

Horspath Stone Pit Charity
Minutes of Trustees' Meeting – Tuesday 27th September 2022 at 8.00pm
held at Horspath Village Hall

Present: Mrs B Oakley (Chairman), Mr D Burgess, Mrs P Cook, Mr L Coolman, Mr P Ewart, Mr B Igoe, Mr P O'Brien, Mrs C Riley, Mr M Timbs, Mrs H Kogel (Clerk). Mr B Lowe.

Apologies: Mr I Harris
Absent: Mr T Bearder, Mrs Gillespie
Public: 23

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were made on behalf of Mr Harris. Mr Bearder was absent from the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

Mr Lowe declared an interest in two of the organisation grant applications.
Mr Ewart declared an interest on one of the organisation grant applications.
Mrs Oakley declared an interest in one of the organisation grant applications.
Mr Timbs declared an interest in two of the individual grant applications.

3. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL.

The Minutes of the Trustees Meeting held on 28th June 2022 were agreed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

The Minutes of the Trustees Meeting held on 5th July 2022 were agreed and signed as correct by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING. – None.

5. INDEPENDENT ADVISOR VACANCIES.

Mrs Oakley stated that 7 applications have been received for the two current vacancies, but unfortunately 2 of the applicants are not able to attend the meeting. Independent Advisors are not entitled to take part in voting, but when a grant application is received from HPC, it will need the support of the Independent Advisors. Mrs Oakley read out the applications from Mrs Legg and Mrs Jane Dobson, both of who are not able to attend the meeting for personal reasons. Mrs Oakley invited all others to give a short presentation.

Mrs Alice Copping, Mrs Hilary Franklin, Mr Bob Hamlet, Mrs Shirley Woodcock and Mr Horsley all gave a short presentation.

Mrs Oakley thanked all applicants and stated that a decision will be made in the closed part of the meeting, and the Clerk will inform applicants tomorrow to let them know if they are successful.

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

Mr Burgess stated that with the recent increase in fuel prices it would be a good idea if HSPC was able to give around £300.00 per household to people that need it. There are approximately 600 households in the village, but not all households would apply. The cost is expected to be between £200,000 - £250,000 in total. Mr Burgess has consulted with the Charity Law Solicitor who has stated that HSPC can only distribute it for such charitable purposes for the general benefit of the inhabitants of the area of the ancient parish of Horspath, as the Trustees think fit. This gives legal permission for HSPC to distribute a grant to all households which would have to be done on a claim basis. Mr Burgess stated that if this goes ahead, he would need assistance in dealing with the claims.

Mr Horsley stated that HSPC needs to appoint a Manager of HSPC to work alongside the Clerk to deal with all matters and manage the money, and suggested that an advert is displayed. Mr Horsley also stated that HSPC money should be invested as it has sat in the account for six years. Mr Horsley had a meeting four years ago with Mr Burgess, Mr Peter Dobson, and Mr James Dobson and they discussed how the money was going to be invested, but nothing has been done. Mr Burgess stated that investing HSPC funds is an Agenda item this evening.

Mr Timbs stated that as it is for charitable purposes, he is all for it and it is part of the Hardship Fund, but Mrs Hennessy stated in her letter that by using the charity funds in this way to give a payment to everyone regardless of need, risks further regulatory action by the Commission, so he is not sure how Mr Burgess has taken this as giving permission. Mr Burgess stated that this is not part of the Hardship Fund, it is a fuel grant. Mrs Oakley stated that the Government are issuing fuel grants to everyone regardless of need, and the only people not benefitting are people who use Calor gas. Residents at Berkeley Homes and possibly Prospect Park all use Calor gas so will not benefit from the Government grant, so if HSPC can find a way to issue a fuel grant to residents in the village, we should do it. Mr Burgess stated that Mrs Hennessy's advice is sometimes conflicting. Mr Timbs stated that there is a difference between the general benefit of the residents of Horspath and giving all households a grant of £300.00 regardless of their income. Mrs Oakley stated that the proposal is for people to be informed that a grant of £300.00 is available if they need it. Mrs Oakley stated that some people will not need the grant and will not apply, but some people particularly the elderly will apply, and they are the people that HSPC should help. Mr Burgess read through the proposed application form which gives three options as to why residents are applying for the grant.

