



FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

• 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak, Eastleigh, SO50 7GL ☎ (023) 8069 2403

✉ enquiries@fairoak-pc.gov.uk 🌐 www.fairoak-pc.gov.uk

📱 @fairoakandhortonheathparishcouncil 📺 fairoakandhortonheath

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of the Council held on Monday 20 May 2024 at 6.00 pm at the Parish Office, 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak

Present: Cllrs Anderson, Barrett, Douglas (Chair), Cllr Higby, Smith & Cllr Stupple

Officers in attendance: Mel Stephens, Clerk, Michelle Leadbitter-Allen, Deputy Clerk and Jo Cahill, Finance Officer

Apologies: Cllrs Bird, Broomfield, Chivuchi, Couldrey, Forfar, Marsh, Meech, Scott & Tennent

PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr Barrett moved that Cllr Douglas be elected Chair of the Council for the ensuing municipal year. The motion was seconded by Cllr Anderson. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Douglas be appointed as Chair for the ensuing municipal year. Cllr Douglas took the Chair and signed the declaration of acceptance of office, formally witnessed by the Clerk.

Councillor Douglas expressed her gratitude to Council members and staff, acknowledging their dedication and teamwork.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Cllr Douglas moved that Cllr Couldrey be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the ensuing municipal year. The motion was seconded by Cllr Anderson. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Couldrey be appointed as Vice-Chair for the ensuing municipal year.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

4 MINUTES (PAPER A)

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 22 April 2024, be signed by the Chair as a correct record; and
- (b) That the delegated planning decision be noted.

5 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES & OUTSIDE BODIES (REPORT B)

The Council considered the membership of committees, Task & Finish Group and outside body representatives for the ensuing year.

The Council also considered the proposal to dispense with the Asset Committee considering the fact that decisions regarding council assets continued to be brought before full council.

Due to the increased number of public open spaces and play areas now under the care of the parish council, the Clerk recommended the establishment of a Public Open Space, Community Infrastructure and Play Area Task and Finish Group. The group would consist of four councillors and two community representatives.

Members supported the proposals as set out above.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Asset Committee be disbanded;
- (b) That the Public Open Space, Community Infrastructure and Play Area Task and Finish Group be established with the terms of reference as set out on Report B;
- (c) That Cllrs Anderson, Bird, Higby & Scott be appointed to serve on the Public Open Space, Community Infrastructure and Play Area Task and Finish Group; and
- (d) That the members appointed to Committees, standing Task & Finish Groups and Outside Bodies as set out in Report B to the Council be approved; subject to the Clerk confirming the representative for Twynams Trustees.

Action: Mel Stephens

6 STANDING ORDERS (REPORT C)

Members considered the Standing Orders and proposed amendments. These included:

1. The inclusion of a robust Public Participation Procedure to assist Council members to better manage larger groups of public attendance;
2. The removal of the Asset Committee and subsequent Terms of Reference;
3. The change to the order of business at ordinary meetings of the council;
4. The change of Advisory Group to Task and Finish Groups; and

5. Minor changes numbering and formatting changes.

Members supported the proposed changes as set out above. As such, it was;

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Standing Orders as set out in Appendix 1 to Report C be approved; and,
- (b) That the Clerk be given delegated authority, to make further minor editing changes, corrections, and updates to the document prior to publication as required.

Action: Mel Stephens

7 PLANNING APPLICATION F/24/96895

The Council considered planning application F/24/96895, Land at Burnetts Lane/Fire Tree Lane as set out on the agenda summons.

Council Members discussed the application and supported the comments made by the following statutory consultees:

- (a) The Ramblers Association, who had concerns that the size of the bridleways and footpaths were insufficient;
- (b) The Local Flood Authority who was concerned that the basins were not of sufficient size or depth to prevent flooding and had concerns about the connectivity of the basins being insufficient;
- (c) Active Travel England who objected to the proposed width and use of footpaths and bridleways, the proposed surface material, and the lack of details on 'gateway' features, and;
- (d) Natural England, who raised concerns regarding the lack of information given to support the adequacy of the green infrastructure as part of the mitigation package for the housing proposed.

