

# HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES 186

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at The Bluebell Centre, Hothfield, on Wednesday 15 May 2019 at 7.00 pm

**Prior to the meeting Councillors signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took DPI Forms to complete, and send to ABC with a copy for the Clerk**

**PRESENT:** Mr I Lloyd, (Chair following election), Mrs S Parker, Mrs P Sutcliffe  
Mr G Cox, Mr P Fothergill, Mr R Vernon

**PARISH CLERK:** Mrs J Batt

**BOROUGH COUNCILLOR:** Mrs C Bell

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** There were 3 Members of the Public present.

#### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Mrs Sutcliffe proposed Mr Lloyd for the position of Chairman, seconded by Mrs Parker. There were no other nominations.

Mr Lloyd agreed to accept the position of Chairman for the coming year.

Mr Lloyd signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

#### **2. EMPLOYMENT OF LOCUM CLERK**

Councillors unanimously agreed to employ Mrs Judith Batt for 20 hours for the month of May at £12.815 per hour.

#### **3. CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLORS**

Mr Lloyd proposed Mr Cook for the vacant position of Parish Councillor, seconded by Mr Fothergill Unanimous

Mr Lloyd proposed Mrs Merrion for the vacant position of Parish Councillor, seconded by Mrs Sutcliffe. Unanimous

Mr Cook and Mrs Merrion completed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took a DPI for to complete and return to ABC by 31 May 2019.

#### **4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An Apology for Absence was received from Borough Councillor, Mrs C Bell.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST****Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.

**Declarations of Significant Interest**

There were no Declarations of Significant Interest.

**i) To note the granting of any Requests for Dispensations and the decision**

No requests received.

**ii) Updating of Declarations of Interest for the Code of Conduct**

**Councillors are reminded that they should update their Declarations of Interest with the Monitoring Officer if necessary.**

**6. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Mr Lloyd proposed Mr Fothergill for the position of Vice Chairman, seconded by Mrs Parker. There were no other nominations

Mr Fothergill agreed to accept a position of Vice Chairman for the coming year.

**7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL**

Finance and Policy Advisory Group – Mr Lloyd, Mrs Sutcliffe and Mrs Merrion

Village Hall Committee – Mrs Parker

KALC – Mr Lloyd, Mr Fothergill and Mr Cox

Parish Forum – Mr Lloyd and Mr Fothergill

Police Committees – Mrs Parker

Disciplinary and Grievance Committee – Mr Fothergill, Mrs Parker and Mrs Sutcliffe

Appeals Committee – Mr Lloyd, Mrs Merrion and Mr Cook

Councillor to serve on reciprocal Complaints Committee for Little Chart Parish Council if required – Available Councillors

Any other Committees requested by Councillors – None

**Resolution: Councillors unanimously agreed to the above appointments**

**8. DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL**

Annual Review all Parish Council paperwork – August – Finance & Policy Advisory Group

Six Monthly Review of Fixed Assets – September and March – Mrs Parker

Six Monthly Risk Assessment/Financial Risk Assessment – September and March – Mrs Parker

Internal Parish Council Audit – Mr L Robbins

Finance – Finance & Policy Committee

Annual Review of Insurance Arrangements – On receipt of renewal – All Councillors

Weekly MUGA and Youth Shelter Safety Check – Mr Cook

Annual Inspection of MUGA and Youth Shelter – The Play Inspection Company

Councillors responsible for Website and Publicity – Mr Fothergill

Councillors responsible for assisting with Transparency and Data Protection – Mr Lloyd

Councillors responsible for accuracy of Council Policies Finance and Policy Advisory Group

Councillor responsible for Post and Emails – All Councillors

Councillor responsible for Returning Questionnaires – Mrs Sutcliffe and Mr Cook  
 Councillor responsible for Submitting Report to Kentish Express – Mr Fothergill  
 Any other responsibilities put forward by Councillors

**Resolution: Councillors unanimously agreed to the above appointments**

**9. PUBLIC INTERVAL**

The meeting was opened to the Members of the Public present from 7.23 – 7.35 during which time the Parish Council was advised to allocate some funds towards the refurbishment of the MUGA.

