



North Hinksey Parish Council



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Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of North Hinksey Parish Council held at 6.00pm on Thursday 17th June 2021 in the Seacourt Hall and via video conference

Those Present: Cllr Potter (Chairman), Cllrs Bastin, Berrett, Blase, Bolder, Dowie, Dykes, Fairclough, Kay and Rankin. Cllr Allen attended in a non voting capacity via video conference.

In Attendance: Sharon Henley, Clerk

Members of Public (via video conference): 2

21/028: Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Church, Jones and MacKeith

21/029: Declarations of Interest: There were none.

21/030: End of Year Finance

1) RFO End of Year Report to 31st March 2021 (Paper 1)

The Year end balance at 31st March 2021 was £307,081 which was similar to the year end (restated) balance at 31st March 2020 of £308,841. This figure includes Earmarked Reserves of £277,296.78 and General Reserves of £29,784.22

We are still awaiting news on the payment of costs from the Judicial Review of £9,393 which, if awarded, would significantly mitigate the total amount spent on legal fees in this financial year.

The Council had its first tree survey completed in August 2020 which highlighted a large amount of necessary safety tree work resulting in expenditure of around £5,500 including the cost of the survey.

Allotments rents were waived for the year due to Covid.

We received a total of £11,706.77 CIL monies.

Staff costs increased as it was decided to increase the Clerk's hours from 30 to 37 per week due to workload. Locum clerk costs were incurred during the recruitment period in 2020.

The accounting system was changed during the year from RBS to Scribe and reporting moved from Income and Expenditure to Receipts and Payments, in line with guidance. When the accounts were moved to Scribe it was noted that the bank balance for the Barclays savings account number 8910 was under reported at 31st March 2020 by £153.36 due to an error in transferring figures from the bank reconciliation and statement.

The Fixed Asset Register was reviewed during the year and items revalued in line with guidance contained in the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners' Guide, resulting in the final figure for Fixed Assets being restated from £375,096 in 2019-20 to £187,366 in 2020-21.

For these reasons there are some boxes that have been marked as 'restated' on the draft Accounting Statements 2020-21. A full explanation is detailed in AGAR Restatements Explanation v5.

The above was noted by Council.

2) Annual Internal Auditor's Report 2020-21

- a) **To review and accept report** (Papers 2a and 2b) Cllr Fairclough proposed to accept the report and Cllr Kay seconded. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against so the motion was APPROVED.

- b) **To determine actions arising from recommendations** (Paper 2c) Councillors reviewed actions as recommended by the RFO as follows:
- i) AGAR 2019-20 – it was noted that the external auditor’s report had still not been received pending a response to Moore from the National Audit Office, despite the Clerk chasing.
 - ii) Recommendation for overpayment of Clerk’s salary were noted and the Chairman and Vice Chairman should continue to check monthly salary payment information as part of their bank signatory duties.
 - iii) Monthly bank statements and reconciliations and end of year bank statements should have hard copies signed by the Chairman following review at each quarterly F&GP Meeting.
 - iv) Period of Exercise of Public Rights for 2019-20 – the auditor’s comments were noted along with reasons why the variation in dates had occurred. Care was to be taken to ensure correct dates were specified on the 2020-21 Notice to ensure the legislation was strictly complied with in the future.

Cllr Fairclough proposed to accept the recommended actions and Cllr Blase seconded. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Dowie who voted against so the motion was APPROVED.

- c) To note that overpayment of the clerk’s salary at £27.37 per month between Oct 2020 and March 2021 totalling £164.22 was deducted from the May salary. In addition a further amount of £27.37 from April 2021 giving a final total of £191.59 gross deducted in May. This was noted.

3) **Review & Approval of AGAR & associated documents 2020-21**

- a) **Annual Internal Audit Report 2020-21** (Paper 3): To review and accept document signed by internal auditor. Cllr Fairclough proposed to accept the Report and this was seconded by Cllr Kay. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.

b) **AGAR Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020-21(AGAR page 4) (Paper 4):**

- i) To review statements 1-9 and agree Yes or No responses to each statement

The Chairman reviewed each question in turn and a vote was taken to approve the response:

- Item 1 – response Yes: Proposed by Cllr Potter and seconded by Cllr Rankin. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- Item 2 - response Yes: Proposed by Cllr Potter and seconded by Cllr Blase,. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- Item 3 – response Yes: Proposed by Cllr Potter and seconded by Cllr Fairclough. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- Item 4 – response No in accordance with the Internal Audit Report. Proposed by Cllr Potter, seconded by Cllr Fairclough. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. Unanimously APPROVED.
- Item 5 – response Yes. Proposed by Cllr Potter and seconded by Cllr Bastin. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- Item 6 – response Yes: Proposed by Cllr Potter, seconded by Cllr Blase. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- Item 7 – response Yes: Proposed by Cllr Potter, seconded by Cllr Fairclough. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.

