

# 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 10 September 2013

**Present:** Cllrs Cossey (Chairman), Harris, Toher and Winstanley

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

### Public Session

No members of the public were present.

### 71. Apologies

71.1 Cllrs Hansell and Roling.

### 72. To Agree the Minutes of the Meeting on 11 June 2013

72.1 Proposed Cllr Cossey, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2013 be accepted as a true record.

### 73. Matters Arising from the above Minutes

73.1 There were no matters arising not dealt with elsewhere in these minutes.

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

74.1 None declared or sought.

### 75. RFO's Report, Budget Monitoring and Payments

75.1 A budget monitoring report had been circulated with the agenda papers. This was noted.

75.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the non-confidential payments tabled for June, July and August be approved.

### 76. To receive and approve the audited Annual Return 2012/13

76.1 The audited Annual Return had been received back from the external auditors and the two observations relating to approval of the annual financial risk assessment and employee dishonesty indemnity cover were noted for subsequent action.

#### Action: Clerk

76.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Harris **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the audited Annual Return for 2012/13 be approved and accepted and that the actions recommended be implemented.

### 77. To consider increasing the employee dishonesty indemnity cover

77.1 The external auditors had recommended that the employee dishonesty indemnity cover be increased from its current level of £150,000 to £200,000 which would be more in keeping with current average cash holdings. Our insurers had quoted an extra £74.20 premium for this additional cover.

77.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the employee dishonesty indemnity cover be increased to £200,000 as recommended by the external auditor and that the additional premium be paid.

#### **78. Grant Aid application**

78.1 A Grant Aid application had been received from New Hope Hampshire who provided practical help to relieve financial hardship and encourage good health to those in need. The application was specifically a grant of £500 towards the costs of a replacement delivery vehicle for large item deliveries.

78.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that a grant of £500 be made to New Hope Hampshire to assist them in purchasing a replacement delivery vehicle.

#### **79. Transfer of RFO's responsibilities to Assistant Clerk**

79.1 The increasing workload of the Clerk, as a result of asset transfers and localism, had generated a review his current roles and responsibilities within his contracted hours and it was thought feasible to his dedicated financial responsibilities as RFO to the Assistant Clerk. An appropriate transfer date would be 1 January 2014 which would then enable both Clerk and Assistant Clerk to work in tandem during the interim internal audit and towards the financial yearend. A notional five hours per week would be transferred although the actual hours spent on financial matters and the future salary scale point of the Assistant Clerk in recognition of these additional responsibilities would be considered under confidential business at a later date.

79.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the RFO's responsibilities be transferred from the Clerk to the Assistant Clerk with effect from 1 January 2014 and that subsequently a full review of hours worked and the appropriate salary scale points be determined.

#### **80. Use of Parish Office by other organisations**

80.1 Discussion took place on the possible use of the parish office by other organisations, in particular, the Carnival Group. It was thought that the Carnival Group could be the exception, given the amount of administrative support provided by the Assistant Clerk to the Group, but use by other organisations would not be appropriate. The Clerk would check the conditions in the temporary planning approval.

#### **Action: Clerk**

80.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RECOMMENDED** with Cllr Toher abstaining that the parish office be made available to the Carnival Group for meetings, if required.

#### **81. Assistant Clerk's hours in support of the Carnival Group**

81.1 Currently, 50 hours per year were budgeted for providing administrative support by the Assistant Clerk to the Carnival Group. With sickness and new members joining the Group this year, more work had befallen the Assistant Clerk resulting in an increase in actual hours spent in support. The help provided was much appreciated by the Carnival volunteers and an increase to 75 hours would likely cover this year. The Clerk confirmed the additional costs could be absorbed within budget.

81.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Assistant Clerk's hours providing administrative support for the Bishopstoke Carnival Group be increased in the current year from 50 to 75 hours.

#### **82. New bus shelter provision**

82.1 In line with the current policy of providing bus shelters at stops on extant routes, it was thought timely to consider likely locations.

82.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that consultation be undertaken with a view to installing a new bus shelter on Hamilton Road.

### **83. Contribution towards Riverside improvements**

83.1 The Borough Council planned to remove the vegetation growth on the corner of Riverside to discourage people from discarding litter et al at that location. At the same time, discussions had taken place about providing suitable seating to complement the Shears Mill improvements opposite at what is the main entrance to the Bishopstoke conservation area. Up to £2,000 had been thought appropriate but would be dependent upon the final plans for this corner.

83.2 Proposed Cllr Cossey, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RECOMMENDED** that up to £2,000 be earmarked for the provision of seating at the Riverside junction in due course.

### **84. Asset Management Report**

84.1 Cemetery and Churchyards. Fifteen interments had taken place in the year to date, up on last year at the same time.

84.2 Allotments. Rent letters would be issued shortly for rents due for the next year. In line with the earlier decision, the amounts charged would remain at the same level as last year. Some complaints had been received about vegetation growth along the border between the allotments and adjacent houses in Underwood Road which had been resolved at minor cost and some expense had been incurred in tidying up uncultivated plots which were between tenants to prevent the spread of seeds and weeds.

