

ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 7th APRIL 2025

Monday 7 April 2025 at 7.00pm

The Large Parish Hall, 11 Links Lane, Rowlands Castle PO9 6AD

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

PRESENT:

Cllr C Stanley (Chairman), Cllr F Ball, Cllr Y Haggard, Cllr I Moore, Cllr B Wilson and Cllr S Donald
C Cllr M Harvey and D Cllr C Maines,

MINUTES:

Taken by G Whatley (Acting Clerk)

THE CHAIRMAN'S SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE

1. To Receive Formal Notice of the Resignation of Cllr Victoria Matthews

Council received formal notification of the resignation of Victoria Matthews as a member of the Council, with effect from 4 March after the Council's last Mtg. The Chairman expressed his thanks for her strong contribution to the work of the Council during her 4.5 years as a parish councillor, which was very much appreciated. The vacancy had been duly notified in accordance with local government requirements. EHDC's Returning Officer has confirmed that no request has been made for a by-election and Council is at liberty to fill the vacancy by co-option.

Action: Acting Clerk to draft a Cllr Vacancy Advert

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

Apologies for absence were received and agreed from Cllr J. Edwards.

3. To Receive any Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this point.

4. To Receive and Confirm the Accuracy of the Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting on 3 March 2025, together with a Written Update on the Progress of Resolutions from Meetings

The Minutes (circulated previously) were unanimously CONFIRMED as an accurate record of the Meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

The Acting Clerk's Update (circulated previously) was NOTED, and a copy will be kept with these Minutes, subject to the amendment of an inaccuracy in the Update.

5. To Receive a Presentation from Political Developments Ltd (PDL) on behalf of Bloor Homes on the Pre-Application for Proposed Development of Land East of Horndean Southern Expansion ('Southern Expansion')

The Chairman welcomed Steve Houkes (SH) from PDL, together with Simon Wise (SW), Robert Carroll and Peter Jones representing planning and design. SH/SW gave a brief flavour of the pre-application proposals, displaying an indicative master plan of the site. The site has capacity for 800 dwellings, with 35 per hectare and up to 40% affordable. PDL had responded to questions raised by the Parish Council prior to the meeting and the team addressed further questions raised by Cllrs and meeting attendees. SH advised that a public consultation had been held and all information collected would be available on the Bloor Homes website. SH was asked to consider holding another public consultation meeting further into the process. The Chairman stated that residents will be informed when any planning application is submitted to EHDC.

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

D Cllr Maines apologised for not submitting reports recently, due to her taking a two-month break from council duties. She gave a verbal Report on EHDC-related matters, including:

- Council Tax has increased by 3.4% for Band D properties, equivalent to £5.00 per annum for 2025/26.
- The Councillor Community Grant allowance has been increased to £7,000 for 2025/26, with an additional £3,000 for environmental projects.

C Cllr Harvey gave a verbal Report on the following Hampshire County Council (HCC)-related matters:

- HCC's Chief Executive has announced she will retire in July 2025.
- Government funding of £12.5m has been made available for a Household Support Fund and a further £2.7m towards the repair of potholes. Cllr Harvey continues to push for work to be done in Bowes Hill and around the Green where there are numerous potholes to be mended.
- EHDC's public consultation on Future Services is open until 7th May, giving residents and stakeholders the opportunity to share their views on a range of proposed service changes that

ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 7th APRIL 2025

could help to contribute towards addressing the shortfall of £97.6 million in HCC's 2025/26 budget.

- Devolution and Local Government reorganisation plans are being debated,
- No response has been received about the provision of flood gates on Woodberry Lane and Cllr Harvey will follow up on this.

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

Two residents expressed concern that decisions about work to the tennis courts had been agreed in principle at the meeting on 03.03.25, where the subject had not been listed on the Agenda for consideration. The residents stated that neighbouring residents must be consulted and raised several concerns. The Chairman apologised to the residents, accepting that discussion did appear to have moved beyond the scope of the Agenda and clarified that work would not be undertaken without a full written report of plans and satisfactory engagement with residents by the Tennis Club.

