previous notifications to members of the public relating to the refused application 20/03277/FUL were issued on Monday 15th May 2023 for a committee meeting on 23rd May 2023. The same period of notice was provided for the March committee this year. In addition, the agenda reports are published on line 5 working days before the committee meets therefore recipients of letters would be able to access the report to determine why the application is being considered. Given that representatives were able to make arrangements to attend with the same timescales some 10 months before, it is difficult to see why differing timetables are required that are outside the timescales used by all the area planning committees.

3. *We have been advised that for various reasons members of the parish council were not able to attend the committee. It is for the parish to manage their representations and even if none of the council could attend, alternative arrangements including asking the divisional councillor or committee clerk to read out a statement could have been pursued.*

4. Area South did consult on revised plans which showed a revised mix of dwelling sizes. The consultation ran for 14 days expiring on 15th March. The consultation letter did indicate the nature of the revisions which did not alter the quantum of layout of the development overall. The revised submissions related to aligning the proposed mix of housing with housing needs evidence. It did not deal with the underlying objections from the community to the principle or level of development.

5. Separate to the applicant's decision to re-submit an application for 49 dwellings following refusal of their earlier scheme (with a revised access design to address that particular ground for refusal), the applicants also elected to submit an separate appeal to the Planning Inspectorate seeking a review of the merits of our decision to refuse the initial application. The Planning Inspectorate is entirely separate to the local authority and provides for independent decision making commensurate with the quasi-judicial nature of the planning decision making process. The appeal is at an advanced stage with final comments due with the Inspectorate by 24th January for the public. We are currently awaiting a date for the inspector to undertake a site visit after which they will issue their decision on the first application.

6. Some parties have indicated that they received multiple letters from Somerset Council which is a waste of resource. This issue arises where individuals have submitted multiple representations on an application, usually in response to amended plans being submitted. Where individuals alter their recorded contact details and or address details our IT is not able to pick up the underlying similarities difference in the overall submission (for example JA Smith John Smith Mr J Smith) given the number of comments we receive it is less costly to duplicate letters rather than have individuals checking all correspondence for duplication.

7. Whilst the May 2023 Area South meeting was held at 5:30pm, Area South was at that time the anomaly in terms of the timing for its meetings in this respect with the other area planning meetings taking place at 2pm. The Area South committee chair had been keen for later meetings to facilitate access for working individuals, however a local preference for later meetings was amended in order that all area planning committee meetings start at the same time which is now 2pm.

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My responses to the above statements:

(1) - I agree that the postal service and its current problems is not a direct planning problem. However, as this is the main method of providing information to interested parties it affects the recipients much more than planning or the developers. I take issue with John Hammond's assertion that **"Over the past year as Somerset Council, where we have notified the public of upcoming committee meetings, we have not to date seen any evidence that this timetable does not provide sufficient notice of the upcoming meeting. Generally, it would seem that the public are receiving notifications with sufficient time to make arrangements to attend committee if they so wish"**. I have emails from our Horton parish Clerk that have identified late arrival/non arrival of important planning documents dated from Mar 2023 onwards. Planning have deferred events and deadlines because of these problems. The issue is still current, and planning are aware. **"it would seem..."**. Is a weak argument to contradict our evidence.

(2) The notice period comparison used by Mr Hammond for this event is misleading. The 26th March 2024 is within a bank holiday week, a number of residents and councillors were booked on holidays during week beginning 25th March 2024. There are no such public holidays impacting on the 2023 planning event. Again, this has more impact on the residents and councillors than planning (who were not booked on holiday) – my question to balance this would be: would the planning meeting have gone ahead on 26th March 2024 if Messrs Hammond and Tryer were on holiday in that week?

(3) A combination of councillors (and residents) having public holiday pre organised travel/holiday plans, is again, not the planning department fault, but the increased likelihood of parents with children taking this week away, should have been part of common sense thinking when booking the meeting. Additionally, I (as chair of Horton Parish Council) had been taken to Musgrove hospital for an urgent kidney operation and was without access to phone, for the period running up to this meeting. At the same time, some councillors were under the impression that the number of dwellings had been reduced to 32 from the original 49 (see next item 4). A councillor did manage to get to the meeting, but no allowance was given to the circumstances for lack of attendance by myself, and he was not able to speak or

read out a statement. We did, however, respond to the application, within time and submitted this on 14th March 2024... this was never mentioned or read out at the planning meeting.

