

BISHOPSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Parish Office, Riverside, Bishopstoke commencing at 7.30pm on 12 April 2016

Present: Cllr Cossey (Chairman), Parkinson-MacLachlan, Thornton, Toher and Winstanley

In Attendance: Mr D Hillier-Wheal (Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)
Mrs C Taylor (Assistant Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)
Jo Calcutt (to give a presentation on street art)

Public Session No members of the public were present.

FGP_1617_M01/

1. Apologies Cllr Mignot

2.

2.1 Proposed Cllr Cossey, Seconded Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan, **RESOLVED** unanimously that FGP_1617_A01 Item 9 be brought forward to the top of the meeting.

3. Public Art – Briefing from Jo Calcutt

3.1 Jo went through a presentation of the different kinds of things that can be done with the Public Art budget. The main criteria involve it being designed by a professional and being accessible to the public.

3.2 The creation process is where the community begins to be involved. There is an initial discussion of issues that could be addressed with street art, covering possible uses such as wayfinding items, or heritage and culture items. The final brief should clearly work towards strong, vibrant, healthy communities.

3.3 A sheet detailing more information about the current proposals for Bishopstoke Park, and other sources of street art funding, was circulated at the meeting (A copy is attached to these minutes).

3.4 Jo requested the committee think of any key community groups that could be brought in to the discussions.

Action: ALL

3.5 The Chair requested that Public Art be added to the next Finance & General Purposes agenda for further discussion.

Action: Clerk

3.6 The Chair thanked Jo for her interesting and informative presentation, and assured her that the committee would be interested in taking part in deciding the future for street art in Bishopstoke.

4. To adopt and sign the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting held on 8 March 2016

4.1 Proposed Cllr Thornton, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2016 be accepted as a true record.

5. To consider Matters Arising from the above Minutes

5.1 None

6 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

6.1 Cllr Winstanley declared an interest in FGP_1617_A01 Item 6 as she had put in a claim for Chair's Expenses, which was contained in the Non-Confidential Payments report.

7 Carnival Working Group – to receive progress report

7.1 Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan reported that the recent Carnival Working Group meeting had been cheerful. Both Falcons and Dogs have been booked for the arena. Carnival packs are being revamped before being sent out in the near future. There should be three quizzes, and it is hoped that the quiz at the Working Men's Club would be taking place before the Carnival rather than after as has been the case in recent years.

8. To receive the RFO's Report, and approve Budget Monitoring and Non-Confidential Payments Reports for March 2016

8.1 The RFO reported that community projects, travel tokens, play equipment maintenance and trees were all significantly underspent, whereas the training budget had been overspent for the training of the new Clerk.

8.2 The current reserves contain more than expected at this time, but going forward there is the recent play equipment inspection to action, and new tree survey and consequent repair work to undertake, planning for near future replacement of play areas and the possibility of having to fund a new office. The RFO suggested that there be an allocation made from reserves of £15,000 for tree work this year, £25,000 be set aside for future play area replacement (this to be matched each year going forward if possible as the Council may need to find around £150,000 over the next 7 years), £10,000 towards the cost of new office space and £20,000 towards the cost of anticipated building and fencing needs at the new allotments, new Cemetery and current Cemetery.

8.3 There was a discussion regarding the current level of reserves, and how it had been intended this year to have the reserves reduce slightly but that unfortunately, due to mostly weather-related underspend, this had not happened. Next year is also forecast to have a reduction in reserves. It is anticipated that, also due to the recent and prolonged bad weather, any future tree work will be expensive, for example, it was reported that there will probably be at least three trees that need to come down in the Cemetery alone.

8.4 A question was raised over whether the Council has, or gives the appearance of having, a "preferred handyman". It was thought proper to more regularly obtain quotes for work approved by the Council. The Clerk was asked to research available local businesses to facilitate the process of gaining quotes for future work.

Action: Clerk

8.5 Proposed Cllr Cossey, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Budget Report for March 2016 be noted.

8.6 Proposed Cllr Cossey, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** (with Cllr Winstanley abstaining) that the Non-Confidential Payments as tabled for March 2016 be approved.

9. To review the Statement of Internal Control

9.1 An updated Statement of Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2016 had been circulated with the Agenda papers for adoption. A copy is attached to these minutes.

9.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the Statement of Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2016 be adopted.

