Minutes of the Meeting of
HAWKWELL PARISH COUNCIL
held on Monday 15th April 2019 at 7:30pm
in the Committee Room, Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford

Councillors present: Chairman Mrs P Young, Mrs E Gadsdon, R Gardner, B Goldsmith, Ms A Rees-Jones, S May, M Strubel, R Patient, Mrs N Shaw, Mrs M Weir & S Wootton.

Also present: District Cllrs P Shaw, Mrs L Shaw, M Steptoe and Mr S Scrutton, MD Rochford District Council (RDC).

Presentation and Q&A by Mr S Scrutton and Cllr M Steptoe:
The Chairman welcomed both Mr Scrutton and Cllr M Steptoe to the meeting. A list of questions had been pre-provided and Mr Scrutton and Cllr M Steptoe proceeded to answer the questions set out:

Question 1: What is the role of RDC, the Councillors and what portfolios do they own?
Cllr M Steptoe confirmed his position as Deputy Leader and read out his list of responsibilities. He read out various other positions and responsibilities within RDC. It was noted all information about roles and responsibilities could be found on the RDC website.

Question 2: Are there any insights into the devolution of responsibilities to Parish Councils?
Cllr M Steptoe reminded Members that some responsibilities had already been passed down from County Council, citing examples of pothole repair schemes. He informed Members that similar schemes for footpaths and pavements were due to be passed down to certain Parishes. Mr Scrutton informed Members that discussions around pavilions had taken place and it was noted that there had been rumours the U3a had secured the pavilion in the Clements Hall field. Neither Mr Scrutton or Cllr M Steptoe were aware of any arrangement and agreed to come back to Members with information. Members raised concerns about the financial impact on Parishes when it came to devolving services and Cllr M Steptoe pointed out that Parish Councils were currently not capped which he felt put them in an advantageous financial position; Members noted that they felt it was only a matter of time before Parish Councils were capped, with Cllr M Steptoe in disagreement.

Question 3: What are the current agendas and priorities of RDC?
Mr Scrutton informed Members RDC's business plan could be found on the RDC website. He outlined key priorities such as the Rochford 2020 celebrations, development of a county park, Asset Strategy and the tackling of key front-line services such as homelessness. Members enquired if the business plans and project plans had been agreed and Mr Scrutton confirmed these were also on the RDC website.

Question 4: What will be the impact of the Asset Strategy, short and long term, on HPC regarding holding its meetings in the Committee Room at the Freight House, given it may be turned into Council Offices?
Cllr M Steptoe confirmed that the Asset Strategy Business Case had been officially agreed and now they were working towards the Strategic Plan. He confirmed that they were looking at

utilising the Freight House, along with Mill Hall and reviewing what could be done with the buildings in South Street and the Civic Suite, noting that South Street and the Civic Suite were expensive buildings to maintain and that they would be better suited as housing. Cllr M Steptoe confirmed Officers had researched the arrangement with HPC with regard to the use of the meeting room at the Freight House and informed Members a Political Agreement was in existence, but not a Legal Agreement, which permitted HPC to have use of the Committee Room free of charge given its investment into the Freight House in the 1980s. (Cllr Mrs M Weir noted for the record that HPC had invested £50k in 1983 in the Freight House when it was formed with the intention of being a community centre.) Cllr M Steptoe expressed his view that the meeting location was strange for the Hawkwell Parish but was informed that the boundary of the Parish lied only a short distance away in Ironwell Lane.
Cllr R Gardner enquired if the Freight House was listed and was informed it was on a Local List only.
Members requested assurance be given that the future of the Freight House would mean that HPC's investment would not be lost but Cllr M Steptoe was unable to offer any official guarantee(s). However, it was noted that RDC would fully engage with HPC during the consultation and discussions surrounding the Freight House.

Question 5: How many properties does RDC anticipate being built in the district?
Mr Scrutton requested further clarity around the question and Cllr R Gardner asked how many properties did RDC propose building. Cllr R Gardner commented there was immense pressure on the doctors and hospital for the area. Mr Scrutton explained RDC were working with five other authorities in Essex to see how to best strategically plan until 2038. It was noted that the government demand was for 97,000 houses for South Essex, which equated to 4,500 houses a year. Mr Scrutton pointed out that there was a shortfall in housing delivery. He explained that by attempting to tie-up with other local authorities they were able to think more strategically and that would result in more meaningful discussions about infrastructure. He fully understood and sympathised about the infrastructure challenges.
Cllr M Steptoe reminded Members about the Section 106 agreements drawn up and referred to Hall Road, Rochford. He explained that the monies set aside by developers were figures requested by bodies such as the NHS and schools, with those bodies requesting set sums to mitigate the result of increasing the number of residents into an area. He aired his frustration that nothing was able to be done to make the NHS supply more services, despite allocating the money to them. However, he informed Members that progress was being made in relation to an additional school and that funding would be triggered when the 500th house would be occupied within the Hall Road estate. He informed Members there was a 10-year plan in force in relation to schools but currently with no definitive plan about when the school would be built and offered those interested the opportunity to look at the booklet he had brought along to the meeting.
Members discussed the issue of not having an adequate number of schools and raised questions about when the school would be built. It was noted the school would be built when there were adequate pupils to fill it. Cllr M Steptoe assured Members that ECC would not spend the allocated money for a school on anything else and that there was a guarantee there would be a new school in Hall Road, with a site already secured. Members discussed the schools in the area and made enquiries about staged intakes for the new school. It was noted further information was provided in the booklet Cllr Steptoe had brought along to the meeting.
Members raised concerns about the infrastructure pressures as a result of the development in the area. Cllr M Steptoe informed Members that Councils were now talking to each other in order to try and tackle some of the issues and mentioned 'South Essex 2050', a group which