RESOLVED:

That the Council supports the comments made by the statutory consultees with a further comment that living art must form part of the Public Art provision for the wider site to increase biodiversity and sustainability.

Action: Mel Stephens

8 PROTOCOL FOR CLLR/OFFICER RELATIONS (REPORT E)

The Council considered the Councillor/Officer relations protocol.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the protocol for Cllr/Officer Relations as set out in Report E be approved; and

- (b) That the Clerk be given delegated authority, to make further minor editing changes, corrections, and updates to the document prior to publication should this be necessary.

Action: Mel Stephens

9 CONFLICT OF INTEREST WITH BDO LTD

Councillors confirmed that they did not have any conflicts of interest with BDO LLP external auditor.

RESOLVED:

That the conflict-of-interest form be signed by the Clerk and Chair for submission with audit papers.

Action: Jo Cahill

10 FINAL ACCOUNTS (REPORT F)

The Council considered the Final Accounts for the 2023/24 financial year.

RESOLVED:

That the Final Accounts for the year ending March 2024 be approved for submission to the external auditor and the annual return completed.

Action: Jo Cahill

11 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE RETURN (SECTION 1&2) 2023/24(REPORT G)

The Council considered the Annual Governance Return sections 1 and 2 for submission to the external auditors.

The Chairman expressed the Council's thanks to the Finance Officer for all her hard work in preparing the reports.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 (Section 1) be approved and signed by the Chair and the Clerk for submission to the external auditor;
- (b) That the Accounting Statement 2023/24 (Section 2) be approved and signed by the Chair for submission to the external auditor; and
- (c) That the dates for 'Notice for Public Right of Inspection' be approved as 3 June 2024 to 12 July 2024.

Action: Jo Cahill

12 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (REPORT I)

The Council considered the report of the Internal Auditor following her visit on 30 April

2024.

The Clerk and Finance Officer had responded to the comments made by the Auditor and actions were set out in the action plan attached as Appendix 2 to Report I.

Pertinent comments made by the auditor included: -

The Council's general reserve was lower than recommended. The Clerk explained that this had been due to the capital projects overspend but would be recouped later in the year as asset transfers completed and Section 106 monies were received.

Additionally, the Finance Officer had received a query from the external auditor regarding the internal auditor appointment. As the council was at the end of the 3-year contract with the current auditor, the council would need to review this.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the internal audit report be noted; and
- (b) That the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer be given delegated authority to carry out actions as set out in the audit action plan attached at Appendix 2 to Report I.

Action: Jo Cahill/Mel Stephens

13 FINANCE REPORT (REPORT J)

The Council considered the Finance Report.

The Finance Officer advised that following publication of the report, the latest pay offer had been agreed by Trade Unions. The agreement set out an increase of £1,290 from 1 April 2024 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all National Joint Council pay points 2 to 43 inclusive.

Although Council had agreed and budgeted for a 2% increase there would be a would be a short fall of approximately £27K due to the difference between the £1290.00 and the agreed increase and the associated costs of National Insurance and staff pensions.

Whilst the report had initially proposed a virement from Woodland Community Centre Ear Marked Reserves to the general reserves to increase the Council's general reserve level, this money would now likely go toward the pay settlement.

Approval of the pay settlement and final financial implications for the Council would be discussed at the next Council meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) That the BACs payments be approved; and
- (c) That the virement of £21,100 from the Woodland Ear Marked Reserve (EMR) to

the general fund be approved.

Action: Jo Cahill

14 WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT K)

The Council considered the work programme.

Cllr Barrett asked if the Financial Internal Controls could be reviewed to include more safeguards around bill payments. This would be considered at the next Finance and Staffing Committee meeting in July.

Cllr Barrett also raised concerns over the leaves left on the ground at the cemetery over winter which had killed the grass underneath and asked for the maintenance schedule for the cemetery to be shared with the Council.

Cllr Douglas asked if a schedule of operations could be shared by the Operations Manager for all sites on 27 May 2024.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the work programme be agreed; and
- (b) That the Operations Manager submit the above maintenance schedules to all members for information by 27 May 2024.

Action: Martin Johnson

Signed Chair

This was all the business and the meeting closed at 6.51pm.