84.3 Play areas. Six companies had been invited to tender for upgrading the play equipment in both Stoke Common and Templecombe Road play areas and these were considered with a shortlist of three being determined. Costs were similar but the equipment on offer differed. There was general agreement to recommend Vita Play for the required work in the Stoke Common play area and Proludic for Templecombe Road play area. Details of the shortlisted three contractors would be tabled at the full Parish Council meeting for decision. EBC would then consult with local people at both locations ideally during the October half term week with a view to placing the formal contracts with installation in early Spring 2014. The Clerk would bid for funding from the LAC and elsewhere, as appropriate.

**Action: Clerk**

### **85. Clerk's Report**

85.1 The Methodist Church had asked when the Council might no longer require use of the small committee room on a Wednesday and the Clerk had confirmed that usage would likely cease in the next few weeks when the parish office was useable in lieu.

85.2 It was Government's recommended best practice that where a council's annual turnover exceeded £200k pa its land and property assets should be fully recorded and records made open for public inspection. The Clerk would investigate further.

**Action: Clerk**

85.3 Cllr Toher volunteered to represent the Council at the forthcoming HALC AGM on Saturday 19 October 2013.

85.4 The Clerk confirmed he had relocated the storage Cabinets from the BCA to the parish office and has asked for a final invoice for storage charges. He also confirmed the quote for providing an electricity supply to the office from SSE amounted to £3,068.92 or less if an underground cable was found useable. The alternative of tapping into the Memorial Hall's supply was being investigated but was unlikely to be feasible due to the Hall's high level of demand. He would also be writing to the Methodist Church to reduce the number of regular bookings in future but asking that the Council could continue to use the Church should a large future meeting be likely.

**Action: Clerk**

85.5 Proposed Cllr Cossey, Seconded Cllr Winstanley **RESOLVED** that the SSE quote for providing an electrical supply to the parish office be accepted.

**86. Date, time and place of next meeting**

86.1 The next meeting will be on Tuesday 8 October 2013 at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Sedgwick Road, Bishopstoke.

**87. Motion for Confidential Business**

87.1 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.

**88. Consideration of approval for payment of staff hours of work, mileage and out of pocket expenses for June, July and August 2013 (Confidential Business)**

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

88.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the payments be made as tabled.

**89. To approve staff pay increases (Confidential Business)**

89.1 The National Joint Council for Local Government Services had reached agreement on revised pay scales effective 1 April 2013. Staff contracts entitled staff to be paid in accordance with these scales which had been increased by 1%.

89.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Harris **RESOLVED** unanimously that the revised pay scales for staff effective from 1 April 2013 be implemented and arrears of pay paid accordingly.

*There being no further business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.10pm.*

## **Summary of Recommendations for Consideration by Full Parish Council**

- 76.2 that the audited Annual Return for 2012/13 be approved and accepted and that the actions recommended be implemented.
- 78.2 that a grant of £500 be made to New Hope Hampshire to assist them in purchasing a replacement delivery vehicle.
- 79.2 that the RFO's responsibilities be transferred from the Clerk to the Assistant Clerk with effect from 1 January 2014 and that subsequently a full review of hours worked and the appropriate salary scale points be determined.
- 80.2 that the parish office be made available to the Carnival Group for meetings, if required.
- 82.2 that consultation be undertaken with a view to installing a new bus shelter on Hamilton Road.
- 83.2 that up to £2,000 be earmarked for the provision of seating at the Riverside junction in due course.

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

- 72.1 that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2013 be accepted as a true record.
- 75.2 that the non-confidential payments tabled for June, July and August be approved.
- 77.2 that the employee dishonesty indemnity cover be increased to £200,000 as recommended by the external auditor and that the additional premium be paid.
- 81.2 that the Assistant Clerk's hours providing administrative support for the Bishopstoke Carnival Group be increased in the current year from 50 to 75 hours.
- 85.5 that the SSE quote for providing an electrical supply to the parish office be accepted.
- 87.1 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.
- 88.2 that the payments be made as tabled.
- 89.2 that the revised pay scales for staff effective from 1 April 2013 be implemented and arrears of pay paid accordingly.

**Payments in June 2013 in excess of £500  
published in accordance with the Government's transparency directive**

Staff	Salaries and expenses	2979.36
R Morris	Grounds maintenance	1244.00
Green Smile Ltd	Grounds maintenance	5165.66
HCC	Map boards	931.20
Notice Board Co	Notice board	503.99
Mr Luff	Tree maintenance	540.00
Memorial Hall	Grant	1750.00

**Payments in July 2013 in excess of £500  
published in accordance with the Government's transparency directive**

HCC	LGPS	526.50
Hants Constabulary	PCSO contribution	3500.00

**Payments in August 2013 in excess of £500  
published in accordance with the Government's transparency directive**

Green Smile	Grounds maintenance	2534.83
EBC	Play equipment maintenance	641.00
Staff	Salaries and expenses	2267.31
HCC	LGPS	503.64
Carnival Group	Insurance	511.03
EBC	YZone contribution	21000.00
Smarts Garden Offices	Final payment	3288.60