

HAYDON WICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Haydon Wick Parish Council Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 25th July 2023 at 7.30pm held at Parish Council Offices, Thames Avenue, Swindon, SN25 1QQ.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS: Councillors V Manro (Chairman), S Heyes (Vice Chairman), J Ali, E Baker-Walker, G Choudhury, S Fateru, C Flux, R Hailstone, A Jimmy, A John, O Munagala, B Patrick-Okoh, P Park, R Ross and R Worman.

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

FC 077 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from Councillors J Jackson and J Fuller (Personal Commitments) and A Roupelis (Work Commitments).

FC 078 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

FC 079 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was one (1) member of the public present who requested to see a full schedule of hedge cutting by his property and the surrounding area in Haydon End. It was commented that a schedule should be ready by week ending 4th August 2023 and he will by duly sent the information required.

FC 080 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

Thanks was given for the overwhelming support and time given to help at the Summer Spectacular.

FC 081 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members confirmed as a true record the minutes of meetings held on Tuesday 27th June 2023.

Proposed: Councillor A John

Seconded: Councillor R Ross

Vote: Agreed with four (4) Abstentions.

RESOLVED: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes of meetings held on 27th June 2023.

FC 082 SWINDON BOROUGH WARD COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor S Adamcova (Haydon Wick):

A written report was received from a Swindon Borough Ward Councillor to note for information only.

Congratulations to the Parish Council on the successful delivery of the Summer Spectacular event. Despite the daunting weather forecast, it turned out to be a nice day! Please, let me know if you need any hand with preparations for the next year. I know that it takes a lot of planning and preparation to deliver such an amazing community event. I would also like to say thank you to the grounds maintenance team for cutting the shrubs by Catherine Wayte School.

Other Updates:

1. Thames Water Haydon End Water main works – In my previous update I stated that I would share the public communication as soon as it is available. I checked this yesterday and Thames Water still has not shared their comms with the SBC.

2. Planning proposal Ref: S/TC/23/0621/MILE – Prior Approval application for the installation of a 12-meter-high street-works pole and associated antenna on a verge at Blunsdon Road Haydon Wick, Swindon, SN25 3PZ. Many thanks to Parish Council for their efforts in helping to provide alternative locations for the street-works pole. Arqiva's agent advised that they wanted to work with the SBC and withdrew the prior approval application. No further information has been provided at this point. I expect that they will submit a new application at some point, so it is important to monitor the planning portal.

3. Application S/23/0696 - Change of use of 5-bedroom dwelling with a self-contained 2-bedroom Flat into a 9 Bed HMO – Thank you to the Parish Council for calling this application to the planning committee. I have followed this up and I have been informed that it may need to go to the September meeting due to the lead times for writing reports by officers. I am still waiting for the date to be confirmed.

4. Thames Avenue road safety issues – The ward meeting with the Transport and Highways representatives took place yesterday afternoon. All ward Cllrs attended this meeting. We discussed a number of issues in the ward, but the main focus of the meeting was on Thames Avenue in relation to the speed bump on the top of the road and a lack of safe crossing for elderly vulnerable residents and school pupils who attend Greenmeadow Primary School. The officers suggested potentially doing a corridor review of Thames Avenue, which means doing a holistic review of the whole road. However, this would need to be considered and prioritised in relation to issues from other wards. I have insisted that we need to separate these issues as a need for a safe place to cross the road, a need for a pedestrian crossing, and then the wider roads safety review. I have also raised the negative impact that the speed bump has on the neighbouring properties, and that it has not addressed the issue of speeding. The officers said that they need to complete the ward meetings with other wards and then they will come back to us with a proposed list of ward priorities. Councillor S Adamcova will update HWPC with any further information as and when received.

FC 083

COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor R Hailstone: Advised he had attended a meeting at West Swindon Parish Council in his capacity as Chairman of Swindon Local Councils Forum (SLCF) and presented the benefits of joining the forum.

