

**Horspath Stone Pit Charity**  
**Minutes of Trustees' Meeting – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 8.00pm**  
**held at Horspath Village Hall**

**Present:** Mrs B Oakley (Chairman), Mr D Burgess, Mrs P Cook, Mr P Dobson, Mr J Dobson, Mr P Ewart, Mrs C Riley, Mr M Timbs, Mrs H Kogel (Clerk). Mrs E Gillespie.

**Apologies:** Mrs J Dobson, Mrs J Horne, Mrs L Yendole, Mr T Bearder, Mr B Lowe.

**Absent:**

**Public:** 51

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were made on behalf of Mrs Dobson, Mrs Horne, Mrs Yendole, Mr Bearder and Mr Lowe.

Mrs Oakley stated that Mr Bearder and Mr Lowe are both Independent Advisors to HSPC. The support and approval of Independent Advisors is required if HPC submits a grant application to HSPC. Mr Bearder has not attended several meetings now and Mr Lowe is attending a fundraising event. Mrs Oakley stated that Mrs Gillespie is the other Independent Advisor and is always in attendance at the meetings. If Independent Advisors are not present at the HSPC meeting, it means that any grant applications from HPC cannot be considered and have to be deferred, which has happened on several occasions. Mrs Oakley proposed that HSPC appoint a further 2 volunteer Independent Advisors to avoid this situation in the future. Mr James Dobson stated that when we previously appointed Independent Advisors, it was based on nature of their posts, so if we are going through an application process we should ask the applicants what they will bring to the role of Independent Advisor and who they are speaking for. Mrs Oakley agreed to this suggestion. Mrs Oakley's proposal was seconded by Mrs Cook, In Favour – Unanimous.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST. - None.**

**3. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL.**

The Minutes of the Trustees Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022 were agreed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

**4. MATTERS ARISING. – None.**

**5. POSSIBILITY OF ISSUING FUEL GRANTS. – Sub-Committee to report.**

Mrs Oakley stated that there are many residents in the village that are not affiliated with any village organisations, and everybody in the village should benefit from HSPC. Mrs Oakley proposed that a fuel grant sub-committee is set up to look into the possibility of issuing a fuel grant to every household in the village. They will also look into how grants could and would be paid. Mr Peter Dobson stated that there is another letter that has been circulated to all Trustees, and asked if alternative suggestions could also be considered by the sub-committee. Mrs Oakley stated that the alternative suggestion is to reduce the Precept by using HSPC funds, which would reduce the council tax by around £20 per household. Mrs Oakley stated that HSPC has been advised by Mrs Hennessy that this would not be permitted by the Charity Commission. Mrs Oakley stated that she is looking at a grant of around £300 per household, which would mean that every household in the village would benefit. Mr James Dobson asked how the sub-committee will decide that it is for charitable purposes against the aims of the charity. Mrs Oakley stated that every household is facing huge increases in fuel costs at the moment, and this is one way of using HSPC money to benefit all residents in the village, not just specific causes. Mr James Dobson stated that the sub-committee will need to take legal advice so that we can demonstrate that it is

for charitable purposes. Mrs Oakley stated that the sub-committee can contact either Mrs Hennessy or Robert Taylor who carries out work for OALC or even contact the Charity Commission. Mrs Oakley's proposal was seconded by Mr Burgess, In Favour – 5, against – 1, Abstentions – 2.

Mrs Riley stated that it may be the case that HSPC is not able to go ahead with the fuel-grant, and if so, we can look into other options. Mrs Gillespie stated that the sub-committee need to look into the legalities of this grant and suggested that one of the Trustees who abstained from the vote should join the sub-committee.

A resident stated that it would be good to support residents in the village with a welfare grant if it is legal. Mrs Oakley stated that the sub-committee will seek advice to determine if such a grant would be legal. Mr Horsley stated that in his experience with HSPC, residents of Horspath do not like applying for charity and there are very few people that will apply for the grant, and those that have, have abused it. Mr Horsley stated that HSPC money should not be spent on individual households, it should be spent on capital infrastructure that reduces energy bills, such as 2 solar panels on every house in this village would reduce everybody's energy bills. Mrs Oakley stated that there are approximately 750 houses in the village.

