



FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

held on Monday 18 December 2023

at the Parish Office, 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak

P – present, Pt – part of the meeting, Ab – absent, Ap – apologies

P	Cllr Anderson	P	Cllr Couldrey	P	Cllr Meech
P	Cllr Barrett	P	Cllr Douglas	Ap	Cllr Scott
Ap	Cllr Bird	P	Cllr Forfar	P	Cllr Smith
Ap	Cllr Broomfield	Ap	Cllr Higby	P	Cllr Stupple
P	Cllr Chivuchi	Ap	Cllr Marsh	P	Cllr Tennent

Officers in attendance: Mel Stephens, Clerk, Jo Cahill, Finance Officer & Linda Greenslade, Admin Officer

Apologies: Cllrs Bird, Broomfield, Higby & Scott.

81 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Couldrey & Douglas in Minute Number 82(b).

Cllr Stupple in Minute Number 82(b) and 89.

82 MINUTES (PAPER A)

Cllr Couldrey declared a pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Community Library. He did not participate in the discussion and did not vote.

Cllr Douglas declared a pecuniary interest as the wife of the Treasurer of the Squash Club. She did not participate in the discussion and did not vote.

Cllr Stupple declared a pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Fountain Cafe. He did not participate in the discussion and did not vote.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 20 November 2023, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record; and

(b) That the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting and recommendations therein,

held on 1 December 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

83 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman expressed her concerns on the value for money given by Youth Options for youth engagement and provision within the parish. She announced that EBC, along with both Bishopstoke and this parish would be taking part in a workshop in Jan/February to kick start a review of the youth provision in the area and the desired outcomes from the Youth Options contract. It was hoped that this would be facilitated by an independent facilitator.

A review of the fabric of the building was also currently taking place, so some immediate improvements would be seen shortly. In the meantime, the Clerk and the Chairman would attend the workshop and report back on any findings.

84 CLERKS UPDATE

The Clerk gave a presentation, attached at **Appendix 1** to these minutes.

85 BUDGET/PRECEPT 2024/25 (REPORT B)

The Council considered the budget and precept 2024/25 setting recommendations from the Budget Task & Finish Group and Finance Committee.

The precept requirement of £530,338 represented an increase of 6.2% from the previous year. This was a 13p per week or £6.84 per year increase for band D properties. Members supported the proposed budget of £645,438 for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Chairman requested that Officers investigate the level of fees of long-term lease holders at the Woodland Community Centre, as it was understood that rents had not been increased for some time.

Following discussion, it was: -

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the budget requirement for expenditure of £645,438 for 2024/25 as set out in **Appendix 1** be approved;
- (b) That the precept request of £530,338 for 2024/25 financial year, representing a 6.2% increase be approved;
- (c) That the fees and charges set out in **Appendix 2** be approved;
- (d) That the Report of the Budget Task & Finish Group as set out in **Appendix 3** be noted;
and
- (e) That the use of Ear Marked Reserves as set out in **Appendix 4** be approved.

Action: J Cahill/M Stephens

86 FINANCE REPORT (REPORT C)

The Council considered the finance report which highlighted the Council's latest budgetary position.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) That the BACs payments be approved.

Action: J Cahill

87 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS (REPORT D)

The Council considered the interim report of the Internal Auditor and the proposed actions highlighted following the audit undertaken in November.

Members supported the proposed actions of Officers as set out in Appendix 2 to Report D, as such it was: -

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the internal Auditors interim report be noted; and
- (b) That the Council notes the internal audit action plan attached at Appendix 2 to Report D.

Action: J Cahill

88 SPLASHPAD REVIEW (REPORT E)

Members considered the performance of the new splashpad at New Century Park following its first summer season (2023). All agreed the facility had been a success.

Cllr Meech requested for it be noted that a review of operating times had been considered and no change was suggested by Officers.

The Council would review the parking facilities following a full year of splashpad and café opening as part of the 2025/26 budgeting.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

Action: M Johnson

89 CAFÉ REPORT (REPORT F)

Cllr Stupple declared a pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the Fountain Cafe. He did not

participate in the discussion and did not vote.

The Council considered the appointment of a kitchen installer and hard landscape contractor as part of the Fountain Café Project.

As the budget for these individual elements of the project was less than £20k, the Clerk had sought three quotes for each element.

After discussing the individual quotes received; it was: -

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the kitchen supply & installation be awarded to Catering Equipment Support at a cost of £18,179;
- (b) That the hard landscaping works be awarded to Vision D & B Ltd at a cost of £20,500; and
- (c) That the Clerk be given delegated authority to instruct and oversee these projects.

Action: M Stephens

90 WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT G)

The Council considered the work programme and made minor amendments.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

91 STAFFING UPDATE & STAFF SALARIES 2024/25 (REPORT H)

The Council considered the current staffing resource, roles, hours and salaries along with the proposed staffing resource and staff salaries for 2024/25 as part of the annual budget setting.

As part of the 2024/25 budget setting, the Budget Task & Finish Group, as well as the Finance Committee considered proposals to increase the Operations Team by appointing a full-time summer grounds operative as well as increasing the relief caretaking hours by 2 hours per week. Given the additional land and community infrastructure assets such as the splashpad, members on the Group/Committee supported this and was reflected in next year's budget setting.

Members also discussed and agreed the recommendations of the Finance Committee that the overall staff salary be increased by 2% for the 2024/25 financial year. The impact on individual salaries was shown in the confidential appendix circulated at the meeting. As recommended by the Internal Auditor, a signed copy of this would be attached to the hard copy minute book.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the current staffing position be noted;
- (b) That a full time, summer grounds operative be appointed in April 2024 at £13.76 per hour;
- (c) That the relief caretaker hours be increased by 2 hours per week commencing 2024/25; and
- (d) That the staff salaries for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 to Report H (confidential) be approved.

Action: M Stephens/J Cahill

Signed Chairman.

This was all the business and the meeting closed at 6.40 pm.

Appendix 1: Clerks Update Presentation