(4) The amended plans were covered by a letter from planning from Catherine Tryer dated 1st March, for most lay (i.e. not planning specialists) residents, this gave a firm impression that the total number of dwellings was reduced to 32. Catherine Tryer had to issue a further letter dated the 15th March to clarify the overall total was STILL 49. In an email to Cllr Sue Osborne and myself, dated 19th March she stated **"There was some slight confusion in a recent consultation letter which related to amendments to the mix of market housing units only, and not a decrease in the number of units (as it was not as clear as it could have been), with the amendments providing fewer 4-bed units and some 2-bed units. I don't feel anyone was prejudiced by the confusion* – as the description of development still referred to 49 dwellings and all the amended plans/information were available online"**. *This assertion is factually incorrect – as five days BEFORE this email, I have counted more than 7 instances that residents have committed comments to the application specifically noted that the total dwellings had be reduced to 32, two dated 15th March, three dated 14th March, two dated 13th March, and more earlier in the month. These are still visible on the 23/01649/ful planning application. (Named Horton residents entries and dates in the planning portal are: Jean Isaacson 15/3, Nicolas Reeves 15/3, Gillian Grafton 14/3, Carol Miller 14/3, Katie Wilson 14/3, Kevin Bell 13/3, Jane Wetherall 13/3 ...and there are more).

(5) If the 2020 application appeal is at a late stage, why continue to submit this almost identical application now? If the appeal is refused, what is the state of the current identical located application?

(6) I understand the rationale for sending multiple letters to the same address being a practical balance on cost. I am concerned that the letters original dates and the subsequent delivery dates were consistently a week later. At the point the perceived confusion was noted by planning and the fact that it was deemed serious enough to duplicate the time and cost to produce a clarification – Which was two weeks after the original letter, I would have expected the second letter would contain notification of an extension to the response period by at least a further two weeks, and the deferment of the application until May 2024. Again, planning ignoring the mistake and keeping to the original timeline disadvantages the residents and objectors, not planning and the developers.

(7) I dispute the statement that the legacy timing for SSDC planning meetings at 5:30pm was an anomaly. What research have planning got to show that SSDC meeting were less practical than the other districts. I was a SSDC councillor that sat on planning up to March 2023. I never felt that an early evening meeting was odd or difficult. To make all area meetings start at the same time does not benefit residents, it benefits developers and council officers, who can schedule it as a valid use of time. It does not benefit residents with full time jobs with other priorities ... teaching, nursing, commercial travelling etc. Surely, meetings that involve the attendance of somerset residents should be set to accommodate ability to attend. – Who made this decision for all planning meetings to be at 2PM, who was consulted and on what basis was it made?

In conclusion, although some items may appear academic, the two letters, their timing and arrival delays have enabled this application to proceed, in a way that has tipped the process to benefit the developer and deny the Parish and residents a valid opportunity to properly air their concerns.

For further information I have attached the two letters from planning dated the 1st and 15th of March. I have as a separate email, the full copy of John Hammond's response to the original queries, this seems to be the same reply to most of the residents objections to the planning date/time and outcome. Please advise if you wish me to send this to you.

I look forward to an even handed and objective review of this case.

Regards

Ray Buckler
Chair Horton Parish Council"

Appendix 3 - Proposal for improving pollination of gardens in Horton

For Horton Parish Meeting 9th May 2024

Introduction: Based on the draft that was supported by Horton PC last month, I have had various discussions with existing beekeepers, residents, and the beekeeping association.

This proposal will need to have both safeguards for the council, plus a clear matching financial commitment from applicants that wish to become beekeepers.

Proposal

There are three stages for the applications as follows:

1. When an application is received, first stage would be for them to visit or arrange a discussion with a nominated beekeeper locally to provide some info on intentions and hive location etc. The Beekeeper would then assess and approve the applicant for stage 2 (if applicable).
2. A SWSBKA (Southwest Somerset Beekeepers Association) membership form would then be completed and HPC would pay direct to the Beekeeping association the first-year registered membership for the applicant (which includes Insurance upto 3 Hives).
3. On or before the anniversary of the SWSBKA initial years membership the applicant can apply to the HPC for a grant for a hive. They will also need to purchase an appropriate Beesuit and equipment such as a hive tool, gloves, smoker etc. HPC would pay direct to the supplier the hive portion of the invoice up to £300 (inc VAT).

General T&C's

Maximum of 10 initial applications in the first year. Maximum of 5 applications in subsequent years. Applicants must be Horton parish residents. Approvals will also depend on "spacing" of applicants hives within the village as agreed with the beekeepers association. Horton PC will not be responsible for insurance or subsequent costs for beekeepers, grant is limited to initial membership and the cost of a single hive. HPC can close this offer anytime after the first year, plus would monitor any increase in prices for the grant items.

Additional limit is **one per household** as if differing names could request twice.

Hives to be ordered via the SWSBKA and HPC payments will be to the SWSBKA via invoice from SWSBKA.

If those whom have had hives purchased decide to stop beekeeping in the 2nd year then Hives to be offered back to SWSBKA for redistribution to other Beekeepers within the area. Additional private purchases such as Beesuit and equipment can be offered for sale or donated to SWSBKA.