

BISHOPSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Methodist Church Hall, Sedgwick Road, Bishopstoke commencing at 7.30pm on 12 October 2010

Present: Cllr Winstanley (Chairman), Cllr Hansell (Item 5 onwards), Cllr McGuinness, Cllr Roling, Cllr Toher and Cllr Uren

In Attendance: Mr P J Storey (Clerk to the Parish Council)
Mrs C Taylor (Assistant Clerk)

Public Session No members of the public were present.

1. Apologies

1.1 None.

2. To Agree the Minutes of the Meeting on 7 September 2010

2.1 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Roling, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2010 be accepted as a true record.

3. Matters Arising from the above Minutes

3.1 Item 10.2 – Cemetery 30 year exclusive rights rule. Following further discussion on the length of time families could purchase exclusive rights over a plot in the Cemetery, it was considered appropriate to offer families a choice of periods rather than a straight 30 years.

3.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Uren, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that families be offered the exclusive right to a plot in the Cemetery for a period of either 30 or 60 years with the fee being double for the latter period.

4. Declarations of Interest

4.1 Cllrs Winstanley and Toher declared an interest in the Grant Aid application from the Memorial Hall (Item 7) and in future support for the Carnival Group (Item 8). Cllr Roling also declared an interest in Item 8.

5. RFO's Report and Budget Monitoring

5.1 A budget monitoring report had been circulated with the agenda papers. This was noted.

5.2 The RFO would redesign the monthly statement of account to enable Councillors to more easily reconcile the figures contained therein.

Action: RFO

5.3 The RFO drew attention to the need to review allotment rent given that a year's notice was given to tenants of increases. Thus, in order to include an appropriate figure for rental income in the budget for 2011-12 and to have a rental level set for notification next October and effective from 1 January 2012, it was necessary to determine any increase at this time. The current rental was £25, with a 50% reduction for tenants aged 60 or over, and this would produce an estimated income of £2900 in the current year. A small increase of £5 would contribute towards anticipated future increases in costs and maintain the aim of keeping the allotments self-financing. There was also some discussion on the relevance of the 60 years and over reduction when other subsidies or reductions elsewhere were linked to pensionable

age. The possible need to increase the qualifying age for reduced rent in line with other age related benefits would be kept in mind for future consideration.

4 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Uren, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the allotment rent for a 5 rod plot be increased from £25 to £30 with effect from 1 January 2012.

5.5 The Chairman then signed the quarterly bank reconciliation statement.

6. To consider the financial risk assessment and statement of internal control

6.1 The statement of internal control and internal audit review checklist had been tabled for consideration as part of the on-going need for Councillors to satisfy their responsibility for ensuring that their conduct of public business and the expending of public money was in accordance with the law and proper standards, that it was safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

6.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Roling, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the financial risk assessment and statement of internal control be adopted.

7. To review and, if appropriate, make recommendations on the application for Grant Aid from the Bishopstoke Memorial Hall

7.1 An application for Grant Aid had been received from the Bishopstoke Memorial Hall to assist them in meeting the costs of replacing the old wrought iron single pane windows along the side of the Hall with modern double glazed units.

Cllr Toher left the meeting at this point

7.2 Proposed Cllr Uren, Seconded Cllr Hansell, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that £1200 be granted to the Memorial Hall to assist them in meeting the costs of replacing windows.

Cllr Toher rejoined the meeting

8. To review the support given to the Bishopstoke Carnival Group

.1 The difficulty the Carnival Group had in attracting more volunteers to help plan and manage the Carnival had been acknowledged previously and it was now thought appropriate, with the experience of this year's Carnival to hand, to consider the degree of help possible for future years. There was unanimous agreement that every effort should be made to continue to help those remaining volunteers who formed the Carnival Committee. Fifty hours of the Assistant Clerk's time had been budgeted for in the current year and it was thought appropriate for this to continue as, although it had not been fully utilised this year, it was more likely to be in future and would provide significant administrative help to the Committee.

