

**Minutes of the Amport Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 19th May 2025, 7.30pm at
Monxton & Amport Village Hall**

Present: Cllr C Harris – Chairman, Cllr S Coke-Vice Chairman, Cllr A Montagu, Cllr Mrs S Baker & Cllr Mrs T Hawkings-Byass,

Also present

Heather Bourner – Parish Clerk

TVBC Susanne Hasselmann

Janet Wright-Pillhill Brook Association

0 Members of the public

Apologies

1) Apologies for absence had been received from HCC Chris Donnelly, TVBC M Flood, Cllr H Dix, Cllr Mrs D Stephenson, Cllr P Harvey & Cllr Mrs C Hemmings.

Election of Chairman

2) Cllr Coke nominated Cllr Harris to be Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was seconded by Cllr Baker. All Agreed. Cllr Harris signed an acceptance of office form.

Election of Vice Chairman

3) Cllr Harris nominated Cllr Coke to be Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was seconded by Cllr Baker. All Agreed. Cllr Coke signed an acceptance of office form.

Janet Wright-Pillhill Brook Association-speaker

4) Janet Wright gave an interesting presentation on the Pillhill Brook association. Membership of the community interest group has increased substantially in the two years since the group was formed. The group carry out water testing on local chalk streams and in general the reports showed the streams are in a good state of health. That said, the group would like the water conditions to be outstanding but some work is still required to reach that point and such things as the weather conditions do have an impact on this. All the data can be seen on the Pillhill Brook Association website and a copy of the full report can also be seen on the Parish Council website.

Annual Chairmans Report

5) See report at appendix 1.

Public Participation

6) There were no members of the public present.

Review and agree Standing orders, financial regulations & Code of Conduct

7) These were all based on NALC model documents and the Clerk confirmed there had been no amendments in the past twelve months. All documents can be viewed on the Parish Council website. Cllr Coke proposed all documents were re adopted for 2025-26. This was seconded by Cllr Montagu. All agreed.

8) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in matters on the agenda. All Councillors confirmed that no changes to Register of Interest forms were required.

9) Minutes of previous meetings & matters arising

Resolved: The minutes of the meetings held on 14th April were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed Cllr Coke seconded Cllr Hawkings-Byass. All in favour.

10) Specific reports

Principle & Process-Cllr Coke had nothing to report.

Devolution- Cllr Harris -see report at appendix 1

The Fen & Green- Cllr Harris confirmed that the reseeding work to repair the goal mouths has been successful and some repairs have been carried out to benches. The verge along side the road is due to be

cut back soon by the grass maintenance contractor. Repairs required to the bridge hand rails are being reviewed.

Finally, he confirmed there are two private bookings of the Village Green for private functions over the summer. Cllr Baker has a set of keys for the electricity supply and will hand these to the hirers. Cllr Harris will confirm the rates to charge for electricity and water use.

Play Area -Cllr Harvey was not present but had confirmed by email that there were no problems with equipment at the play area. The Clerk confirmed the reports from the annual review of equipment had recently been received.

The school had not moved the goal posts as agreed and concerns were that further erosion would occur. It was agreed that the quote from Greenflints would be accepted and they will be asked to carry out the work. Cllr Hawkings-Byass to action.

Weyhill- Cllr Hemmings had sent her apologies.

Footpaths- Cllr Hawkings-Byass reported the footpaths have all been cut recently. The footpath from the church was discussed and Cllr Baker agreed to speak to the new owners of the adjoining field and suggest they speak to a HCC footpaths officer before erecting a fence

Communications – Cllr Hawkings-Byass will be drafting the next newsletter soon and would like articles to include. The Parish Council intend to have a stall at the village fete and will need a new gazebo. Cllr Hawkings-Byass will research costs to present to the Parish Council at the next meeting.

Projects- Cllr Harvey was not present.

Neighbourhood Plan– Cllr Stephenson was not present but had confirmed by email the draft plan is now with TVBC for review before an examiner is asked to proceed with their formal review. In due course a formal referendum will be required.

Highways- Cllr Harris highlighted an area on Wiremead Lane where repairs required had only been partially completed. He has reported this to HCC and the return of the work force to complete this is awaited. There have been some confusing reports about road closures in Weyhill which suggested that the whole of Fyfield Road would be closed which created concerns given the businesses at the Mayfield Industrial estate, some of which used large HGV lorries. Despite the notice no road closures had appeared. (It was later confirmed the closure was to Fairways Estate which is off Fyfield Road.)

Southern Water -Cllr Harris confirmed the Pan Parish Forum have a meeting on Wednesday 21st May with Southern Water to hear about capital works for the next year and any remedial works still required in local parishes.

Resilience Plan- Cllr Waller was not present.

