

BISHOPSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Methodist Church Hall, Sedgwick Road, Bishopstoke commencing at 7.30pm on 11 September 2012

Present: Cllrs Thornton (Chairman), Hansell, Lyon, Toher and Winstanley

In Attendance: Mr P J Storey (Clerk to the Parish Council)

Public Session

No members of the public were present.

90. Apologies

90.1 Cllrs Cossey and Roling.

91. To Agree the Minutes of the Meeting on 10 July 2012

91.1 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2012 be accepted as a true record.

92. Matters Arising from the above Minutes

92.1 Para 72.2 Social network sites. Cllr Toher was following up on social network sites.

Action: Cllr Toher

92.2 Para 75.1 The Clerk had established that the Aldermore Bank was not yet offering accounts to parish councils. No further action at this time.

92.3 Para 76.1 Cllr Winstanley confirmed a core skills training course for councillors would be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 20 November 2012 probably in the Methodist Church. (*This venue was subsequently confirmed*). Details would be circulated in due course by HALC.

Action: Cllr Winstanley

92.4 Para 79.2 The Clerk had been unable to obtain an understanding with the Jockey Lane allotments neighbour in the possible allotment dispute and would recourse to the Land Registry for a definitive map. Subsequent to the land being confirmed as ours a final letter should be sent before considering further action.

Action: Clerk

92.4 Para 81.1 The implications of Cllr Harris' proposal for a 'buddy' system for the allotments would be debated at the next full Council meeting; the Clerk would prepare a brief.

Action: Clerk

92.5 Para 84.1 Cllr Winstanley would seek volunteers for the Community Speedwatch initiative through the Newsletter in due course.

Action: Cllr Winstanley

93. Declarations of Interest

93.1 Cllr Winstanley declared a personal interest in Item 9 (response on changes to council tax benefits).

94. RFO's Report, Budget Monitoring and Payments

- 94.1 The Clerk confirmed that the Audit Commission had signed off the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2012 and that the statutory notice advising electors' of their rights to inspect these accounts had been displayed.
- 94.2 A budget monitoring report had been circulated with the agenda papers. This was noted.
- 94.3 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Lyon, **RESOLVED** unanimously that payments be made as tabled.

95. To note the revised management terms for the YZone Youth Facility

- 95.1 All parties to the revised YZone Management Agreement, made necessary by the withdrawal of the County Council, had now signed and the Clerk reminded councillors of the terms. No further action was necessary.

96. To consider proposals for the new parish office

- 96.1 Discussion took place on the 2 quotations received to date for the new parish office and samples of building material were chosen (external colour – dark green; internal carpet – gunmetal; internal walls – double cream). This followed general agreement on the preferred supplier of the two but a third quote was awaited. It was planned to have the office operational by the yearend and the Clerk would prepare a brief to this effect for the full Council to consider.

Action: Clerk

- 96.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Hansell, **RECOMMENDED** that, subject to any last minute reason to change, the preferred contractor for the new parish office should be Smart Garden Offices Ltd.

97. Installation of additional litter bins

- 97.1 Following the agreement to install more litter bins in the Parish, especially at in-use bus stops, the Clerk had established that Direct Services were not inclined to add emptying these additional bins to their tasks because of lack of manpower. Some thought was given to establishing a Litter Warden and the possibility of the HCC Lengthsman scheme being extended to Bishopstoke in the future but our need was more immediate. Possible disposal problems were noted although the Borough bins outside the Memorial Hall could provide a solution. The Clerk would investigate further but, in the meantime, it was agreed that a bin would be installed as a matter of urgency on the Stoke Park Road new bus shelter to satisfy local demands.

Action: Clerk

98. National changes to council tax benefits

- 98.1 Changes to council tax benefits and the level of discount given for empty homes would be introduced nationally from April 2013. A Borough-wide consultation was in progress on the implications of the changes and the introduction of a new council tax support system. The consultation ended on 19 October. The Clerk would provide a brief for councillors at the next full Council meeting to determine if a formal response was appropriate.

Action: Clerk

99. Funding the costs of play area inspection

- 99.1 At least an annual inspection, if not more during the year, should be undertaken of all play equipment to satisfy good management and our insurers. Currently, daily and monthly inspections were undertaken by the grounds maintenance contractor and the Clerk but more formal inspections by persons qualified were essential. The Clerk was collating costs for these inspections and would table recommendations in due course. EBC had quoted for quarterly and annual inspections but this was a competitive market and other quotes were being obtained.