The members of the Council were also asked to find out whether Mather and Smith are adhering to the conditions laid down by ABC in relation to their new development.

It was suggested that the question of the Visitor Centre might be investigated again.

**10. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Finance and Policy Advisory Group will review the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

**11. REVIEW OF LAND AND ASSETS BELONGING TO THE COUNCIL**

The Finance and Policy Advisory Group will review the Fixed Assets belonging to the Council.

**12. CONFIRMATION OF INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF ALL INSURABLE RISKS**

**Renewal of Insurance for 2019/2020**

The renewal documentation was sent to all councillors who agreed that it was in order.

**Self-Insurance of Parish Council Assets**

**Resolution: Councillors unanimously agreed to continue to self-insure the Litter Cart.**

**13. REVIEW OF SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Councillors unanimously agreed to continue to subscribe to the following:

Kent Association of Local Councils

Wealden Wheels

**14. REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Councillors unanimously agreed that the Complaints Procedure was in order.

**15. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN RESPECT OF ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

Councillors unanimously agreed that the policies in place in respect of Freedom of Information Legislation and Data Protection are in order.

**16. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S POLICY FOR DEALING WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

Councillors unanimously agreed that the policy in place is in order

**17. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S EMPLOYMENT POLICIES/PROCEDURE**

Councillors unanimously agreed that the policy in place is in order.

**18. RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE POWER OF GENERAL COMPETENCE AND REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S EXPENDITURE INCURRED UNDER THE POWER OF GENERAL COMPETENCE**

As the Council no longer has a qualified Clerk, Councillors were unable to resolve to adopt the Power of General Competence.

No monies were spent under this power during the Financial Year 2018/2019.

At present no expenditure is expected under this power during 2019/2020. Any expenditure during the forthcoming year will be documented.

**19. DETERMINING THE TIME AND PLACE OF ORDINARY MEETINGS UP TO AND INCLUDING THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Meetings will usually be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7.00 pm in the Bluebell Centre, excluding August and December or January.

The next APM and APCM will be held on 6 May 2020.

Any amendment to this arrangement will be advertised on the noticeboard and website.

**20. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes 185 were accepted and it was unanimously agreed that Mr Lloyd should sign them as a true record of the meeting.

**Proposed Mrs Parker**

**Seconded Mr Lloyd**

**21. MATTERS FOR REPORT ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Mr Lloyd will contact Southern Water to try and ascertain the progress being made regarding replacing the sewer pipe.

**22. CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS****Correspondence**

Arbor

EDF notification that the Direct Debit for the electricity for the MUGA is being reduced to £3.00 per month.

Clerk and Councils Direct

HAGS

**Email Correspondence**

Councillors did not bring any emails to the attention of the Council.

**Arrangements for dealing with Parish Council Post and Emails**

The Clerk will inform Mr Lloyd of any significant post as it arrives.

**Emails**

All emails are forwarded to all councillors who will monitor them and bring any of particular importance to Hothfield to the attention of Councillors at the next meeting.

Councillors should inform the Clerk if they wish a particular email to be included on an agenda for discussion.

Mr Lloyd will inform the Clerk of any emails he feels Hothfield should unsubscribe from.

**Chairman's Update**

The Chairman had nothing to report that was not covered on the agenda.

**MUGA and Youth Shelter**

Mr Cook noted that the large hole inside the shelter needs attention. If possible could it be filled in with the proper material, as he thinks that this could be a health and safety issue.

**Website**

We are still waiting for the website to be migrated to KCC.

**Risk Assessment**

A Risk Assessment will be carried out in June.

**Storage of Parish Council Documents**

Councillors are satisfied that the minutes and all other documents are secure in the filing cabinet in the Bluebell Centre.

