

# HIGHCLERE PARISH COUNCIL

## Meeting of the Parish Council

### Minutes of the Highclere Parish Council Meeting held at

#### Highclere Village Hall

**Tuesday 12 September 2017 at 7pm**

**Members:**

Cllr. Sally Izett (Chairman), Cllr. Brad Norton (Vice Chairman)

Councillor Mike Jenkins, Councillor John Stoker, Councillor Jane Smith, Councillor Mike York.

**In attendance:**

Clerk to the Council Sue Edwards, Cllr. Graham Falconer, Cllr. Tom Thacker

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**47/17 Apologies for Absence.** Councillor Millie Nicholls, Councillor Don Langan, Cllr. John Izett.

**48/17 Declarations of Interest.**

There were no declarations of interest.

**49/17 To confirm accuracy and sign the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 July 2017.** The Minutes were circulated. It was unanimously resolved that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record. They were duly signed by the Chairman, Sally Izett.

**50/17 To Progress Resolutions from 11 July 2017** (*Matters arising from the Minutes*).

**39/17 Social Media Policy**

Cllr. Smith has supplied the Policy which the Clerk has posted onto the website.

**40/17 Report on Environment**

**Ditches in Highclere Street.**

Cllr. Stoker to email his contact at Highclere Estate again.

**Litter.** The Clerk wrote to the litter warden regarding the litter warden equipment. The litter warden has confirmed that he does not want to use a bodycam.

**Lengthsman.** The Clerk emailed Cllr. Falconer for clarification on who is responsible for verges outside of householder hedges/roadside grass. He replied that it is not clear cut. It is the landowner's responsibility. If it is Highways then HCC has a responsibility e.g. at Penwood crossroads. For example, on Penwood Heights BDBC does mow the publicly owned land such as the little roundabout but not the privately-owned gardens which abut the pavement. The Land Registry does not have all the answers because land has only been registered for 100 years and so there is a lot of old estate and farm land which is not registered.

**41/17 Report on Roads and Transport**

**Barred Routes Scheme.** Cllr. S. Izett queried the status with Cllr. Thacker who was attending the meeting. Cllr. Thacker said that he has written to Cllr. Humby and the matter is ongoing. The questions are: is the CCTV working, are there any funds, can funds be used on this route?

**Grass cutting Penwood Crossroads.** Councillor D. Langan was to establish the grass cutting schedule for Penwood crossroads and inform the Clerk. Cllr. Langan is on holiday.

**Action:** The Clerk to email HCC for an update.

### **43/17 Financial Matters**

The Clerk met with Cllr. Nicholls, Financial Overseer in July to adjust the budget to include the actual litter warden grant. Cllr. Nicholls checked expenses against bank accounts for the period April – July 2017.

#### **Grant Application Form.**

The Chairman has informed the Highclere Cemetery committee that they need to complete the Grant Application form when requesting financial support for grass cutting and she has also asked them to submit any requests before next year's Precept is discussed.

**51/17 Public Participation.** There were no members of the public present.

**52/17 Discussion on publication of Draft Minutes on PC Website.** Cllr. Izett, the Chairman, explained that a parishioner had raised a query at the parish assembly regarding the publication of draft minutes on the PC website. The Clerk contacted the Society of Local Council Clerks and the Hampshire Association of Local Councils. Their advice is that it is a matter for each council. Highclere Parish Council has discussed the process in the past and decided to post only approved minutes onto the website. The parish councillors discussed the current practice and it was unanimously agreed that only approved minutes should be posted onto the PC website but if a parishioner wishes to see a copy of the draft minutes they should email the Clerk.

**Action:** The Clerk to continue to post the approved minutes onto the PC website as soon as they are approved.

### **53/17 Reports from Borough and County Councillors**

#### **Borough Councillor Report – Cllr. G. Falconer**

**Trim Trail Sign.** Cllr. Falconer has worked with Adrian Morgan, BDBC, who has now agreed that two signs can be mounted on existing posts. There will be a sign on the "Recycling Centre" signs, one on Foxs Lane and one sign on Heathlands.

**Westridge Studio.** Cllr. Falconer reported that planning approval for Westridge Studio is due to be confirmed.

**Refuse Collection.** Tenders for bin collections for the next 8 years are currently being reviewed and BDBC are considering the frequency of bin collections as part of the process. The Clerk confirmed that residents can request more than one glass recycling box per household.

#### **County Councillor Report – Cllr. T. Thacker**

Cllr. Thacker stated that HCC has delayed number plate recognition at recycling centres in Hampshire. Cllr. Thacker said that negotiations are continuing between HCC and West Berkshire regarding access to the Newtown Road recycling site. Cllr Izett reported that a joint letter from the Chairmen of neighbouring parishes, including Highclere, had been submitted to Cllr Humby at HCC and an acknowledgement had been received.

**Action:** Cllr. Thacker to continue to keep the parish council informed on the progress of negotiations.

### **54/17 Social Media Policy**

Cllr. Smith said that work has commenced on the HPC Facebook page. There is more work to do on the privacy settings and gaining local photographs.