Action: Clerk

100. Contribution towards Riverside replacement railings

- 100.1 The deterioration of and damage to the Riverside railings continues and the time taken to repair lengthens. A partnership funding arrangement had been suggested to fund the cost of repainting the entire length as this exceeded HCC's annual budget. However, Councillors cast doubt on the wisdom of repainting given the degraded state of some of the railings and it was thought appropriate to seek a review of the state of the railings if a Parish contribution was to be considered.

Action: Clerk

101. Asset Management Report

- 101.1. Cemetery. Eight interments had taken place in the Cemetery to date this year. The land adjacent to the tree line remained severely waterlogged precluding any further interments in sequence. The rule to inter sequentially and not allow pre-purchase had been the subject of a complaint to Chris Huhne MP from a constituent. However, the Clerk had been able to meet the complainant's request in the short term because of the waterlogged ground.
- 101.2 Allotments. The new extractor fan at Manor Farm had yet to be installed and some lopping of trees on Borough Council land had taken place at Jockey Lane to allow more light on to adjacent plots.

102. To consider and, if appropriate, make recommendations on adopting the revised Code of Conduct

- 102.1 A revised draft Code of Conduct had been circulated with the agenda papers. The Clerk reminded Councillors of the recommendation that the Borough's Code be adopted by parish councils with only minor amendment, as appropriate.
- 102.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the revised Code of Conduct, as tabled, be adopted for Bishopstoke Parish Council.

103. Clerk's Report

- 103.1 Underwood Road bus shelter. Passenger numbers using the stop were still awaited
- 103.2 Shears Mill. The Clerk updated Councillors on progress made with the turbine housing renovation now that planning approval had been received. Thus far, the preferred contractor had been Bruno Construction who could start with the necessary lime mortar repairs the week beginning 17 September. One other quote had been received and a third would be obtained although the Clerk reminded Councillors they were not constrained to accepting the lowest quotation. Contact had been made with EBC who would help with the manufacture costs and a form of words had been drafted. An approach had been made to HCC to relocate and replace the existing lamp post with one of a traditional design and an advisory letter had been delivered to the Mill House occupants advising them of the work plan. Finally, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust was producing an agreement outlining the payment procedure for us to claim reimbursement from the Lottery grant and this would be tabled for acceptance in due course. In order to avoid delay, it was thought appropriate to seek the agreement of all Councillors to start work without sight of three competitive quotes as difficulty was being experienced in finding suitable builders willing to undertake the work.

Action: Clerk

104. Date, time and place of next meeting

- 104.1 The next meeting will be on Tuesday 9 October 2012 at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Sedgwick Road, Bishopstoke.

105. Motion for Confidential Business

105.1 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Hansell, **RESOLVED** unanimously that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed relating to employees' remuneration it was advisable and in the public interest that the public be excluded and for the record the business be regarded as confidential.

106. Consideration of approval for payment of staff hours of work, mileage and out of pocket expenses for July and August 2012 (Confidential business)

106.1 Members noted the report tabled by the RFO and attached to these minutes.

106.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Hansell, **RESOLVED** unanimously that payments to staff be made as tabled.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.25pm.

Summary of Recommendations for Consideration by Full Parish Council

96.2 that, subject to any last minute reason to change, the preferred contractor for the new parish office should be Smart Garden Offices Ltd.

102.2 that the revised Code of Conduct, as tabled, be adopted for Bishopstoke Parish Council.

Summary of Resolutions Passed to be Noted by the Full Parish Council

91.1 that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2012 be accepted as a true record.

94.3 that payments be made as tabled.

105.1 that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed relating to employees' remuneration it was advisable and in the public interest that the public be excluded and for the record the business be regarded as confidential.

106.2 that payments to staff be made as tabled.

**Payments in July and August 2012 in excess of £500
published in accordance with the Government's transparency directive**

July 2012

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|-----------------|---------------------|---------|
| Mr P Storey | Salary and expenses | 1568.99 |
| Mrs C Taylor | Salary and expenses | 542.28 |
| HCC | LGPS | 502.87 |
| Green Smile Ltd | Grounds maintenance | 1794.33 |

August 2012

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| Mr P Storey | Salary and expenses | 1499.52 |
| Mrs C Taylor | Salary and expenses | 720.37 |
| Audit Commission | Audit fee | 660.00 |
| Green Smile Ltd | Grounds maintenance | 1794.33 |
| Methodist Church | Room hire | 812.00 |
| Carnival Group | Expenses | 2045.00 |