10. To consider and, if appropriate, recommend adoption of the Financial Accounts and approval of the Statement of Assurance for the year ended 31 March 2016

10.1 The Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 had been circulated with the Agenda papers for adoption.

10.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Thornton, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 be adopted.

10.3 A blank copy of Section 1 – The Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 – of the Annual Return had been circulated with the Agenda papers.

10.4 The Clerk explained the importance of the Committee being satisfied that the rules, checks and procedures adopted by the Council allowed it to agree with each statement in turn on the Annual Governance statement.

10.5 The Clerk read out each Statement in turn and asked for the Committee's agreement that – regarding Bishopstoke Parish Council – each statement was true.

10.6 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Thornton, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that on Section 1 of the Annual Return, statements number 1 – 8 have the “Yes” box ticked and that statement 9 be marked “N/A”, and that the Chair and Clerk be authorised to sign as appropriate.

10.7 A blank copy of Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2015/16 – of the Annual Return had been circulated with the Agenda papers.

10.8 The Clerk explained the need for the Committee to be satisfied as to the accuracy of the figures for each box.

10.9 The Clerk went through each figure in turn and asked for the Committee to approve it.

10.10 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Thornton, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the figures as entered by the RFO on Section 2 of the Annual Return be approved, and that the Chair and RFO be authorised to sign as appropriate.

11. Cemetery – To consider a briefing and make recommendations on a burial request

11.1 A briefing paper from the Assistant Clerk had been circulated with the Agenda papers for this meeting. A copy is attached to these minutes.

11.2 The Chair offered thanks to the Assistant Clerk for the research she had done, and for the briefing paper that had been circulated.

11.3 A discussion was had regarding the two possible options. It was felt by some Committee members that making an exception to the existing rule concerning pre-purchasing would set a dangerous precedent. Others felt that as the resident concerned believed they had initially been misinformed by her Funeral Director, and it was a case of a person wanting to be buried with their spouse, then the sensitivity the Council could demonstrate in this case outweighed any fear of setting a precedent. The Committee were made aware that 16 other residents have previously enquired about pre-purchasing. Some felt that Option 2 could still be seen as unfair as it gave a resident priority over others, but the Committee was reminded that Option 2 is effectively what had happened on a previous occasion.

11.4.1 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Thornton, that Option 1 be sent forward to Full Council for consideration.

11.4.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan, **RECOMMENDED** with the additional vote of Cllr Cossey, that Option 2 be sent forward to Full Council for consideration.

12 To consider the Proposal that the Council employ a litter picker on weekend mornings

12.1 Cllr Thornton, having tabled this Item, explained that he believed this would be an affordable and helpful way of giving a few hours work a week to either a teenager or a retired resident. It would help keep Bishopstoke looking better, and would encourage others to drop less litter in the first place.

12.2 The Committee discussed the probable affordability of such a scheme – similar to a lengthsman – and where such a service might be needed. Job creep was raised as a possible danger and so would need to be guarded against. It was also felt that it was important to not try to replace anything done by Eastleigh Borough Council, but to augment it. The Clerk was asked to look into the figures and find out more about what happens in Fair Oak, where a similar scheme operates, and to report back at the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.

Action: Clerk

13 To consider the Proposal that future Agenda have a note informing residents of the standing invitation to meetings received by the Police Force

13.1 Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan, having tabled this Item, explained it was born out of the concern some residents had aired that the Police had been present at a previous meeting. In order to avoid future embarrassment the Cllr believed it would be better to include, as standard, a reminder to residents that the Police have a standing invitation to all Council meetings.

13.2 The Clerk was asked to find out from HALC if this was being done anywhere else.

Action: Clerk

Discussion followed about the potential wording of such a statement. It was felt that it would be appropriate to include all those who receive such a standing invitation. The final suggested wording, which the Clerk was asked to check with HALC and circulate to all Council members, was “The Safer Neighbourhood Team, PCSOs, Police, Hampshire County Councillors and Eastleigh Borough Councillors are invited to all meetings of the Parish Council.”

Action: Clerk

14 Asset Management Review

14.1 Cemetery – There were 25 interments in total in 2015-16

14.2 Allotments – The Clerk reported that there had been a generally positive site meeting at the weekend. Issues raised by plot holders included the water supply in winter, the voting process for site reps and the issue of non-cultivation. The water supply is turned off in the winter and back on in the spring, as arranged by the site reps. Some plot holders would like the water to remain on, but this is not done due to the risk of burst pipes. Following previous problems, the Parish Council will now be running the vote. Those nominated will be allowed to include a brief supporting statement with the voting paper, and will be listed alphabetically. Some plot holders felt that non-cultivation was not dealt with swiftly enough and the Assistant Clerk and Clerk agreed to take a fresh look at the procedures. There had been one Freedom Of Information request following the sending of non-cultivation letters.