School Liaison-Cllr Baker confirmed the issue with cars parking inappropriately at drop off and pick up time was being reviewed by the school who will be asking a local PCSO to visit. The school sports day will be held on 12th June on the Village Green or 16th if the weather is inclement

11) Dog Mess Issue

Cllr Harris reported he had been approached by two parishioners about the perennial problem of dog mess in particular the footpath behind the Hawk Inn and the path near Waterloo Cottage. Cllr Baker will ask the school if some children could draw posters reminding dog owners to clear up. These would be laminated and erected in the worst areas. If the matter does not improve the Parish Council will research how taking more formal action is possible.

Clerks report

12) The Clerk reported as follows-

She has confirmed Hampshire Highways have sent an invoice for the work required to fit the new posts for the speed awareness signs. Presumably work will be scheduled once they receive payment.

The licence required between Hampshire County Council and Amport Parish Council for the erection of the signs has now been signed.

The Clerk confirmed she had spoken to Hugo Fox and as a consequence they were now proceeding with the Amport Parish Council application for a .gov email service

Finally, she confirmed the VAT claim for 24/25 had been submitted.

Finance

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i) To note the bank balances as at 09/05/2025

Lloyds savings £21812.14

Lloyds current £11759.31

ii) To approve the following payments and authorise online transactions: -

H Bourner salary	£491.60
HMRC	£152.41
H Bourner exp.	£19.70
H Bourner add hours	£92.16
Kinex (DD)	£19.70
Ray Welch	£270.00
Zurich Insurance	£796.42
HCC street lights	£128.31
Taits printers	£100.00
Web site	£11.99
HALC	£526.00
HCC re speed sign posts	£1025.50
Eclipse pest control	£85.00
Monxton & Amport V Hall	£30.00
Playsafety Ltd	£120.00

iii) To approve end of year accounts and audit return

Cllr Coke had reviewed the year end accounts and audit papers and proposed these were agreed this was seconded by Cllr Harris. Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025 were discussed and agreed. The Audit return was reviewed. Section 1 was reviewed and agreed followed by section 2 which was also reviewed and agreed, both were signed by the Chairman. The internal audit will take place on 20th May. The Parish Council also agreed it had no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP and it was agreed Cllr Harris should sign the necessary form.

Dates for public rights to review the financial records were agreed as 3rd June to 14th July.

Borough & County Councillor Reports.

14) HCC Chris Donnelly had sent apologies.

TVBC S Hasselmann referred to her recent report in particular the energy efficiency strategy for historic housing and also a survey regarding sports facilities.

15) Planning

The following decisions by TVBC were noted:

25/00487/FULLN-replacement paths & drainage-1 Mount Pleasant -withdrawn

25/00502/FULLN-replace annex with conservatory, Waterloo Cottage-permission

25/00188/TREEN-tree works, Lady's Walk, Wiremead Lane-no objection

25/00686/TREEN tree work, Bramley's, Monxton Road-no objection

Reviewed between meetings:

None

Resolved: that the planning advisory committee's approval on the following applications were endorsed:

None

Solar Farm- Cllr Montagu reported the long outstanding decision on the solar farm had now been reached and permission has been granted.

Amport House- concerns have been raised by parishioners about the deteriorating Grade 2 listed building and if this should be reported to the conservation officer at TVBC. Cllr Harris will speak to the current owners and let them know of the issue.

Correspondence

16) None

New Items for next agenda

17) None at present.

Community News

18) Amport and Monxton Village fete will be held on 5th July 2025.

Date of next meeting

19) The next meeting will be on Monday 16th June 2025, 7.30pm at **Monxton & Amport Village Hall**

Appendix 1

CHAIR ANNUAL REVIEW – by Chris Harris - May 2025

I am Chris Harris, chair of Amport Parish Council, or APC, and this is a brief review of APC's activities over the past 12 months.

This Parish is quite a large rural parish for this part of Hampshire. Hopefully, the PC, made up of volunteers and not party political, represents the whole Parish as the first tier of local government here. Every parishioner is encouraged to tell us if the PC misses something that needs attention.

We are operating against the backdrop of likely significant changes (that are still being discussed and formulated) in the structure of local government in England, following on from the last general election in July 2024. The proposal locally is to devolve more powers away from central government to a new Hampshire-based mayor. And it is also proposed that there should be unitary authorities, meaning there will be mergers of the existing district councils (including TVBC) across Hampshire. HCC will be abolished. Some of the proposals we have seen are sensible. We feel that others have not been discussed sufficiently or widely enough. The fear is that the proposed local government reorganisation will achieve little benefit for the community.

There is also some discussion of giving more powers (or responsibilities) to parish councils. This is superficially attractive to us, depending on what we are asked to do and with what resources. This is again a complex issue which should not be rushed. As has been pointed out by our HCC councillor, Councillor Donnelly, parish councils across Hampshire differ in size and capability, and it would be an error to put all parish councils into the same box. In short, watch this space for what parish council changes will mean for this parish.

