

HASLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

6th February 2023

Commenced: 7.00 pm

Terminated: 8.45 pm

Present: Councillor S Green (Chair)
Councillors L Allen, H Blake, Y Bushill, C Davis, M Deakin, S Edgar,
M Edwards, J Griffith, A Heler, R Hovey, R McCarthy, M Mews (until 7.45
pm), A Peake and G Sawyer

Also in attendance:
Mrs M Clough, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
5 Members of the Public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no Apologies for Absence submitted by Members of the Parish Council.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Edgar declared his interest in the Allotment Group and agreed to abstain from any discussions or voting thereon.

Councillors Deakin, Peake and Sawyer declared their interests in the Yoxall Group and agreed that they would abstain from any discussions or voting thereon.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of Parish Council held on 9th January 2023 were approved by the Parish Council, and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the following amendment discussed as Item 5, Public Forum.

For the purpose of the Minutes and for public knowledge, Councillor Sawyer clarified that the discussion regarding Item 5 at the last meeting had been misleading. He confirmed that the entire scheme was not under the remit of the Parish Council. The location was within the ownership of Cheshire East Council, and the project was initiated by an independent organisation called Haslington Support Group. It was Haslington Support Group that had purchased the benches, and had been in discussions with various other organisations (including Cheshire East Council) regarding their siting and installation.

Whilst the Parish Council could forward on the objections of residents to the proposal of the installation of the benches to Haslington Support Group, it was not within the power of this Parish Council to make any resolutions regarding this matter, and the resolution made at the last Council regarding the consideration of the removal of the benches, should any anti-social behaviour be reported to the police, would have to be withdrawn, together with the resolution which states that the benches will be installed incrementally.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

The following matters were raised by Members of the Public in accordance with Standing Order Section 3.

Ms Kathleen Williams, requested details of the Haslington Support Group and Councillor Davis agreed to forward these to her.

Mrs Bev Moon from the Haslington Allotments Group reported that the Group's recently held open days had been very well received.

RESOLVED

That the matters raised in the Public Forum be noted.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- (i) The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer explained to the Parish Council that its current practises relating to the ordering of goods and services (outside the remit of delegated authority), and also in relation to the allocation of contracts could not continue, as they contravened the Parish Council's Financial Regulations. She was now working to regularise all processes and procedures in line with statutory requirements.

The Clerk referred to a recent meeting at which advice was sought from the Parish Council's Adviser, and she confirmed that in future, any work to be carried out within the Parish, would first require approval by the Parish Council of a written quote, before the work had commenced. Furthermore, the current practise of giving work/contracts to just one contractor could not continue.

This procedure was met with resistance from some Councillors who felt that this would cause unnecessary delays and bureaucracy, but the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer reinforced that this procedure was already detailed within the Parish Council's Financial Regulations, and should be automatically followed, as it was a legal requirement.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

At this juncture, the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer advised the Chair to withdraw from the meeting, as she had a pecuniary interest in Items 5(ii) and 5(iii). The Chair therefore, withdrew from the meeting and left the room. The position of Chair was resumed by the Deputy Chair, Councillor Sawyer.

- (ii) The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer reported that she had received two retrospective invoices for payment from J D Services, for work that had already been completed, without first having had the approval of the Parish Council:

Invoice Number 28/12/22 in the sum of £475.00

Invoice Number 30/01/23 in the sum of £925.00

RESOLVED

That payment of Invoice Number 28/12/22 in the sum of £475.00 be approved

That payment of Invoice Number 30/01/23 in the sum of £925.00 be approved

- (iii) The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer asked the Parish Council to consider the payment of a quote for bin emptying across the Parish for February 2023 and March 2023. The sum quoted was £100 per month.

Councillor Hovey reported that historically, a sum of money had been received by the Parish Council from Cheshire East Council in the sum of approximately £1,150 per annum called the Parish Compact, which enabled Parish Councils to be able to fund the emptying of their litter bins

RESOLVED

That the quote received from JD Services detailing the specific bins to be emptied within the Parish during February 2023 and March 2023, in the sum of £100 per month, be approved.

- (iv) The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer advised the Parish Council that comprehensive contracts would have to be considered for grounds maintenance works and services required within the Parish for the 2023-2024 Financial Year.

RESOLVED

That the Parish Council to consider the requirements of each contract for the 2023-2024 Financial Year, as a matter of urgency.

- (v) The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer reported that she still did not have any access to the Parish Council online banking (despite posting the forms some weeks earlier) and this was making her role much more challenging. The Chair reported that as a signatory, she had tried to make contact with the Co-op Bank to resolve this matter, but had been unable to do so.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

6. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer sought approval of updated Financial Regulations which included the responsibilities of the Haslington Parish Council Finance Committee.

RESOLVED

That the updated Financial Regulations be approved.

7. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer requested approval to rename the Finance Working Group, the Finance Committee, and also sought approval for Finance Committee Terms of Reference which would replace the Terms of Reference previously approved for the Working Group.

RESOLVED

- (i) **That the Finance Working Group be renamed the Finance Committee;**
- (ii) **That the Finance Committee Terms of Reference, as submitted, be approved;**
- (iii) **That the first meeting of the Finance Committee for the 2023-2024 Municipal Year be held on Tuesday, 4th April 2023 at 7.30 pm.**

8. APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

The Parish Council considered an application for a donation towards the cost of enabling a child in the Parish to participate in the Special Olympics. Mr Wright, the child's father represented his daughter in her application, and explained that the child had been attending a gym club since the age of 3.

Councillor Hovey referred to the Haslington Parish Council Grants and Donations Policy, which unfortunately precluded any funding or donations to individuals.

Councillor Edgar requested that consideration of the current criteria within the policy be reviewed.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Haslington Parish Council Grants and Donations Policy be reviewed as soon as possible;**
- (ii) That additional consideration be given to this application at a future meeting.**

9. WEBSITE

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer reported that she had attempted to obtain four quotes for the purchase of a new website. One company did not respond, two companies were very expensive, therefore, the recommended supplier was Netwise. The most suitable package was the premium package, in the sum of £599 set up fee plus £330 per annum (+VAT).

RESOLVED

That the purchase of a new website from Netwise, via the Premium Package (as detailed above) be approved.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Risk Assessment for 2023-2024 was circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED

That the Risk Assessment for 2023-2024 be approved, with the following amendments:

- Minutes / Agendas / Statutory documents – Medium Risk**
- Election Costs – Low Risk**

11. GUTTERSCROFT CENTRE

(i) The Gutterscroft Working Group

Councillor Green reported that she was resigning from the Gutterscroft Working Group with immediate effect.

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer added that she would draft some Terms of Reference for approval by the Parish Council and recommended that the Working Group be renamed the Gutterscroft Management Committee.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the resignation of Councillor Green from the Gutterscroft Working Group/Management Committee be noted;**
- (ii) That the Gutterscroft Working Group be renamed the Gutterscroft Management Committee;**
- (iii) That in the short term, until Terms of Reference are approved, the day to day spending on revenue or emergency items up to a maximum of £500 in total, be authorised by the Management Committee and reported in writing, to the Parish Council, at its next meeting.**
- (iv) That a request from Croft Pre-School, for works to the outside area of the Gutterscroft Centre details of which were previously submitted to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Parish Council be approved, subject to the cost of the work being funded by the Croft Pre-School.**
- (v) That delegation to the Management Committee for the hiring of the Gutterscroft Centre, be approved.**

(ii) Utility Payments

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer reported that she would like to arrange for the payment of utilities by monthly direct debit, as detailed in Section 6 of the Financial Regulations

RESOLVED

That the payment of utilities by monthly direct debit, be approved.

12. PARISH GAZETTE

Councillor Griffith reported that this project would not proceed.

RESOLVED

That the cessation of this project be noted.

13. PLANNING MATTERS

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer submitted a record of planning applications that had been submitted to Cheshire East Council.

RESOLVED

That regarding application number 23/0101N, the objections of the Parish Council be submitted to Cheshire East Council, particularly in relation to:

Too many dwellings

The type of dwellings – bungalows were preferred

Use of Section 106 monies

Size of garages

14. UPDATES ON WINTERLEY, OAKHANGER AND HASLINGTON VILLAGE WARDS

Matters relating to individual wards were raised, and the common themes involved potholes, fly tipping, SIDS, utilities equipment and speeding.

RESOLVED

That the matters raised be noted, and Councillors and residents be encouraged to contact Cheshire East Council to report any concerns.

15. REPORT FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCILLOR

Councillor Edgar reported on the following:-

- (i) Public Right of Way - Footpath FP33 – discussions had taken place with the landowner and Cheshire East Council;
- (ii) The dog bin at the Gutterscroft was being replacement and relocated at the Gutterscroft gates
- (iii) The previously refused planning application 21/6113C for 55 houses on land off Close Lane, Alsager was now under the appeal system.
- (iv) The decision for application 22/2692N for up to 55 houses on land off Crew Road, Winterley, was still outstanding
- (v) The Neighbourhood Plan was to be delayed due to pre-election. The period of pre-election publicity restrictions would prevent further progress, as the Neighbourhood Plan was to be sponsored by the Parish Council To receive an update from Cheshire East Councillors representing Haslington Parish Council.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

16. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair allowed the consideration of the following item of business, due to time constraints in making arrangements.

17. CORONATION CELEBRATIONS IN THE PARISH

RESOLVED

That the Events and Publicity Committee be authorised to make proposals to the Parish Council for a plan of celebrations for this event.