**Retention and Storage of Post and Emails**

Post that is not specific to Hothfield will not be kept unless it is considered to be important, or the Clerk is particularly asked to keep it. Old post will be recycled.

**Emails**

Sensitive emails should be printed off by the Clerk. Councillors should inform the Clerk if they wish a particular email to be printed. Emails to be kept indefinitely.

**IT Security**

Councillors should all bear the following in mind when using their home/work computer for Parish Council business.

All councillors should provide the Parish Council with a secure email address and ensure that virus software is current.

Councillors should be aware that all correspondence and emails are confidential until they are tabled at a Parish Council meeting. If anyone else is privy to the information contained in emails received by you on a home/work computer, please ensure that they are aware of this fact.

Councillors should all ensure that their computers are encrypted and should not use mobile phones to receive Parish Council information.

The Freedom of Information Act now extends to emails that would previously have been considered to be private, if they relate to Council business.

#### **Compliance with Transparency Code**

All information required under the Transparency Code is published on the website.

#### **Compliance with Data Protection Legislation**

This matter continues to be progressed.

#### **Storage of Computer Records**

All information is backed up on The Cloud. Councillors are satisfied that the cloud is in Europe.

#### **Social Media Policy**

Councillors unanimously agreed that the policy in place is in order.

#### **Terms of Reference for Finance and Policy Committee**

These will be reviewed.

#### **Container on MUGA**

Mrs Sutcliffe reported that she has sourced a locked bin at a cost of £149.00 + £30 delivery.

Councillors unanimously agreed that Mrs Sutcliffe should place the order and arrange for delivery.

#### **Update on employment of Parish Clerk**

Mrs Sutcliffe and Mr Vernon interviewed 5 candidates and Councillors agreed on the successful candidate who will be offered the position. The candidate's references will be followed up.

#### **Speed Signs**

Defer to next meeting.

### **23. FINANCE AND GENERAL COUNCIL BUSINESS**

#### **Internal Auditors Report**

Not yet received.

#### **Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Auditor**

Councillors unanimously agreed that they were satisfied with the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor, Mr Lionel Robbins and agreed to employ him again next year.

**Resolution to Certify Hothfield Parish Council as exempt from a Limited Assurance Review under Section 8 of the Local Audit (smaller authorities) Regulations 2015**

The requirements are as follows

- Total gross income and total gross expenditure below £25k **and**
- no public interest report/statutory recommendation/advisory notice/judicial review/application to court re unlawful item of account issued by external auditor in the prior year **and**
- been in existence since before 1/4/14

**Resolution: Councillors unanimously agreed that Hothfield Parish Council met the criteria laid down above and it was therefore agreed that the Chairman and Clerk should sign the Certificate of Exemption.**

**Proposed Mr Lloyd**

**Seconded Mr Fothergill**

**Review of Statement of Internal Control**

Councillors were satisfied that the Statement of Internal Control, was in order and Mr Lloyd and the Clerk signed the document.

**Consideration of the Findings of the Review by Members of the Meeting as a Whole**

Councillors considered the findings of the review and agreed they were satisfactory.

**Approval of the Annual Governance Statement by Resolution – Sec 1**

Councillors completed the Annual Governance Statement.

**Resolution: Councillors unanimously approved the Annual Governance Statement.**

**Proposed: Mr Lloyd**

**Seconded: Mrs Parker**

**Signature and Dating by the person presiding at the meeting and The Clerk – Sec 1**

Mr Lloyd and the Clerk signed and dated the Annual Governance Statement.

**Consideration of the Accounting Statements by Members of the Meeting as a Whole**

Councillors considered the Accounting Statements and agreed they were accurate.

**Approval of the Accounting Statement by Resolution – Sec 2**

Councillors considered the accounting statement.

