

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 10 May 2011

Present: Cllr Winstanley (Chairman), 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.

63. Apologies

63.1 Cllr Hansell not present.

64. To Agree the Minutes of the Meeting on 5 April 2011

64.1 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Uren, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2011 be accepted as a true record.

65. Matters Arising from the above Minutes

65.1 There were no matters arising not dealt with elsewhere in these minutes.

66. Declarations of Interest

66.1 None declared.

67. RFO's Report and Budget Monitoring

67.1 A budget monitoring report had been circulated with the agenda papers and was noted. The Clerk expressed his disappointment at the rigid approach adopted by the HALC audit team towards the production of the end of year financial statements and sought agreement to contract our internal audit from elsewhere. He confirmed that the agreement between us and HALC allowed for withdrawal by one party without penalty and he also thought he could get an improved service at a lower cost. Members agreed that further research should be undertaken.

68. To consider and, if appropriate, make recommendations on an application for Grant Aid from Bishopstoke Parochial Charities and Victim Support

68.1 The application by Bishopstoke Parochial Charities for help towards meeting their running costs and providing a new kitchen in one of the cottages was again considered following receipt of confirmation that rents were reviewed annually and set at an affordable rate. However, the Trustees had now acknowledged that rents should compare favourably with other similar providers to bring them to a commercially viable level. Members noted that Cllr Mike Thornton's name had been submitted for consideration as a co-opted trustee to enable the Bishopstoke community to have a more direct input. Should a grant be approved, it was thought appropriate to have the Trustees' acknowledge our wish that rents be more commercially comparable, reviewed annually and that monies be set aside for longer term improvements to the cottages.

68.2 Proposed Cllr Roling, Seconded Cllr McGuinness, **RECOMMENDED** with one against that a grant of £500 be approved for Bishopstoke Parochial Charities with certain provisos.

68.3 Victim Support had applied for financial help towards meeting the costs of recruiting and training Bishopstoke volunteers to provide the support and practical help necessary to those in need.

68.4 Proposed Cllr Toher, Seconded Cllr Roling, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that £500 be granted to Victim Support to enable them to continue to recruit and train volunteer helpers.

69. To consider and, if appropriate recommend adoption of the Financial Accounts and approval of the Statement of Assurance for the year ended 31 March 2011

69.1 The Financial Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011 had been circulated with the agenda papers and showed a total income received during the year of £143,036 and an expenditure of £94,390 resulting in a surplus for the year of £48,646. The bulk of this surplus resulted from over-precepting to meet the assumed costs of managing the Cemetery and allotments. However, the Clerk would make recommendations in the near future for ringfencing the surpluses on these two assets to provide funding for future land acquisition as and when necessary.

69.2 Members considered the Statement of Assurance in the Annual Return and agreed that the systems of control were sufficient to enable an affirmative response to be signed off on the form.

69.3 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Roling, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the Financial Accounts and Statement of Assurance for the year ended 31 March 2011 be signed by the Chairman

70. To consider and, if appropriate, make recommendations on the open spaces and play areas to be transferred from Borough Council ownership in 2012

70.1 Members considered the implications and limitations of taking responsibility for the play areas at Templecombe Road, Church Road, Sayers Road and Otter Close. Each of the play areas had a defined fenced border although there was play equipment at Otter Close outside the fence and there was a small grassed area adjacent to the Templecombe Road play area which could be included to enhance the area by grass cutting at the same time. Members saw a need to introduce a regular safety inspection routine and litter sweep as carried out by the Borough at the moment. It was also thought necessary to have a clear indication from the Borough of the planned improvements to play equipment and an undertaking that the LAC would allocate funds in support of future Parish improvement programmes.

70.2 The decision on which areas to take over would be debated further at the next full meeting of the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk

71. Asset transfer update

71. The Clerk reported that he was still liaising with the Borough and the Church on tree work in the St Mary's Churchyard as a result of complaints from neighbours about root problems and falling debris. He had engaged professional help to deal with the rat problem in the Jockey Lane allotments and the delay in reaching agreement with the Borough on the terms of the transfer agreement for the bus shelters would, hopefully, soon be resolved.

72. Parish Website

72.1 Various updates would be submitted to the webmaster by Cllr Winstanley and the Clerk.

73. Parish Newsletter

73.1 The Summer edition of the Newsletter would be issued in late June.

74. Clerk's Report

74.1 A local resident's request for a bus shelter at the junction of Colchester Road and Drake Road had met with little support from the Borough. The Clerk would resubmit the request.

Action: Clerk

74.2 Agenda items were being sought for the NALC AGM later in the year but none were thought of by Members.

- 74.3 Following a meeting of the YZone management committee to discuss the impact of the HCC cutbacks to the Youth Service, the Clerk briefed on the possible increase in contribution from the remaining partners in the facility, not necessarily in this financial year but quite likely in next. There was also the matter of the organisation of the facility with the loss of the Youth Service contribution to be determined; this was being discussed by the committee at this time. All agreed it would be unacceptable if a local solution could not be found to enable the facility to continue to operate. The Clerk would update Members as necessary.
- 74.4 The Environment Agency had still not agreed to the fish pass design submitted by the consultants for use at Shears Mill and further remodelling was in hand to attempt to reach agreement. There was a risk that the National Lottery would cancel the funds allocated to the project if work did not start before the yearend and the Clerk would negotiate with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, under whose auspices the Lottery bid had been made in an attempt to retain the funding. At the same time, further discussions would take place with the Borough to apply any pressure possible on those external agencies involved to expedite a decision.
- 74.5 In response to a comment raised by Cllr McGuinness, it was agreed that it would now be timely to resubmit the planning application to replace the old Shears Mill turbine housing with a new one with an adjacent parish office although it was noted that a firm decision on the siting of a parish office had yet to be made.

Action: Clerk

75. Date, time and place of next meeting

- 75.1 The next meeting will be on Tuesday 14 June 2011 at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Sedgwick Road, Bishopstoke

76. Motion for Confidential Business

- 76.1 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.

77. Consideration of approval for payment of staff hours of work, mileage and out of pocket expenses for April 2011 (Confidential Business)

- 77.1 Members noted the report tabled by the RFO and attached to these minutes.
- 77.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Toher, **RESOLVED** unanimously that payments be made as tabled.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.20pm.

Summary of Recommendations for Consideration by Full Parish Council

- 68.2 that a grant of £500 be approved for Bishopstoke Parochial Charities with certain provisos
- 68.4 that £500 be granted to Victim Support to enable them to continue to recruit and train volunteer helpers
- 69.3 that the Financial Accounts and Statement of Assurance for the year ended 31 March 2011 be signed by the Chairman

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

- 64.1 that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2011 be accepted as a true record
- 76.1 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
- 77.2 that payments be made as tabled.

Payments in April 2011 in excess of £500 published in accordance with the Government's transparency directive

HALC	Subscription	1086.00
Glasdon Ltd	Churchyard seats	912.64
Staff	Salaries	1664.45
Green Smile Ltd	Grounds maintenance	670.00
Total		4333.09