

RICHARDS CASTLE (HEREFORDSHIRE) PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 4th June 2024 at 19.30 at Richards Castle Parish Hall

Present

Councillors: Sebastian Bowen (in the Chair), Peter Enzer, Martin Atkins, Gillian Harding and Chris Cadman

In attendance

Clerk Helen Tinson – on behalf of HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils); 0 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received and accepted from Ward Councillor D. Hurcomb.

2. Declarations of interest & written requests for dispensation:

There were none.

3. Co-option of New Councillor:

Members were informed that a parishioner had applied to be co-opted onto the Parish Council but was unwell and could not attend the meeting. Members received a brief resume.

It was RESOLVED: to defer the co-option to the next meeting.

4. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16th May 2024:

It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

5. Open Session:

5.1. Ward Councillor Report:

The Ward Councillor was not present and there was no report.

5.2. Community Policing Team Report:

The Community Policing Team were not present and there was no report.

5.3. Representations from the Public:

There were no members of the public present and no written representations had been received.

6. Policies:

Members considered and reviewed the following policies:

6.1. Code of Conduct:

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Code of Conduct and review annually.

6.2. Standing Orders:

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Standing Orders and review four-yearly at the beginning of each term, or unless changes are recommended.

6.3. Financial Regulations:

Members considered the new model Financial Regulations issued by NALC.

It was RESOLVED: to edit the model policy to reflect the practice of Richards Castle (Herefordshire) Parish Council and re-present for adoption at the next meeting (Clerk)

6.4. Risk Schedule:

Members considered the Risk Schedule and noted that updates were required before it could be re-adopted.

It was RESOLVED: to update the current schedule and re-present for adoption at the next meeting (Clerk/Cllr Enzer)

6.5. Asset Register:

Members considered the Asset Register and noted that updates were required before it could be re-adopted.

It was RESOLVED: to update the current register and re-present for adoption at the next meeting (Clerk/Cllr Enzer)

6.6. Reserves Policy:

It was RESOLVED: to defer to the next meeting.

6.7. Grants and Donations Policies:

Members considered three documents that comprise the Grants and Donations Policies:

6.7.1. Community Grant Funding Policy (applications exceeding £200)

6.7.2. Small Grants Policy (applications not exceeding £200)

6.7.3. Small Grants Application Form

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Community Grant Funding Policy, Small Grants Policy and Small Grants Application Form and review four-yearly at the beginning of each term, or unless changes are recommended.

It was RESOLVED: to upload the documents to the website and submit an article to the Castle News to inform parishioners of the availability of grant funding, and how to apply (Cllrs Enzer/Bowen)

7. Finance:

7.1. Financial Report and Bank Balances:

It was reported that the bank balance at 4.6.24 was £14,726.67. Members were informed that the payments approved at the last meeting have not been fully authorised and were asked to complete the authorisation as a matter of urgency. No transactions have therefore been recorded on the current year's cash book.

7.2. End of Year 2023-24 Cash Book:

It was RESOLVED: to defer review until after the Internal Audit has been concluded.

7.3. Joint ventures with Richards Castle (Shropshire) Parish Council:

Members considered the values of relative payments for any joint venture with Richards Castle (Shropshire) Parish Council. It was noted that there are approximately 120 households in RC (Hfids)

and 300 households in RC (Shrops) but that costs for joint ventures undertaken in 2023 were shared on a 50/50 basis.

It was RESOLVED: that the proportion of future contributions made to joint ventures should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

It was RESOLVED: to amend Standing Orders to include “the proportionality of any donations towards joint ventures should be agreed on a case-by-case basis”.

7.4. Payments:

Members considered invoices due for payment. It was reported that two invoices relating to the domain renewal of orleton-ndp.co.uk and richardscastle-ndp.co.uk, and webhosting for orleton-ndp.co.uk had been received.

It was RESOLVED: to forward the invoices to Orleton PC.

It was RESOLVED: not to renew the domain renewal of richardscastle-ndp.co.uk as the site is no longer required.

There were no other invoices to consider.

8. Lengthsman/Highways:

8.1. Report:

Members were informed that the Lengthsman Contract with Herefordshire approved at the last meeting has been signed and returned to Herefordshire Council. The next action is to put together a list of budgeted actions. Accordingly, contact has been made with the Lengthsman to ask for a quote for the same work undertaken last year. A few complaints have been received concerning visibility on Woodhouse Lane following two cuts undertaken in the year and Cllr Enzer has therefore arranged to assess visibility in early July. It was noted that there may be some difficulty with the availability of the usual weed sprayer for the current year.

8.2. Verge Cutting:

Members were informed that BBLP will be cutting verges on the same frequency as last year unless advised otherwise. It was noted that the verges were cut once last year in late Summer.

It was RESOLVED: to continue with one annual cut as last year.

8.3. Lengthsman Contract and Annual Maintenance Plan 2024/25:

Members considered the appointment of the Parish Lengthsman contract for 2024/25.

It was RESOLVED: to appoint DC Gardening Services as the Lengthsman for 2024/25.

9. Footpaths:

9.1. Report:

Members received a report from the Parish Footpaths Officer. The main task over recent weeks has been to assess the PRoW network and prepare a proposal for the PRoW funding currently available from Herefordshire Council.

9.2. Funding Opportunities for Public Rights of Way:

Members considered a draft proposal to replace hardware in six locations across the parish. Three further locations were identified where the hardware is acceptable, but overgrowth needs clearing back. It was noted that the application must be submitted before the 30th June.

It was RESOLVED: that the Footpaths Officer would continue to develop the draft proposal

It was RRSOLVED: to submit the final proposal via email to all council members for approval between meetings to meet the submission deadlines, and ratify approval at the next meeting (Cllr Cadman/Clerk)

It was RESOLVED: to instruct the Lengthsman to cut back the overgrowth at three locations identified (Cllr Cadman)

10. Website:

Members considered who would administer the Parish Council website until a new clerk has been recruited. It was reported that HALC, with assistance from Eyelid Productions Ltd if required, could continue to upload mandatory documents.

It was RESOLVED: to ask HALC/Eyelid Productions Ltd to continue to upload mandatory documents to the website.

11. Training:

Members considered the HALC training schedule. It was noted that Cllr Gillian Harding has been booked on the Leading Lights Training on 1st July 2024

It was RESOLVED: to consider once a new councillor has been co-opted.

12. Correspondence:

12.1. Members noted the newsletter from the Leader of Herefordshire Council

13. Items for the Next Agenda:

- 13.1. To consider the co-option of a Councillor for the parish and consider training requirements
- 13.2. To consider works for the Local Drainage Scheme
- 13.3. To ratify submission of PRow funding application
- 13.4. To consider and approve the Annual Governance and Accounting Return 2023/24
- 13.5. To consider and adopt policies:
 - 13.5.1. Financial Regulations
 - 13.5.2. Risk Register
 - 13.5.3. Asset Register
 - 13.5.4. Reserves Policy

14. Date of the Next Meeting:

Thursday 11th July 2024, 7pm at Richards Castle Village Hall.

15. Recruitment of new Clerk:

There was no update and therefore no discussion.

The meeting closed at 8.43pm.

SIGNED DATE