

**Minutes of the meeting of  
HAWKWELL PARISH COUNCIL  
held on  
Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009 in the Committee Room,  
Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford  
at 7.30pm**

**Councillors Present:** Vice Chairman J Dickson, Mrs J Barney, Mrs E Chippette, Mrs C Cunningham, Mrs J Fern, Mrs H Glynn, Mrs A Heath, K Holmes, A James, R Mitchell, R Patient, Mrs M Weir and Mr D Weir.

**Change to the order of Agenda:**

Cllr Dickson notified Members any decisions taken on item 6 may affect the budget, he therefore asked Members if they agreed to shift the order of the Agenda to cover item 8 prior to item 6. Members agreed.

1. **To receive apologies for non attendance at meeting:**  
Cllrs Mrs T Bateman (other appointment - hospital), Mrs M Dorrell (unwell), D Eade, (work) and V Leach (holiday). Also District Councillors M Starke and D Stansby apologised as they had a meeting at RDC. Members noted and accepted the apologies tendered.
2. **Declarations of Interest:**  
There were no declarations of interest.
3. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Extra-ordinary Meeting of Hawkwell Parish Council held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and to approve the destruction of the manuscript notes in respect of that meeting:** Members approved the Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 as a true record and agreed to the destruction of the manuscript notes.
4. **Action points – progress report:**  
The Clerk went through the progress report.  
**Donation request from Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall** – the Clerk had since attended a meeting with Members of Ashingdon Parish Council. He advised that he had been given a running account for the current year which indicated that the Committee had £4.5K in the bank. The Committee had not yet lodged the annual account ending 31<sup>st</sup> May 2007. The Builders estimate for repairs to the roof was approximately £10K, though no competitive quotes had been produced. A further request for information had been sent. Members accepted the progress report.
5. **Financial Report:**  
The Clerk went through the Financial Report, Members agreed and accepted the report.

6. **Approve 2009/10 Budget for submission to Rochford District Council:**

The Clerk made a detailed presentation to Members on the proposed budget. Members debated at length the affect of decreasing the budget or increasing the precept to maintain general reserves in line with the Council's dictated reserve policy.

At the Chairman's request the Clerk read out the motion put forward from the Finance Committee for consideration: **'Council resolves to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and sets a precept of £126,825 to cover the estimated expenditure of £163,136. The difference between the estimated expenditure and the precept will be made up by drawing £34,561 from reserves; whilst still maintaining, and strictly observing, the level of reserves dictated by the Council's reserve policy. On the basis of the Band D figure of 4560.7 the Band D council tax factor for the Parish will be £27.81 per household.'**

Further discussion took place. Members were eager to maintain a high level of services to Parishioners, however they noted that interest rates had dropped significantly and the council would not now reap the interest predicted, they recognised that this would put the reserves policy at risk.

Cllr Mrs Glynn then proposed that Council amend the motion put forward by the Finance Committee to increase the precept by a further 2.5% to 5%. Cllr Mitchell seconded.

Cllr Dickson requested Members to vote on amendment of the motion. 9 Members voted for and 3 against. Cllr Dickson confirmed Council accepted the amendment to the motion and now needed to vote on the substantive motion.

Cllr Dickson requested Members to vote on the substantive motion. There was some confusion amongst Members on the substantive motion and the meeting was adjourned for the Chairman to explain the correct procedure that the 'substantive' was the original motion amended. Cllr Dickson reconvened the meeting. He asked Members to confirm what was proposed.

The Clerk read out the **'Council resolves to amend the recommendation of the Finance Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and sets a precept of £129,918 to cover the estimated expenditure of £163,136. The difference between the estimated expenditure and the precept will be made up by drawing £31,468 from reserves; whilst still maintaining, and strictly observing, the level of reserves dictated by the Council's reserve policy. On the basis of the Band D figure of 4560.7 the Band D council tax factor for the Parish will be £28.49 per household.'**

Cllr Dickson requested Members to vote on the substantive motion and Members voted 9 for and 3 against.