8.1 The level of future financial help was then discussed and ringfencing some of the Community Projects budget was thought appropriate. However, if this was agreed, it should become a requirement of the Carnival Committee to account for expenditure to the Council.

8.3 Proposed Cllr Uren, Seconded Cllr McGuinness, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that 50 hours of the Assistant Clerk's time and £2500 be ringfenced from the Community Projects budget as contributions towards the costs of mounting next year's Carnival.

9. To review the options for a travel token scheme

9.1 Following previous discussion at the July meeting on the feasibility of introducing a travel token scheme for those persons unable to use public transport through age or infirmity, it was now thought timely to look in detail at introducing such a scheme in Bishopstoke. There was

no objection from the County or Borough Councils to locally managed schemes and the previous experience of the Hamble scheme would assist in starting up a local scheme. It was thought a small working party of councillors could make the necessary enquiries and determine the eligibility criteria with a view to commencing the scheme in April 2011. Again, it was thought a sum of money could be ringfenced from the Community Projects budget to finance the start up costs, estimated at £2500, and running costs thereafter which would be determined by the take up rate.

- 9.2 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Uren, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that a small working party of councillors be set up to investigate the feasibility and eligibility of those in Bishopstoke who might benefit from a travel token scheme funded by the Council and that £2500 be ringfenced from the community projects budget to cover start up costs.

10. Asset transfer update

- 10.1 The Clerk reported that all legal paperwork had now been signed and sealed regarding the transfer of title from the Borough Council for the allotments and Cemetery. He would now be liaising with the Borough Council on the transfer of ownership of the bus shelters to take effect from 1 April 2011.

11. Parish Website

- 11.1 Councillors were requested to check their personal details on the Council website.

Action: All

12. Parish Newsletter

- 12.1 The next issue would be in late November/early December.

13. Clerk's Report

- 13.1 The Clerk reported that repairs to the damaged Riverside railings had been completed but he was still liaising over the need for other damaged areas to be repaired; that a wildlife interpretation board would soon be installed on the railings adjacent to the community board on Riverside; that various improvements works on the mounds and other open areas on the Brookfield estate would soon be undertaken; and that the cctv investigation into the flooding at Riverside had proven inconclusive and would have to be repeated.

14. Date, time and place of next Meeting

- 14.1 The next meeting will be on Tuesday 9 November 2010 at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Sedgwick Road, Bishopstoke.

Action: All

15. Motion for Confidential Business

- 15.1 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed relating to employees' confirmation in post and remuneration, it was advisable in the public interest that the public be excluded and for the record the business be regarded as confidential.

16. Consideration of approval for payment of staff hours of work, mileage and out of pocket expenses for September 2010 (Confidential Business)

- 16.1 Members noted the report tabled by the RFO and attached to these minutes.
- 16.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Hansell, **RESOLVED** that payment be made to the staff, as tabled.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.15pm.

Summary of Recommendations for Consideration by Full Parish Council

- 3.2 that families be offered the exclusive right to a plot in the Cemetery for a period of either 30 or 60 years with the fee being double for the latter period.
- 5.4 that the allotment rent for a 5 rod plot be increased from £25 to £30 with effect from 1 January 2012.
- 6.2 that the financial risk assessment and statement of internal control be adopted.
- 7.2 that £1200 be granted to the Memorial Hall to assist them in meeting the costs of replacing windows.
- 8.3 that 50 hours of the Assistant Clerk's time and £2500 be ringfenced from the Community Projects budget as contributions towards the costs of mounting next year's Carnival.
- 9.2 that a small working party of councillors be set up to investigate the feasibility and eligibility of those in Bishopstoke who might benefit from a travel token scheme funded by the Council and that £2500 be ringfenced from the Community projects budget to cover start up costs.

Summary of Resolutions Passed to be Noted by the Full Parish Council

- 2.1 that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2010 be accepted as a true record.
- 15.1 that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed relating to employees' confirmation in post and remuneration, it was advisable in the public interest that the public be excluded and for the record the business be regarded as confidential.
- 16.2 that payment be made to the staff, as tabled.