

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
HAWKWELL PARISH COUNCIL  
held on Monday 6th February 2017 at 7:30pm  
in the Committee Room, Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford**

**Councillors Present:** Chairman V Leach, Mrs E Gadsdon, R Gardner, S May, R Patient, Mrs L Shaw, M Strubel, Mrs M Weir, Mrs P Young

**113. To receive apologies for non-attendance at meeting:**

Cllr K Binding (unwell) & D Weir (private appointment).  
Members **accepted** the apologies tendered.

**114. Declarations of any:**

- a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;**
- b) **Other Pecuniary Interest; or**
- c) **Non-Pecuniary Interest**

**on any matter on the agenda for 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017:**

None were declared.

**115. Attendance of the Rochford District Council (RDC) Deputy Leader, Councillor Mike Steptoe:**

Chairman Leach welcomed Cllr Mike Steptoe to the meeting who proceeded to update Members on a variety of areas. The initial confusion that Members did not hold meetings in the Hawkwell Parish was explained to Cllr Steptoe by the Chairman who informed him the historic arrangement with the Freight House following Hawkwell Parish Council's (HPC) financial investment into the development of the property in the 1980s meant the meeting rooms were available without rental/hire cost to HPC and therefore the most cost effective option.

Cllr Steptoe explained his position and responsibilities at RDC and informed Members that he was Ward Councillor for Roche South and Parish Councillor for Barling Magna. He noted that historic relationships with Parish Councils in the area needed improvement and that his aim was to improve those relationships and find ways to work together. He further noted the recent Parish Networking Event and had felt it had been successful, with Members who had attended in agreement. He also referred to recent strategic partnerships with neighbouring parishes where play equipment had been part-funded through Parish Councils who had access to funding District Council did not. It was noted that RDC wanted to pursue more of those strategic partnerships, with a keenness that ideas were driven by the Parish Councils.

Members were also given more detailed information about the new ground maintenance company which had been set up, Green Gateway Ltd. Members enquired if Directors at the new company were employees of RDC and Cllr Steptoe confirmed they were, but that the company was expected to run as an independent company with profits made to be returned to RDC. Cllr R Patient questioned whether the Director jobs had been nationally advertised, but Cllr Steptoe was unable to

answer as he had not been involved in the hiring process. He confirmed that the company had recently been successful in securing a contract with Barling Magna. He also informed Members RDC was looking to launch other companies under the Green Gateway holding company; one would deal with refuse collection and another would deal with property purchasing and management. Members then enquired if the property business would affect the Freight House, with Members concerned about the HPC investment and meeting arrangement with the Freight House. Cllr Steptoe confirmed a project ('Project Wyvern') was underway, which was assessing all the property assets in the district and that HPC's investment in the Freight House was on record. RDC had been to Luton Borough Council and Chelmsford City Council to learn more about their successful property business models. He also informed Members that the 'Old House' in Rochford had recently become available for hire for Civil Ceremonies and events and used this example as an asset which would now be providing better financial returns while giving more benefit to the residents. It was suggested that a visit be arranged to the Old House for Members to attend to understand and see the changes that had been implemented. He informed Members that he was not able to share any further information due to confidentiality and that more would be made publicly available during a public consultation scheduled for the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Cllr Steptoe enquired why Members had not attended the RDC Planning training which had been set up, noting that Parish Council attendance in the area was poor across the board. Members discussed the issue of cost, noting that the cost per head additional to one free delegate was too high for a lot of the Parishes. Cllr Steptoe stressed the importance of being trained and kept up-to-date with Planning matters and noted that one of his biggest frustrations as a member of the Planning Committee was that planning reports failed to include material objections on a consultee level. Cllr Steptoe enquired whether Members felt a trainer going out to Parishes would be better suited and it was agreed that was a good idea, with the view smaller Parishes would combine so the training could take place at one venue. It was noted that the price would have to be comparable to other training providers such as the EALC. Cllr Steptoe confirmed he would take the idea to the Standards Board for consideration and that the next meeting would be on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Chairman Leach suggested to Members that an agenda item be added to the March Full Council meeting to allow Members time to come up with ideas for Cllr Steptoe and these could formally be passed back to him via the Clerk. Chairman Leach thanked Cllr Steptoe for his attendance and update. Before leaving the meeting, Cllr Steptoe thanked Members and told them he was happy to return to a meeting, or meet Members on an individual basis.

