



Bishopstoke Parish Council

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Tuesday 11th January at 7.00pm online.

Notes taken from the discussion

Attendance

Cllr Ray Dean (Chair)
Cllr Dave Francis (Vice Chair)
Cllr Ralph Candy
Cllr Andrew Daly
Cllr Anne Dean
Cllr Louise Hillier-Wheal
Cllr Sue Lynch
Cllr Martin Lyon
Cllr Chris McKeone
Cllr Dermot McKeone
Cllr Andy Moore
Cllr Lou Parker-Jones
Cllr Gin Tidridge
Cllr Anne Winstanley

Also Attending

Mr David Wheal (Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)
Mrs Sophie Thorogood (RFO to Bishopstoke Parish Council)

PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of the public attending.

1. Apologies for Absence
Councillor Mike Thornton had given his apologies. All other Cllrs were attending.
2. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
No requests or declarations were made.
3. Reports from Committees, Working Groups, Officers and Councillors
 - Vire £3,000 from reserves for Sayers Road play area gates
 - Vire £5,000 from reserves to cover tree work at Underwood Road

There was general consensus amongst those present that both the play area gates and the tree work at Underwood Road allotments were necessary. Cllr Ray Dean, supported by Cllr Daly proposed that a recommendation be made to the Clerk to proceed with transferring the funds from reserves as requested and continue with the planned work.

Members: Cllrs Dean R. (Chair), Francis (Vice Chair), Candy, Daly, Dean A, Hillier-Wheal, Lynch, Lyon, McKeone C, McKeone D, Moore, Parker-Jones, Thornton, Tidridge and Winstanley
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4. To agree the date, time and place for the next meetings

The Clerk advised those present that the next meetings on the published calendar are for January 25th, when there are supposed to be Planning and Assets Committee meetings. As the next announcement from the Government is expected to be in January 26th it is the Clerk's intention to continue with the current policy of holding informal meetings for Cllrs to discuss any substantial items that may require their attention. Currently there is nothing substantial for Assets to discuss, and Planning will continue discussing applications and responses via email, so there may not be a need to hold the January 25th meetings.

The Clerk reminded those present that approval of the budget and precept request is one of the things that cannot be delegated to officers, and so, given the current legal situation, it will require an in-person meeting of the Council. A discussion on the budget is scheduled for after this informal meeting and it is hoped that by engaging in that process the in-person meeting will be able to be conducted more swiftly. It is intended to hold the required meeting on January 18th, at 7:00pm. The venue is likely to be outside the Methodist Church but this is yet to be confirmed.

5. Motion for confidential business

As there were matters of contracts and financial sensitivity to be discussed, there was a need for any members of the public that had been attending to be asked to leave. Cllr Ray Dean proposed 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. This was seconded by Cllr Candy.

6. Award of the Open Space contract

Cllr Parker-Jones thanked the Clerk and RFO for their work on the bid process. There was concern over the substantial increase any of the bids represented when compared to the current value of the contract but as the cost of the contract (as represented by the hourly rate charged to the Council) had been held stable for 9 years this was to be expected. The bids had been scrutinised by the Chair, the Chair of Finance, the Clerk and the RFO and between them they had agreed to recommend continuing with the current providers, Green Smile.

The assembled Councillors discussed the merits of the three bids that had been received, comparing not just cost, but also the quality of the bid, the Council's previous experience of working with each bidder, and the commitment to switching to electric rather than diesel for power. The Clerk also detailed the lengthy process by which the tender documents had been prepared, scrutinised and published, and the work that had been done with each bidder to ensure their bid was as good as it could be.

Cllr Ray Dean, supported by Cllr Anne Dean, proposed that the Clerk be recommended to award the contract to Green Smile and thank the other bidders for their interest. The majority of those present agreed to this course of action, although Cllrs Moore, Candy and Lyon indicated that, had this been a formal vote, they would have abstained.

7. Play area maintenance contract

The award of a play area maintenance contract had been recommended to the Finance Committee by the Assets Committee but the Finance Committee meeting in December had been cancelled due to the increased restrictions put in place by the Government. Cllrs generally agreed that regular, planned maintenance of the play areas should improve their quality and lifespan, as well as allowing major work to be done in a timelier manner.

Cllr Ray Dean, supported by Cllr Chris McKeone, proposed that the Clerk be recommended to award the play area maintenance contract to Vita Play as recommended by the Assets Committee. The majority agreed with Cllrs Lyon and Moore indicated they would have abstained in a formal vote.

There being nothing further planned for discussion, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:45pm.

**Decisions taken by the Clerk following an informal meeting
with Cllrs on Tuesday 11th January 2022**

- 1) £3,000 will be vired from reserves to cover the cost of replacement gates at Sayers Road play area.
- 2) £5,000 will be vired from reserves to help cover the cost of additional tree work at Underwood Road allotments.
- 3) There will be a formal, in-person meeting of Bishopstoke Parish Council at 7:00pm on Tuesday 18th January, to be held in the Bishopstoke Methodist Church car park. The purpose of this meeting will be to approve the Council's budget for 2022-23 and the precept request to be sent to the Borough Council.
- 4) The Assets Committee meeting planned for 25th January will only be held if there are substantive decisions to be made, not merely to receive reports, and if held, will be done so virtually.
- 5) The open space contract for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2025 is awarded to Green Smile.
- 6) The quote from Vitaplay for a play area quarterly maintenance contract will be accepted