

**Minutes of the Meeting of
HAWKWELL PARISH COUNCIL
held on Monday 2nd October 2023 at 7:30pm
in the Rochford Day Centre, 33a Back Lane, Rochford**

Councillors present: Vice Chair S May, Mrs L Dalby, T Hargrave, A MacPherson, Mrs L Massey, R Patient & Mrs M Weir.

Also present: Mr Stephen Appleby, S-Type Security.

FC 23/55 To receive apologies for non-attendance at meeting:

Chair M Strubel, Cllr R Gardner and Mrs J Strubel had given apologies.
Members received the apologies tendered.

FC 23/56 Declarations of any of the following interests on any matter on the agenda for 2nd October 2023:

- a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;**
- b) **Other registrable interests**

No declarations were made.

FC 23/57 Public Forum & Information Reports from District Cllrs for Hawkwell Parish:

a) **Public Forum:** No members of the public were present.

b) **Information Reports from District and County Councillors:** No District Cllrs were present. Members were referred to Agenda item 9 (Minute FC 23/63.5 & 23/63.11).

FC 23/58 To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Hawkwell Parish Council meeting held on 24th July 2023 and to destroy the notes in respect of the meeting:

It was **resolved** that the minutes from the meeting held on 24th July 2023 were approved as a correct record and Members agreed to the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

FC 23/59 Financial Report (September 2023):

The Clerk reported that at month six the budget was 46.4% spent against an expected 50%. The Finance budget was 52% spent, General Purposes Committee was 40% spent and the Parks Committee budget was 41% spent; all were on target.

There were no questions and it was **resolved** that Members accepted the Financial Report.

FC 23/60 Action List Update (October 2023):

23/60.1 Members were referred into Agenda item 11 (Minute FC 23/65).

23/60.2 Members were to let the Clerk know if they were interested in any of the training available.

23/60.3 Cllr Mrs M Weir had volunteered to assume the position as Representative for the Rochford UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Members agreed to close the item.

23/60.4 The Clerk had passed the contact details for the Community Payback Team (CPT) to St Mary's Church.

23/60.5 The inspection of leases, asset register and deeds by the Chairman and Vice-Chair had been carried out. Members agreed to close the item.

- 23/60.6** The summer newsletter had been distributed in mid-August. Feedback had mainly been around new recipients for the Christmas Parcels Initiative and new Councillor interest. One interested party had since withdrawn due to health issues.
- 23/60.7** A letter of thanks had been sent to Council's security company guard.
- 23/60.8** The hedgehog surrounds had arrived and the Hedgehog Highway Project had been publicised on Facebook. Some residents had collected the surrounds but more remained. It was agreed several surrounds be given to Cllr T Hargrave to distribute to customers of Potash Garden Centre.
- 23/60.9** Cllr T Hargrave had agreed to join Cllr Mrs M Weir as a Hawkwell Village Hall Management Committee Representative.
- It was **resolved** that Members accepted the Action List update and **agreed** to the removal of closed items.

FC 23/61 Private Security Patrols:

a) Verbal report from S-Type Security regarding patrols for Hawkwell Parish Council;

Mr Appleby thanked Council for choosing S-Type Security as Council's security company. He informed Members that since their engagement, crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ABS) had decreased; when first employed, there had been several issues with drugs and ABS, particularly situated at Magnolia Park but there now were considerably fewer incidents. Mr Appleby reported ABS had been an issue across the country and that his company now worked for 15 different parish councils.

Mr Appleby informed Members that his company wanted to publish materials for the public about various ways to help deter crime during the winter months, such as leaving lights on when going out etc. He requested that this information be shared via Council's social media and newsletters. The Clerk would liaise with Mr Appleby accordingly to arrange a suitable Facebook post be published.

A Member informed Mr Appleby they had received a call from a resident about issues around Rectory Avenue/Magnolia Nature Reserve entrance; Mr Appleby said it was key that information and issues be passed to them so they could be reactive. He encouraged that their telephone number be passed to residents, when required. He explained while it may not be possible respond immediately to every call, the building of intelligence was pivotal to what they did and that they could share this form of intelligence with the police, if needed. Mr Appleby also noted the police regarded S-Type Security as a reliable source for such intelligence.

A Member enquired about the company's relationship with the police and Mr Appleby explained that the police were not favourable of the company. He felt the reasons were predominately down to the lack of resources the police faced; callouts were extremely limited with the police, largely due to the amount of paperwork that had to be conducted post call. Mr Appleby felt his company were able to be more proactive and reactive and could respond to calls the police were unable to. He impressed upon Members that his guards were all professionally trained and knew the laws and legislations which they operated strictly in adherence to.

A Member enquired about the recruitment process for security guards. Mr Appleby explained all his guards were SIA trained and that he selected only those ex-military or ex-police.

The power of arrest was discussed and Mr Appleby explained the laws under which his guards could act.

The Vice-Chair thanked Mr Appleby for his update and Mr Appleby left the Chambers at 8:00pm

b) Incident reports (July & August):

Members noted the reports.

Cllr T Hargrave left the Chambers at 8:00pm

FC 23/62 Budget planning for 2024-25:

a) Recommendation that Council adopt the Fiscal Policy when setting the budget for 2024/5: It was **agreed** that Council adopt the Fiscal Policy when setting the budget for 2024-25.

