

ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 11.05.23

Monday 11 May 2023 at 8.05pm (immediately after the Annual Meeting of Council)

The Meeting Place, The Church on The Green, Rowlands Castle PO9 6AB

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Council at its next Meeting

PRESENT:

Cllr C Stanley (Chairman), Cllr F Ball, Cllr S Donald, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr Y Haggard, Cllr V Matthews, Cllr I Moore and Cllr B Wilson.

G Whatley (Council's Admin Officer) and C Newman (Council's Facilities Officer) were also present.

MINUTES:

Taken by Ms L Walker (Clerk to the Council).

THE CHAIRMAN'S SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE

Death of former P Cllr David Symonds in April 2023

The Chairman paid tribute to David's strong contribution during his 6½ years as a parish councillor from November 2011, in particular his leadership on various projects including the Pavilion extension. The Clerk and several councillors will attend his funeral on 1st June 2023.

RCA's Coronation Picnic on 8 May 2023

The Chairman expressed Council's thanks to the RCA for organising such a successful event despite the threat of inclement weather.

1. To Receive and Agree any Councillors' Apologies for Absence

Members noted apologies from newly-elected D Cllr Charlene Maines due to a prior commitment.

2. To Receive any Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this point.

3. To Receive and Confirm the Accuracy of the Draft Minutes of the Previous Council Meeting on 3 April 2023, together with a Written Update on the Progress of Resolutions from Meetings

The Clerk referenced an addition at the end of the draft Minutes acknowledging former Cllr Schneider's contribution to the Council. The Minutes (circulated previously, and now including the aforementioned amendment) were unanimously CONFIRMED as an accurate record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman of the Meeting.

The Clerk's Update on the Progress of Resolutions (circulated previously) was received and NOTED and a copy will be held with these Minutes.

4. OPEN FORUM – Limited to 15 minutes in total and a max 3 mins for each individual speaker

A resident requested details of RCWI's open event on 12 June, featuring a talk re Spitfires. Cllr Matthews undertook to progress the request.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS: To Consider and Agree Action on the following, if appropriate

NB: Council's full comments on these and all other relevant Applications can be read via EHDC's website: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/planning-application-process/search-and-comment-planning-applications> or a similar page on SDNPA's website.

For Note Only Notification of an Application for Works to Trees: REMOVAL OF LINEAR ROW OF
29506/030 LEYLANDII (APPROX. 10M TALL AND APPROX. 50M LONG) TO GROUND LEVEL
Land Adjacent to Deerleap, 17 The Green, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6BW

It was noted Cllr Ball had reviewed this Application and with the agreement of members, a response of NO OBJECTION had been submitted by the deadline of 18 April.

For Note Only DETACHED BARN (Additional Information Received on 13/03/2023 and 29/03/2023)
57837/002 *Lot 12, Comley Hill, Rowlands Castle*

Cllr Wilson had reviewed the additional information (notification of which had been received since Council's consideration of the original Application on 3 April), considered Council's previous comments and a response of NO OBJECTION had been submitted by the further deadline of 12 April.

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For Note Only FORMATION OF HARDSTANDING (RETROSPECTIVE)

28525/059 *Lot 3b, Comley Hill, Rowlands Castle*

It was noted that Cllr Wilson had reviewed this Application and, with the agreement of members, a response of OBJECTION on a number of grounds had been submitted by the deadline of 20 April.

For Note Only RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF 82 DWELLINGS, ASSOCIATED PARKING, ACCESS, BIN AND CYCLE STORES, ELECTRICITY SUB-STATION, PUMP STATION, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING, SUDS/DRAINAGE AND OTHER WORKS FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES

Development Land East of Horndean, Rowlands Castle Road, Horndean

It was noted this Application was part of a larger development and that Council's comments were unlikely to be taken into account compared to those of larger authorities eg Hampshire Highways (HH). It was AGREED to request the Council be included in discussions between HH and the applicant, given that both the proposed cycleway route and traffic from the development to RC station would pass through the Parish.

