

HAYDON WICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 7.30pm at Parish Council Offices, Thames Avenue, Swindon, SN25 1QQ.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS: Councillors: V Manro (Chair), A Roupelis (Vice Chair), S Faterus, J Fuller, R Hailstone, S Heyes, J Jackson, O Munagala, B Patrick-Okoh and R Worman

OFFICERS: Georgina Morgan-Denn, Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO
Jodie Smart, Finance Officer, Deputy RFO
Julie Coe, Meetings Administrator

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE Councillor P Park

FP 086

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from Councillor C Flux (Personal commitments).

FP 087

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

FP 088

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

FP 089

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Welcome Spaces program will run every other Monday commencing on Monday 27th November through to March 2024 11am – 1pm. However, this will require Councillors to volunteer their time to attend this event and meet and greet the residents who wish to use this service. Should there be no available Councillors to volunteer, sessions will have to be cancelled. Currently there is no further capacity for staff to facilitate these sessions.

Chairman attended the Haven on 20th November which was extremely well attended and another successful event with the room full with happy attendees.

FP 090

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members reviewed the minutes of Finance and Policy Committee held on Tuesday 17th October 2023 and agreed they were a true record.

Proposed: Councillor B Patrick- Seconded: Councillor J Fuller Okoh

Vote: Agreed with four (4) Abstentions.

Resolved: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes of meetings of meetings held on 17th October 2023.

FP 091

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor V Manro – Nothing to report.

Councillor B Patrick-Okoh – Nothing to report.

Councillor A Roupelis – Nothing to report.

Councillor J Fuller – Nothing to report.

Councillor S Fateru – Nothing to report.

Initials: _____

Councillor P Park – Nothing to report.

Councillor J Jackson – Nothing to report.

Councillor S Heyes – Nothing to report.

Councillor R Hailstone – Attended meeting at Swindon & Cricklade Railway and they would like to discuss the car park with SBC (Swindon Borough Council) at Mouldon Hill, and perhaps this could be discussed in conjunction with SBC after the Tadpole Field Working Party.

Councillor R Worman – Attended a meeting as a member of the public at SBC and advised the Committee there are to be changes to the POD (prescription ordering) services and the last consultation is on 18th December 2023.

FP 092

CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

1. Advised that a Freedom of Information request has been received into the office reference outdoor cinemas and it was confirmed that HWPC don't offer this facility. The full response will be reported at a future meeting.

2. Legal issues with HWPC Bowls Club are ongoing and any updates will be reported when received.

3. Attended a seminar held by SLCC on 'Martyn's Law'. Once this is made law this will need to be taken into consideration for any Council buildings or large public events.

4. Deputy RFO (Responsible Financial Officer) attended a Pension seminar in Trowbridge and a formal report on this will follow in due course.

5. Cost of Living pay rise was confirmed and back pay due from April 2023 was duly paid to staff in the November payroll run.

FP 093

FP 093A

FP 093B

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Members noted the Income & Expenditure reports for Month 7 (October).

Members considered and noted the bank statements and reconciliations for October 2023.

FP 093C

Members discussed and approved October/November 2023 expenditure under purchase daybook references 3099 - 3147 and cashbook reference 347. The total for approval is £95,511.37

Proposed: Councillor J Jackson Seconded: Councillor S Heyes

Vote: Agreed Unanimously

RESOLVED: To approve expenditure under purchase daybook references 3099 – 3147 and cashbook reference 347. The payments total is £95,511.37.

FP 093D

Members discussed and retrospectively approved the payments for the credit card and petty cash totaling £1015.72 and £33.46 respectively.

Proposed: Councillor R Worman Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To retrospectively approve the payments made using the credit card and petty cash totalling £1015.72 and £33.46 respectively.

FP 094

PRECEPT IMPACT

The Committee noted the tracking report of additional budget requirements for 24/25 precept following decisions made in previous Council meetings.

Initials: _____

FP 095

PARISH COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

Members considered the report recommending to Full Council an uplift on Councillors' Allowances in 23-24 by 8.46%, which is consistent with the average staff Cost of Living pay rise and a budget aspiration for 24/25. After a thorough discussion and several counter proposals made where the votes fell the final vote was to defer the decision to Full Council on the 12th December 2023.

Proposed: Councillor R

Seconded: Councillor A Roupelis

Hailstone

Vote: Agreed with two (2) Abstentions.

RESOLVED: Full Council to consider the Parish Councillor Allowances for 2023/24 and budget aspiration for 2024/25 at the 12th December meeting.

FP 096

BUDGET SETTING 2024/25 UPDATE

A verbal update was received on the budget setting process following the Budget Setting Working Party meeting on 21st November 2023. The deadline for budget aspirations is set at 30th November 2023. Once all have been collated the budget will be aligned, made formal and decisions will be agreed and set at the end of January 2024.

FP 097

FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT – ANNUAL REVIEW

Committee read and reviewed the annual review and agreed to propose to approve the document and put to Full Council December 2023.

Proposed: Councillor J Jackson

Seconded: Councillor S Heyes

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To recommend that Full Council adopts the policy in December 2023.

