



Minutes of the Parish Council Tuesday 18 August 2020

1/20 Attendance and Apologies for absence

Attendance: Cllr Buxton (Chairman); Cllr Sayer; Cllr Burn; Cllr Booth

Apologies for absence: Cllr Jacklin (Vice-Chairman); Cllr Penney

Absent: Cllr Pike; Cllr Evans

Present: Ruth Davies (Clerk)

There were no members of the public present.

2/20 Declaration of interest for items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest received for items on the agenda.

3/20 Approval of Minutes of Council of 10 March 2020

The council **resolved to approve** the minutes and they will be signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting once the Clerk and Chairman meet.

As detailed in the agenda, the actions and matters arising associated with these minutes will be reviewed at the council meeting on the 8 September 20.

4/20 Announcements from the Chairman

The Chairman confirmed to council the resignation of Cllr Anne Brindle and expressed on behalf of council her gratitude for the excellent service Cllr Brindle provided to council in her role, especially her caring presence and alternative voice.

The Chairman informed council that the vacancy had been duly advertised and with no residents wishing to call an election, this vacancy was now open to co-option through the council process. This means there are two co-option vacancies on council. The Chairman also confirmed that should an election have been called then this would not have taken place until 6 May 2021 under the current COVID-19 regulations.

The Chairman informed council of the resignation of 2 members of the council employment currently working as Park Keeper and Assistant Park Keeper. They will have worked for the council for 2½ years when they leave at the end of September and have worked well in their roles and are now moving to a new home out of the area. On behalf of council, the Chairman wished them well and thanked them for their hard work. The vacancy will now be re-advertised.

The Chairman expressed her thanks on behalf of council to the emergency services who worked to contain the fire on Chobham Common. The fire reached some 150 hectares and there was a requirement to evacuate around 12 homes in Sunningdale.

The Chairman confirmed that work was taking place on risk assessments and actions required to open the under 12s playground in the coming days. The date would be confirmed once the necessary actions had taken place and this was because of updated government advice. The toilets at the recreation ground would remain closed as the government advice on public toilets was to keep closed.

The Chairman informed council that a 3-page letter to residents had been published in the Village Life magazine as the Parish News for August. Councillors who had not received this publication could read it online and the Clerk took an action to place a link to the online version of the publication on the council website.

5/20 Public Adjournment

There were no members of the public present and no questions to answer from previous meetings, therefore the chairman moved on to the next agenda point.

6/20 Councillors Questions and Business Motions

There were no questions from council members nor business motions brought forward, therefore the Chairman moved on to the next agenda point.

7/20 Business from previous meetings

Council reviewed and **resolved to approve** the ratification of the decisions taken by council during the period when meetings were suspended under the extended scheme of delegation.

As detailed in the agenda, the other business from previous meetings will be reviewed at the council meeting on the 8 September 20.

8/20 Presentation of Committee Minutes, reports from Representatives and proposals from Working Groups

The council reviewed and **resolved to approve** the proposal from the Operations Committee that all future council and committee meetings should be held on the Zoom platform until May 2021 or changes to the government legislation occur.

As detailed in the agenda, the minutes, and proposals from committees, working groups and representatives will be reviewed at the council meeting on the 8 September 20.

9/20 To receive the Statement of Accounts for the year ending March 2020

The Statement of Accounts as prepared by DCK Accountants on behalf of the council were presented to the council by Cllr Booth, Chairman of the Finance Committee. Cllr Booth detailed the areas where grammatical errors were required to be amended and highlighted the financial performance as follows:

- The council year ended with a surplus of receipts totalling £24,724 which increased the general reserve account from £58,050 to £82,774 which is slightly higher than the 4 months payments which the council retains in the general reserve, however in current circumstances where the council is losing income due to closures this is a reassuring position.
- The total reserves of council now stand at £310,545 however this includes £94,528 of CIL and £32,505 of S106 reserves which are ring fenced funds.
- The council received £451 of bank interest during the year ending March 20, however the council should be aware that no interest is being paid on council deposit accounts from 1 July 20.
- The reduction in the employer's pension contributions which started the year at 27.2% and reduced to 8%. The employer contribution into the Berkshire Pension fund is now 29.9%.
- There may be a liability on the council for exiting the Berkshire Pension scheme, which was not highlighted at the time of leaving, however no more information had been received to date.
- The fixed assets for the year ending March 2020 are listed at either their original cost if known or the earliest know value, and therefore do not represent a true value today. Due to the requirement to move to Accrual accounting for the financial year 21/22, these assets will be restated into a balance sheet and the council accounts for 2019 20 and 2020 21 will need to be restated. This work is due to be carried out in the Autumn as the new budget set for 2021 22 will need to be set on an income and expenditure basis.

The council **resolved to approve** the Statement of Accounts with the amends as highlighted and requested the Clerk places these on the council website once the amended copy has been received.

10/20 To approve the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2020

The council received, reviewed, and **resolved to approve** the final auditors report for the year ending March 2020, noting the points raised by the auditor regarding the changes to the financial regulations for the financial year 2020 21.

The council thanked the Clerk / RFO for her work in providing the papers via electronic format to the auditor to enable this audit to take place remotely.

The council reviewed the AGAR annual return figures as they corresponded to the approved Statement of Accounts (page 5) and noted the sign off from the internal auditor in relation to compliance and control during the financial year (page 3).

The council **unanimously resolved to approve** the Annual Governance Statement (page 4) confirming a sound system of internal control and arranging for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. The Chairman will duly sign the return on behalf of council.

The council were updated by the Clerk/RFO that no further correspondence had been received from PKF Littlejohn in relation to the potential objection to the AGAR year ending March 2019.

11/20 To receive the Financial Report

The council received and reviewed the financial report as prepared by the Clerk/RFO with the following actions taken in response to questions from council members:

- The finance committee to investigate putting some of the council reserves into short term investments to get a better return than 0% as offered by the council bank.
- The Chairman to ensure RBWM are aware of the financial difficulties that RBWM are experiencing and to request an improvement in the CIL reporting to the parish council.

The council received, reviewed, and **resolved to approve** the receipts and payments as presented.

12/20 To confirm the dates of future meetings

The Chairman confirmed that the dates as sent out with the Agenda papers of the upcoming council and committee meetings would take place via the Zoom platform.

The next meeting would be the Planning Committee on 25 August followed by Council on 8 September.

13/20 Information Sharing

The Chairman apologised for missing this in her announcements and explained to council that the government legislations which postponed the Annual Parish Council Meeting from May 2020 to May 2021 did not remove the option of the council holding an election for the position of Chairman of Council or Chairman of separate committees.

The Chairman requested the views of the council on whether they wished for this action to take place at the next council meeting.

The council **confirmed** that they were **unanimously** happy with the extension of Chairmanship for council and committees until May 2021.

Cllr Sayer brought forward the RBWM Highways consultation regarding the crossing on Chobham Road which she had received as a resident. It was noted that council was not informed by RBWM that this consultation was taking place, nor any information received.

Cllr Booth, on behalf of council, thanked and congratulated the Clerk and her team for their excellent work during the close down. This was agreed by all council members.

Cllr Burn confirmed that the next planning committee would take place via Zoom and that the Clerk had the facility to share PowerPoint presentations during the meeting. This was confirmed by the Clerk.

Cllr Sayer expressed concerns over the re-opening of the under 12s playground in relation to the toilets remaining closed. The concern was not over whether or not to open the toilets, rather the behaviour which may be seen when families are unable to access toilet facilities. It was agreed that this would be closely monitored and if the situation became unacceptable then the under 12s playground may need to close once more.

With no further items to discuss, the Chairman thanked all councillors and the Clerk for their attendance and participation in the council meeting which closed at 9 pm.