

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2013 AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr R Sawtell in the Chair, Cllrs G Thomas, D Heaton, R Porter, L Leonard and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the public was in attendance until the end Item 3.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr S Wyles, Cllr T Stanbridge and Borough Cllr J Wilson.

2. **COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS**

2.1 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no councillor declarations.

2.2 **Dispensations**

There were no requests for dispensations.

3. **CHRIS WHEAL, KENT FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

This item took place during an adjournment of the preceding Planning Meeting, to allow Mr Wheal to leave at a reasonable time. It is documented in these minutes as it was a listed agenda item for this meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Wheal to the meeting, to speak about rural fire safety.

Mr Wheal is a volunteer with the Community Safety Unit of Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS), with particular involvement in rural fire safety.

Rural fire safety – Mr Wheal can do talks and demonstrations with any groups who request them. He can also provide free home safety visits for anyone over 60 years of age, those with young children or vulnerable persons. Members highlighted the five almshouses in Hunton which have single occupants who have not been visited by KFRS for some time. Mr Wheal agreed to liaise with the Clerk on this.

Mr Wheal stressed that prevention is important to ensure there is no fire in the first place as response times are slower in rural than urban areas. Houses in rural areas are usually larger and older and the population is also often older.

Fire hydrants – as fires in rural areas could be larger, extra water could be required, so the fire hydrants are a necessity. In urban areas, fire hydrants are situated every 50m, but in rural areas the hydrants are very scattered. KFRS is trying to engage with communities to ‘keep an eye’ on the hydrants. The hydrants are identified by a black H on a yellow post and a yellow H on the road. Hydrants will usually be on the verge and vehicles can run over them. KFRS does inspect the hydrants once or twice a year, but a hydrant could be damaged the day after an inspection takes place, which is why community help is necessary – just as simple as a dog walker being aware of the hydrants while out for a walk. Mr Wheal has inspected the 20 hydrants in Hunton, which are generally in good condition, although there are some problems which will be dealt with by KFRS.

Open water resources – it is useful for KFRS to be aware of open water resources in the area in the event of a fire. Open water resources include swimming pools, ponds and streams. If any local knowledge can be supplied to KFRS it would be very helpful.

After some discussion, the Chairman thanked Mr Wheal for his very informative presentation.

4. ANNUAL REVIEW OF INSURANCE

The insurance renewal has been received from Aviva (through Came & Co) from 1st October 2013 to 30th September 2014, at a cost of £1,958.43, compared to last year's premium of £1,977.99. This is the final year of the three year long term agreement in place between the Parish Council and Aviva. Cheque 1131 was completed for £1,958.43 and signed by Cllr Sawtell and Cllr Heaton.

Came & Co has offered to reduce the renewal premium by 5% to £1,861.51 in return for the Parish Council entering into another long term agreement to 30th September 2016. The Clerk had received a very competitive quotation from Zurich, so Members agreed not to enter into another long term agreement at this time.

There being no further planning matters to be discussed, the meeting closed at 9:50pm.