**116. Public Forum & Information Reports by District Cllr Mrs J Gooding & Mrs Lauren Shaw (in her capacity as District Cllr):**

There were no members of the public present.

District Cllr Mrs J Gooding informed Members the local youth bus pilot project was underway and it was estimated the bus would start to visit Clements Hall Leisure Centre car park after Easter. Members were referred to Agenda item 12 (Minute 124.5), noting correspondence which related to this matter from the Essex Youth Service.

Cllr Mrs L Shaw drew attention to the letter which she'd sent to Members, requesting donation for the "Now You See Me" campaign, an initiative to provide young school

children in the district with luminous/reflective stickers to help drivers and cyclists see them more clearly in areas of darkness/poor lighting. It was noted that local housing developers had recently committed £500 to the initiative and Members suggested further businesses who were heavy road users in the district be approached. Cllr Mrs Shaw explained she had contacted schools in the area and had received positive responses, estimating 690 children to be possible recipients of the stickers. Members agreed the initiative was a good idea, but enquired if keyrings or straps would have a better longevity and be more practical. Cllr Mrs L Shaw confirmed she was in the process of investigating the costings of those.

Members also felt it would be worthwhile to contact Westerings Primary School if funding could be secured. Cllr R Patient suggested that Cllr Mrs L Shaw contact the Head Teachers of the schools to obtain possible permission to write to parents to see if funding could be secured that way.

Chairman Leach moved from the Chair that a donation of £50 be given to the 'Now you See Me' initiative which was seconded by Cllr R Patient and unanimously agreed by Members.

**117. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Hawkwell Parish Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and to destroy the notes in respect of that meeting:**

The minutes of the Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 were **approved** as a correct record and Members agreed to the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

**118. Financial Report (January 2017):**

The Clerk reported that the overall budget was 81.4% spent at month 10. She further reported that the Parks budget was overspent at 85%.

There were no questions and Members **accepted** the Financial Report.

**119. Action List Update (January 2017):**

119.1 Members noted a meeting for the Robert Sudbury Trustees had taken place on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 with Cllrs Mrs M Weir, Mrs P Young and the Clerk. They had met with Rochford Extended Services who were in the process of helping identify several families who could be eligible to get grants under the terms of the charitable trust. Members were informed that it was the aim of the Trustees to wind up the trust, but it was noted that process may take a considerable time.

119.2 Members noted that the Neighbourhood Watch Representative had been invited to the March Full Council meeting.

119.3 At the request of Members in the previous meeting, the Clerk had contacted RDC to seek clarification about the contact details and methods in relation to their new trading company, Green Gateway Ltd. She had been informed that the team were based in Hockley Woods and specific email addresses had been set up for Parishes to contact them but it was important to also copy in RDC Customer Services to ensure all issues are logged correctly and passed to the right officers. It was also noted that if work was of an urgent nature, calling the RDC switchboard could enable a person to call through to

the workers' mobiles. It was further noted there was also a landline at their base in Hockley Woods. Members agreed to close the item.

119.4 The Clerk informed Members she had contacted both the Hockley & Hawkwell and Rochford Day Centres to obtain the dates of forthcoming meetings. Rochford had since provided their meeting schedule and the Clerk had passed this on to Cllrs Mrs E Gadsdon and S May. Mrs Clover at the Hockley & Hawkwell Day Centre had advised the Clerk she would reissue the meeting dates to Cllr Mrs Weir and confirmed she would send over the meeting minutes via email in future to the Clerk. Members agreed to close the item.

119.5 The Clerk informed Members that she had notified RDC of HPC's Precept for 2017/18 on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017. Members agreed to close the item.

Members **accepted** the Action List update and **agreed** to the removal of closed items.

