

HAYDON WICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Haydon Wick Parish Council held on Tuesday 22nd November 2022 at 7.30pm held at Parish Council Offices, Thames Avenue, Swindon, SN25 1QQ.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS: Councillors, V Manro (Chairman) E Baker Lee (Vice Chair), S Heyes, J Jackson, A John, L Rhys-Jones, B Patrick-Okoh, R Hailstone, R Ross, J Fuller, S Fateru, D Rodgers, S McDermott, S Callen and R Venkatesh.

OFFICERS: Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO, Georgina Morgan-Denn
Deputy Clerk & Services Manager, Laura Cutter
Finance Officer/ Deputy RFO, Jodie Smart
Head of Parks & Open Spaces, David Hunt
Community Development Officer, Caroline Hunt

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE SBC Ward Councillor David Renard (Haydon Wick)

FC 132 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from Councillor L Brown (Personal Commitments) and Councillors A Roupelis and K T Naik (Work Commitments).

FC 133 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors S Callen, R Hailstone and J Fuller declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 10 – Bowls Club as they are members.

19.31 Linda Rhys-Jones joined the meeting.

The Chairman updated the meeting that a member of public was recording the meeting.

FC 134 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One member of the public was present and advised that residents of Haydon View Road, Sunningdale Road and Eastville Road receive a rebate from Thames Water every year on drainage, as all the water from the houses goes into a special gully. Residents can claim £27.95 per year and in some cases back dated for five years. If water does not go through a pumping station, you are able to claim by making an application form Thames Water website – Storm Water Drainage (SWD). Current timescales 10 working days from report to the investigation and assessment.

FC 135 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

FC 136 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members confirmed as a true record the minutes of meeting held on 25th October 2022 and the Chairman signed the minutes accordingly.

Proposed: Councillor A John Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed with three (3) abstentions.

RESOLVED: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes of meetings held on Tuesday 25th October 2022.

FC 137

SWINDON BOROUGH WARD COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor D Renard (Haydon Wick): Nothing to update but was happy to take any questions. Members asked if Councillor Renard had any involvement, as Leader of Swindon Borough Council, in relation to the rerouted bus services through Thursday Street and Friday Street? Councillor Renard explained as this is in Priory Vale Ward his fellow SBC Ward Councillors will be more informed of the issues, but happy to work with the SBC Ward Councillors to resolve. *Councillor V Manro advised there has been good level of engagement with residents and planning at Swindon Borough Council, these routes were already set up as bus routes, but keen to avoid issues as seen in Redhouse Way, meaning that the Bus Company will need to be reactive down the line.* Councillor A John reported that he continues to engage with residents as per actions from the Planning & Highways Committee meetings.

Councillor J Jackson (Haydon Wick): None.

Councillor V Manro (Priory Vale): Gave an update in relation to the tankers on Thamesdown Drive, due to sewage pipe burst earlier this month. Thames Water have resolved the issues and placed tankers as a proactive measure this week to avoid additional rainwater causing further issues. Thames Water acknowledge they need to prioritise this water pipe for some upgrade measures. Councillor A John has drafted a letter to Thames Water on behalf of the Planning & Highways Committee, detailing the concerns that the pipes are no longer fit for purpose and there have been several instances of the pipes failing. Thames Water has suggested some drop-in sessions for engagement with residents and Councillor Manro will circulate the dates.

Councillor S Heyes (St Andrews): New 4 & 16 bus services are not particularly well used despite concerns from residents when the bus services were going to be reviewed that they are not frequent enough.

FC 138

COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Councillor E Baker Lee: Nothing to report.

Councillor S Heyes: Nothing to report.

Councillor J Jackson: Nothing to report.

Councillor S Callen: Nothing to report.

Councillor D Rodgers: Nothing to report.

Councillor L Rhys Jones: Nothing to report.