**Action:** Cllrs Smith and Nicholls to progress the design of the Facebook page. Agenda item for the October meeting.

### **55/17 Report on Environment**

**Southern Water Tubbs Lane Scheme.** Cllr. York walked around the parish - Mount Road, Tubbs Lane, Pantings Lane - with representatives of Southern Water. A detailed list of planned works has been emailed to the Clerk. The plan is to engage a landscaping company

once the project is completed and not to reinstate on a piecemeal basis as the verges could be damaged before the project reaches completion.

**Action:** Agenda item for October

**Litter.** Fly tipping is becoming an increasing problem. Cllr. Izett has received representations from residents and the Newbury Weekly News. The key issues are fly tipping in Great Penwood and along the A343. The Clerk said that BDBC will no longer collect fly tipping from Great Penwood. Cllr. Izett has been in contact with the Forestry Commission which has agreed to arrange collection. Cllr. Izett has asked the Clerk to identify the borders of BDBC, Forestry Commission, HCC land in Highclere parish.

**Action:** The Clerk to maintain contact with the Forestry Commission. The Clerk to obtain local boundary maps.

**Lengthsman.** Cllr. Jenkins reported that the Lengthsman has been in the area working on planned jobs at Foxs Lane and the salt bin at Treasure Hill.

**Action:** Councillors to suggest future work for the Lengthsman, email Cllr. Jenkins.

### **56/17 Report on Roads and Transport**

**Speedwatch.** Cllr. Norton said that Speedwatch has resumed now that the traffic lights have been removed in Highclere. On 6 September 2017, at 12 noon, 212 vehicles passed through and 18 were travelling at more than 30 mph.

**Action:** The Clerk to invite potential volunteers to contact Speedwatch. Promotion of Speedwatch through the parish council website, Facebook and the parish magazine.

**Speed Indicator Device.** Cllr. Norton confirmed that the licence application was submitted on 4 July 2017 and it has now been granted.

The East Woodhay Parish Council grant of £500 towards the Speed Indicator Device has been received. Three quotes have been obtained by the Clerk for the SID - Westcotec £2625 plus extras, Radarlux £2198 plus extras and Unipart Doorman £2402 plus extras. Extension poles, brackets and software may need to be purchased depending on the model. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Norton and the Clerk for all their work on this project.

**Action:** Cllr. Norton and the Clerk to review the quotes and specifications and proceed to place an order.

**Soft Verges.** A parishioner has commented on the state of the verges to the north of the village. There are already Highways signs warning motorists not to park in these areas due to soft verges.

**Action:** The Clerk to ask Steve Goodall if bollards could be placed at the roadside.

**Commuter parking.** Cllr. Smith said that cars appear to be parked all day outside the gate to Great Penwood.

**Action:** The Clerk to contact the local police and the Forestry Commission.

### **57/17 Report on Planning.**

No plans were received in this time period.

All planning applications can be viewed on the Highclere Parish Council website [www.highclerepc.uk](http://www.highclerepc.uk) see Planning Tracker.

**Planning Protocol.** Cllr. Norton asked if "sustainability" should be added to the criteria.

**Action:** Cllr. York and the Clerk to attend BDBC training on 18 September 2017 at BDBC offices and report back to the October meeting. Agenda item October meeting.

### **58/17 Financial Matters.**

A summary of the parish council expenditure for April-July was distributed to councillors at this meeting which included the parish council reserves.

### **Accounts for payment 12 September 2017.**

Date incurred	Expenditure	Purpose	Ex VAT	VAT	Total	Online/
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			£	£	£	cheque
26/07/17	Viking	Toner for PC printer	115.94	23.19	139.13	paid
31/08/17	Litter Warden	Aug Fuel Allowance	13.95	0.00	13.95	online
30/09/17	Clerk's Salary	September Salary	782.63	0.00	782.63	online
30/09/17	Litter Warden Salary	September Salary	465.00	0.00	465.00	online
30/09/17	HMRC	Tax & NI September 2017	40.53	0.00	40.53	Direct debit
30/09/17	Smart Pension		18.83		18.83	Direct debit
30/09/17	Employer contribution	Clerk's September pension	3.14		3.14	
	BT	Parish telephone line				Direct debit

Highclere Parish Council Bank Accounts balances at 31 August 2017.