7. **Copy of final response to RDC Core Strategy Document:**  
Cllr James commended the Clerk for producing an excellent response. Cllr Dickson thanked the Chairman of Planning, Cllr Mrs Weir. Cllr Mrs Glynn requested it be noted in the minutes that she took no part in this debate in anyway and had nothing to do with this item whatsoever. Cllr Dickson asked Members if they agreed with all of the above. They did and the final response was accepted.
8. **Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel:**  
Cllr Dickson notified Members Item 8 was open for debate. A lengthy debate ensued whether to reject or introduce the allowance. Members expressed concerns over increasing the budget, equal opportunities to those on benefits/pensions, income tax issues and the unfairness as to the way the allowance was calculated.
- Cllr Mrs Glynn proposed that HPC maintained the status quo. Cllr Mrs Chippette seconded. Cllr Dickson asked Members to vote on the proposal put forward by Cllr Mrs Glynn that HPC maintained the status quo. Members voted 10 for and 2 against. The Chairman announced the motion was carried.
- Cllr Mrs Heath requested HPC should write to the Independent remuneration Committee and advise them that the way the allowance was calculated was unfair, Members agreed and the Clerk was asked to respond accordingly. .
9. **Costings for Clearance of Spoil Heap from St. Mary's Churchyard:**  
The Clerk went through the report and asked for any questions to be put forward. A lengthy debate took place as Members were expressing concerns regarding the future of the site including insurance liability and Council's liability to remove fly tipping. Members felt very strongly that an acknowledgement certificate be sought from RDC to confirm that the clearance work had been completed satisfactorily. As a consequence the matter was referred to the Parks Committee for further consideration together with the future prospect of seeking to gain ownership of the land.
10. **Consider amendment to the model Publication Scheme (Freedom of Information Act 2000) – deferred from 1.12.08:**  
Members noted and agreed the Clerks report.
11. **Newsletter – Next issue (Cllr Mrs Glynn):**  
Cllr Mrs Glynn opened the discussion stating the last issue that was published was excellent in content but the A5 size was too small. She questioned the cost to produce an A4 size Newsletter bearing in mind it would require 2 peoples manpower. The Clerk clarified costs.  
Cllr Mrs Weir proposed the Newsletter be reverted back to the original A4 size having been printed on A3 and folded. Cllr Mrs Glynn seconded. Cllr James suggested the list of Councillors on the reverse of the Newsletter be condensed. Cllr Mrs Heath proposed HPC trial for the next issue, printing the newsletter on a single sheet of A4 double sided, condensing the Councillors names and addresses on the reverse and leaving the Editorial Committee to decide the content. Cllr James seconded.

Cllr Dickson reminded Members there was a proposal to amend the motion put forward by Cllr Mrs Weir. Cllr James seconded the amendment. Cllr Dickson confirmed the substantive proposal that the newsletter be trialled for the next issue on a single A4 sheet, double sided, condensing the Councillors names and addresses on the reverse. Members agreed and the motion was carried.

12. **Correspondence (see list enclosed):**

Cllr Dickson went through the list of correspondence. He asked Members if they were in agreement for the Chairman to attend the Rochford District Council Civic Dinner 2009 and they were.

Members noted the correspondence and information available in office.

13. **Receive Committee/Working Party Reports since last meeting:**

**General Purposes Committee:**

Cllr James as Vice Chairman of General Purposes moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008 be accepted, this was agreed.

**Parks Committee:**

Cllr Holmes as Chairman of Parks moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008 be accepted, this was agreed.

**Planning Committee:**

Cllr Mrs Weir as Chairman of Planning moved that the minutes of the meetings held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2008 be accepted, this was agreed.

**Finance Committee**

Cllr Mitchell as Chairman of Finance moved that the minutes of the meetings held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008 and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 be accepted, this was agreed.

**Personnel Committee**

Cllr Mrs Glynn as Chairman of Personnel moved that the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 be accepted, this was agreed.