Councillor A John:

Gave an update on a recent Swindon Local Councils Forum. Key points included:

- An update on the draft charter: awaiting response from Cabinet Member charged with parishes liaison -Councillor D Heenan
- Precept setting and budget discussion: most parishes submitting their precepts later than the 31st January in view of the current economy.
- Potential further devolvement of services: some parishes discussed examples of what services could be done, some rural parishes concerned of the resourcing and how this will affect small budgets.
- Concerns over parliamentary constituencies, southern parishes such as Wroughton and Chiseldon may be absorbed into East Wiltshire parliamentary ward, but still be part of Swindon Borough Council, this could cause confusion of SBC Ward Councillors and MPs.

Councillor R Hailstone:

Also updated on the recent Swindon Local Councils Forum meeting that there was lengthy discussion regarding double taxation of residents who must pay a housing management fee as well as a parish council precept. Parishes should try to engage with housing developers during the planning stages. South Marston

Initials _____

Parish Council has experience of this and offered to share some information. The Forum has agreed to write a letter to Justin Tomlinson MP and Robert Buckland MP to ask for their assistance on these issues.

Councillor S Fateru: Sends apologies in advance for December's Full Council.

Councillor R Venkatesh: Attended the Remembrance Day Service with Councillor S Fateru and thanked for the opportunity to represent the Parish Council. Advised that only one person can represent the Parish Council and lay the wreath.

Councillor S McDermott: Attended Havisham Park on Remembrance Sunday with Councillor A John. No members of the public joined. Next year could we have a tidy up of the area so it looks well kept, Council may need to think about securing the wreath.

Councillor J Fuller: No updates on the Enforcement Issues raised with Swindon Borough Council, some issues have been outstanding for two years. Issue will be escalated to Haydon Wick Ward Councillors.

Councillor R Ross: Recently attended the Climate Change presentation at the Parish Council Offices and thought it was very informative.

Councillor V Manro: Nothing to report.

FC 139 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

**FC 140 FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 15TH NOVEMBER 2022
RECOMMENDATIONS**

FC 140A Councillors' Allowances 22/24 and 23/24

Members received recommendations from the Finance & Policy Committee meeting. It was noted that for this year's increase (22/23), Councillors had previously agreed to receive any uplift to their allowance in line with staff increases. This year that was a set amount of £1,925.00 on all scale points, which works out as an average 7.67% increase. Regarding discussions for 23/24 and since the Finance & Policy committee meeting was held, SBC's Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations for 23/24 were available for members to consider. However, as the recommendation would see the budget for councillor allowances double in 23/24 the IRP rates were immediately rejected. After more discussion and some Members feeling uncomfortable agreeing to an increase on allowances, given the current economic situation, a vote was taken on the original recommendations from Policy & Finance Committee which was to reject the Committee's recommendations:

1. Councillors' Allowances in 22-23 will be uplifted by 7.67%. This equates to a new rate of £80.72 per month for Councillors (additional £5.75) and £150.09 for the Chairman (additional £10.69). Back pay to be applied since April 2022.
2. Consider Swindon Borough Council's IRP recommendation and agree to reject their recommendation. To include a budget aspiration of £19,182 for 23-24 Councillor Allowances - this equates to a 5% increase resulting in new rates of £1,017.12 per annum for a Councillor and £1,891.08 per annum for the Chairman.

Proposed: Councillor S Fateru

Seconded: Councillor S Callen

Vote: Rejected with four (4) For, six (6) Against and four (4) Abstentions.

RESOLVED: To reject Finance & Policy Committee's recommendations, as presented, for uplifts in Councillors' allowances 22/23 and 23/24.

A counter proposal was then voted on to implement a standstill on all Councillors' allowances for both 22/23 and 23/24. This would mean allowances would stay at £74.97 per month for Councillors and £139.40 for the Chairman's role. It was then acknowledged that if the new Council from May 2023 wanted to increase their allowances, they could use General Reserves to cover the short fall.