Mr O'Brien stated that this year is unprecedented times with the increase in fuel costs, and he would rather 100% of residents have a grant of £300.00 if 80 of residents were under hardship rather than nothing at all. Any residents who don't want the grant could return it. Mr O'Brien stated that Mrs Hennessy should be contacted as soon as possible, and if she doesn't respond quickly we should look for another Solicitor to assist us, and then obtain the qualification and agreement before it is taken any further. Mr Igoe asked if Mrs Hennessy is fully conversant with charity law. Mr Burgess stated that she is a Charity Law Solicitor, but sometimes she contradicts her advice, and it would be beneficial to seek further advice from another independent Charity Law Solicitor.

Mrs Copping asked how HSPC will ensure that residents that need the grant will actually apply for the grant, and how will the admin of processing 300 - 400 payments be managed, and to ensure that the security is in place for the bank information that will be held. Mr Ewart proposed that Mr Robert Taylor, Charity Law Solicitor is contacted for advice, Seconded by Mr Coolman, In Favour – 8, Against – 1. Mr Lowe, Independent Advisor supported the proposal. Mr Horsley asked why one of the Trustees has just voted against a perfectly legal proposal. Mrs Oakley stated that is his own prerogative. Mr Timbs stated that he will talk with Mr Horsley after the meeting.

7. DETAILS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND.

Mr Timbs has recently given a presentation on the Infrastructure Fund and is willing to answer any questions. Mr Timbs stated that a Stage 2 application has been received from Horspath Primary School for a grant for an all-weather multi-sports pitch which needs to be voted on tonight. Mrs Oakley stated that Trustees will not be considering any Stage 2 applications this evening, as it is not an Agenda item. Mr Timbs stated that all Trustees have seen the application, so on what grounds can it not be considered this evening. Mrs Oakley confirmed again that Stage 2 applications are not on the Agenda, therefore this application cannot be considered. Mrs Oakley informed members of the public that the Infrastructure Fund was instigated by Mr Timbs, Mr James Dobson and Mr Peter Dobson. Mr Timbs stated that the Infrastructure Fund was approved last year, and he doesn't see why Mrs Oakley would stop an organisation from accessing the grant. Mr Coolman stated that a lot of new Councillors were not present when the Infrastructure Horspath Stone Pit Charity – Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2022

Fund was voted in, and he considers it to be so flawed. Mrs Oakley stated that Horspath Primary School has only ever had one grant, which was at the start of the pandemic in 2020, when they requested a grant from HSPC to cover the cost of a teacher for one year, five days a week at a cost of £33,800.00. At that time Mr Peter Dobson proposed the grant which was supported by the majority to approve the grant under special circumstances. At the September 2020 HSPC meeting, Mrs Oakley pointed out that the teacher was only employed for three days a week, so some of the grant awarded, approximately £9,923.84 should have been returned to HSPC. Mr Peter Dobson stated that there were unforeseen costs so there would not be any refund, which was accepted by Trustees. Mrs Oakley stated that at the time the Headteacher of Horspath Primary School was made aware that this is a one off grant for the School, which was accepted by the Charity Commission due to the pandemic. Mrs Oakley stated most village organisations apart from HPC and Horspath Hub had applied for Stage 1 of the Infrastructure Fund. Trustees were told that when organisations had applied for Stage 1, all Trustees would receive the details of the applicants, but this has not happened. The only organisation that had plans to progress a project was the Church, but since announcing the Infrastructure Fund, most organisations applied. Mr Timbs stated that both Horspath School and Horspath Nursery also had plans for projects. Mr Timbs stated that there is a lack of understanding with Phase 1 & 2 of the Infrastructure Fund. Mr Timbs stated that the point of the Infrastructure Fund was that something could be built with the money that would last rather than awarding small grants. The other reason was that the only organisation that could apply for larger scale funding was HPC, so the point of the Infrastructure Fund was to allow all organisations to apply for larger scale funding. Mrs Oakley stated that in the criteria it states that the organisations must own the land. Mr Timbs stated that the criteria was that the organisation must have land. Emily, Chair of Governors for Horspath School stated that an all-weather sports pitch has been an aspiration of the School for a number of years. Mrs Oakley stated that it is well known that she is against the Infrastructure Fund that will allow organisations to take so much of the money from HSPC, and if the grant is for more than £75,000, the additional amount will be on a low cost loan. Mrs Oakley stated that HSPC funds need to be used for the benefit of Horspath residents.