Cllr T Hargrave returned to the Chambers at 8:04pm.

b) Consideration for new budget items:

Members agreed to consider solar panels in the budget for 2024-25 following the work conducted by the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG). Members discussed the current lighting contract; one Member enquired if there were any issues with the lighting infrastructure that may require investment from Council, noting there had been recent callouts over several months. The Clerk reported that the issues were mainly associated with faulty LED bulbs that had been glowing blue. The contractor was in the process of resolving the issue with the supplier and it was noted the bulbs were still under warranty. Members enquired if the callout costs could be refunded via the contractor/supplier; the Clerk would make enquiries.

It was agreed that consideration also be given to a new piece of machinery for grass collection; a budget be set for any works at Spencers Brook and more funds to be allocated to security for Magnolia Store. The Clerk also informed Members the office computers were at the end of their life and performance was becoming very poor; Members agreed it would be prudent to factor in costs for their hardware replacement.

FC 23/63 Correspondence:

23/63.1 Hawkwell Village Hall Management Committee – Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th June 2023: The information was noted.

23/63.2 Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils (RHALC) – Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th July 2023: The information was noted.

23/63.3 Civility & Respect Project – July newsletter: The information was noted.

23/63.4 Email from resident regarding view and concerns over HPC's Christmas Parcels Initiative: Members discussed the initiative's aim, noting it had been run for over 40 years and its purpose was to offer comfort and a gesture of good will to the older population who lived alone during the festive period. Members felt there were no ways to offer the gifts to the individuals outlined in the correspondence due to GDPR concerns and implications. Members agreed no response was required but noted the comments contained within the email.

23/63.5 Email from ECC Cllr Mrs L Shaw – information about bleed control kits: It was **agreed** to refer the matter to the General Purposes Committee.

23/63.6 Email from RDC Member Training (Overview of Local Government Finance) – 19th September: It was noted the training date had elapsed.

23/63.7 RDC:

a) Budget Consultation details: The information was noted.

b) 'Save the Date' – Events for Oct 2023-Mar 2024: The information was noted

23/63.8 Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall – grant thank-you letter: The information was noted.

23/63.9 Resident thank-you letter: The information was noted.

23/63.10 Old People's Welfare Committee for Rochford & District – Minutes of the meeting held on the 10th August 2023: The information was noted.

23/63.11 Email from District Cllr Mrs J Gooding regarding the 'Red Card Initiative': Members discussed the issues of the hate crime graffiti reported throughout the Parish, particularly in Magnolia Park, noting it had currently subsided within Magnolia Park and Nature Reserve. Members agreed to promote the initiative but noted that the content provided by District Cllr Mrs J Gooding was not suitable for promotion; the Clerk would contact District Cllr Mrs J Gooding for more suitable material to publish through Council's Facebook page.

FC 23/64 Representatives Reports:

Rochford Old Peoples Welfare Committee – Members were referred to Agenda item 9 (Minute FC 23/63.10).

RHALC – The Clerk informed Members there would be a meeting in October; once the date was known the information would be passed to Cllr S May.

Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall (AEHMH) – No representatives.

Hawkwell Village Hall – There had been no meetings.

Public Transport Liaison Group – There was nothing to report.

Robert Sudbury Trust – The Clerk would be contacting Barclays in due course.

Information Reports:

Community Meetings – There was nothing to report.

FC 23/65 Receive Committee/Working Party Reports since last meeting:

Planning Committee: It was **resolved** that Members accepted the minutes of the meetings held on 24th July 2023, 14th August 2023 and 11th September 2023.

Parks Committee: It was **resolved** that Members accepted the minutes of the meetings held on 24th July 2023 and 18th September 2023.

Finance Committee: It was resolved that Members accept the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2023.

Climate Change Working Group (CCWG): It was resolved that Members accepted the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2023.

a) It was **resolved** that Members adopt the Environmental Policy.

b) It was **resolved** that Members accept the solar panels recommendation subject to grant funding.

c) It was **resolved** that HPC be added to the UN Directory as recommended by the CCWG.

FC 23/66 Payment of Accounts

A Member enquired why the Zoom remote meeting subscription was still being paid and the Clerk confirmed she used the service for meetings/training courses.

A Member enquired why there had been two payments to Blake Fire & Security and the Clerk explained the Magnolia Store had suffered issues with the intruder alarm, including power failures. It was anticipated those failures had now been repaired but the Clerk was monitoring the situation.

There were no further questions and it was **resolved** that the payment of accounts paid since the last meetings (July, August & September payments) were approved together with agreement to pay any accounts due before the next meeting.

FC 23/67 Summary of Decisions Taken:

- Clerk to liaise with Mr Appleby to arrange a suitable Facebook post be published.
- Clerk to contact lighting contractor to enquire about callout fees being returned via the supplier of faulty bulbs.
- Fiscal Policy adopted for setting budget for 2024-25.
- Budget items noted for consideration – solar panels, additional security (Magnolia Store), office computers, Spencers brook work, grass collection machinery.
- Bleed Kits item to be referred to the General Purposes Committee.
- Red Card Initiative to be supported by publishing a suitable Facebook Post; Clerk to contact District Cllr Mrs J Gooding for suitable material.
- Environmental Policy approved.
- Solar Panels recommendation approved.
- Approval given for Council to join the UN Directory.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:40pm

Chairman