Councillor J Ali: Raised issues from residents regarding the overgrown shrubs and hedges in Oakhurst, he would like this resolved and a management plan put in place for future reference. Also confirmed West Swindon Parish Council resolved to join SLCF.

Councillor P Park: Emulated the same concerns as Councillor J Ali of the management of shrubs and hedges around Oakhurst.

Councillor S Fateru: Gave positive feedback on the 'Haydon Wick Living' magazine residents had enjoyed receiving and reading the content and useful information.

Councillor E Baker-Walker: Attended the Orbital event on Saturday - it was well attended, and the general comments and feedback were positive. One complaint reported about the collection of medical waste in the Parish, the resident was advised that this is an issue to be reported to Swindon Borough Council.

Councillor R Ross: Requested Councillors to please share the new morning yoga sessions within their communities to increase interest and attendance. Also attended the event at the Orbital on Saturday to assist on the Parish Council stand.

Councillor V Manro: Nothing to report.

Councillor S Heyes: Nothing to report.

Councillor G Choudhury: Nothing to report.

Councillor A John: Nothing to report.

Councillor O Munagala: Nothing to report.

Councillor A Jimmy: Nothing to report.

Councillor R Worman: Nothing to report.

Councillor C Flux: Nothing to report.

Councillor B Patrick-Okoh: Nothing to report.

FC 084

CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

FC 085

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The meeting heard that the latest contract is with the Contractor's Solicitors and will be shared with Council once it is ready for signing. The Licence to Occupy the Waterside Facility/Depot has been signed by the Chief Officer and the current scheduled date to move the team is the 14th August 2023.

FC 086

SUMMER SPECTACULAR

Thanks were expressed to all the Councillors, staff and volunteers who gave up their time to make this event a success. Verbal update to the meeting as follows:

- Parish Council stands – Guess the name of the Teddy, Memory Café, Youth Craft and Parish Council stand all worked well, with enough volunteers on hand to make sure everything ran smoothly. Having free activities for children really attracts families. The popper bracelets and bubbles went down well with children, and good feedback was received from those who took part in the free craft activity. Due to the wind the craft materials had to be kept in a box and pulled out when needed.
- Councillor and Volunteers – Signing in and out sheet worked well, good feedback on how helpful staff, Councillors and volunteers were, everyone was prepared to adapt to help where needed.
- Stall holders – Most were efficient at setting up, a few were still setting up as the event opened. Fun fair arrived late, and some stall holders just didn't turn up on the day possibly due to the weather forecast.
- Entertainment – Dog Show was really popular, and the prizes (some donated by Thameswood vets) were really lovely. The Bubble Man was popular, BEST proved a draw for young people to try out their boxing skills, and people enjoyed seeing sponges thrown at the brave people in the stocks. Unfortunately, the yoga and live music acts had to be cancelled at very short notice due to weather, but they were very understanding.
- Food – all outlets turned up on time, we received positive comments on the quality of the food available. Due to a food outlet who cancelled on the day, there was a need for more hot drinks providers.
- Contractors – all very efficient, all risk assessments and insurance provided up front. Portaloo contractors removed the toilets earlier than expected, but weren't able to provide a disabled accessible toilet, which was only made clear two days prior to the event. PA and stage hire went smoothly, medics and security staff were helpful. The fun fair was a little antiquated with a little disappointment with the time of arrival and the ride in general.
- Estimated footfall of 400 people, again due to the weather.
- Budget information to follow at Community Development Committee on 1st August.

It was noted there was a lot of litter before the event started and a more thorough standard of littering picking is required at the park. It was also questioned why the July date was chosen when it clashed with other local events.

FC 087

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To bring to Community Development Committee fundraising ideas for Councillors to take part in.

FC 088

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: Contractual.

Member of the Public left the meeting at 19.53.

