

Minutes of Hopton Castle Parish Meeting 20th May 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, Peter Marquis, Sue Williams and John Williams.

- 1) **Apologies:** Steve and Meadie Waterhouse, Jane Price, Katie Rollason, Neville Rollason, Jan and Gareth Jones and Jenny Marquis.
- 2) **Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of 22nd January 2024 were **agreed**
- 3) **Matters arising:**
 - a) **Stream retaining wall** – JA has finally had confirmation that contractors would be strimming the grass by the wall in May and the works to repair the wall would be completed by the end of October 2024. **Noted.**
 - b) Defibrillator training – JA noted that he had written to the training company asking for dates for running a training course. It was noted that there was interest from Clungunford in taking part (and sharing the cost) of a training event. **DP to follow up with Mary Balson**
- 4) **Chair's Annual Report**

JA ran through his report orally, noting that he and GA were looking to move away from the area and was therefore stepping down from the role of Chair. ED proposed a vote of thanks for the service JA had given to the parish in his role, and DP added thanks to GA for her role as Clerk and treasurer.
- 5) **Election of Chair**

DP proposed JW for the role of Chair and this was seconded by JD. JW was asked if he was willing to stand and he confirmed he would, providing there was support for managing the website. DP confirmed he would assist. **JW was duly elected.**
- 6) **Election of Vice-Chair**

Having been elected Chair, JW stood down from the position of Vice-Chair. Chris Gad was nominated by DP and seconded by PM. Having confirmed he would be willing to stand **CG was duly elected.**
- 7) **Finance Report for the period to 31st March 2024**

DP noted that the only receipts passing through the bank account for the year were the precept, agreed at the January meeting, of £668 and a 50% contribution to the defibrillator running costs from Bedstone. The net cost of the defibrillator was £162 and there had also been a charge for training and memberships of £120. The charge for the web hosting was still awaited and would go through the following year. There was therefore a surplus of £386.00, of which £165.00 would be transferred to the defibrillator replacement fund and £500 for the kitchen refurbishment. DP noted total reserves stood at £2,423.67 including £825.00 for the

defibrillator, which was 50% of the expected replacement cost, £500.00 for the contribution to the kitchen refurbishment and £1,098.67 in the General Fund.

Compared with the budget, this was an improvement of £701, primarily as a result of the expected further contribution to the kitchen fund of £500 being voted against at the January meeting, the postponement of the defibrillator training, delay on the web hosting invoice and charges for meeting refreshments not being claimed. **The accounts for the year were approved.**

8) **Budget for 2024/25**

DP reported that the budget had remained unchanged since the January meeting. The precept had been maintained at its current level of £668, but this would be voted on at the January 2025 meeting. Currently, the expected surplus would be £136.

9) **Annual Governance and Accountability Report**

DP explained that the AGAR was an annual requirement which needed to be completed and submitted by 30 June. The report was in 3 parts: a certificate of exemption, confirming we are a small parish meeting; an internal audit report on governance of the parish meeting, which had been carried out by PM; and the accounting statements which had been signed off by JA, as Chair. The report was agreed and approved and JW signed the documents as current Chair. **The report would be filed by JA and posted on the parish website for the required period.**

- 10) **Castle Trust matters of interest** – PM reported that a grant had been received from the community shop in Aston-on Clun to acquire some picnic benches for the grounds. PM also reported that the collection boxes at the castle had been vandalised. No money had been stolen but one of the boxes was destroyed and would need replacing at a cost of about £50 which was disappointing. It was noted that the pond was running dry again. PM remarked that it would be too expensive to obtain the required archaeological permission to make changes to the pond. JW suggested the silt might be dredged allowing better flow.

- 11) **Date of future meetings** – the meetings for the coming year were provisionally agreed as:

- Monday 9th September
- Monday 13th January
- Monday 19th May.

12) **Any other urgent business:**

- a) **Defibrillator Rota** – JA agreed to circulate the existing rota and given he and a number of other residents had left/would be leaving the village, asked for volunteers to put their name forward. **JA to circulate rota.**
- b) **Electricity** - JW agreed to keep chasing his contact for the installation of 3-phase electricity to the village. **JW to chase.**

The meeting concluded at 7.30pm

Signed.....20th May 2024