A resident stated that solar panels are not allowed on listed buildings, so those residents would be excluded from the grant.

Mr Whitlock stated residents living on the mobile home site would also be excluded from the grant.

A resident stated that the grant is a good idea if it is legal, but there will be some households who will have a bigger need than others, and asked if there would be a way that if individual households didn't need the grant, could they pass it on to another household. Mrs Oakley stated that grants would not be means tested so this would need to be investigated.

Mrs Oakley proposed that the sub-committee members should be Mr Burgess, Mrs Cook and Mrs Riley as they are not on any other sub-committee. Seconded by Mr Ewart, In Favour – 7, Against – 1.

A resident asked if there will there be a discussion about the maximum amount for the grant. Mrs Oakley stated that the sub-committee will investigate the options and will bring recommendations back to all Trustees for further discussion. A resident asked how HSPC will consult with residents to gather information required to make the right decision. Mrs Oakley stated that it is likely that there will be a leaflet drop to residents, and she is aware that HSPC need to engage more with residents. Mr James Dobson asked if the sub-committee can report in form of a paper. Mrs Oakley stated that when the sub-committee have obtained all of the information, another meeting can be arranged. Mr Burgess stated that he is hopeful that more information will be available within a month, depending on how long it takes to obtain the legal information, and then an open meeting can be held.

Mr Horsley stated that it is a 50 year lease that started 8 years ago, and at the moment the rent is £250k a year. The rent review is in 2025, and Stagecoach have an option to pull out in 2028. Stagecoach looked at a site in Yarnton which they decided was unsuitable for their operations so they are going to carry on with the existing site. Mr Horsley stated that this is a £25 million pound contract, and the village needs to decide what they want to spend the money on.

## **6. DETAILS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND & GRANTS.**

Mrs Oakley stated that Mr James Dobson, Mr Peter Dobson and Mr Timbs were the instigators of the Infrastructure Fund, and invited one of them to explain the grants to residents of the village.

Mr Timbs stated that there seems to be lots of information and whispers in the village regarding the Infrastructure Fund. At the moment the grants available are, personal grants, organisation grants of £4500.00 per year and the Hardship Fund. The problem with the £4500.00 grants to organisations is that it doesn't allow organisations to do much. The sub-committee and most Trustees wanted a system to enable larger grants to be available such as Infrastructure grants to enable organisations to build something for the future. HSPC Trustees have to be seen to be Horspath Stone Pit Charity – Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022

independent from HPC, so HPC is classed as a village organisation. The Infrastructure Fund is to make grants available to all organisations and allow infrastructure improvements across the whole village. The village organisations that were chosen for the Infrastructure Fund, have land and have structures that they can either build or improve. Solar panels is something that has been encouraged within the application process. The Infrastructure Fund Phase 1 has been launched, which identifies the organisation, their structure, and can they manage a project of a high value. Stage 2 will be for the organisation to provide details of the amount of the grant that is required, and how they will engage with the community and what is the overall benefit.

A residents asked what organisations were invited to the Infrastructure Fund. Mr Timbs stated that the School, Nursery, Cricket Club, Cycle Speedway, Allotments Association, Church, Village Hall, Parochial Charity and HPC were all invited. Mr James Dobson stated that organisations that were invited were organisations who had an application in with HSPC within a certain period of time.

Mr Whitlock stated that he understands the School and the Church being invited, but how many people involved with organisations are actually residents. Is the Infrastructure Fund benefitting people from outside of the village by doing this, when the money is meant for Horspath residents. Mr Timbs stated that this is a fair concern and HSPC money is for the residents of the village, but there is an overall benefit to being in a village that has better infrastructure. Mr Timbs stated that Horspath is not big enough to maintain all of the facilities that we have in the village, so we want to make it better for people in the village. Mrs Gillespie stated that by having other children attend the School from outside the village is why the school exists, otherwise Horspath children would need to go to a school outside of the village. Mrs Oakley stated that some Horspath children have to attend a school outside of the village.