FC 089

TRENT ROAD PLAY AREA INVITATION TO TENDER (ITT)

Meeting received a report detailing the tender process for Trent Road Play Area. The tender bidding documents were published on the GOV.UK Public Contracts Finder website and the Parish Council's website in early June 2023 allowing four weeks for interested companies to make contact and seek any clarification. Six companies were interested in tendering for this project. Two companies had to pull out due to resourcing impact. Four submitted a tender bid by the deadline on Friday 30th June. All four tender bids were in the assigned budget of £65,000.00.

The bids were opened by the Chief Officer in the presence of Councillor R Worman on Friday 30th June.

On Monday 17th July, Officers and Councillors visited Greenmeadow Primary School to host a consultation session with Year 6 pupils. Good feedback was received on all four designs and the play value appeal of each design. Pupils also gave ideas for the play area's opening event in October, fundraising towards a piece of equipment and ideas for future play area projects. The Council also reached out to Benjamin's Smile and Mums on a Mission, both charities are ambassadors for accessible play and the Council has worked with them on developing designs previously. The Play Area Working Party met again on Thursday 20th July to receive the clarification questions, scrutinise the documents and score them accordingly. The bids were also reviewed alongside the Government guidance for inclusive play design. All bids captured the Council's aspirations for this site and suppliers were helpful with any enquiries and open to suggestions of different ideas. One of the bids stood out from the rest, as it was innovative, eye catching, full of play value and gave a lot of interactive equipment for the assigned budget. Councillors reviewed the designs and recommendation and agreed to award the contract to Wicksteed at a cost of £64,520.00 (exc VAT) to be coded to EMR 325 (Play Areas). Councillors also assigned £5,000.00 contingency budget to include the purchase of CCTV to protect the new asset.

Proposed: Councillor R Hailstone Seconded: Councillor E Baker Walker

Vote: Agreed with two (2) Abstentions.

Resolved:

- 1. To award the Trent Road Play Area contract to Wicksteed at a cost of £64,520.00 (exc VAT) to be coded to EMR 325 (Play Areas).**
- 2. To note there is a contingency budget assigned to this project of £5,000.00 which is to include CCTV to protect the new asset.**

FC 090

CCTV MONITORING SYSTEM

Deferred to future meeting as all the information was not yet available.

FC 091

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION 18TH JULY 2023 – GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY (GMF) FINANCES

The meeting discussed the recommendation from the Finance & Policy Committee concerning amending the financing option for the GMF borrowing application.

The recommendation from the Committee is to amend the permission for borrowing application so that the repayment method is maturity for a term of three (3) years with the intention of refinancing with an annuity loan at the maturity rate.

It was acknowledged that the project has been in progress for over two years. At the beginning of the project the intention was to take out a 25–30-year loan from the Public Works Loan Board (which is a lending facility operated by the UK Debt Management Office (DMO) on behalf of HM Treasury). At this time the interest rates were around 1.55-2.17%. Due to the global economic situation, these rates are no longer available, that coupled with inflation affecting a rise in materials and labour costs means that the projected costs to the Council over the next 30 years has significantly increased, whilst the necessity of the building is still as prevalent as ever.

As at 11th July 2023 the interest rates for a 30-year annuity loan for up to £768,590.00 is 5.56%. It was noted that this is the maximum loan requirement and Council will only loan what is necessary to complete the project and may be lower than projected.

The Council's forward budget for the next two years includes a loan repayment budget line of £50,000.00 per annum. The application for borrowing approval is currently with the Approver at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The loan can be drawn down in tranches and Council may use its Reserves to cover the costs of the Contractor's instalments, to obtain the most favourable interest rates at the time. This will also assist the Council in drawing down only what is necessary to cover the costs of the project.

It was reported the forecast on interest rates is currently showing a peak at between November 2023 and February 2024, with a slow reduction then over the following 2-3 years. The current build schedule means that it is likely that Council will be requesting the loan drawdowns during the peak in interest rates.

