

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Bishopstoke Parish Council  
held at Bishopstoke Methodist Church  
commencing at 7.30pm on 30 April 2024**

**Present:** Councillor Louise Hillier-Wheal (Chair)  
Councillor Geoff Harris (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Ralph Candy  
Councillor Andrew Daly  
Councillor Dave Francis  
Councillor Chris McKeone  
Councillor Dermot McKeone  
Councillor Mike Thornton  
Councillor Gin Tidridge  
Councillor Anne Winstanley

**In Attendance:** Mr David Wheal (Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)  
Mrs Sophie Thorogood (RFO to Bishopstoke Parish Council)

**Public Session** 0 members of the public were present.

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**87 Apologies for Absence**

87.1 Apologies were noted from Cllrs A Dean, R Dean, Kirby, Lyon and Moore.

**88 To adopt and sign Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 March 2024**

88.1 The minutes of the above meeting had been included in the document pack for this meeting.

88.2 Cllr Francis stated that in Minute 69.4 his concern had actually been access to Glebe Meadow during and after the demolition and requested the minutes be amended to reflect that.

88.3 Proposed Cllr Francis, Seconded Cllr C McKeone, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the amended minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 March 2024 be adopted as a true record.

**Action: Clerk & Chair – to sign and publish the minutes and document pack**

Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **89 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

89.1 There were no such declarations or requests.

## **90 Reports from Committees, Working Groups, Officers and Councillors**

90.1 The resolutions from Council Committees were noted.

90.2 The Clerk's report was noted. Cllr Hillier-Wheal asked that a volunteer from the Carnival group to lead on D Day 80 Sports Day be requested urgently.

**Action: Clerk – to contact the Carnival Group and request a volunteer to lead D Day 80.**

90.3 The report from Cllr Harris regarding the Airport Consultative Committee was noted.

## **91 To adopt and sign Minutes from the People Committee meeting of 27th February, the Assets Committee meeting of 26th March, the Finance Committee meeting of 9th April and the Planning Committee meeting of 9th April**

91.1 All minutes had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting.

91.2 Cllr Francis requested that Assets Committee minute 41.1 be amended to include his comment that Rose Close is separated from the adjoining play area by a tree belt and requires remedial works to remove 3 dead (and staked) trees and improvements to, or removal of an area of failed landscaping on the south side abutting the parking area. Council agreed to this by a show of hands.

**Action: Clerk – to amend the Assets Committee minutes from 26 March as noted in 91.2**

91.3 Proposed Cllr Hillier-Wheal, Seconded Cllr Francis, **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt and sign the minutes from the People Committee meeting held on 27 February.

91.4 Proposed Cllr Francis, Seconded Cllr D McKeone, **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt and sign the amended minutes from the Assets Committee meeting held on 26 March.

91.5 Proposed Cllr Thornton, Seconded Cllr C McKeone, **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt and sign the amended minutes from the Finance Committee meeting held on 9 April.

91.6 Proposed Cllr Candy, Seconded Cllr Thornton, **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt and sign the amended minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on 9 April.

**Action: Clerk & Chair – to sign and publish the minutes of the various meetings**

## **92 To approve the statement of reserves as at 31st March 2024**

92.1 Details of the final balances of the various reserves had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting. The RFO detailed minor changes since the previous statement had been presented to Council. It was noted that the Council is required to return a grant of £5,148 to Locality which would have been used to cover invoices related to the Neighbourhood Plan but delays at the Borough Council had meant this money was left unspent. It is hoped that it can be applied for again this year.

92.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Francis, **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the statement of reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**93 To confirm there are no conflicts of interest between the Parish Council and BDO LLP**

93.1 The Clerk noted that this is the same procedure the Council had gone through twelve months prior as part of the audit process. No Councillor had responded to the Clerk's email request confirming any conflict of interest.

93.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Francis, **RESOLVED** unanimously to affirm that there are no conflicts of interest between the Parish Council and BDO LLP.

**Action: Chair & RFO – to complete and sign the conflict of interest statement**

**94 To note the report from the internal auditor and approve the Council's response**

94.1 The internal audit report had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting and was noted.

94.2 The Clerk informed Council that there were no issues found during this audit and that therefore there are no Council responses to note.

94.3 The Council wished to put on record their thanks to Mrs Sophie Thorogood for all her hard work since joining the Council in 2018 and to wish her well in her new job.

**95 To adopt the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2024**

95.1 The Clerk noted that the internal auditor had provided their recommended response to each part of the Annual Governance Statement, as well as justification for that recommendation. The recommended responses agree with the Clerk's & RFO's recommendation as well.

95.2 Proposed Cllr Thornton, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RESOLVED** unanimously to complete the Annual Governance Statement as recommended by responding "Yes" to all nine boxes.

**Action: Chair & Clerk – to complete and sign the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2024**

**96 To approve the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024**

96.1 The figures for the Accounting Statements had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting. The RFO informed Council that the figure for box 9, 31 March 2024, was not 336,088 as shown in the initial report, but was actually 334,805. This change was due to the removal of a basket swing from Council's assets and had been confirmed by the auditor.