Another resident raised concerns about the desperate parking situation in the village centre, with vehicles being parked dangerously on the corner by the railway arch and the general gridlock around The Green on a regular basis. There is very little parking at the railway station and the double yellow lines painted along Woodberry Lane had just pushed the parking further up the road. The Chairman acknowledged the problem whilst stating that the Parish Council has no authority or responsibility for highways and there is nothing it can do to alleviate this problem, which results from there being many more cars on the road today and many more visitors to the village than in earlier times. Cllr Harvey stated that double yellow lines had been renewed except where some cars had been parked on the day and she would push Hampshire Highways to complete the job.

8. 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.

EDHC-25-0213-
GPDE
For Note Only GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT EXTENSION: PRIOR NOTIFICATION FOR SINGLE STOREY DEVELOPMENT EXTENDING 3.5 METRES BEYOND THE REAR WALL OF THE ORIGINAL DWELLING, INCORPORATING AN EAVES HEIGHT OF 3 METRES AND A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 3 METRES.
20 Uplands Road, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6BU

It was noted councillors had reviewed the Application and agreed a response of NO OBJECTION be submitted by the deadline of 18 March.

58024/001
For Note Only DETACHED SELF-BUILD DWELLING, WITH DOUBLE GARAGE, ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND ACCESS (ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REC.22.11.24, AMENDED PLANS AND RED LINE 14.02.25, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REC. 14.02.25)
Land West of Manor Lodge Road, Rowlands Castle

It was noted councillors had reviewed the revised Application and agreed a response of NO OBJECTION be submitted by the deadline of 25 March.

60454
For Note Only ERECTION OF A PART TWO-STOREY AND PART SINGLE-STOREY REAR EXTENSION (AMENDED DESCRIPTION) (AS AMENDED BY PLANS UPLOADED 06/03/2025).
64 Bowes Hill, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6BS

It was noted councillors had reviewed the Application and agreed a response of NO OBJECTION be submitted by the deadline of 24 March.

EHDC-25-0247-
GDP
For Note Only PRIOR NOTIFICATION FOR A SINGLE STOREY DEVELOPMENT EXTENDING 4.5 METRES BEYOND THE REAR WALL OF THE ORIGINAL DWELLING, INCORPORATING AN EAVES HEIGHT OF 3 METRES AND A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 3.3 METRES
2 Deerleap Lane, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6FD

It was noted councillors had reviewed the Application and agreed a response of NO OBJECTION be submitted by the deadline of 24 March.

ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 7th APRIL 2025

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

a) **Consider Arrangements and Advertising to Fill the Vacancies on the Council** – Members agreed to seek candidates for co-option to fill the two parish councillor vacancies by advertising on Grapevine, social media and website, for a period of 4 weeks. If necessary, an article will be published in the next Village & Valley magazine to attract potential candidates.

Action: Admin Officer to produce and publish advertisement.

b) Recreation Ground

- **Quotes for Removal/Installation of Access-Restricting Measures** – Members noted the Facilities Officers' Briefing (circulated previously). It was unanimously RESOLVED to commission Merrid Ltd (as a local company, offering best price and having undertaken previous works for the Parish Council) to remove four short wooden posts and two short metal posts under the pavilion canopy and install two, waist-height wooden bollards at a cost of £300.00 (excl.VAT).

Action: Admin Officer to inform Facilities Officer of Council's decision

- **Quotes for Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) for Pavilion** – Members noted the Facilities Officers' Briefing (circulated previously). It was unanimously RESOLVED to commission SPS Electrical Contractors (a local business, offering best price and having undertaken previous works for the Parish Council and Parish Hall) to produce the Report at a cost of £665.00 (excl.VAT).

