



## FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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### **Minutes of the Council Meeting of the Council held on Monday 22 July 2024 at 6.00 pm at the Parish Office, 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak**

**Present:** Cllrs Douglas (Chair), Barrett, Broomfield, Couldrey, Forfar, Marsh, Meech, Smith & Stupple

**Absent:** Cllrs Chivuchi & Tennent

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**Officers in attendance:** Mel Stephens, Clerk, Jo Cahill, Finance Officer, Carly Giles, Communications Officer and Siobhan Strand, Community Development Officer

**Apologies:** Cllrs Anderson, Bird, Higby and Scott.

#### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made in connection with any agenda item.

#### **2 MINUTES (PAPER A)**

##### **RESOLVED:**

- a) That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 17 June 2024, be signed by the Chair as a correct record;
- b) That the Finance Committee meeting held on 5 July 2024 and the recommendations therein, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record; and
- c) That the delegated planning decisions for week ending 31 May and 21 June 2024 be noted.

#### **3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

#### **4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that Bloor Homes had recently commenced a public consultation, prior to formal planning, regarding a 250-home development off Mortimers Lane. The proposed development would be considered formally by the Council as a statutory consultee. The Chairman therefore asked, to ensure that members did not predetermine this application, that no comments be made on social media.

The Chairman advised the Council that following a Communications and Events Task & Finish Group, a report would be submitted to the September Council proposing a large-

scale event on Monday 5 May 2025, to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. The whole organisation would be needed to resource the event; therefore, roles would be assigned to all Councillors on that basis.

## **5 CLERK'S UPDATE**

The Clerk gave a presentation, attached at Appendix 1 to these minutes.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the presentation be noted.

## **6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Council received a presentation, attached at Appendix 2 to these minutes, from the Community Development Officer on community engagement activities and future planned events.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the presentation be noted.

## **7 KNOWLE PARK ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENTS**

The Council received a presentation, attached at Appendix 3 to these minutes, from the Community Development Officer proposing the establishment of a mini forest at Twynams Field and a second community orchard at Knowle Park.

Members were informed that the grant application for the installation of the mini forest at Twynams Field, as an extension to the Twynams nature recovery project, had been successful, with Hampshire County Council awarding the full costs of the project namely, up to £10k.

In relation to the establishment of the second community orchard, at Knowle Park, this had been proposed by officers owing to the fact that the current orchard at Lapstone Farm had been struggling considering its poor ground conditions. The proposed site, being free draining and offering greater accessibility to the public, would be better suited as an orchard space as such the Community Development Officer had met recently with Officers at Hampshire County Council who had encouraged the Parish to submit a grant application for their Hampshire Forest Partnership Community Orchard fund. If successful the grant would finance all works associated with a new orchard, which would include planting of approximately 30 fruit trees, provide all the ancillary items and fund interpretation boards.

Recent Facebook polls on the projects had shown huge support from the community. As the planting windows for both projects were relatively close, namely, February for the mini forest and March for the community orchard, members requested that a robust communications plan be put in place to ensure that residents were fully engaged in the process.

Councillors were supportive of both proposals and requested that the Community Development Officer, in consultation with the Clerk, progress both projects.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Community Development Officer in consultation with the Clerk and Chair, be delegated to project manage the installation of a mini forest at Twynams Field;
2. That the Community Development Officer in consultation with the Clerk and Chair submit a grant application to Hampshire County Council for the establishment of a second community orchard at Knowle Park;
3. Subject to the community orchard grant application being successful, the Clerk and the Community Development Officer, be given delegated authority to oversee the establishment of the orchard; and
4. That a robust communications plan be developed for both projects

Action: Mel Stephens/Siobhan Strand/Carly Giles

## **8 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE & PLAY AREA TASK & FINISH GROUP (REPORT B)**

The Council considered the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group including the commissioning of a play provision strategy.

Given the continued mass development in the Parish, and the lack of engagement in the development of section 106 legal agreements which left the parish subject to a 'pepper potted' approach to play provision, members were supportive of the recommendation to commission a comprehensive public open space and play provision strategy. It was hoped that the strategy would not only assist the Council in the design, delivery and management of provision but also be a useful evidenced based tool in influencing the Borough Council.

The Clerk had received an indicative cost for the development of a strategy which had exceeded the proposal on the report. It was therefore suggested that the Clerk, seek other quotes and bring a fully costed proposal, with timescales and brief to the September Council meeting. The Council would then determine how this would be funded.

In relation to the provision at Upper Barn Copse, the Clerk and the Community Development Officer would be running two workshops in August with local children to observe their play preferences and seek their views on what provision they would like to see at this site. Whilst the Clerk's funding support request from the Local Area Committee had been successful, the funds available for this project were still relatively small, namely approximately £35k which would restrict the provision available for this site.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Clerk seek a further two quotes for the commissioning of a public open space and play provision strategy for consideration at the September Council meeting.

Action: Mel Stephens

## **9 VOLUNTEER POLICY (REPORT C)**

The Council considered amendments to the Volunteer Policy.

Cllr Broomfield suggested that under 3.1 of the policy, an amendment be made to make clear that the views of the volunteer do not represent the views of the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

That subject to the amendment of paragraph 3.1 to stipulate that the views of individual volunteers are not reflective of the views of the Council, the Volunteer Policy be agreed.

Action: Mel Stephens

**10 CORPORATE ACTION PLAN (REPORT D)**

The Council considered the Corporate Action Plan for 2024-2026 as set out in Appendix 1 to Report D.

The Chairman requested that project planning for a new cemetery be added to January 2025 under the place priority.

**RESOLVED:**

That subject to the inclusion that project planning for the new cemetery be added to January 2025 place priority, the Corporate Action Plan for 2024-2026 be adopted.

Action: Mel Stephens

**11 FINANCE REPORT (REPORT E)**

The Council considered the finance report which highlighted the Council's latest budgetary position.

Following discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) That the BACs payments be approved.

Action: J Cahill

**12 FINANCE REGULATION AND INTERNAL CONTROLS (REPORT F)**

The Council reviewed the Financial Regulations and Internal Control Statement.

Following discussion, it was;

**RESOLVED:**

That the Finance Regulations and Internal Control Statement for 2024-2025 as set out in Appendix 1 to Report F, be adopted.

Action: Jo Cahill

**13 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE (REPORT G)**

The Council considered the appointment of an internal audit service.

Following discussion, it was;

**RESOLVED:**

That 'Do the numbers' be appointed to carry out internal audit service function, for a three-year period commencing on 23 July 2024 at a fixed rate of £1,350 per annum.

Action: Jo Cahill

**14 HORTON HEATH COMMUNITY CENTRE BOILER (VERBAL REPORT)**

The Council considered a supplementary budget request for the installation of a replacement boiler at Horton Heath Community Centre.

Members were happy to support the proposal but requested the Operations Manager to clarify that the boiler quoted for was robust enough to support the effective running of a busy community centre.

Following discussion, it was;

**RESOLVED:**

That £2,519.76 be taken out of the Horton Heath Community Centre Flooring Ear Marked Reserve for the boiler replacement.

Action: Martin Johnson

**15 WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT E)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the work programme be agreed.

Signed ..... Chair

This was all the business and the meeting closed at 7.15pm.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Clerk's presentation

Appendix 2 – Community Development Officer's presentation

Appendix 3 – Knowle Park Environmental Enhancements presentation