had formed and were attempting to address the infrastructure issues. He also informed Members he Chaired the ‘A127 Economic Growth Corridor Task Force’, a group which were attempting to talk to central government to try and improve the A127. He gave details about the group and further road works around the A127 which aimed to relieve traffic congestion problems. Cllr M Steptoe indicated there were plans to have the A127 turned into a motorway, given its heavy use.
Chairman Mrs P Young enquired if all this information could be relayed to residents as it was often the case people were oblivious that certain things were being done in relation to improving infrastructure. She recommended information about these groups be added to RDC’s newsletter.
Cllr B Goldsmith enquired what was the percentage of Zero Carbon Homes when it came to building new homes. Mr Scrutton informed him that the Policy for a set requirement for Zero Carbon Homes had been abandoned, largely due to the lack of expediency and extra costs involved. It was further noted that RDC did not impose any conditions on developers to produce Zero Carbon Homes.
Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones referred to the S106 agreement and enquired what control measures RDC implemented to ensure developers paid the monies agreed. Mr Scrutton assured Members that there was a close relationship with developers and that they actively worked with them to ensure obligations were met. Cllr M Steptoe cited examples in the area where developers were working to aid infrastructure before building developments due to discussions which had taken place between themselves. Cllr S Wootton expressed a differing view, citing his own personal example of a poor relationship with the developer on his estate, noting a lot of works which had been pre-agreed had not been followed through and felt the Local Authorities needed to do more. Mr Scrutton informed Members RDC would enforce these matters if made aware and that a lack of staff meant they had to be more ‘reactive’ than ‘proactive’.
Cllr R Gardner pointed out that natural gas would be phased out by 2020 and the new pipe works being laid were to make way for hydrogen gas.

Question 6: Does RDC propose to restrict the number of bungalows being converted into 4 and/or 5 bedroomed properties?
Mr Scrutton confirmed there was no policy regarding bungalows. He pointed out Milestone Close in Hawkwell was a new development made up entirely of bungalows. Mr Scrutton also informed Members a lot of infill development was made up of bungalows.

Question 7: On RDC’s budget revenue overview, what do the following relate to:
i) Governance 2017-18 £1.094m; 2018-19 £0.974m;
Mr Scrutton informed Members he would circulate the written information he had to Members after the meeting/at a later date.
ii) Expenditure reports 2018 – why are there so many payments to Braintree, Tendering and Basildon Councils?
Mr Scrutton read out the services used in relation to the Councils which related to Procurement Support, emergency out-of-hours services and Executive Functions.
ii) Why do RDC use British Gas and EDF as energy providers when they are the most expensive?
Mr Scrutton explained RDC used an Energy Providers Framework which meant fees could be reduced.
iv) Why do RDC not total spreadsheets?
Mr Scrutton was unable to provide a reason.

Cllr M Steptoe informed Members he would be happy to attend another HPC meeting, if Members wished him to. Members noted the considerable time it had taken to have Cllr Steptoe and Mr Scrutton agree to attend a meeting and felt it would be useful if they attended from time-to-time. The Clerk would make the necessary arrangements, when required.

Members thanked Cllr M Steptoe and Mr Scrutton for their attendance and gave a round of applause before they left the meeting along with District Cllrs L Shaw, P Shaw, and two members of the public (at 8:42pm.)

136. To receive apologies for non-attendance at meeting:

Cllr K Binding had given apologies along with District Cllr Mrs J Gooding.
Members received the apologies tendered.
Members noted that Cllr K Binding would be leaving his position as Cllr at HPC and Members recorded their thanks for his tenure. It was agreed the Clerk would send a letter of thanks accordingly.

137. Declarations of any:

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;
b) Other Pecuniary Interest; or
c) Non-Pecuniary Interest on any matter on the agenda for 15th April 2019:
None were declared.

138. Public Forum & Information Reports from District Cllrs Mrs J Gooding & P Shaw:

Two members of the public were present. (Until 8:42pm). District Cllrs Mrs J Gooding was absent from the meeting and P Shaw had left the meeting at 8:42pm so was unable to provide an information report.

139. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of Hawkwell Parish Council held on 4th March 2019 and to destroy the notes in respect of that meeting:

The minutes of the Meeting held on 4**th** March 2019 were **approved** as a correct record and Members **agreed** to the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

140. Financial Report (March 2019/Year End):

The Clerk reported that overall expenditure at year end was 77.3%, down from previous years. It was noted that the underspend was largely due to no longer having a Groundsman and the associated costs. Finance was 96.2% spent, General Purposes 89% spent, and Parks 56% spent.
There were no questions and Members **accepted** the Financial Report.

141. Action List Update (April 2019):

141.1 Members noted the Defibrillator Working Group had met on the 11th March 2019. Cllr R Gardner explained that no central database existed which gave details about all the defibrillators in the area and felt it would be beneficial to add information on local defibrillator locations to the next newsletter. He explained the Working Group were looking at a management company for the defibrillators as they would deal with GDPR matters, insurance and the maintenance of the equipment. Cllr R Gardner also pointed out that the defibrillator the Working

Group were considering would also work on children, if needed. Cllr M Strubel raised concerns about the use of defibrillators, noting that he thought training would be compulsory for anybody who used it. Members assured him training would be available but that on-screen instructions meant anybody could use the machines, with or without training.
Members noted that the Working Group's next steps would be to make a recommendation to Full Council.

141.2 Members noted that the Q&A session with Cllr Steptoe and Shaun Scrutton had taken place that evening.

141.3 Members noted Les Hawkins of the Community Special Constable project had met the Clerk earlier that day to provide an update. The Clerk informed Members there was little to report, with the job advertisements now on the website and in the notice boards but with no interest to date. It was agreed the advert should be placed in the next newsletter.

141.4 Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones had shown an interest in becoming a Trustee for the Robert Sudbury Trust and was in the process of learning more about the Trust.

141.5 Members were referred to Agenda item 7 (Minute 142).

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

142. Strategic Plan 2019-22: Revised plan:

Members noted the revision (item 5). The Chair of the Policy Committee noted the Clerk had prepared the paragraph and felt it was an excellent addition.
Members unanimously agreed to adopt the Strategic Plan for 2019-22.

143. CIF Grant Application 2018-19: Update

Members noted the report which had been compiled by the Clerk. Members were disappointed and frustrated by the way the application had been run for 2018-19 and that HPC had failed to secure any grant.

144. Correspondence:

1. **Essex County Council (ECC) Libraries' Consultation – Email reply from ECC regarding Parish Council's response:** Members noted the information.
2. **Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) – Legal Update March 2019:** Members noted the information. Cllr S Wootton pointed out that an article on page 11 was inappropriately written as it was not gender neutral. The Chairman said she would be happy to put something in writing to EALC to complain about the article.
3. **Passenger Transport – Notice of meetings in June 2019:** Members noted the information.
4. **RDC – '#CommunityLitterpickmovement':** Members noted the information.
5. **Southend Area Bus User Group (SABUG) – Invitation to AGM and May Newsletter:** Members noted the information.
6. **Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC)**
   a) **Edition No 178 (Serving Communities across Essex):** Members noted the information
   b) **Edition No 179 (CIF 2019):** Members noted the information.

145. Receive Committee/Working Party Reports since last meeting:
Planning Committee: Cllr Mrs M Weir moved the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March & 4th April 2019 which were **accepted.**

General Purposes Committee: Cllr R Gardner moved the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th March 2019 which were **accepted.**

Health & Safety Committee: Cllr R Gardner moved the notes of the meeting held on the 11th March 2019 which were **accepted.**

146. Representatives Reports:
Hockley & Hawkwell Old People's Welfare Committee – Members noted the last three meetings had been cancelled but no reasons why had been given.
Rochford Old People's Welfare Committee – There had been a meeting on the 11th April and the minutes were due to be sent out.
Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils (RHALC) – Members noted there would be a meeting on the 18th April 2019 and Cllr S May would be attending.
Hawkwell Village Hall – Members noted there had been no meeting.
Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall MC – There was nothing to report.
Public Transport Liaison Group – Members noted there would be a meeting on the 7th June 2019.
Robert Sudbury Trust – Members noted a new trustee was still required.
Information Reports:
Community Meetings – There was nothing to report.

147. Payment of Accounts:
Cllr S Wootton enquired what the payment to Fusion Lifestyle was. The Clerk reminded Members that refreshments for the Council meetings incurred a charge which was paid to Fusion Lifestyle.
There were no questions and the payment of accounts paid since the last meeting (March payments) were **approved together with agreement to pay any accounts due** before the next meeting.

The Vice Chairman thanked Chairman Mrs P Young for all her work as a long-standing Cllr and Chairman for HPC and presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

148. Summary of Decisions Taken:
- Advert for Special Constable position to be added to next newsletter.
- Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones interested in the Robert Sudbury Trust Trustee position; currently seeking further information.
- Strategic Plan for 2019-22 formally approved and adopted.
- HPC unsuccessful in the CIF Grant Application; Members disappointed and frustrated by the lack of grant for 2018-19.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Chairman