**Resolution: Councillors unanimously approved the Accounting Statement.**

**Proposed: Mr Lloyd**

**Seconded: Mr Fothergill**

**Signature and Dating by the person presiding at the meeting – Sec 2**

Mr Lloyd signed and dated the Accounting Statement, previously signed and dated by the Clerk

Sections 1, 2 and the Internal Auditors Report will be published on the notice board and website.

**Review of Direct Debits**

**Resolution:** Councillors agreed to continue to pay the electricity bill for the MUGA by Direct Debit.

**Accounts to be Paid**

PAYEE	CHQ NO	DETAILS	NET £	VAT £	GROSS S £
Mrs J Batt		Salary General Admin Expenses Less on account April	438.74 34.76 15.00 -200.00		288.50
Mr K Marden		Salary Less on account April	203.58 -100.00		103.58
Came & Co		Insurance Premium 2019/2020	778.69		778.69

**Resolution:** Councillors unanimously agreed to pay the above accounts and noted the Direct Debit Payment to EDF for the electricity for the MUGA, taken on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for £3.00.

**Bank Balance****Hothfield Parish Council - Bank Reconciliation as at last Bank Statement****Balance per Cash Book****Balance at Bank**

Opening Balance	32765.19	PC Reserve A/C	36151.30
Add Receipts in Year	<u>5464.11</u>	Plus, u/c Receipts	<u>0.00</u>
	<b>38229.30</b>		<b>36151.30</b>
Less Payments in Year	<u>2669.64</u>	Less u/c Cheques	<u>691.64</u>
	<b>35559.66</b>		<b>35459.66</b>
Less Earmarked Funds	<u>7838.11</u>	PC Current A/C	<u>100.00</u>
	<b>27721.55</b>		<b>35559.66</b>
		Less Earmarked Funds	<u>7838.11</u>
			<b>27721.55</b>

**Hothfield Youth Account - Bank Reconciliation – as at last Bank Statement**

Opening Balance	2401.90	Business Current a/c	1369.86
Add Receipts in Year	<u>0.18</u>	Plus, u/c Receipts	<u>0.00</u>
	<b>2402.08</b>		<b>1369.86</b>
Less Payments in Year	<u>0.00</u>	Less u/c Cheques	<u>0.00</u>
	<b>2402.08</b>		<b>1369.86</b>
		Direct Reserve a/c	<u>1032.22</u>
			<b>2402.08</b>

**Review of Salaries**

**Resolution: Councillors unanimously agreed to increase the Litter Picker’s Salary to £8.21 with effect from 1 April 2018. Total for year £1280.76. Councillors agreed to pay him for one hour extra as he was not informed that the meeting on 1 May had been cancelled due to the election.**

**Proposed Mrs Lloyd      Seconded Mrs Parker**

**24. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Mrs Bell was unable to attend the meeting.

**25. PLANNING**

No applications received.

**Storage of Planning Applications**

Councillors confirmed that the Clerk can dispose of all Planning applications, once they have been discussed at a meeting, as they are available on the website.

**26. VILLAGE ACTIVITIES**

**Village Fete**

The Village Fete has been renamed the Village Fun Day and postponed to 5 April 2020 in line with other Village activities.

**27. FORUM FOR EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN COUNCILLORS**

Mr Lloyd reported that Mr Simkin has provided an initial cost estimate of £18,500 for the Proposed pedestrian crossing island and associated foot-way works on the A20 Maidstone Road near Chapel Road.

Councillors confirmed that they had read the PCSO’s report

Councillors were reminded to return their DPI and expenses form to ABC.

Suggestions for projects to spend the Solar Park money on to be included on the next agenda.

KCC has forwarded a map showing where the 50mph speed limit is going to be implemented.

The Clerk will forward a letter to Mr Lloyd, authorising the bank to include him as a signatory on the Parish Council’s accounts immediately, for him to take to Mrs Sutcliffe and Mr Cook for signature.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.48 pm.

Signed ..... Dated .....  
Chairman