

DRAFT

Minutes of Hopton Castle Parish Meeting 22nd January 2024 held at Bedstone & Hopton Castle Village Hall 7.00pm

Present: Jon Allen (JA - Chair), Duncan Price (DP - Clerk), Gill Allen, Charles Jackson, Ann Jackson, Elaine Dean and Jonathan Dean, Chris Gad, Steve Waterhouse, and Jack Chapman.

1. **Apologies:** Meadie Waterhouse, Jane Price, Katie Rollason, Neville Rollason, Jan and Gareth Jones, Steve Williams, John Williams.
2. **Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of 25th September 2023 were **agreed**
3. **Matters arising:**
 - a. **Stream retaining wall** – JA has written to the highways officer again to obtain confirmation that the repairs to the stream wall were in this year's budget as agreed. No response has yet been received. **Noted.**
 - b. **Community Energy Scheme.** JA had managed to contact the assessor training company to arrange the training but discovered they had run out of funding and so were no longer offering training. JA left his details in case they received more funding. **Noted.**
4. **Finance Report for the period to 31st December 2023** – DP noted there had been no transactions through the bank account since the last meeting, so the surplus remained at £386.00, of which £165.00 would be transferred to the defibrillator replacement fund. This was £701 above budget as the £500 for the kitchen refurbishment had not yet been made (see below), the defib training had not been arranged (and would probably be held over to next financial year), no claims had been made for meeting refreshments and we were still waiting for the web hosting charges. DP noted total reserves still stood at £2,423.67 including £825.00 for the defibrillator, which was 50% of the expected replacement cost.
5. **Precept and Budget for 2024/25** – DP reported that the meeting had to agree a precept for the coming year by the end of January. To maintain the precept at its current level of £668 would mean an average charge per household (based on a Band D residence) of £16.40 (compared with £16.76 last year). At the September meeting it had been agreed to provide £500 out of funds for the Bedstone village hall kitchen refurbishment, with a further £500 being provided for by increasing the precept for the coming year. This would have been a one-off average increase of £12.28 per household to a total of £28.68.

JA reported that the funding application by the village hall had been rejected so new funding sources were being investigated, and no further progress had been made to date. DP noted that the original £500 donation would not be passed across until the project was confirmed and the funds requested. Following a discussion, the meeting decided to reject the decision made in September and not increase the precept to reserve this amount.

There were no further suggestions for funding any other expenditure, so the precept was held at the same figure as last year. DP agreed to amend the budget for the decision above and circulate shortly. **DP to prepare the budget for circulation and the precept form for JA to sign and submit by the end of the month.**

6. **Castle Trust matters of interest** – postponed to the next meeting as Peter Marquis was absent.
7. **Defibrillator Rota and Training** – JA agreed to circulate the existing rota and given certain residents had left the village asked for volunteers to put their name forward. Given that no training had been arranged for this year it was agreed to set up a training session for later in 2024. **JA to circulate rota and arrange a training session.**
8. **Date of next meeting** – this was the annual meeting and was agreed as Monday 20th May.
9. **Any other urgent business:**
 - a. AJ reported that she had been successful in reporting potholes and action had been taken as a result. Everyone was encouraged to report holes in their area and up the lanes. **JA to circulate the website link.**
 - b. JC reported that the speed limit sign at the entrance to the village needed a new post. **JA to notify the highways officer.**
 - c. JA noted that he had decided to step down as Chairman at the annual meeting in May for personal reasons. Attendees were asked to consider whether they or anyone else might volunteer for the role.

The meeting concluded at 7.30pm

Signed.....22nd January 2024

Jon Allen