## **120. RDC/Parish Council Networking Event – Feedback from Members attending and E-mail from Andrew Lowing regarding presentation slides:**

The Clerk gave Members a brief update following her attendance at the RDC/Parish Council Networking Event which she had attended with Chairman Leach, Cllr Mrs E Gadsdon, Cllr R Gardner, Cllr Mrs L Shaw and Cllr Mrs M Weir. RDC had discussed the ongoing Homeless Crisis in the area and the difficulties surrounding funding that area. The Clerk had also noted that RDC had given information that a Government Health Grant (£500) was available to Parishes. A talk by Dementia Alliance had also taken place, which raised questions about how Parish Councils could become involved in the work of the charity.

The Clerk also shared information received during the Roundtable sessions, mentioning a partnership initiative, 'Community Agents Essex', which supported independent living for older people and their informal carers. Another point of interest was that RDC had launched a procurement projects platform on their website which would be extended to Parishes to enable them to better communicate with local businesses/contractors when quotes were required.

Members who had attended agreed the format had improved from past events and the Clerk encouraged all Members to attend going forward.

## **121. Representatives of Outside Bodies:**

**i Cllr Mrs Shaw advised Members she wanted to stand down as a representative for the RHALC.**

Members accepted Cllr Mrs Shaw's decision to stand down as representative for the RHALC. Cllr Mrs P Young volunteered to be the new representative which was accepted.

**ii Cllr Mrs Gadsdon advised Members that she needed to stand down as a representative on the Rochford & District Old Peoples Welfare Committee and as Deputy Representative on the Hockley & Hawkwell Old Peoples Welfare Committee.**

Members accepted Cllr Mrs E Gadsdon's decision to stand down as representative for the day centres. Cllr M Strubel volunteered to be the new Representative on the Rochford Day Centre and Deputy Representative on the Hockley & Hawkwell Day Centre which was accepted.

**122. Local Council Risk Systems (LCRS) Report for Year 2016/17:**

Members noted the LCRS report for the 2016/17.

**123. Newsletter – Spring Edition:**

Members agreed the articles for inclusion and the authors of those articles:

<b>Article/Item</b>	<b>Author</b>
2017-18 Council Tax for Hawkwell	The Clerk
Christmas Parcels Update	Cllr Mrs L Shaw
Footpath improvements in Spencers Park – Project Spring 2017	The Clerk
Pond Work in Magnolia	Chairman Leach & Cllr Mrs P Young
Support for new mini bus for Hockley and Hawkwell Old People’s Day Centre	The Clerk
Community Agents Info	The Clerk
Mobile Library times	The Clerk
Rectory Road pavement improvements	District Cllr Mrs J Gooding
Speed watch	District Cllr Mrs J Gooding
Magnolia Nature Reserve – ‘Spring watch’	Cllr M Strubel

Members **agreed** that all articles be sent to the office by 24th February 2017 and that a copy of newsletter would be ready for proofing at the March Full Council meeting.

**124. Correspondence:**

- 1. Rochford District Council (RDC) Notice of launch of Annual Community Safety Questionnaire** - Members noted the questionnaire.
- 2. RDC Surface Water Flooding Issues (Flood Forum) Minutes of the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016** - Members noted the Minutes had contained an incorrect reference to a pond in Magnolia Park. The pond in question was the attenuation pond which was owned by Anglian Water and was not situated in Magnolia, but on the perimeter of the nature reserve. Members asked that the Clerk obtain further information about the completed work.
- 3. RDC/Essex County Council (ECC) Invitation to ECC Briefing on Highways for Rochford District to be held on 28th February 2017** - It was agreed Cllrs Mrs E Gadsdon and R Gardner would attend the event on the 28th February 2017.
- 4. Larger Local Council Forum (LLCF) Notice of meeting to be held on 21st February 2017** - Chairman Leach and Cllr Mrs E Gadsdon confirmed they would attend the event.
- 5. Request for permission from Essex Youth Service to park the youth bus in Magnolia Park** - Members felt reviewing the outcome of the pilot scheme arranged at Clements Hall was necessary before considering having the bus parked at Magnolia Park. Members briefly pointed out that there would be

potential access problems and that residents' support would be vital given they currently managed the daily opening and closing of the barriers at the park.