Initials _____

Proposed: Councillor V Manro Seconded: Councillor S Heyes
Vote: Agreed with seven (7) For, two (2) Against and five (5) Abstentions.
RESOLVED: To a standstill on all Councillors' allowances for both 22/23 and 23/24. This would mean allowances would stay at £74.97 per annum for Councillors and £139.40 for the Chairman.

FC 140B Members noted the interim Internal Auditor's report. Some high priority items have already been progressed, introduced and taken to a recent Finance & Policy Committee meeting - such as the Barclay Credit Card reconciliations and Petty Cash journals.

FC 140C Members received a Safeguarding Policy. Queried whether Officers have had safeguarding training, additional DBS checks and that the safeguarding training is offered to external volunteers. Officers confirmed measures had been taken and the urgent need to have the policy in place for the Warm Spaces initiative.

Proposed: Councillor A John Seconded: Councillor L Rhys Jones
Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.
RESOLVED: To adopt the Safeguarding Policy, as presented.

FC 140D Members acknowledged amendments to the Leisure Garden Terms & Conditions and agreed to proceed with adopting them.

Proposed: Councillor S Fateru Seconded: Councillor S Callen
Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.
RESOLVED: To adopt the revised Leisure Garden's Terms & Conditions.

FC 141 BOWLS CLUB TRUST & LEASE RENEWAL

Members received and noted the Bowls Club AGM meeting held on 25th October 2022. It was noted that Councillors R Hailstone and L Brown are the current trust representatives, and both have confirmed that they are happy to continue in this role. If necessary, trust representatives can be reviewed post May following the elections. Members discussed the lease renewal and agreed to extend the existing lease terms for another 25 years. *Action Chief Officer to inform the Bowls Club to draw up the lease renewal with their solicitors.*

FC 141A Proposed: Councillor R Ross Seconded: Councillor E Baker Lee
Vote: Agreed with three (3) abstentions.
RESOLVED:

- 1. To note the minutes of the Bowls Club Annual General Meeting held on 25th October 2022.**
- 2. To confirm Councillors R Hailstone and L Brown as the Parish Council representatives on the Bowls Club Trust.**
- 3. To approve the existing lease terms are renewed for a further 25 years.**

FC 142 BUDGET SETING & BUDGET ASPIRATIONS

FC 142A Budget Setting Update

Members received a report from the Chief Officer/RFO and Deputy RFO. Parish and Town Councils have been given sector guidance to exercise the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and submit their precept demand to their principal authorities by 1st March – when SBC state 31st January. Members considered the rationale and agreed to postpone their submission until mid-February. The extension in the submission will give additional time to consider the Quarter 3 projections for more accurate year end totals and assessment of the level of General Reserves. It will also mean a better assessment of the financial climate at the time and more accurate costs for the Grounds Maintenance Facility and Public Works Loan interest rates. Members were invited to contact the Officers to arrange one-to-one meetings if they were unsure about any aspect of setting the precept.

Other matters in the report will be discussed in more detail with the Budget Setting Working Party. Namely:

- a) Impact of a deficit budget on the Council's General and Ear Marked Reserves levels
- b) Cumulative effect of the Committee's budget aspirations on the future precept
- c) Preparing for potential SBC devolvement of public services without the guarantee for transitional funding
- d) Public Works Loan to fund the improved Grounds Maintenance Facility and rising interest rates
- e) Cautionary note about focusing on percentage increases when actual monetary increases are more realistic
- f) A comparison of Haydon Wick Parish precept compared to others in Swindon - largest at £196.24 – smallest at £57.01
- g) Deprivation statistics in Swindon and noting Haydon Wick and Priory Vale are amongst the least deprived.
- h) A breakdown of services the Parish Council delivers demonstrating good value for the £98.88 per year.

Proposed: Councillor E Baker Lee Seconded: Councillor S McDermott
Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.

RESOLVED: To postpone the budget and precept setting decision until mid-February 2023 and communicate this to Swindon Borough Council as soon as possible.

FC 142B

Earmarked Reserves

Members noted the Ear Marked Reserves and potential for £12,440.00 to go back into the General Reserves. The Finance Officer reiterated that any unplanned expenditure within the remainder of this financial year could affect the final totals.