Action: Admin Officer to inform Facilities Officer of Council's decision

c) The Green - Request by St. John's Church:

- **to erect the Wooden Cross on The Green over the Easter weekend from 17th – 22nd April 2025.**
- **To hold its Easter Sunday service at 10am on The Green on 20th April 2025.**

Members noted the requests (circulated previously) in line with previous years. The Admin Officer acknowledged receipt of a Risk Assessment and confirmation the Church has adequate insurance for the planned events. It was unanimously RESOLVED to grant both requests.

Action: Admin Officer to inform Church of Council's decision

d) **Replacement PCs for Parish Office and Update on future IT Equipment Needs** - Members noted the Admin Officer's Briefing and Quote (circulated previously). It was unanimously RESOLVED to commission David Somma, Council's IT consultant, to replace both office desktop PCs and all 3 laptops with refurbished models at a cost of £450.00 (excl.VAT) each, preconfigured with Windows 11 and supplied with a one-year parts and labour hardware warranty. It was also unanimously RESOLVED to purchase a lifetime software licence at a cost of £500.00 to cover all 5 PCs.

Action: Admin Officer to Clerk to liaise with David Somma to purchase equipment

e) **Hampshire County Council Future Services Consultation** –Members unanimously agreed not to submit a response on the 4 items within the consultation as the road maintenance funds will actually rise due to Government support and the Council had no view on the other 3 elements that had no impact for the Parish Council anyway.

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

a) **March 2025 Schedule of Payments, for authorisation** – Cllr Wilson stated he had reviewed and confirmed the relevant invoices. It was unanimously RESOLVED to AUTHORISE the Schedule (previously circulated), which was then signed by the 2 signatories present.

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

Method	Amount £	Payee	Reason
DD	117.82	Focus Group	Monthly fee for Office phone and broadband
DD	22.00	Vodafone Ltd	Monthly fee for Facilities Officer's mobile
DD	11.28	Three Business	Monthly fee for CCTV SIM Card at Pavilion
DD	12.01	Managed Print Partners Ltd	MFD charges incl supplies, maintenance etc
IBT	6362.58	ESP Scotland Ltd t/a ESP Play	Payment of Retention Value held from supply and installation of playground equipment
IBT	1841.40	Quality Land Services Ltd	Quarterly Litter and Dog Waste Clearance
IBT	250.00	South Central Ambulance Service	Grant towards general running costs

ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 7th APRIL 2025

IBT	1260.00	Southern Ground Care Ltd	Football Pitch Improvement Treatments
IBT	40.00	RC United Reform Church	Room Hire for Council Committee Mtg
DD	100.00	David Somma t/a Microsomma	Office IT Anti-virus Renewals
IBT	33.30	RCPHMC	Hire of Small Hall for Council Mtg
IBT	600.35	Exterior Living Rooms Ltd	Handyman and Lengthsman services
IBT	57.60	Hants Assoc. of Local Councils	Admin Officer Training
IBT	39.26	Rowlands Home Hardware	Consumables for Parish Office
IBT	31.50	L Walker, Clerk	Travel Expenses
IBT	35.10	G Whatley, Admin Officer	Travel Expenses
IBT	98.40	Securitas Technology	Maintenance of A/V Equipment at Pavilion
IBT	192.00	Keep Britain Tidy	Rec Ground Public Information Posters
PAY	8.50	Lloyds Bank PLC	Bank Service Charge*
IBTs	6,661.99	Staff salaries including HMRC, PAYE and NICs	
Total	17775.09		

IBT = Inter-bank Transfer, Council's main payment method

PAY = Bank Charge

DD = Direct Debit SO = Standing Order Chq = Cheque

PP = PayPal

Action: Clerk to make any remaining payments according to Schedule

A list of receipts into the Current Account in February 2025 is included below:

Method	Amount £	Payer	Reason
IBT	10,000.00	CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	Transfer to cover general payments
IBT	331.28	HMRC	VAT Repayment for January & February 2025

b) Report on Council's Bank Accounts as at 31 March 2025, for acceptance – Members noted and ACCEPTED the Report (circulated at the Meeting).