Mr O'Brien stated that the Phase 2 application for Horspath School was not received until 22nd September 2022 and it did not include any quotations etc, when they were asked by Mr James Dobson asked them to submit their application by 1st September 2022. The quotations to support the Phase 2 application have only just been received today so there is no time for Trustees to scrutinise the application. Mr Timbs stated that there is no need to scrutinise the application as the sub-committee members knew that the School has governance and the money would be well spent. Mr O'Brien stated that organisations should scrutinise any quotations received before applying for a grant and in this instance the PTA should have scrutinised the quotation.

Mr O'Brien stated two meetings ago that in his opinion the Infrastructure Fund was totally flawed. If you invite someone to apply for £75,000 they are not likely to apply for £25,000. Mr O'Brien stated that Mr Timbs is insisting that we vote on the Phase 2 application tonight for up to £75,000 but they are actually applying for £99,000. Mrs Cook asked how much money the School has raised by fundraising to go towards this project. Mr Timbs was not aware of this information. Mrs Oakley stated that the School have not carried out any fundraising recently. Mr Coolman stated that he has read all of the information provided on the Infrastructure Fund, and it states that the assessments will be undertaken by HSPC sub-committee members. Mr Coolman asked Mr Timbs why he gets to make the decision on what applications go forward. Mr Timbs stated that this is for Phase 1 only. Mr Coolman asked why Mr Timbs thinks he has the authority to do that. Mrs Oakley stated that the decision should have been made by all Trustees. Mrs Oakley stated that Mr Timbs has previously stated that he has an interest as he is involved with the School. Mr Timbs stated that he is on the PTA for the School. Mrs Oakley stated that there are so many anomalies that could be raised when the Trustees making the decision are involved with the organisations that have applied. Mr Timbs stated that conflict of interest forms have been completed by Mr Timbs, Mr James Dobson and Mr Peter Dobson.

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Mr O'Brien stated that if Mr Timbs is on the PTA for the School, there is a conflict of interest so he should not be discussing this matter. Mr O'Brien stated that the School and the PTA together have already been awarded £65,000 over the years from HSPC, and this is not right and things need to change. Mrs Oakley stated that the School had the grant for £33,800 and the PTA have received £4,500 every year for 7 years. Mr Coolman stated that if you include the Nursery in these grants, it totals £105,000. Mr Timbs stated that all organisations have received £4,500 every year. Mrs Oakley stated that not all organisation have applied for the full amount every year. Mrs Oakley stated that an all-weather sports pitch would be good for the village, but it needs to be sited on the Recreation ground so all residents can use it. Mr Timbs stated that the Infrastructure Fund is the best thing for this village. Mrs Oakley stated that the money will be used with the backing and support of the residents of Horspath, with surveys carried out to obtain public opinion.

Mrs Oakley proposed that the Infrastructure Fund is totally cancelled. Seconded by Mrs Cook. In Favour – 8, Against – 1.

8. INVESTING HSPC FUNDS. – Mr Burgess.

Mr Burgess has been suggesting over the last two years that HSPC should look to invest some of the funds currently held but our options are limited as the Governing Scheme states that money can be held in a bank account but cannot be invested in stocks and shares without prior permission from the Charity Commission. Mr Burgess stated that there is a platform called Greystone which is where you put the money to earn interest and distribute it between bank accounts for an amount of time. Some of the accounts are offering 3.9% interest. Mrs Oakley stated that the Government will only guarantee a maximum of £80,000 if the bank should fail, so it would be safer to distribute it between different bank accounts. Mr Horsley asked where it says in the Governing Scheme that HSPC cannot invest in stocks and shares. Mr Burgess stated that the Governing Scheme has changed a lot, and it is Charity Commission rules. Councillors agreed that HSPC discuss this matter further in a closed finance meeting.

9. APPROVAL OF AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2021/22.

The Clerk reported that due to the way the accounting is done for the provision of the Infrastructure Fund, the accounts have not been received back from the accountant. It was agreed that the Clerk will notify the accountant that the Infrastructure Fund has been cancelled and the accounts can be prepared in the normal way.