6. **RDC Invitation to the Civic Dinner & Dance to be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2017:** Chairman Leach felt the event did not provide the best networking opportunities and that numbers had dwindled over the years. Cllr Mrs P Young, in her capacity as Vice Chair, volunteered to attend. Members agreed Vice Chair Mrs Young and her husband should attend, with a vote of six in favour of her attending and three against.
7. **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) – Satisfaction survey:** Members noted the survey and were encouraged to fill it in if relevant to their experience(s).

**125. Receive Committee/Working Party Reports since last meeting:**

**Planning Committee:** Cllr Mrs Weir moved the Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 which were **accepted**.

**Finance Committee:** Chairman Leach, in place of Cllr K Binding who was absent from the meeting, moved the Minutes of the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 which were **accepted**.

**Parks Committee:** Cllr Mrs P Young moved the Minutes of the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 which were **accepted**.

**126. Representatives Reports:**

**Hockley & Hawkwell Old Peoples Welfare Committee** – Cllr Mrs Weir had no updates. It was noted the Minutes still had not been received, despite being told they would be emailed to the office.

**Rochford Old Peoples Welfare Committee** – Cllr S May informed Members he had not been to a meeting.

**Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils (RHALC)** – No representative had been able to attend the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

**Hawkwell Village Hall** – Cllr Mrs Young informed Members the Hall had their AGM. Work at the hall was ongoing and it was noted the Parish office window had been replaced and the locks on the toilets had now been fixed. It was further noted that the cost of paper towels in the toilets had rocketed so hand driers had been put in to keep costs down. The Clerk had noticed that the new driers in the annexe were very poor and did not dry and Cllr Mrs Young explained that the driers had been moved from the main building following complaints of poor drying performance.

**Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall MC** – Chairman Leach had been absent from the last meeting, but had learned that the hall had now installed Wi-Fi which was jointly paid by KAOS Youth Club and the hall.

**Public Transport Liaison Group** – Cllr Mrs Weir reported there had been no meetings.

**Robert Sudbury Trust** – Members were referred to Agenda item 7 (Minute 119.1)

**Information Reports:**

**Community Meetings** – Cllr M Strubel reported he had no updates as he had not attended any community meetings.

**127. Payment of Accounts:**

Members discussed the cost of catering for the Council and Committee meetings with some Members feeling the price was too high in terms of quantity and quality, noting the coffee was particularly poor. It was agreed the cost of refreshments should be considered at a later date, when the future of the Freight House was made clear.

Members also enquired about the underused administration charge on the Fuelcard and the Clerk informed Members that the card incurred a fee if a certain level of fuel was not purchased within a month. The lack of purchased fuel was due to the time of the year, with machinery being used less. It was agreed this should be monitored to ensure the card was still cost effective.

Cllr R Gardner also referred to the cost of the street lighting, feeling it was too high. It was agreed he would investigate other suppliers

The payments of accounts paid since the last meeting (January 2017 payments) were **approved together with agreement to pay any accounts due** before the next meeting.

**128. Summary of Decisions Taken:**

- Members to consider ways to work with RDC for future discussion with Cllr Steptoe; an agenda item to be added to March's Full Council Meeting.
- £50 donation to be paid to Cllr Mrs L Shaw for the 'Now You See Me' Campaign.
- Cllr Mrs P Young now representative for the RHALC.
- Cllr M Strubel now representative on the Rochford & District Old People's Welfare Committee and deputy representative on the Hockley & Hawkwell Old People's Welfare Committee.
- Newsletter articles and authors agreed with a deadline for article submission set for 24<sup>th</sup> February 2017.
- Clerk to obtain further information about the completed work on the attenuation pond on the perimeter of Magnolia Nature Reserve.
- Cllr Mrs P Young, in her capacity as Vice Chair, and her husband to attend RDC Civic Dinner & Dance on Saturday 18th March 2017.
- Cllr R Gardner to investigate costs of electricity suppliers for the Parish street lighting.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:23pm

Chairman