FP 098

POLICY REVIEWS

FP 098A

Petition Policy was reviewed with no questions raised.

Proposed: Councillor R Hailstone

Seconded: Councillor S Fateru

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To recommend that Full Council adopts the policy in December 2023.

FP 098B

Procurement Policy was reviewed by committee with no questions raised.

Proposed: Councillor A Roupelis

Seconded: Councillor B Patrick-Okoh

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To recommend that Full Council adopts the policy in December 2023.

FP 098C

Tree Management Policy was reviewed by committee with no questions raised.

Proposed: Councillor R Hailstone

Seconded: Councillor A Roupelis

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To recommend that Full Council adopts the policy in December 2023.

FP 099

INSURANCE – KEY PERSONNEL COVER

The Committee noted that the Heads of Parks and Open Spaces has been added to the Parish Council's Key Personnel Insurance.

FP 100

CIL RECEIPT

Members noted the CIL receipts received for up to 2022/23 totalling £6,544.26.

FP 101

BAD DEBT WRITE OFF

Members noted a bad debt of £84.00 carried over from the last financial year was written off by the Chief Officer despite numerous attempts to recover this debt it has resulted in no payment.

FP 102

PETTY CASH – HSBC BRANCH TEMPORARY CLOSURE

Members noted that the Swindon branch of HSBC is temporarily closed until 11th December 2023. Therefore, the petty cash is unable to be topped up so the credit card and staff expenses will be utilised in the meantime.

FP 103

POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW

The polling station districts and polling places report from SBC (Swindon Borough Council) was reviewed and HWPC polling stages all remain the same with the exception of a new one at the 'Shield and Dagger' and another one at the Orbital Library (previously used). Committee agreed they did not require any change requests to go back to SBC (Swindon Borough Council) and this would be acknowledged back to them formally.

Proposed: Councillor J Jackson Seconded: Councillor S Heyes

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To inform SBC that the Parish Council does not have any comments to submit.

FP 104

SMOKE FREE GENERATION

Committee reviewed the report received from SBC (Swindon Borough Council) and it was agreed that should Councillors wish to respond, that they can do individually.

FP 105

PARISH ELECTION CYCLE

SBC will change its election cycle in 2026 to whole 'all-outs' Councillor elections once every four years and parishes therefore have the option to harmonise their own election cycles with SBC. The benefits of doing so will help with reducing the cost of running an election because the cost is shared with SBC. A combined saving of £16,871.00 for Haydon Wick. However, it was acknowledged the current Council's term would be reduced by a year – with the next election due in 2027, then 2031 and every four years thereafter. After a discussion and considering the views of the Election Working Party, the Committee agreed to recommend to Full Council to fall in line with SBC's election cycle.

Proposed: Councillor B Patrick- Seconded: Councillor A Roupelis Okoh

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council that Haydon Wick Parish Council falls in line with the SBC's election cycle with the next parish council elections taking place on the 2027, 2031 and every four years thereafter.

FP 106

MOULDON HILL – FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENT WORKS

SBC advised the schedule of works commencing in November:

- Phase 1: Footpath works to the car park and access road. Provisionally programmed to commence from Monday 20th November 2023 until Friday 22nd December 2023 (approximately 5 weeks).
- Phase 2: Footpath works around the lake. Provisionally programmed to commence from Wednesday 3rd January 2024 until Friday 2nd February 2024 (approximately 6 weeks).

It was stated because the Parish Council does litter picking and bin emptying, as well as grass cutting on the main drive, car park and lake it should be kept more up to date with improvement works than it currently does. It was suggested and agreed to arrange a meeting with SBC in January 2024.

FP 107

FLOODING ENGAGEMENT

The Council's Emergency Working Party will meet to discuss the flood and emergency plans. In the meantime, Councillors were asked to collate any information from their areas and to send to Councillor V Manro to start collating. The Parish Council will add links of how to report floods on social media to ensure residents are clear on reporting flood concerns.

FP 108

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

RESOLVED: 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: Contracts & Sensitive.

FP 109

TRACTOR & FLAIL HIRE

Committee reviewed the report and the recommendation to extend the current hire period of the tractor and side arm flail from 12th December 2023 – 12th March for period of three months at a cost of £3,750.00 (£1,250.00 per month) + VAT. To be met from EMR 328 Arboricultural funds using available funds currently at £16,211.02.

Proposer: Councillor R Worman Second: Councillor R Hailstone
Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To extend the Tractor and Flail Hire by three (3) months at a cost of £3,750.00 using available funds from EMR 328.

FP 110

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

FP 110A

Finance Update: Treasury have advised that DCLUH can make the decision on the approval to borrow application, it is now with the approver.

FP 110B

Contract Update: No further update other than HWPC await details of revised costs and have requested this be itemised. SSE quote has been received.

FP 111

INSURANCE MATTERS

One (1) accident occurred with the minibus bumping into a car in the car park. This is with Council's insurance.

The Meeting Closed at: 8.48pm Chairman Signed:_____

Initials: _____