Action: Clerk/Admin Asst to submit comments on Application to EHDC/SDNPA Planning Depts

6. To Receive Reports from County & District Councillors, and other delegates, if appropriate:

County Cllr Marge Harvey Cllr Harvey was not present and no report had been received in her absence.

District Cllr Charlene Maines Members noted Cllr Maines (see Item 1) hoped to attend future Council meetings and/or submit reports thereon.

7. GENERAL MATTERS FOR DECISION: To Consider and Agree Action on the following:

a) **Future Response(s) to Havant Thicket Reservoir Project and wider water-related matters** – As the Council's lead on this topic, Cllr Stanley stated he had already been asked to add Council's support to a submission by other local interested groups, regarding the issue of water recycling, at fairly short notice and may be asked again in the future. He explained that there was not always time to consult with all other members prior to responding. It was unanimously RESOLVED to authorise Cllr Stanley to add Council as a signatory to other groups' submissions on this topic without prior consultation with Council/other members, providing the content accorded with Council's already publicly-stated views on such matters.

Action: Cllr Stanley to use authorisation as allowed and liaise with Clerk accordingly

b) **Informal Contract with Jan Halliwell/ELR to provide Handyman Services to Council** – It was unanimously AGREED to continue Council's informal arrangements with Jan/ELR for the provision of handyman services, on the understanding that Council be advised of approaches by any others offering a similar service.

Action: Clerk to liaise with ELR and inform Council of any future offers, should they arise

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS FOR DECISION: To Consider and Agree Action on the following:

a) **Review of Budgeted and Actual Payments and Receipts to year ended 31 March 2023** –

Members noted and ACCEPTED the Clerk's Review (circulated previously).

Action: Clerk to publish Review on Council's website

b) **Internal Auditor's Report for year ended 31 March 2023** – Members RECEIVED and NOTED the Report (circulated previously) from the Auditor's Visit on 18 April 2023, including her favourable view of the Council's files and records. Members thanked the Clerk for her work in this regard. It was unanimously RESOLVED to pursue the auditor's recommendations as follows:

- Include additional cost of Accounts software when budgeting for 2024/25 Council year;
- Review the Council's pension scheme – *The Clerk has since identified an issue with the Council's payroll software and made the necessary corrections for the future;*
- Consider preparing future accounts on an Income & Expenditure basis rather than Receipts & Payments;
- Request councillors include 'RCPC' in the email address they use for Council-related correspondence and consider whether to budget for standardised email addresses for councillors in 2024/25;

Action: Clerk to publish Report and progress recommendations/advice as appropriate

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c) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for year ended 31 March 2023 – Having accepted the accounts for the year (see Item 8 a), members noted the following, prepared by the Clerk (all circulated previously):

- Council's 6-page AGAR 2022/23 Part 3 including Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23, Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement and Section 2 – Accounting Statements, with relevant figures entered and signed by the Clerk as Responsible Finance Officer (RFO);
- Accompanying draft Explanation of Variances, Bank Reconciliation and Conflict of Interest Declaration;
- The Clerk's recommendation as to the period for the Exercise of Public Rights for the year in question.

Members considered the above in order. It was unanimously RESOLVED to:

- i) Answer 'Yes' to all 9 categories of Section 1 of the AGAR and APPROVE the Statement;
- ii) APPROVE the figures and thereby Accounting Statements for Section 2 of the AGAR;
- iii) APPROVE the accompanying Bank Reconciliation and Explanation of Variances;
- iv) CONFIRM that there was no Conflict of Interest with the External Auditor, BDO LLP;
- v) ADVERTISE the period for the Exercise of Public Rights as being from 5 June to 14 July 2023 inclusive.

Accordingly, the Chairman and Clerk signed Section 1 and the Chairman signed Section 2, prior to submission to the external auditor.

