

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
held on Monday 17th June 2019 at 7:46pm
in the Committee Room, Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford.**

Cllrs Present: R Gardner, Ms A Rees-Jones, Mrs N Shaw, R Patient & Mrs M Weir.

Also present: Cllrs T Manyika & S Wootton.

- 1. To elect a Chairman for the civic year 2019-20:**
Cllr R Patient nominated Cllr R Gardner. This was seconded by Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones. There were no further nominations and Cllr R Gardner was nominated as Chairman with all Members in agreement.
- 2. To elect a Vice Chairman for the civic year 2019-20:**
Cllr R Gardner nominated Cllr R Patient as Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs N Shaw. There were no further nominations and Cllr R Patient was nominated as Vice Chairman with all Members in agreement.
- 3. Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:**
Cllrs M Strubel and S May had given apologies.
Members **received** the apologies tendered.
- 4. Declarations of any:**
 - a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;
 - b) Other Pecuniary Interest; or
 - c) Non-Pecuniary Interest**on any matter on the agenda for 17th June 2019:**
None were declared.
- 5. Public Forum:**
No members of the public were present.
- 6. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2019 meeting:**
The Minutes of the Meeting were **approved** and Members agreed to the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.
- 7. Action Update List – June 2019:**
 - 7.1 Members noted that the Local Highways Panel (LHP) Officer had confirmed the scheme to install a road sign to deter HGVs along the unmade section of Thorpe Road had been approved. It was expected it would be completed by September 2019. The Clerk was keeping the resident in question informed along the way. Members **accepted** the Action Update List.
- 8. Financial Report – May 2019:**
There were no questions and Members **accepted** the Financial Report.

9. Parish Street Lighting Upgrade Project:

Members noted the report prepared by the Clerk and were pleased good progress had been made. It was noted that money would be saved in the long term in relation to energy consumption. Cllr R Gardner had calculated potential energy savings and informed Members that running 151 sodium lights incurred a cost of £6074 (excluding VAT) and following the upgrade to LEDs this would be reduced to £2149 (excluding VAT). He also informed Members that the emissions would reduce from 22 tons to 7 tons. It was noted that Members would have to consider when to contact SSE regarding changing the fixed tariff given more energy efficient lights were being installed. It was further noted a special report would have to be submitted to SSE in relation to this. Members **agreed** to look at the matter again following the end of August when more lights would have been upgraded.

Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones enquired if there had been any feedback following the upgrades. The Clerk informed Members that one resident had complained that the new LED light was too bright but the contractor had rectified the issue; it was noted the lights had four brightness settings and that the contractor had been back out to the light to turn it down to the second setting.

Cllr R Patient enquired if the Parish lights were turned off like the Essex County Council (ECC) lights and was reminded that the Parish lights did not get turned off during the night/early hours. Cllr R Patient suggested an item be added to the newsletter but was informed that an article of this nature had already been agreed.

10. Parish Footpath Map/Noticeboard Refurbishment:

Members noted the pictures of the new polycarbonate sheets which had been installed in the boards. It was noted the old boards had become tired and the sheets had become misty and that some had been defaced with graffiti. It was estimated the boards had been installed around 2011/12. The Clerk informed Members that since the refurbishment it was unfortunate that the board at the Roche Avenue junction had been re-graffitied and efforts to remove the defacement had meant the affected sheet had become misty.

Members also noted that the imagery in the Footpath board included the White Hart pub, but this was not within the Parish.

11. Freight House Refurbishment/Council Meetings going forward. Referred from Full Council:

Members noted the information from RDC dated 1983 which stated HPC had made a financial contribution to a capital scheme for the Freight House which allowed them "three bookings in any one month for the purpose of meetings, without charge."

Some Members felt it was RDC's responsibility to find HPC a new meeting room/arrangement or offer a new proposal if the Freight House would no longer be available but it was noted that no formal approach had been made by RDC. Members felt that as HPC had been using the Freight House since 1983 it would be courteous of RDC to contact HPC. Cllr Mrs M Weir pointed out that the money had been given to RDC for the Freight House as a investment and therefore some money should be returned.

Members discussed alternative meeting locations and Cllr Ms A Rees-Jones mentioned that she had learned schools were able to host Council meetings. Discussion around this ensued and it was noted that some schools' business plans would prohibit certain types of meetings such as political and religious meetings.

Cllr S Wootton was invited to speak given he had raised the item at Full Council and

was a District Councillor with some knowledge regarding the asset review at RDC. Cllr S Wootton gave a brief overview of RDC's intentions regarding its Asset Review and noted that the Freight House was not being sold by RDC but that it was not up to standards for modern use. He believed there was no intention to kick HPC out but confirmed he had not spoken officially on the matter at RDC. As an HPC Cllr, he felt the matter should be reviewed and agreed it would be courteous for RDC to write to all long-term users once the future of the building had been decided. He accepted that HPC had made an investment and that such investment would expect a form of growth, but also raised the point that HPC had spent 36 years without any meeting room costs. Cllr Mrs N Shaw pointed out that it would be beneficial to have sight of any official document that referenced the original investment made by HPC in the 1980s. Cllr Mrs M Weir agreed to go through her historic papers to see if she could find the original paperwork or any Minutes relating to the investment. The Clerk also pointed out that historic minutes were held at the Essex Record Office. Cllr S Wootton informed Members that he would not take part in any conversations or hold any position with RDC regarding HPC and the Freight House but, if invited, would stand up as a Parish Councillor for HPC.

12. Summary of Decisions:

- Cllr R Gardner elected as General Purposes Committee Chairman for 2019-20.
- Cllr R Patient elected as General Purposes Committee Vice Chairman for 2019-20.
- Members to review number of lights upgraded to LED following end of August to see whether to contact SSE about changing the fixed tariff to allow for less energy consumption.
- Cllr Mrs M Weir to go through historic papers to find information on HPC's investment into the Freight House capital scheme.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:12pm

Chairman