Community current account £5488.27. Business Premium account £ 26,563.83. The bank statements were checked by Cllr. J. Stoker

**59/17 Westridge Trust.** Cllr. Izett asked Cllr. York, Chairman of the charity the “Westridge Trust”, for an overview.

Cllr. York explained that the charity is independent of the parish council and is governed by the Charity Commission, the registered number is 1169481. The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This charitable structure was chosen following lengthy discussions during the Highclere Parish Council meetings and after gaining independent legal advice from Wellers Hedleys solicitors, specialists in parish council business. This format means that there is no burden on future parish councils or councillors. Annual returns and reports must be submitted to the Commission by the Trustees. The Trustees must ensure that the charity is run in line with the Constitution. The Constitution was written following guidance by Wellers Hedleys solicitors and it can be viewed on the Charity Commission website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>. An Information Day was held in January 2017 and a presentation was given at the Annual Parish Assembly in May 2017. A PowerPoint slide presentation was accompanied by a hard copy of the slides for interested parties. Cllr. York explained that planning permission had taken longer to obtain than expected in part due to the requirement to conduct a Bat Survey. This is not a one-off activity as the bat behaviour must be monitored at various times of the day over a set period of time. This has now been completed and as Cllr. Falconer has informed the Council planning permission is imminent. There will be an Information Day to coincide with the Table Top sale in November.

Now that planning permission has been obtained the tendering process, in line with the charity's procedures, will take place.

Sally Izett one of the Trustees has worked with Angela Tiley (Trustee) and Justine Grace on a very detailed Local Infrastructure Fund bid and they are waiting to hear the outcome. Mike York thanked them for their work on this bid which had been very time consuming. Cllr. Smith asked where the history of the legacy could be read. The Clerk said that it was detailed in the Minutes of the parish council produced over the last two and a half years. The Internal Auditor, Eleanor Greene, reported “*During the year, the council took control of the Westridge Trust endowment fund for the months until the charity was properly set up. The minutes and records surrounding this decision were extremely well kept.*” She also reported

regarding the costs *“This money has to be included in the receipts and payments of the council, distorting the values and increasing the audit fees. However, the benefit to the community outweighs the cost”*.

Cllr. Izett said that she had received an email from Cllr. Langan who was on holiday. He asked several questions which were discussed by the whole Council. The first question was why the Westridge Trust is no longer an Agenda item. Cllr. Norton confirmed that it is no longer a parish council matter and so it should not be on the agenda. Cllr. Langan queried the Studio becoming a community facility. Cllr. York said that the Constitution of the Westridge Trust set out that its purpose is to provide an arts centre in the broadest sense for the population of Highclere and its neighbourhood. Cllr. Langan queried the legacy fund. This was detailed in the annual accounts for the Parish Council 2016-2017 which were distributed to councillors at the meeting on 13 June 2017 and Minute number 27/17 details the Acceptance of the Accounting Statement by the Council. The Accounting Statement is now available on the Highclere Parish Council website. The individual transactions were audited by Cllr. J. Stoker, the Vice Chairman at that time. Cllr. Langan asked about technical advice. Cllr. York said that independent technical advice had been sought through the architect to try to ensure that the building was fit for purpose for many years to come. Cllr. York asked the Council if they had any further questions. Councillors unanimously agreed that all their questions had been answered and they had no further questions. Cllr. Stoker proposed that the topic be removed from future agendas and the council unanimously agreed.

Cllr. York stated that now planning permission has been granted all interested parties will be able to follow this exciting project by viewing updates on the Westridge Trust website. Sally Izett has already started work on a timeline and the Trustees have registered the details of potential users of this new arts facility for Highclere. The Chairman thanked Cllr. York for his detailed overview.

#### **60/17 Correspondence Received.**

Electoral register poster received for the noticeboards.

Letter from the Kintbury & Woolton Hill Patient Participation Group.

Email from HCC regarding Flood and Water Management. Poster to be displayed on noticeboards.

**61/17 Councillors Matters for Next Agenda.** These are detailed in the minutes.

**62/17 Date of the next Council Meeting – 17 October 2017 Highclere Village Hall at 7.00pm.** Please note that this is not the second Tuesday of the month.

**Adjournment:** there being no further business the meeting closed at 8.59 pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Actions**

##### **41/17 Report on Roads and Transport**

**Barred Routes Scheme.** Cllr. Thacker said that he has written to Cllr. Humby and the matter is ongoing. The questions are: is the CCTV working, are there any funds, can funds be used on this route?

**Grass cutting Penwood Crossroads.** Councillor D. Langan was to establish the grass cutting schedule for Penwood crossroads and inform the Clerk. Cllr. Langan is on holiday.

**Action:** The Clerk to email HCC for an update.

**52/17 Discussion on publication of Draft Minutes on PC Website.**

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**53/17 Reports from Borough and County Councillors**

**Trim Trail Sign.** Progress to be tracked.

**County Councillor Report – Cllr. T. Thacker**

Newtown Road recycling site. Cllr. Thacker to continue to keep the parish council informed on the progress of negotiations.

**54/17 Social Media Policy.** Cllrs Smith and Nicholls to progress the design of the Facebook page. Agenda item for the October meeting.

**55/17 Report on Environment**

**Southern Water Tubbs Lane Scheme.** Agenda item for October

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**Commuter parking.** The Clerk to contact the local police and the Forestry Commission.

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**60/17 Correspondence Received.** Letter from the Kintbury & Woolton Hill Patient Participation Group. Reply pending.