Action 1: Clerk to submit AGAR and accompanying documents to external auditor by 30 June 2023

Action 2: Clerk to publish AGAR, Notice of Public Rights and related Notes, as appropriate

d) Parish CIL Annual Record for year ended 31 March 2023 – Members noted the Clerk's draft Record (circulated previously) which was unanimously APPROVED and signed by the Clerk and Chairman prior to publication on Council's website and submission to EHDC.

Action: Clerk to publish on Council's website and forward copy to EHDC

e) Funding Arrangements for Playpark Project – Members noted the Clerk's Briefing on definite and potential sources of funding for the project. It was unanimously RESOLVED to:

- i) Release the £40,457 from Council's 95-day Notice Account with immediate effect, *The Clerk has since been informed the balance is likely to be just over £41,000 upon transfer;*
- ii) Release the £55,000 from Council's 100-day Notice Account with immediate effect;
- iii) Request the CIL Neighbourhood Portion Funds of £12,586 currently held by EHDC be transferred to Council's account as soon as possible'
- iv) Submit an Application for £25,000 from EHDC's Supporting Communities Fund by deadline of 14 May;
- v) Submit an Application for the c £22,500 of s106 Public Open Spaces funds currently held by EHDC for the Parish, noting the window for such applications was not due to open until the "Summer" of 2023;
- vi) Submit an Application for £2,000 from the local County Cllr's Community Grant Funding.

It was noted that of the Council's Applications at iv) to vi) some/all may not be successful therefore it was necessary to release Council's definite sources of funding in this light to ensure the Project could be funded one way or another.

It was noted that Council may seek funding from private companies for Phase 2 of the project to provide equipment to appeal to older children ie 12 years and older.

f) April 2023 Schedule of Payments, for authorisation – Cllr Donald stated he had reviewed and confirmed the relevant invoices. It was unanimously RESOLVED to AUTHORISE the Schedule (circulated at the Mtg), which was then signed by the 3 signatories present.

A list of payments is included below (incl VAT where appropriate, which is reclaimable by the Council):

Method	Amount £	Payee	Reason
DD	371.39	HS Administrative Services Ltd	Monthly pension contributions + admin fees
DD	33.96	Vodafone Ltd	Monthly fee for Facilities Officer's mobile
IBT	250.00	Citizens Advice East Hampshire	Grant for running costs
IBT	250.00	Rowlands Castle Scout Group	Grant for running costs
IBT	1,260.00	Southern Ground Care Ltd	2 nd phase, Year 2 of pitch improvement works
IBT	68.64	Viking Payments	Parish Office consumables
IBT	2,844.00	R J Winnicott Ltd	Office rental + cleaning 1 April to 30 Sept '23
IBT	81.29	LocaliQ, Newsquest Media Grp	Advert in Hants Chronicle re Playpark Tender
IBT	63.65	RCPHMC	Hall Hire for Council Mtgs
IBT	587.46	Wel Medical	Replacement pads for Parish defibrillators
IBT	941.64	Morton Pattison Ltd	2nd phase to increase biodiversity of R Copse
IBT	870.00	Cutting Edge Carpentry & C Ltd	Replacement Groundsman's Shed door
IBT	234.00	The Play Inspection Co Ltd	Quarterly operational inspection, Play Area

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IBT	475.00	Do The Numbers Ltd	Internal Audit fee for yr ended 31 March 2023
IBT	35.00	Rowlands Castle URC	Hall Hire for NPSG Mtg
IBT	200.00	David Somma t/a Microsomma	Managed Cloud Anti-virus Renewals
IBT	364.32	County Office Supplies Ltd	2 x stools for Parish Office, sit-stand working
IBT	948.28	Exterior Living Rooms Ltd	Grass cutting, Handyman + Lengthsman servs
DD	11.28	Rowlands Home Hardware	Admin and Rec Ground consumables
IBT	142.80	Miss L Walker, Clerk	Reimbursement: Payroll software
IBTs	5,723.44	Staff salaries including HMRC, PAYE and NIC + additional hours	
Total	£15,756.15		

IBT = Inter-bank Transfer, Council's main payment method now it is registered for online banking.