The meeting noted the report and at the at the time of writing the recommendation was to progress with taking out a maturity loan with Public Works Loan Board for 2 years (illustrative term, can be increased). This means that Council will only be paying the interest on the loan for the first two years. However, the difference between the interest repayment and budgeted £50,000.00 should be saved in an EMR and repaid on the loan at the end of the 2-year term to reduce the capital balance for year 3.

Councillors heard that a full financial proposal, with final costings, will be brought back to Council meeting for approval and today's vote was simply to amend the permission to borrow application to a maturity loan.

Councillors raised several questions on the previously agreed decision to proceed with the GMF Facility. It was further reiterated that this evening's discussion was only to amend the permission for borrowing application so that the repayment method is maturity for a term of three (3) years with the intention of refinancing with an annuity loan at the maturity rate. The decision to proceed with the project and the loan had already been agreed by Full Council.

All Councillors were reminded that they could attend the GMF Working Party meetings to better understand the project and associated financials. Councillors were politely asked have trust in their colleagues and that they have scrutinised the project and due diligence prior to this recommendation being presented to Full Council.

One Councillor was adamant to halt proceedings on the project until the interest rates were more favourable. However, concerns about rising building materials, the welfare and wellbeing of the staff and the immediate requirement for a purpose built facility were counter argued. It was also noted that the Councillor would require ten other Councillors to rescind a previous resolution and the

business being transacted tonight was simply to amend the permission for borrowing application and not to debate any potential delays in the project.

Councillor P Park gave thanks to Deputy RFO for the excellent reporting and hard work to date.

Councillor R Worman requested a recorded vote.

Proposed: Councillor R Hailstone Seconded: Councillor C Flux
Vote: Agreed with thirteen (13) For, one (1) Against and one (1) Abstention.

For

Thirteen (13)

Cllr V Manro

Cllr S Heyes

Cllr J Ali

Cllr E Baker Walker

Cllr G Choudhury

Cllr C Flux

Cllr R Hailstone

Cllr A John

Cllr A Jimmy

Cllr O Munagala

Cllr B Patrick-Okoh

Cllr P Park

Cllr R Ross

Against

Cllr R Worman

Abstention

Cllr S Fateru

RESOLVED:

- 1. To note the report on options for financing the GMF.**
- 2. To amend the permission for borrowing application so that the repayment method is maturity for a term of 3 years with the intention of refinancing with an annuity loan at the maturity date.**
- 3. To agree that the difference between the maturity repayments and £50,000 budget for repayments be moved into an Ear Marked Reserve at each year end for the 3-year term with the balance paid on the loan at maturity.**

FC 092

GROUND'S MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The meeting heard that the Licence to Occupy Waterside has been signed and there is a date of 14th August to move the team to the temporary location. The Council's Solicitor has prepared a Schedule of Amendments to accompany Affleck's Building Contract based on feedback from the Council's Project Manager and the GMF Working Party. This is now with Affleck's Solicitor for comments. Once we have their final comments Councillors will be able to scrutinise the final contract before signing.

FC 093

AFC HAYDON VALE

Members considered correspondence from the Football Club Secretary regarding changes to the lease renewal. The meeting acknowledged that complaints had been received to do with balls going onto private property and affecting the wellbeing of some residents. Councillors discussed the importance of trying to balance the requirement to keep grass roots football at the site, for its obvious

benefits with the concerns reported to them. It was acknowledged that the Club would like to increase the age range from under 14s to under 17s girls and under 15s boys but they are not able to install temporary nets during the football season predominately due to financial reasons and this seems to be the main sticking point in the lease renewal process. Members asked the Football Team to consider some alternatives to the nets which may be able to address both parties' concerns.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor J Ali

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: For original renewal terms to remain as agreed at Full Council on the 27th June 2023 [FC 076] but for the Football Club to suggest some alternatives to point 3 and offer some alternatives to temporary nets to address the safety issues being reported by residents.