- Item 8 – response Yes: Proposed by Cllr Potter, seconded by Cllr Bastin. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
 - Item 9 – response n/a: Proposed by Cllr Potter, seconded by Cllr Rankin. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. Unanimously APPROVED.
- ii) Approve signing of document by the Clerk and Chairman. Cllr Berrett proposed, Cllr Kay seconded and Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. All voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- c) **To approve Bank Reconciliation 2020-21 as recommended by F&GP Committee (Paper 5)**
Proposed by Cllr Fairclough, seconded by Cllr Blase and Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. All voted in favour except Dowie who abstained. APPROVED.
- d) **To approve Explanation of Variances 2020-21 as recommended by F&GP Committee (Paper 6)**
Proposed by Cllr Blase, seconded by Cllr Bastin and Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. All voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- e) **AGAR Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020-21 (Paper 7):**
- i) To approve draft Accounting Statements as recommended by F&GP Committee. Cllr Kay proposed, Cllr Blase seconded and Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. All voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- ii) To approve signing of document by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Blase, seconded by Cllr Fairclough. Cllr Dowie requested a named vote and all voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.
- f) **2021 Notice of Public Rights (Paper 8):** To approve
- i) Dates for exercise of Public Rights as Mon 21st June to Fri 30th July and draft notice. Proposed by Cllr Fairclough, seconded by Cllr Blase and unanimously APPROVED.
- ii) Date and method of publishing on website. The notice to be published on Friday 18th June on the website and displayed on the Seacourt Hall noticeboard. Cllr Dowie proposed the notice to be circulated to noticeboard monitors and displayed as soon as possible. Seconded by Cllr Berrett and unanimously APPROVED.

21/031: Clerk/RFO Role

1) **To report the resignation of the Clerk/RFO.** The Chairman confirmed the Clerk would be leaving on 2nd July to take up another Clerk role. This was following a grievance raised by the Clerk about a councillor and efforts had been made through the grievance process to address these issues. In relation to this a Code of Conduct complaint sent by 12 councillors to the Monitoring Officer had not been followed up by the Vale since March. A complaint had also been raised with the Vale about this inaction which had exacerbated the problem highlighted by the Clerk in her grievance. The grievance outcomes to be discussed in more detail at the 24th June Council meeting.

2) **To agree arrangements for recruitment of temporary Clerk/RFO to cover during recruitment process and determine budgetary provision.** The Chairman had approached SLCC for a locum who advised that a locum would be available from 22nd July and into August. Hours of 20 hours per week up to 100 hours at £50 per hour to a total cost of £5,000 had been approved in principle under the Three Chairmen rule approval prior to the meeting.

During the two week gap between Clerks it was proposed to use autoreply on emails to signpost enquiries to others within the Council. As this included part of the term for the Exercise of Public Rights, Cllrs Kay, Potter, Rankin and Berrett to manage requests to view documents. Proposed by Cllr Potter, seconded by Cllr Bastin and Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. All voted in favour except Cllr Dowie who voted against. APPROVED.

Cllr Kay proposed approval of a minimum of 3 months funding for a locum clerk at 20 hours per week at £50 per hour. This was seconded by Cllr Rankin and Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. Unanimously APPROVED.

- 3) **To agree delegated responsibility to create job advertisement, method of recruitment, job specification and agree timescales in order to commence recruitment process.** The previous Clerk/RFO job advertisement and job description to be circulated to councillors for review at the Council meeting on 24th June when delegated responsibility for finalising the documents and progressing recruitment would be determined. Proposed by Cllr Blase, seconded by Cllr Bastin and Cllr Dowie requested a named vote. Unanimously APPROVED.

Cllr Potter thanked the Clerk for all her hard work and professionalism during her time in post.

21/032: Date of Next Scheduled full Council Meeting: Thursday 24th June 2021 at 7.30pm in the Seacourt Hall, attendance for members of the public via Zoom.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.10 hours.