14.3 Play areas – work from the inspection will start to be commissioned over the next few weeks with priority obviously given to urgent cases.

15 To receive the Clerk's Report

15.1 The Clerk reported he had received the Eastleigh Borough Council corporate plan and a Hampshire Hospitals survey, both of which he would forward to the Council. He informed the Committee that he would be meeting Toby Ayling of Eastleigh Borough Council on the 13th to discuss Assets of Community Value, that there would be a meeting of the Community Safety Group on the 14th, and that the auditors would be in the office on Tuesday 19th April. The Clerk also reminded the Committee about the Parish Assembly on the 21st of April, for which Cllr Cossey gave his apologies. Finally, the Clerk informed the Committee that a new tree survey was being commissioned.

16 Date, time, place and Agenda Items for the next meeting

16.1 The next meeting will be on Tuesday 14 June at 7:30pm in the Parish Office, Riverside, Bishopstoke.

16.2 No Agenda Items were tabled at this time.

17 Motion for Confidential Business

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

18 To approve work on a soakaway for Manor Farm allotments

18.1 As the Committee was not in possession of the final quote for the soakaway it was felt that only provisional approval could be given. The Committee discussed allowing the work to proceed if the final quote came back at less than £3,000 plus VAT. Further discussion followed around whether other potential builders could do the job. The Clerk was asked to obtain a quote from Dave Piper, and follow up with Colden Common the builder they have used in the past for soakaways.

Action: Clerk

The Assistant Clerk left the meeting at this point

19. To approve the salary increment for staff with effect from 1 April 2016

19.1 A briefing regarding the pay of the Assistant Clerk had been circulated with the Agenda for this meeting. The Committee asked the Clerk to determine if the Assistant Clerk had reached the top of her pay scale.

Action: Clerk

19.2 Proposed Cllr Cossey, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that, subject to the check being undertaken by the Clerk in 19.1, above, the Assistant Clerk be awarded an annual scale point increase, in accordance with her contract.

20. To approve payment of staff hours of work, mileage and out of pocket expenses for March 2016

20.1 Members noted the report tabled by the RFO which is attached to these minutes.

20.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the March 2016 staff payments be noted as tabled.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8:50pm

Resolutions to be noted by the Full Parish Council

- 2.1 that FGP_1617_A01 Item 9 be brought forward to the top of the meeting.
- 4.1 that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2016 be accepted as a true record.
- 8.5 that the Budget Report for March 2016 be noted.
- 8.6 that the Non-Confidential Payments as tabled for March 2016 be approved.
- 17.1 that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed relating to employees' remuneration, it was advisable in the public interest that the public be excluded and for the record the business be regarded as confidential.
- 19.2 that, subject to the check being undertaken the Clerk above, the Assistant Clerk be awarded an annual scale point increase, in accordance with her contract.
- 20.2 that the March 2016 staff payments be noted as tabled.

Recommendations for consideration by the Full Parish Council

- 9.2 that the Statement of Internal Control for the year ended 31 March 2016 be adopted.
- 10.2 that the Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 be adopted.
- 10.6 that on Section 1 of the Annual Return, statements number 1 – 8 have the “Yes” box ticked and that statement 9 be marked “N/A”, and that the Chair and Clerk be authorised to sign as appropriate.
- 10.10 that the figures as entered by the RFO on Section 2 of the Annual Return be approved, and that the Chair and RFO be authorised to sign as appropriate.
- 11.4.2 that Option 2 be sent forward to Full Council for consideration.

Payments in March 2016 in excess of £500 published in accordance with the Government's transparency directive

Green Smile	Grounds Maintenance	£3,195.73
Bishopstoke Memorial Hall	Grant	£800.00
New Hope Hampshire	Grant	£500.00
Jason Bruno	Bus Shelter Repair	£1,176.28
Jason Bruno	Ashes Slab Installation	£570.72
Green Smile	Various Clearance Jobs	£725.00
Mr C Luff	Tree Work – Old St Marys'	£1,200.00
Eastleigh Borough Council	Bus Shelter Cleaning 2015/16	£824.90