The Meetings Administrator and Deputy RFO left at 21.12.

FC 094

PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE 24TH JULY – VARIOUS STAFFING MATTERS

Councillor V Manro in his capacity as Chair of Personnel Sub Committee reported items from a Personnel Sub Committee meeting held on the 24th July 2023.

FC 094A

Parks & Open Spaces Team (POST) Temporary Relocation to Waterside

Council has sought professional HR advice regarding temporary relocation to Waterside Depot, Cheney Manor during the build stages of the Grounds Maintenance Facility. After discussion the meeting agreed to the following.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor J Ali

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. To give two weeks' notice instead of the standard four weeks' notice to the employees as they have been informed regularly and know the move is forthcoming.
2. To note employees must 'mutually agree' to the temporary change of workplace as the current contracts do not include a 'mobility clause'.
3. To note the advice received from Wiltshire HR advice line that a reasonable compromise would be to allow employees travelling the extra distance to claim mileage allowance.
4. To reduce the temporary 0.95p mileage rate to 0.45p in view of fuel price reductions.
5. The mileage reclaim for a total for seven operatives travelling to Waterside for 9 months will be £2,835.00. Budget Code EMR 319 £11,897.74 funds available.
6. To note the proposed consultation letter to staff, as presented.
7. To note further changes to contract, such as adding a 'mobility clause' to all contracts and changing the operational hours of the Parks & Open Spaces Team will follow ahead of moving into the Grounds Maintenance Facility.

FC 094B

POST Service Delivery & Staffing Matters

Members received a verbal update on the current service delivery, noted the lessons learnt, and what next steps are needed to assist in the delivery. After discussion the meeting agreed to the following.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor J Ali

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. To hire a tractor for up to 3 months at a cost of up to £6,600.00. Budget 4522/307 (Grounds Maintenance Contract, £7,406.00 available).
2. To delegate authority to the Chief Officer to approve the final supplier following further quotations, up to a value of £6,600.00.

3. To approve the additional insurance premium of £589.02 to cover the tractor and side arm. Budget 4522/307 (Grounds Maintenance Contract, £7,406.00 available).
4. To approve training costs of up to £200.00 to train up to three members of staff in 01/S2 (Chapter 8 traffic management). Budget 4020/307 (Staff Training, £4,600.00 available).

FC 094C

23/24 COST OF LIVING PAY AWARD IMPACT & SALARY REGRADE

The NJC pay rise for 1st April 2023 is currently under negotiation. The Employers final offer stands at £1,925 across all pay scales up to SCP43, with a 3.88% increase for scales above this.

At budget setting the Council included a best guess blanket 5% increase on all salaries. Should the offer be accepted the average salary increase for Council employees is 6.35%. Considering the previously agreed expenditure the financial implications for 2023/24 a +£2,559 difference - which is a precept impact in 24/25 +£0.22 on a Band D and in 25/26 +£0.25.

There was also discussion to regrade a member of staff based on their performance and changes in responsibility to warrant the regrade. The regrade has a financial impact this year that can be met from budgeted funds. There are however future impacts on the precept, and coupled with the above NJC Cost of Living increases, they will result in:

- 24/25 +£0.38 per Band D household
- 25/26 +£0.52 per Band D household

After discussion and an acknowledgement that the staff member was an asset to the Council and the Community, Members agreed to the Sub Committee's recommendation.

Proposed: Councillor E Baker Walker

Seconded: Councillor J Ali

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the update on the NJC pay rise negotiations and potential financial impacts.
2. To regrade the member of staff, details held confidentially.
3. To implement the regrade from August 2023 and funding to be met from EMRs for 23/24.
4. To note the financial impact for 24/25 and 25/26 of the proposed regrade.

FC 094D

STAFF LOAN SCHEME & SAVINGS SCHEME

Members noted the update that five staff loans have been issued and many have reported those loans to be a 'lifeline'. The savings scheme is now set up and many in the team have indicated they will use it.