Account	Balance
Lloyds Current Account	£5,003.31 (<i>Reconciled balance of 3,365.01 accounting for payments not yet made/direct debits not yet take/cheques not yet presented</i>)
Public Sector Deposit Fund	£54,353.15
12-month Fixed Rate Bond	£15,491.33, matures 11/06/25
12-month Fixed Rate Bond	£20,000.00, matures 16/12/25

c) Grant Application from Citizens Advice East Hampshire – Members noted the Charity's Application (circulated previously) and the budgeted funds available. It was unanimously RESOLVED to award a grant of £250 towards general running costs as has been awarded in previous years. This is an important service for many residents to call on in today's financially challenging times.

Action: Clerk to inform CA Charity of decision and include grant in April Payment Schedule

11. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

a) Summary of Residents' Dealings with Parish Office in March 2025 – Members noted the Admin Officer's Summary (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes.

b) Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – Members supported the Chairman's suggestion to submit a short response to HCC's consultation on Hampshire and the Solent Devolution proposal in support of the principle of devolution but noting concerns about the certainty of Government funds being provided to strategic authorities.

Action: Chairman to submit response to HCC consultation by deadline of 13 April 2025

12. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION:

a) Schedule of EHDC's and SDNPA's Planning Decisions up to 4 April 2025 – Members noted the Admin Officer's Schedule (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes.

ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 7th APRIL 2025

b) EHDC's Briefing on Key Implications for East Hants on Government's Planning Overhaul on 4 March 2025 - Members noted Cllr Wilson's briefing (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept with these minutes. Concerns were raised about a proportion of dwellings within the LEOH and Southern Expansion, within Rowlands Castle PC, potentially being allocated to Horndean PC, with possible boundary changes being discussed. The Chairman will write to EHDC's Leader, Cllr Richard Millard, to record council's views.

Action: Chairman to write to EHDC Leader re the Parish Boundary issue

c) Report on Havant Thicket Reservoir Visitor Centre Design Meeting on 2 April 2025 – The Chairman briefed Members on the first iteration of plans for the visitor centre and the surrounding area at the NW corner of the reservoir. A good exchange of views took place with the emphasis on wildlife first and visitors second. Architects will produce amended plans by June for further consideration by the Reservoir Stakeholder Group, of which the Council is a member.

d) Southern Water's Consultation on Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project – The Chairman submitted agreed comments into the online consultation, as the previous comments submitted by letter had not been taken into account.

13. 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 and the remaining member of the public left the meeting at this point.

14. To Consider and Agree Action on the Appointment of the Clerk to the Parish Council – Members noted Cllr Ball's briefing (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept on file. It was unanimously RESOLVED to appoint Dominic Harland-Jones as Clerk to Rowlands Castle Parish Council, with effect from Monday 28th April 2025, on a starting salary at the first point of the local Government salary scale 29 plus 3% increase agreed for all RCPC staff effective from 1 April 2025. As a condition of employment Mr. Harland-Jones will be required to successfully complete the ILCA and FILCA courses during his probationary period, at a cost of £120 each, and the CILCA course within one year of commencing employment. These costs will be borne by the Parish Council as necessary staff development training.

It was further unanimously RESOLVED to appoint Gill Whatley, Admin Officer, as Acting Clerk for a period of 2 months with effect from 1st April 2025, on the minimum Clerk's pay scale for this period, with additional overtime hours worked in the role. Members unanimously AGREED to her completing the ILCA and FILCA courses at the expense of the Parish Council, again for staff development.

Action: Cllr Ball to confirm Mr. Harland-Jones' appointment and produce Appointment Letter and relevant documents.

15. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 12 May 2025 at The Meeting Place, Church on the Green, Rowlands Castle

The Meeting ended at 9.30pm

During the course of the Meeting (both part and whole) there were 23 members of the public present, as well as those listed at the beginning of these Minutes, and no members of the Press in attendance.