10. CORRESPONDENCE.

- a. Horspath Cricket Club. – Thank you email & receipt.
- b. Horspath PTA. – Thank you email & part receipt.
- c. Mrs Ray. – Thank you email & receipt.

11. PAYMENTS.

Payment Type	Paid To	Details	Total £
BACS	Mrs Hayley Kogel	Salary July, August, Sept 2022	170.50
		2 x additional hours for Hardship Fund	34.10
BACS	Tessa Hennessy	Legal advice on Fuel Grants	262.50
		TOTAL	467.10

12. RECEIPTS.

Date	Received from	Details	Total £
27.6.22	Stagecoach	Quarterly rent	62,500.00
5.7.22	Mrs Oakley	Return of un-used grant	50.00

		TOTAL	£62,500.00
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****£62,500 due from Stagecoach in September 2022**.**

Bank Balance as of 20.9.22 - £533,426.18.

HARDSHIP FUND GRANTS ISSUED.

July 2022 - £710.50

August 2022 - £165.00

September 2022 – Nil

The Clerk reported that there are some outstanding referrals to be actioned for the Hardship Fund, but this cannot be done until the new debit card has been received. Mrs Oakley stated that Mr Peter Dobson was the card holder previously but since his resignation the card has been cancelled and a new card has been ordered.

13. AOB.

- a. Mr Timbs commented that the events of tonight will grate with the Charity Commission.
- b. Mr Zarechy asked if the Church will still receive their grant. Mrs Oakley stated that the future of grants needs to be discussed. Mrs Oakley stated that the Church is the only organisation that has carried out fundraising for many years.
- b. Mr Horsley stated that he supports grants going to the School but it is illegal for HSPC to give money directly to the School, it has to go to the PTA.
- c. Mr Brooks stated that HSPC money is for the benefit of the residents of Horspath, therefore, an all-weather sports pitch should be on the recreation ground for all residents to use, and not located in the School. Mr Timbs stated that having a School in the village is a massive benefit for the village. Mrs Cook stated that her children all went to the village school and played sports on the grass.
- d. Mrs Elias stated that if the School had an all-weather sports field on site, it would also benefit the Nursery and it could be open to the community in the evenings and weekends for everyone. Mrs Oakley stated that it is unlikely that the School will leave the School gates open when the School is closed. Mrs Elias stated that it could be for the whole community. Mrs Oakley stated that the Infrastructure Fund is cancelled but the two organisations that have submitted a Phase 2 application, the School and the Church, so these will be considered, but not for a value of £75,000. Mrs Oakley stated that the School do not hold any fundraising events. Mrs Elias stated that she cannot comment on the PTA and fundraising. The only organisations to fundraise are the Church and the Hub. Mr Burgess stated that the reason that there is a lot of anti Infrastructure Fund is because it has been carried out by the sub-committee without full information being provided to all Trustees.
- e. A resident asked how the new committee will vote on future applications. Mrs Oakley stated all decisions will be made by the full committee, there will no longer be any sub-committees.

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

14. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING

Trustees considered 9 Organisation and 8 Individual grant applications.

Individual Applications

7 of the individual applications were successful.

1 of the individual applications was not successful as a receipt for a previous grant has not been provided.

(Mr Timbs did not take part in voting on 2 applications).

Organisation Applications

4 of the organisation grant applications were successful.

(Mr Lowe did not take part in voting on 2 of the applications).

(Mrs Oakley did not take part in voting on 1 application).

2 of the applications have been deferred until the October meeting when 2 independent advisors are present. (Mr Lowe, Independent Advisor, confirmed that he supports both applications).

2 of the applications have been deferred until quotations have been received.

1 of the applications has been deferred as a receipt for a previous grant has not been provided.

A total of £8,745.00 was awarded.

It was agreed that the Clerk will write to three organisations to request that previous grants are returned to HSPC as they have failed to provide a receipt within the set timeframe.

15. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT ADVISORS.

Mrs Oakley asked each Trustee to vote on their two preferred applicants. The two applicants with the majority votes were, Mr Bob Hamlet and Mrs Hilary Franklin. The Clerk will inform both successful applicants.

Signed Date.....