A resident stated that HSPC money is for the village and one of the organisations invited is the allotments. How many residents can actually get an allotment, the waiting list is probably years, so it is giving money to certain people, instead of to the village.

Mr Zarachy stated that HSPC should be spent in the village.

A School Governor from Horspath Primary School stated that 50% of pupils are Horspath residents and 50% are from outside, and without the 50% of children from outside of the village, the school is not viable and will not exist for the village. The infrastructure is very important to all residents and the more appealing the village is, the better. This argument could also be used for other organisations. Mrs Oakley stated that there are children in the village do have to attend another school as Horspath School is over-subscribed. Mr Peter Dobson stated that it could also be because children have siblings attending the school. Mrs Oakley stated that HSPC Charitable Aims state:- the beneficiaries are for charitable purposes for the general benefit of the inhabitants of the area of the ancient Parish of Horspath. Only residents living in, and organisations operating entirely within the Parish of Horspath may benefit from the income of the charity. Mrs Oakley stated that it probably does cover the village organisation, but these are not made up of solely Horspath residents and that is why she is proposing the fuel grants, so that all residents benefit.

Mrs Oakley stated that Mr James Dobson, Mr Peter Dobson and Mr Timbs all decided if the organisations who applied to the Infrastructure Fund were fit to spend up to £75,000, none of the other Trustees were involved in this process. (Mrs Oakley insisted that a disruptive resident to stop interrupting or she will be asked to leave the meeting).

Mr James Dobson stated that it is being represented that 3 Trustees have gone away and formed the Infrastructure Fund. On 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021 it was unanimously agreed to form the sub-committee. The sub-committee reported back to Trustees in August 2021 with their proposals and the proposals were agreed in a public forum at the September 2021 meeting. The preparation work was then carried out between September and January 2022, and Trustees agreed in January 2022 to launch the Infrastructure Fund to organisations. The responses from the organisations totalled 340 pages of text, there was a scoring criteria, and it wouldn't be a good use of time for 10 Trustees to review the text. There has to be trust with the sub-committee that was formed to deliver a scope of work. Mrs Oakley asked if it was ever suggested that instead of approaching Horspath Stone Pit Charity – Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022

certain organisations, that an open meeting be held with residents to see what they would like to see the money spent on. Mr James Dobson stated that all Trustees agreed with the Infrastructure Fund in June, but they could also have suggested another option. Mrs Oakley stated that not all Trustees agreed with it. Mrs Oakley is concerned that she has been contacted by residents who are extremely concerned with HSPC money being spent on the Infrastructure Fund that is not for the benefit of residents. Mr Peter Dobson stated that it is being put across that 3 Trustees have formed the Infrastructure Fund, when it was the majority of Trustees agreed to this proposal. Mrs Oakley agreed that it was the majority of Trustees.

Mr Goss asked about an expense listed on the Agenda for £1268.75 for a meeting that was held, and asked how this amount can be spent on one meeting. Mr Timbs stated that this cost was for a number of meetings with the Charity Law solicitor to set up the legal documentation around the Infrastructure Fund for organisations. Mr James Dobson stated that this cost is for a scope of work. Mrs Oakley stated that the invoice is for 7.25 hours.

Mr O'Brien stated that around 10 organisations have been hand-picked for the Infrastructure Fund, and an amount of £75,000 has been mentioned which is a huge amount of money, totalling over £500,000, who came up with this amount of money? Are 3 Trustees responsible for awarding over £500,000? If this money is given out, which is the village's money, how is this going to be scrutinised, example being is the Nursery linked to the School? Mr Peter Dobson stated that the Nursery is not linked to the School, it is private. Mr Timbs stated that the Nursery is a charity on the school site. Mr Timbs stated that up to £75,000 was set as a maximum figure available as a grant, with a possibility that the organisation could go over the £75,000 but this would be classed as a loan with HSPC. Mr Timbs stated that we haven't got to Stage 2 yet, so we don't yet know the amounts the each organisation will apply for. In terms of the process for applications, the sub-committee of 3 Trustees have assessed Stage 1 applications, but the final Stage 2 applications will be decided by all Trustees. All information about the Infrastructure Fund is available on the HSPC website.