Proposed: Councillor R Ross Seconded: Councillor S Callen
Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.

RESOLVED: To return £12,440.00 from the Ear Marked Reserves back into the General Reserves, as presented.

FC 142C

Adobe Acrobat Budget Aspiration

Councillor S McDermott presented a budget aspiration to purchase Adobe Acrobat Pro Licences for the Editor, Chief Officer, Deputy Clerk and Community Development Team. Reasons were given as to why the purchase is necessary and the previous two licenses were purchased seven years ago and now out of date. Alternative software was suggested but it was confirmed that Adobe Acrobat is compatible with the Council's suite of software. Members noted that many IT Software companies are now subscription-based to offer a support service, the benefit of this is that it can be reviewed regularly, and updates/upgrades are part of the package. After discussion, Members agreed to submit the cost of five (5) Adobe Acrobat Pro Licences into next year's budget. It was noted that there are funds in an EMR Website and Social Media at £979.69 which could be utilised, resulting in an overall budget impact of £333.53.

Proposed: Councillor S Callen Seconded: Councillor R Ross
Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.

RESOLVED: To submit a budget aspiration for five (5) Adobe Acrobat Pro Licences. Cost on budget will be £333.53 using funds in EMR 341 - Website and Social Media (- £879.67).

FC 142D Community Development Budget Aspirations

Members received a list of budget aspirations submitted by the Officers. The table presented was scrutinised and it was commented that not all projects are unnecessary. Officers explained that each aspiration will be discussed at length and developed with the Community Development Committee. Members agreed to add the aspirations to the budget, except for the Dog Waste Dispensers. It was noted that the final impact of the aspirations and how they affect the final budget will come back to Full Council for consideration. A replacement Tommy figure was also discussed, the current repair is lasting well but this is subject to vandalism. Members suggested and agreed that the Tommy statue is only displayed during November and is put away for safety at other times in the year.

20:40 Councillor S McDermott left the meeting and returned at 20:41.

20:41 Councillor D Rodgers and D Renard left the meeting.

Proposed: Councillor R Hailstone Seconded: Councillor S Callen

Vote: Agreed with two (2) against and one (1) abstention.

RESOLVED: To submit the budget aspirations numbered 2-21, as presented:

- 1. Community Bus: To reinstate funds into the annual budget for a future replacement bus. £12,000.00 accrued funds in Ear Marked Reserves plus £4,000.00 Annual Budget. Total £16,000.00 with an annual accrual of £4,000.00 for the next three years (2023/2024-2025/2026)**
- 2. Memory Café – Provision up to 31st March 2025 with a budget aspiration for £12,500.00 for 2023/2024 and £12,500 for 2024/2025.**
- 3. Community Choices - Split budget in to £8,000.00 Community Choices and £4,000.00 Youth, total £12,000.00**
- 4. Community Projects – other various additional activities requiring an additional £3,184 in community development budget.**

FC 143 CLIMATE CHANGE

Members noted the contents of the report and the ways in which Haydon Wick Parish Council can reduce its carbon footprint. Members noted that the Community Development Officer has recently undertaken training with Councillors S Heyes and V Manro on carbon literacy. It was agreed that Councillors S Heyes, V Manro, E Baker Lee, R Ross and V Venkatesh will form a Climate Change Working Party and will work alongside the Officers to develop an Environmental Policy and report back to a future meeting.

FC 144 SHRUB BED MAINTENANCE AND HEDGE CUTTING SCHEDULE

Members received an update on the shrub bed maintenance and hedge cutting schedule for this autumn/winter. The plan is now to take the operation in-house after the newly appointed external contractor had to pull out from the contract. The in-house plan includes hiring two temporary seasonal members of staff, an additional vehicle on temporary hire and tools and equipment. It was acknowledged that there is budget available within the current agreed budget which was allocated to the external contractor. It was also noted that there was a contingency plan in case of this scenario meaning that an internal option was ready to roll out in the event of a contract withdrawal.

