**HOTHERSALL PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting on 4 December 2023 at Hillside School, Ribchester Road, Longridge

**Present**: – *Councillors* Bateman, Gale, Gee, Gornall, Pell, Soper, Upton,

*Borough Councillor* Brocklehurst*, Borough Councillor* Rogerson,

Residents - one

**1 Declarations of Interest:** None

**2 Public Participation:** None

**3 Welcome:** Councillor Bateman was welcomed to his first meeting, and duly signed the Declarations of Acceptance and Pecuniary Interest. (Placed on record).

**4 The Minutes of the meeting** on 20 September 2023 were confirmed and signed.

**5 Matters Arising:**

**5.1** *Replacement Bus Shelter*: Cllr Brocklehurst confirmed that there had been a firm indication that the work will be done, but no date yet identified. It was suggested that the resident who first raised the matter should have been contacted by now by LCC or RVBC to advise her when it was scheduled.

**5.2** *Speed Limits and other Traffic Issues***:** Various issues were revisited and identified as Matters of Serious concern; particularly the perennial problem of double parking on the main road near to Hillside School (Taxis). It was reported that there was some evidence gathering taking place, but no clear actions taken to date. There was particular worry about Hillside staff having been seen walking towards the school on the blind bend.

There was a view that this twice daily road obstruction was causing a serious traffic hazard. It was also felt that the School bore some responsibility to address the problem.

The other matter of serious concern included the long-standing problem of speeding traffic. Cllrs Pell and Upton were involved in a working group looking at the feasibility of reducing speed limits in villages to 20mph.

**5.3** *CCTV Proposal:* A paper was tabled at the meeting, outlining four options (and costs) for consideration. It was considered that Option 3 provided the best option, (installation of camera on existing lamppost) but there was a practical problem of placement. It was agreed that siting was a vital concern and positioning near the top of Hothersall Lane was given consideration. Cllr Pell to continue to explore this proposed amenity for the community.

**6 Financial Matters:**

6.1 *Bank A/C.* The current financial position was reported, as at the end of September, since then there had been no other drawings on the A/C = £2361.43

6.2 *Application for the 2024/2025 Precept* (payable on 1 April). This matter was considered and it was CONFIRMED that the amount to be applied for should remain the same; ie, £1400. (Authorised by Chair, and form duly delivered to RVBC).

6.3 *Funding Opportunities.* The several announcements of recent funding opportunities were reported to the meeting. One example of the Lancashire Environmental Fund was cited where funding was applied for (from Ribchester Parish) for EV charging and solar panel installation, but once it had been ‘awarded’ it was revealed that a payment of £2,200 was levied from the grant as a ‘third party contribution’; further the stated reduced rate of VAT was summarily withdrawn (by HM Government) hence the excellent project for a much improved public building resulted in severely reduced reserves. This is minuted as **an alert** to consider all aspects of funding currently being offered to Councils.

6.4 *Insurance Renewal consideration.* It was noted that the Annual Insurance would be payable in the early part of the next financial year. Given the recent history of increases (**2020** - £218; **2021** - £330; **2022** - £344; **2023** - £344) it was **recommended** that well in advance of the payment of the next premium, information should be obtained about the best/most economical Policy to be purchased for a small Parish Council with limited income and few, if any, insurable assets.

**7 Planning Applications:**

At the meeting there were no recent applications to be reported. There had been Agricultural Determinations formally notified but it was noted that no permissions are required for these.

**8 Village Matters:**

8.1 *Trees on Hothersall Lane*. Concerns were raised about trees along the Lane which were dead or dying (some appeared to be from Ash Dieback). It was identified that these could cause a problem in during storms this winter. Cllr Rogerson mentioned speaking to Harrisons about this projected problem. An informal suggestion was made that some money be found from grants awarded in this financial year (eg, Coronation funds) to replace such trees for the benefit of the local community/environment).

8.2 The Hothersall Lane Pothole. Cllr Bateman reported that United Utilities had finally attended to the leak causing problems on the Lane, however , he also confirmed that the road surface was not sufficiently well finished. The expectation being that it would continue to be a recurring problem.

 8.3 Dates of Future Meetings:

 Monday 2 September Parish Council Meeting

 Wednesday 4 December Parish Council Meeting

 Date To be Confirmed Annual Parish Assembly and AGM2023

SIGNED…………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

DATE………………………………………………………………………