Mr Zarechy stated that as he is not involved with any organisations, so how can he benefit from HSPC? Mr Zarechy stated that he wants a referendum in the village. Mr Underdown asked when the closing date is for Stage 1 applications. Mr Timbs stated that the closing date has now closed. Mr Underdown stated that the details of Infrastructure Fund is not common knowledge in the village. Mr Timbs stated that the organisations chosen for the Infrastructure Fund are charities or they have buildings within the village where there is an ability to do an infrastructure upgrade. Mr Timbs stated that an organisation has to have land or a building that will improve the infrastructure which is why private companies have not been invited to apply. Mr Timbs stated that the Infrastructure Fund is a 5 year Fund which takes into account the income over this period.

Mr Horsley stated that the Cricket Club is a private members club, with a subscription fee, with half of its members from outside the village, who competes with other local businesses, and asked how can they be offered a grant of £75,000. Mr Timbs stated that the Cricket Club are in control of a lot of land and things that can bring people into the village. Mr Peter Dobson stated that half of the members are residents of Horspath and they work well with the village and offer training for children.

A resident stated that based on the massive turnout this evening, Trustees must take on board comments from residents.

Mr O'Brien asked if Trustees know if the organisations even need the grant money. Mr Timbs stated that it is not about needing the money, we want organisations with land to do something for the village for the future.

Mr Coolman stated that it would benefit most residents in the village if improvements were made to the village hall.

Mr Brooks stated that Mr Timbs has said organisations with land, what land do the Cricket Club own, they don't. Mr Peter Dobson stated that the Cricket Club lease the land.

A resident stated that she would like to see more transparency about where HSPC money is spent as there is no information available. Residents have no idea where the money is being spent. There are lots of residents in the village that are not involved with any village organisations.

A resident stated that HSPC Minutes have to be displayed on the village noticeboard. Mrs Oakley stated that they are displayed after they have been approved. Mr Peter Dobson stated that HSPC do not have to be displayed on the noticeboard. Mr James Dobson stated that the points being raised are correct, and there have been several discussions over the past months/years around the reporting of HSPC and it has not moved forward. Mr James Dobson stated that he would support the formation of a sub-committee to produce a report for HSPC. Mr Horsley stated that the money is not being spent, it is sitting in Barclays bank. Mr Horsley recommended 3 years ago that HSPC money is invested, and he still recommends that this is done.

Mrs Riley stated that most organisations submit a grant for £4,500.00 every year and have done for around 10 years, so that will account for some of the money being spent. In addition to this, individual grants are awarded. Mr Underdown stated that £54,000 was awarded on grants last year. Mr Peter Dobson stated that HSPC has also contributed to the bus service over the years, with £16,915 contributed this year. Mr Peter Dobson stated that HSPC does not identify individual grants that are allocated. Mrs Oakley stated that grants of £100 are ring-fenced for Horspath children for school uniform, Yenworthy trip, swimming lessons. There is an additional grant of £100 available for pupils going to 6<sup>th</sup> form to use towards school transport costs. Receipts for all of these grants must be submitted to HSPC. A residents stated that these grants are an excellent idea but residents don't know anything about them. A resident commented that under correspondence on the Agenda there are thank you letters from two children related to a Trustee so they know about the grants, but how will you let other children know about the grants. Mrs Oakley stated that she liaises with the Headteacher about Yenworthy and School uniform grants and the Headteacher sends an email to the parents of the children who are eligible for the grants. Details of the swimming lesson and transport grants are advertised on the website, with posters and on the noticeboard. The resident stated that a village newsletter, an active FB page, a church magazine a few suggestions where the grants could be advertised.

A resident stated that she has lived in the village since 2007 and has never received an email from the school with regards to the grants.