Our existing Borough Council also faces significant pressure from central government to produce more sites for development through the planning process – roughly a doubling of the “quota”. TVBC is heavily involved in fighting our corner realistically to manage proposals for development. The proposals do not take properly into account issues such as local infrastructure and resources, or the lack of. The efforts also involve considerable expenditure, when there is not enough public money for ordinary things – for example pothole repairs. It is hard for this PC - let alone the public - to keep up with all developments. This parish is fortunate to be well-served by our two ward councillors, Maureen Flood and Susanne Hasselmann, as well as our HCC councillor, Chris Donnelly, who are all working hard to achieve a realistic outcome. Thank you to them.

The main highlights of the year locally, for me, have been the opening of this attractive village hall with the neighbouring parish of Monxton, and the submission to TVBC of our Parish's draft **Neighbourhood Plan**.

Monxton and Amport Village Hall had its official opening on 29 March. The opening was performed by the Chief Executive of TVBC, Andy Ferrier, and by our MP, Caroline Nokes. It was a well-attended party by residents of both parishes. There have been subsequent events in the hall, all successful. Not surprisingly, there are a few “teething troubles”, and we encourage all parishioners to comment as appropriate. It is the community’s hall – for all the parishioners of Monxton and Amport. Parishioners in Amport are encouraged and invited to get involved with the running of the hall. There is a whatsapp group for the village hall which gives information to parishioners on the hall including classes and events taking place. Do ask if you wish to join.

In the past year, the Parish has been engaged with developing a **Neighbourhood Plan**, which has been submitted to TVBC. This initiative was led by Cllr Diana Stephenson, as well as others across the Parish. The objective behind the Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that decisions on planning are rooted in the Parish and not just made by planning officers. The plan stands alongside TVBC’s local plan. In due course, all residents in the Parish will be able to vote in a referendum on whether to approve the final Neighbourhood Plan, before it can become effective. I encourage everyone to read the plan and support it – it will be available on the website.

One of the biggest benefits of the NP work is APC’s improved engagement with parts of the Parish, especially with the community at Weyhill. This is to be welcomed. There is more to do in engaging with Weyhill and other parts of the Parish.

APC has continued our work with **Southern Water** over the past year to address the groundwater infiltration problems in the Pillhill catchment area from Kimpton at the north end to Upper Clatford where the brook joins the Anton. Groundwater infiltration led to a major overload of the sewage network along the catchment, requiring significant tanker movements, and the major disruption to the roads in the villages. APC led a forum of 8 local parishes, now known as the PPPF or Pillhill Pan Parish Forum, in engaging with Southern Water, with input from the Environment Agency, in seeking significant improvement in the water related issues – above all preventing sewage discharge - along the Pillhill Brook. I am pleased to confirm that the sewer sealing work at the north of the catchment has been successful. There were 39 tankers deployed in the catchment three winters ago. Now, there are none save for exceptional conditions. I hope that this model of cross-parish co-operation will be used by other local communities, and will be a model that can be embraced by other public bodies. There is a relatively small amount of further work still to do at the Water-pumping stations in the Parish and locally, and APC is determined to press Southern Water to complete this work.

An offshoot of the PPPF has been the setting up of the Pillhill Brook Association. Janet Wright leads the association, and we are fortunate to have Janet as a speaker in a few minutes.

Turning to other matters, work has been done on the Green in Amport and in the fen. New football goals have been installed on the green. Various trees also came down in the fen during winter storms. These have been cleared by a group of volunteers. This is much appreciated.

On **Amport House**, APC was heavily engaged with TVBC on the planning issues a couple of years ago, before permission was granted for the development of a hotel on the site. The site remains on the market as another use is sought for the site, but the news last week is that the current owners remain optimistic that an offer may be forthcoming soon.

A less successful story relates to **Highways**. Although it is acknowledged that some road repairs have been carried out by HCC, which falls short in keeping roads in the Parish up to the standard required in terms of road safety and quality of surfaces. The response from the Highways team and from HCC is that there is a lack of government funding for repairs. There are several areas across the Parish where road repair work is long overdue. APC will keep pressing for action.

APC have been involved with other matters too – but I hope that you can see the current level of activity. I should also pay tribute to the service of many other volunteers in the community. APC is very ably supported by our clerk, Heather Bournier.

Members of APC at this time, aside from me, are Stephen Coke, vice-chair; Sally Baker; Alan Montagu; Tessa Hawkings-Byass; Diana Stephenson; Peter Harvey; Peter Waller; Clare Hemmings, and Howard Dix. All make their contributions and thanks are due to all of them. Others in the community support the team

on specific projects. There are several tasks that can be and are undertaken by ordinary people that benefit you, your friends and your neighbours. Things – whatever the size and complexity - get done by local people. Please volunteer when you can.

The current PC knows there is room to improve communications within the Parish. We seek to improve things – including the circulation of the successful Parish Pages. Thanks to Councillor Hawkings-Byass for editing this. And thanks also to the volunteers who help with the distribution.

Please provide us with your support.

APC hopes you all have a good year.