96.2 Proposed Cllr Tidridge, Seconded Cllr Candy, **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

**Action: Chair & RFO – to complete and sign the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**97 To agree the Parish Council's response to the Borough Council Dog Fouling consultation**

97.1 Cllrs agreed that there would be no Council response but instead individuals would be encouraged through Facebook and the website to respond to the survey.

**Action: Clerk – to publicise the consultation online**

**98 To agree amending the Clerk's contract to allow approval of additional overtime by agreement of both the Chair and Vice Chair**

98.1 A brief description of the proposed amendment had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting.

98.2 Cllr Francis suggested that agreement be via the People Committee rather than simply Chair & Vice Chair. Cllr Tidridge commented that excess overtime is a welfare concern the Council should be aware of and suggested that all overtime, not just any over eight hours, be approved by the Chair & Vice Chair. Cllr Thornton suggested going with the original proposal but including a requirement for there to be a report to Full Council whenever extra overtime is sought this way.

98.3 By a show of hands, six Councillors preferred Cllr Thornton's suggestion, with one each preferring those of Cllrs Francis and Tidridge.

98.4 Proposed Cllr Thornton, Seconded Cllr Daly, **RESOLVED** with two abstentions to amend the Clerk's contract to allow overtime beyond eight hours per week to be agreed by a combination of both Chair and Vice Chair, and to add a requirement that any such agreement will be reported to the next Full Council meeting.

**Action: Chair & Clerk – to sign the amended contract**

**99 To consider content for the next press release**

99.1 The Council agreed that the next press release would include the approved end of year accounts, the makeup of the new Council and a report on the Annual Parish Assembly

**Action: Clerk – to draft the press release and circulate it to the Communications Group Lead Member for approval**

**100 To agree the date, time and place for the next meeting**

100.1 The next meeting will take place on Tuesday May 14th 2024. It will take place at 7:30pm at the Bishopstoke Methodist Church.

100.2 Council agreed that the Clerk should send an invitation to all Councillors to attend from 7:00pm in order to meet each other, and that drinks and cakes should be provided.

**Action: Clerk – to invite all Cllrs to the meeting and ensure refreshments are provided**

*The RFO left at this point.*

Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **101 Motion for confidential business**

101.1 Proposed Cllr Hillier-Wheal, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RESOLVED** unanimously that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be excluded and for the record the business be regarded as confidential.

## **102 To receive a report on Cemetery matters and approve recommendations**

102.1 A report detailing the findings of the investigation into circumstances at the Cemetery in January had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting. The Clerk provided more information about the exact circumstances.

102.2 The Council noted that the Assets Officer had resigned and had left the Council's employment as of Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April.

102.3 Proposed Cllr Tidridge, Seconded Cllr D McKeone, **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the recommendations contained in the Clerk's report: Reformatting the Cemetery Internal Procedures document into chapters with an index; Completing the online file reorganisation; Completing an update to how payments are recorded; Adopting sign off procedures for training; Adding weekly meetings with new employees to check in on how they are doing (including a focus on their wellbeing); Adding spot checks for new employees to ensure accuracy of work; the Clerk to be trained on all Council procedures and other officers to be so trained if possible and appropriate

**Action: Clerk – to put in place the recommendations contained in the report**

## **103 To approve the particulars of the three officer vacancies**

103.1 The job specifications and salary assessments had been presented to the Council with the supporting papers for this meeting.

103.2 Cllrs were generally happy with the three job descriptions. They wished to amend the Assets Officer role and the Allotments & Cemeteries role to include a responsibility to monitor and report instances of fly-tipping, vandalism and graffiti. Additionally, the Assets role was slightly upgraded to reflect the varied areas of responsibility.

103.3 Councillors also noted that there was an opportunity for the two smaller roles to be merged into one full time job should the right candidate present themselves; there is an opportunity for one of the new staff to be appointed as Deputy Clerk, which would come with a salary bonus; and that the Council would be happy to offer two extra hours per week to a candidate who would commit to using that time to walk the Parish looking out for issues that can be resolved or reported.

103.4 Proposed Cllr Francis, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the amended job descriptions.

Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

103.5 The Clerk noted that two of the posts were to be advertised at or close to the top of a pay band and recommended that progress be permitted into the next pay band on condition that staff are cross trained to enable them to cover other officers in the event of holiday or sickness.

103.6 Proposed Cllr Harris, Seconded Cllr Daly, **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve progression into the next pay band subject to cross training.

103.7 Proposed Cllr Thornton, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RESOLVED** unanimously to set the initial salaries for the roles at scale points 19 for Allotments & Cemeteries, 17 for Assets and 16 for Committees, Communications & Events.

#### **104 To make decisions regarding allotments**

104.1 Proposed Cllr Candy, Seconded Cllr Francis, **RESOLVED** unanimously to reject the request from the allotment plot holder.

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

Chair's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_