Mrs Gillespie stated that there needs to be more accountability with grants. Mrs Gillespie stated that HSPC needs to do more long term projects to benefit the community, such as the village hall and the school. HSPC funds are increasing and it is time that Trustees listened to residents and develop it and look to invest the money properly.

Mr Brooks asked why grants are all discussed in secret. Mr Burgess stated that the Yenworthy and school uniform grants are automatically awarded. Mrs Oakley stated that for data protection reasons the details of grants are discussed in a closed meeting and the details kept confidential. Mrs Oakley stated that there is a section on the application form where the applicant is asked for their consent to the details of their application being made public, and suggested that it be changed so that all grants are discussed in an open meeting.

A resident stated that a grant of £75,000 is a lot of money to award and suggested that it should be limited to £20,000, and anything above that is put to the residents to make the decision. Mr Timbs stated that part of Phase 2 is about how organisations have engaged with the residents of the village and how they will benefit. Mr Timbs stated that with larger projects, £75,000 doesn't go very far. A resident stated that above a certain limit, it should be down to the residents of the village to decide if it is granted. Mrs Gillespie stated that Trustees are all voted on by residents to represent the village. The resident stated that they didn't vote for the Trustees. Mrs Oakley stated that the election will be held in May 2023.

Mr O'Brien asked about the income to HSPC. Mr Peter Dobson stated that it was previously £25,000 per quarter, but that has now increased to £62,500 per quarter. Mr O'Brien asked why after 10 years of income the money has not been invested. Mr James Dobson stated that the

reason for the Infrastructure Fund was to invest the money into the village and reduce the balance, as well as keep a reserve amount of approximately £100,000.

Mrs Woodcock stated that the lease ends in 2028 and then Stagecoach have the option of either vacating the property or buying it. Mr Peter Dobson stated that HSPC has re-negotiated from that contract as it was not good value. Mr Peter Dobson, Mr Horsley and Mr Harris carried out a lot of work to re-negotiate the lease with the support from HPC. Trustees are doing to the best of their ability trying to provide services to the village for the future.

Mr Timbs stated that there are two organisations did not apply for Phase 1 of the Infrastructure Fund, one of which was HPC and suggested that the cut-off date is extended to allow the two organisations to apply. Mrs Oakley stated that she chose not to apply as she didn't agree with giving grants of £75,000 to organisations. There are two projects that HPC has to pay for at the moment, one is to remove the chicane on Oxford Road and install an alternative traffic calming measure, and as previously approved by the Charity Commission, as this is solely for the benefit of the residents of Horspath this can be paid for by a grant from HSPC. The other project is improvements to the Burial Ground. Mr Underdown has carried out a lot of work on this project and will need funding after it has been discussed with residents. As the Burial Ground is solely for the residents of Horspath, this will also be acceptable to the Charity Commission for a grant to be awarded from HSPC. Mr Timbs stated that there are several projects that HPC could have applied to the Infrastructure Fund for, but if they don't apply they will lock themselves out of the Infrastructure Fund. Mrs Riley asked what will happen if the Infrastructure Fund doesn't go ahead, what will be built. Mr Timbs stated that HSPC is not a slush fund to HPC. A resident asked why the same people Councillors for HPC and Trustees to HSPC. Mr Peter Dobson stated that the village hall is a valuable asset to the village and renovation works could be carried out or work towards replacing it in the years to come.

Mr Coolman stated that HPC should be in charge of HSPC. As villagers the only thing we have control of is through HPC. Mrs Oakley stated that all Parish Councillors automatically become Trustees to HSPC. Mr Horsley stated that HPC is the Trustee of HSPC, not individual people. Mrs Oakley stated that morally she is not prepared to submit an application from HPC to the Infrastructure Fund and suggested that another HPC Councillor complete the application. Mr Timbs volunteered to complete the application, but for transparency reasons requires a vote to agree to extend the deadline for Phase 1 applications. Mr James Dobson asked if this will also apply to other organisations. Mr Timbs agreed that this will apply.

