

# 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 10 November 2015

**Present:** Cllr Cossey (Chairman), Cllrs Mignot, Parkinson-MacLachlan, Thornton (paras 131 to 144.2) Toher and Winstanley (paras 135.1 to 144.2)

**In Attendance:** Mr P J Storey (Clerk to the Parish Council)  
Mrs C Taylor (Assistant Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)

**Public Session** No public present.

### 129. Apologies

129.1 None.

### 130. To Agree the Minutes of the Meeting on 13 October 2015

130.1 Proposed Cllr Mignot, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** with Cllrs Cossey and Thornton abstaining (absent) that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2015 be accepted as a true record.

*Cllr Thornton arrived at this point*

### 131. Matters Arising from the above Minutes

131.1 Public session. HCC had confirmed that the tree types now planted on Riverside were Sorbus and Alnus and that maintenance of these trees would remain an HCC responsibility.

131.2 Para 117.1 Old Fair Oak Road seat. The old seat outside The Welcome Inn on Old Fair Oak Road had been removed by EBC.

### 132. Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensations

132.1 None declared.

### 133. Carnival Working Group's report

133.1 Nothing to report.

### 134. RFO's Report, Budget Monitoring and Non-Confidential Payments

134.1 A budget monitoring report had been circulated with the agenda papers.

134.2 Proposed Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that budget report for October 2015 be noted.

134.3 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the non-confidential payments tabled for October 2015 be approved.

### 135. Expenditure Budget, Burial Board Fees, Allotment Rents and Precept for 2016-17

135.1 A draft Expenditure Budget had been tabled and was discussed in detail with some amendments being made as the discussion progressed. Given the future need to maintain the current high standards of maintenance in the play areas and open spaces and, in particular, tree maintenance, it

was thought appropriate to consider a small increase in Precept for 2015-16 of 1.9% to minimise the potential drain upon reserves. A new line entry to meet anticipated costs for the Neighbourhood Plan was added with an initial allocation of £2,500.

*Cllr Winstanley arrived at the start of this discussion*

135.2 Members considered the Burial Board and allotment rents and thought it appropriate in the light of the current economic climate to recommend the Burial Board fees remain at their current levels but the cost per rod in the allotments be increased from £7 to £8 per rod with the concessionary rate remaining the same ie £5 per rod, for the next financial year.

135.3 Proposed Cllr Thornton, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that an expenditure budget of £189,010 be approved, that the current combined Precept/EBC top up grant be increased by 1.9% to £149,530, that Burial Board fees and charges remain at their current level, and that the allotment rent per rod be increased from £7 to £8 except for the concessionary rate which should remain at £5 per rod.

### **136. Travel Token Scheme changes**

136.1 Cllr Toher tabled suggested changes to the travel token scheme whereby the amount available to each applicant would be increased by £12 with this increase being absorbed by the recommended budget for the scheme which was not being increased. The application form was being amended to include a statement that the tokens were not transferable and were only for use by the applicant. Members also noted that the Bishopstoke Good Neighbours Group were now eligible to join the scheme and that procedures would be amended accordingly.

136.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Cossey, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the value of an eligible applicant's travel tokens be increased by £12 from 1 April 2016,

### **137. Grounds maintenance contract extension**

137.1 The Clerk briefed on the grounds maintenance contract currently awarded to Green Smile Ltd which was due to expire on 31 March 2018. He had no hesitation in recommending an extension of a further two years in return for the price remaining at its current level for that time.

137.2 Proposed Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the Green Smile Ltd's grounds maintenance contract be extended until 31 March 2020 subject to the regulations on contract extensions being complied with.

### **138. Asset Management Report**

138.1 Cemetery and Churchyards. A total of 20 interments had taken place in the financial year to date.

138.2 Allotments. The need for a soakaway was being investigated to minimise the risk of flooding in the area of the Manor Farm shop.

138.3 Play areas. The Brookfield title transfer was still awaiting completion and minor repairs to play equipment continued as necessary.