14. **Representative Reports:**

**Hockley & Hawkwell Old Peoples Welfare committee** – Cllr Mrs Weir – no meeting.

**Rochford Old Peoples Welfare committee** – Cllr Dickson attended meeting, nothing to report.

**Rochford Hundred Assn of Local Councils** – Cllr Dickson/Cllr Mrs Dorrell – Meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009. Cllr Mrs Glynn asked the Chairman if she may suggest HPC write a letter of congratulations to Cliff Wallace for being awarded an MBE. The Chairman put it to Members and they agreed.

**Hawkwell Village Hall** – Cllr Eade/Cllr Mrs Weir – no meeting.

**Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall MC** – Cllr Mrs Chippette –no meeting.

**Public Transport Liaison Group** – Cllr Mrs Weir reported there had been no mention of bus routes 7 and 8 and nothing had come through the Transport Committee. There was a claim of insufficient use of the services and according to Arriva there had been no objection from District Council. Members expressed their concern over cutting out or reducing of these services. Cllr James proposed the Clerk write a letter. Cllr Mitchell seconded.

There was a show of hands and the motion was carried. The Clerk confirmed he would discuss with Cllr Mrs Weir, write a letter to Arriva and send a copy to Essex County Council

**Partnership to Success: Crime & Disorder** – Cllr James had attended a meeting and reported the feedback was mainly regarding concerns over the Youth Shelter at Clements Hall. They would like to see lighting in the shelter and paths to be put in around it.

**Essex Police - NAPs** – Cllr Mrs Heath and Cllr James. Cllr Mrs Heath reported the same concerns above regarding the Youth Shelter.

**Parish Plan:** Moribund.

**Neighbourhood Action Panel** – Cllr Mrs A Heath/A James. Cllr Mrs Heath said a meeting was due on the 13<sup>th</sup> January and asked Members if they wanted to put anything forward. Cllr Mrs Glynn requested it be noted that parking on grass verges across the Parish was a problem. Cllr Heath accepted this was a broad problem but there was nothing the Action Panel could do unless County Council introduced a bye-law or unless a vehicle was causing an obstruction. Cllr Dickson confirmed a Police Constable had visited the Parish Office and suggested the registration details be reported to the Police if a vehicle was causing an obstruction.

**Central Area Committee** – Cllr Mrs Weir had attended a meeting last week and reported the action points, to have a Christmas Tree planted on the park it would have to be a certain size and they were still investigating bridle way through Hawkwell Park Drive.

**School Governing Bodies:**

**Holt Farm Infants School** – Cllr Mrs Chippette reported she had attended the Christmas activities but there had been no recent Governors meeting.

**Holt Farm Junior School** – Cllr Mrs Dorrell had given her apologies for absence therefore no update available.

15. **Payment of Accounts:**  
Members accepted and agreed the Payment of Accounts.
  
16. **Summary of Decisions Taken:**
  - **Approve 2009/10 Budget for submission to Rochford District Council:** Increase precept by 2.5% to 5% and accept the substantive motion 'Council resolves to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and sets a precept of £129,378 to cover the estimated expenditure of £163,136. The difference between the estimated expenditure and the precept will be made up by drawing £29,000 from reserves; whilst still maintaining, and strictly observing, the level of reserves dictated by the Council's reserve policy. On the basis of the Band D figure of 4560.7 the Band D council tax factor for the Parish will be £28.49 per household.
  - **Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel:** Agreed to maintain the status quo and reject the introduction of allowances (other than out of Parish travel expenses). Cllr Mrs Heath requested HPC should state the way the allowance is calculated is unfair despite rejecting it.
  - **Costings for Clearance of Spoil Heap from St. Mary's Churchyard:** referred to Parks & Open Spaces Committee for further consideration.

- **Newsletter – Next issue:** Members agreed for the newsletter to be trialled on a single A4 sheet, double sided, condensing the Councillors names and addresses on the reverse.
- **Invitation from RDC – Civic Dinner 2009:** Chairman to attend the Rochford District Council Civic Dinner 2009.
- **Letter to Cliff Wallace MBE:** Clerk to write a letter of congratulations to Cliff Wallace for being awarded an MBE.
- **Bus routes 7 and 8:** The Clerk to discuss the threat to services with Cllr Mrs Weir and write to Arriva stating the concerns of HPC and send a copy to Essex County Council

Chairman