FC 145 PARKS & OPEN SPACES GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Members received an update informing that costings and final designs of the Grounds Maintenance Facility are due on 30th November 2022. Once the final

specification has been received, the Council will reissue the tender to all three interested companies. The working party will present back to Parks & Open Spaces Committee on the 6th December and Full Council on the 13th December. The tendering process will run in to 2023 and the cost of facility is now likely to be more than £750k due to escalating costs of supplies and labour. This means when assessing the tenders Council will need to reassess all options for the facility to ensure it is best value. Also noted the Public Works Loan interest rates have increased. Once there is an agreed way forward and cost of project is confirmed there will be a public consultation about taking out a loan.

Regarding Ventnor Close temporary relocation of a team facility during the build stages; approval was given to proceed with appointing an architect - cost £2,250.00 as per maximum £25,000.00 delegated authority limit [agreed FC 199 (4) February 2022]. Optimistic that planning application for the temporary site will be submitted before the end of 2022.

FC 146 CLIFFORD MEADOW SSSI

Members received an update on the Natural England complaint regarding the poor land management at Clifford Meadow SSI. The Tier 1 response was not satisfactory and did not address a lot of the issues. Council will be escalating to Tier 2 complaint and submitting a press release. Justin Tomlinson MP to be contacted and support the complaint. Optimistic the above actions will create some additional engagement and showcase the importance of the Meadow's status. The working party will be informed of the submission of the Tier 2 complaint. Note Council will be setting clear expectations for turnaround times following the working party meetings to be clear on what the Committee and Officers can achieve. *Action: A draft press release will be circulated to the Chair and Vice Chair of Parks & Open Spaces prior to submission.*

The Deputy Clerk left the meeting at 21.09 and returned at 21.11.

FC 147 HAYDON WICK "LIVING" MAGAZINE

Members received a timeline of the next edition of the magazine. After discussion it was acknowledged the magazine may need to be delayed to capture the most current budget and precept information. To be discussed at December's Full Council meeting. *Action: Editor to look at the implications of delaying the schedule for the spring edition, balancing purdah which begins in April, versus producing a separate budget setting leaflet and reducing the size of the general magazine to 48 pages instead of the usual 64 pages.*

Councillor S Fateru left the meeting at 21.12 and returned at 21.14.

FC 148 POLICE CRIME COMMISSIONER (PCC) DECEMBER/JANUARY PARISH COLUMN

Members noted that the PCC's parish column as circulated and the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) will be attending the March 2023 Full Council meeting.

FC 149 HAYDONLEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Members noted that the Chairman of the Council has been invited to attend a Year 5 Debating Competition on Wednesday 2nd February 2022 at Haydonleigh Primary School.

FC 150 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Members were asked to send any items for the Full Council meeting on the 13th December 2022.

21.17 The Finance Officer and Member of Public left the meeting.

FC 151 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

To resolve in accordance with Standing Order 3 (d) that 'in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted and in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw'. Reason: Contractual.

FC 152 VILLAGE GREEN PLAY AREA WETPOUR SAFETY SURFACING

Members received a report detailing the potential resurfacing of Village Green Play Area. The Head of Parks & Open Spaces gave operational reasons why it would be easier to have a wet pour safety surface rather than the current bark chippings. Members queried if this has been picked up in the annual play inspections and it was confirmed the depth was an issue and had to be raked daily to keep it within a specified depth. As such by replacing the surface with wet pour it will remain at a constant depth

Proposed: Councillor J Jackson

Seconded: Councillor R Venkatesh

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To go out to tender for the supply and installation of wet pour rubber surfacing in the area containing the Supernova and swing frame at Village Green Play Area.**
- 2. To spend from the existing budget of £19,000.00 4518/302 and £22,000.00 from EMR 325 Play Areas.**
- 3. To note the timelines associated with the tender, as presented.**

The meeting closed at 21.25.

Chairman _____

Initials _____