DD = Direct Debit SO = Standing Order Chq = Cheque PP = PayPal

Action: Clerk to make any remaining payments according to Schedule

A list of receipts is included below:

Method	Amount £	Payer	Reason
IBT	£59,471.00	EHDC	1 st of 2 instalments of Precept Requirement for 2023/24
IBT	£3,510.70	HMRC	VAT Repayment for January, February & March 2023

g) Report on Council's Bank Accounts as at 30 April 2023, for acceptance – Members noted and ACCEPTED the Report (circulated at the Mtg).

Account	Balance
Current	£52,959.99 (<i>Reconciled balance of £51,766.43 accounting for payments not yet made/direct debits not yet take/cheques not yet presented</i>)
95-day Notice Account	£40,457.25
100-day Notice Account	£55,000.00
2-Yr Fixed Rate Bond	£15,000.00
In total, Council currently holds reserves (restricted and unrestricted) of c £115,517 including under-spends from previous years on specific projects and developers' contributions released to RCPC.	

h) Renewal of Subscription for Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) – It was unanimously RESOLVED to renew the subscription of £50 for 2023/24.

Action: Clerk to include in May Payment Schedule

9. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

a) Summary of Residents' Dealings with Parish Office in April and up to 10 May 2023 – The Administrative Officer's Summary (circulated previously) was noted, a copy of which will be held with these Minutes. Some items were discussed in more detail at the Meeting.

b) Update on Rowlands Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Members noted and thanked the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for his Update (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes.

Action: Clerk to publish Update on Council's website

c) Recreation Ground: Update on CCTV Provision, Anti-social Behaviour and Vandalism –

Members noted the Facilities Officer's verbal report on her findings from CCTV footage and subsequent liaison with the police. Members also noted serious incidents of anti-social behaviour and vandalism in a neighbouring Parish.

Action: Facilities Officer to continue to liaise with police, as appropriate

d) Tree Guards for Whips Planted on Whichers Gate Common – Members noted the 2 residents who lead the tree-planting project on the Common over a year ago had stated the whips were now out-growing their existing guards. It was unanimously RESOLVED to purchase the recommended pack of 75 taller guards from Farm Forestry, and allocate further funding for taller support canes, up to an overall budget of £250 excl VAT.

Action: Clerk to order specified guards and liaise with residents to source canes

10. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION:

a) Schedule of EHDC's and SDNPA's Planning Decisions up to 11 May 2023 – The Administrative Officer's Schedule (circulated previously) was noted and a copy will be kept with these Minutes.

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b) **Notice of South Downs National Park Authority Parish Representatives Elections** – Members noted that the period for nominations for these elections ran until 2 June 2023. The elections would be held by ballot, with the deadline for return of papers by 23 June 2023.

Action: Clerk to include appropriate Item on Agenda for next Council mtg in June 2023

11. To pass a Resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussions regarding employment matters where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to pass the Resolution though no members of the public remained at the Mtg at this point.

Although the bulk of the discussion under Item 12 will remain the subject of a separate Confidential Note, the following is to be publicly minuted.

12. To Receive a Report on Employment Matters relating to the Groundsman and Pavilion Cleaner roles at the Recreation Ground, and Agree Action thereon

The resignation of the Pavilion Cleaner, Mrs J Street, was noted and members acknowledged her 18 years of service to the Council.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to pay the Groundsman an extra 5 hours per month at his standard hourly rate to clean the Pavilion in addition to his existing duties, for Council's 2023/24 financial year

Action: Clerk to inform Groundsman and confirm details in writing

13. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 12 June 2023 in the Meeting Place, Church on The Green, Rowlands Castle

The Meeting ended at 9.45pm

During the course of the Meeting (both part and whole) there was 1 member of the public and no members of the Press in attendance.