A resident asked about improvements to village hall, and asked what we expect to use it for as a lot of current users are being pushed out from using it due to the increase of prices. Mr Peter Dobson stated that it is one group that have stopped using the hall. Mr Peter Dobson agreed to speak with the resident after the meeting.

## 7. CORRESPONDENCE.

- a. Ms Oakley. – Thank you email and receipt. – **Mrs Oakley confirmed that £50.00 will be returned to the Clerk as the cost was less than expected.**
- b. Mrs Sims. – Receipt.
- c. Mr Roynon. – Receipts.
- d. Antonia & Evan Timbs – Thank you letter.
- e. Pamela Wyles. – Receipts.
- f. Mrs Twycross. – Thank you email.

## 8. PAYMENTS.

Payment Type	Paid To	Details	Total £
BACS	Mrs Hayley Kogel	Salary April, May, June 2022	170.50
		Additional hours for Hardship Fund x 8.5 hours	144.92

BACS	BHIB	Annual Trustees Insurance	112.00
BACS	HPC	Contingency amount for over flow car park grant	1500.00
BACS	Lemoneye	Final payment for new website	425.00
BACS	Tessa Hennessy	Meeting with James Dobson & Michael Timbs to discuss Infrastructure Fund. Responding to questions about bids from HPC. Preparing terms and conditions for grants Commenting on documents on HSPC website	1268.75
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£3621.17</b>

## 9. RECEIPTS.

Date	Received from	Details	Total £
4.4.22	Stagecoach	Quarterly rent	62,500.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£62,500.00</b>

**\*\*£62,500 due from Stagecoach in June 2022\*\*.**

**Bank Balance as of 21.6.22 - £480,645.85.**

### **HARDSHIP FUND GRANTS ISSUED.**

April 2022 - £235.00

May 2022 - £635.00

June 2022 - £635.00

## 10. AOB.

- a. Mrs Oakley asked members of the public, subject to seeking legal advice, who would be in favour of all future grant applications being considered in a public meeting. The majority of the public were in favour. Mr Horsley stated that if HSPC disclose the names of the applicants, people will not apply, so suggested that details of the grant are disclosed but not mention any names. A resident stated that if HSPC want to support residents who are struggling, it will put people off from applying if names are disclosed. A resident asked if residents can see a copy of HSPC's governing document and operating guidelines so they can understand HSPC. Mrs Gillespie stated that she is concerned with names being disclosed and suggested that applications should be numbered. Mrs Gillespie stated that it is evident that residents want the information published widely. Mr Brooks stated that HSPC belongs to the residents and they have every right to know who is having the money and what for. Mrs Oakley stated that an option would be to publish what the grant has been awarded for without disclosing names. Mrs Oakley will look into this further.
- b. Mr Burgess stated that a newsletter was published a month ago. A resident stated that the newsletter was from HPC and not HSPC, and either way more communication is needed from HSPC and suggested that a quarterly newsletter is circulated. Mr Burgess stated that HSPC is made up of volunteers. A resident stated that part of the responsibility of the role as Trustees is to communicate back to the public, all of which can be done electronically. Mr Burgess stated that there are a lot of senior citizens on the mobile home site that do not have access to the internet or smart phones.
- c. Mr Timbs asked if it was agreed to extend the deadline for Phase 1 applications. Mr Timbs proposed that the deadline is extended by 4 weeks for organisations to apply. Seconded by Mr James Dobson, In Favour – 6, Abstentions – 2.

**\*\*\*The meeting was closed to the public for grant applications to be considered\*\*\***

**11. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING**

Trustees considered 4 Organisation and 14 Individual grant applications.

**Individual Applications**

Thirteen of the individual applications were successful. One of the individual applications was not successful as it did not meet the criteria.

**Organisation Applications**

Two of the organisation grant applications were successful.

(Mr Timbs did not take part in voting on one application).

(Mrs Oakley did not take part in voting on one application).

Two of the organisation grant applications were deferred until the July meeting when two Independent Advisors are present.

Mrs Oakley stated that all successful applicants must provide receipts for grants awarded, or no further grants will be awarded.

**A total of £10,800 was awarded.**

Signed ..... Date.....