### **139. Replacement Clerk selection progress**

139.1 Six applications had been received for the Clerk's post and a shortlist of four had been determined with interviews to be held on 6 December 2015. Cllr Parkinson-MacLachlan had resigned from the selection panel having declared a close friendship with one of the candidates.

### **140. Meeting dates 2016**

140.1 Meeting dates for 2016 were tabled, with the exception of the Annual Assembly which would be determined subsequently, and noted.

## **141. Clerk's report**

- 141.1 The Clerk reported that an informal meeting between Bellway representatives, he and the Assistant Clerk, had taken place to introduce themselves and establish the future means of close liaising especially when access to the present Cemetery was required for groundwork and interments given the approach road would be partially blocked and site noise could cause annoyance at an interment. Mention was also made of some necessary tree work and the concerns about retaining the path route through the centre of the new Cemetery. These were noted by Bellway who also confirmed they would construct the new Cemetery car park first to facilitate car parking for users of the old Cemetery and an access would be established through the trees for mourners from the new Cemetery car park to the old Cemetery for interments. Building work would commence before the month end.
- 141.2 The Clerk had met with the EBC Planning Policy team to discuss the lack of progress on approving our submission under the Localism Act to have certain assets recognised as being assets of community value. It transpired that some asset owners had objected to the inclusion of their assets in the scheme, notably the Church of England which had had taken judicial advice. As a result, the Clerk was recommending deleting some assets, namely some of the churches, Scouts and Guide huts, Co-op store/post office, Wainwright's Pharmacy and Shears Mill. Stronger evidence of social cohesion and community wellbeing had been submitted for the remaining assets ie Working Men's Club, Bishopstoke Memorial Hall, Welcome Inn, Anchor Inn, Stoke Park Infants School, Anchor Surgery, Stoke Park Woods, the BCA and Methodist and St Paul's Churches, for further consideration.
- 141.3 It was now timely for many of the recommendations contained in the 2014 tree survey report to be actioned and quotes were being obtained for work in Old St Mary's Churchyard and elsewhere to effect these.
- 141.4 On our Facebook page, the number of people reached was reported as 3500 for the posting on the reduced speed limit along Alan Drayton Way and 1100 on the warning about the advertised council tax scam.

## **142. Date, time and place of next meeting**

- 142.1 The next meeting will be on Tuesday 15 December 2015 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office, Riverside, Bishopstoke.

## **143. Motion for Confidential Business**

- 143.1 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.

## **144. Consideration of approval for payment of staff hours of work, mileage and out of pocket expenses for October 2015 (Confidential Business)**

- 144.1 Members noted the report tabled by the RFO which is attached to these minutes.
- 144.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Cossey, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the October 2015 staff payments be noted as tabled.

*There being no further business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.40*

### **Resolutions to be noted by the Full Parish Council**

- 130.1 that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2015 be accepted as a true record.
- 134.2 that budget report for October 2015 be noted.
- 134.3 that the non-confidential payments tabled for October 2015 be approved.
- 143.1 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.
- 144.2 that the October 2015 staff payments be noted as tabled.

### **Recommendations for consideration by the Full Parish Council**

- 135.3 that an expenditure budget of £189,010 be approved, that the current combined Precept/EBC top up grant be increased by 1.9% to £149,530, that Burial Board fees and charges remain at their current level, and that the allotment rent per rod be increased from £7 to £8 except for the concessionary rate which should remain at £5 per rod.
- 136.2 that the value of an eligible applicant's travel tokens be increased by £12 from 1 April 2016,
- 137.2 that the Green Smile Ltd's grounds maintenance contract be extended until 31 March 2020 subject to the regulations on contract extensions being complied with.

#### **Payments in October 2015 in excess of £500 published in accordance with the Government's transparency directive**

|                 |                            |         |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---------|
| Southern Water  | Manor Farm water           | 763.03  |
| Mr C Luff       | St Mary's Church tree work | 1200.00 |
| Open Sight      | Grant                      | 1000.00 |
| Came & Co       | Annual insurance           | 1940.12 |
| Green smile Ltd | Grounds maintenance        | 3195.73 |