

Great and Little Hampden Parish Council: Clerk to the Council – Nick Baxter

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 4 April 2023

The meeting took place at the Memorial Hall, Memorial Road, Great Hampden.

Present: Councillor F Smith (Chair)
Councillor C Aston (Vice Chair)
Councillor K Butler
Councillor C Page

Apologies Councillor J Colvin
Buckinghamshire Councillor D Carroll

Attendance: Mr N Baxter – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Members of the public: None

Members of the press: None

MINUTES

23/0019: Formalities

- a) To NOTE apologies for absence
- Apologies were received from Councillor Colvin, which were accepted.
 - The Clerk confirmed the Council was quorate.
- b) To RECEIVE declarations of interest in items on the agenda (*In accordance with the Local Code of Conduct to receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and to consider and grant any dispensation requests*)
- No declarations were made.
- c) Members of the public and press are invited to address the Council.
- No members of the public or press were present.
- d) To RECEIVE an update from Buckinghamshire Councillors (if present)
- No Buckinghamshire Councillors attended. Buckinghamshire Councillor Carroll had tendered his apologies.

23/0020: Minutes and matters arising

- a) To APPROVE the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 March 2023
- The minutes were unanimously APPROVED. The Chair will sign the minutes when the draft watermark is amended.

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- b) To DISCUSS matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting 7 March 2023 that are not covered in the Minute Action Tracker
- None
- c) To REVIEW the Minute Action Tracker and to RECEIVE a report from the Clerk on matters not covered elsewhere in the agenda or Minute Action Tracker
- 21/0059 (a) iii/22/0002 (b) and 23/0012 (c) it was NOTED that plaques still need to be ordered.

'CIL spend' update

- The current CIL position was discussed, along with the annual CIL report. The Clerk noted the remaining CIL was £12,522.65. The annual CIL report was unanimously APPROVED.
- The Council NOTED that having asked the village for 'CIL spend' ideas none had been received. Therefore, the main ideas being considered by the Council, 'pond renovation' and 'parking next to the Memorial Hall', remain as the Council's main 'CIL spend' priorities.
 - a) 21/0040 (a) / 21/0063 (c) / 22/0006 (a) / 22/0029 (c) / 22/0051 (a) i [CIL: pond spend] – Councillor Page advised that the newt survey kit had been paid for (£25.00) and received. The Clerk was INSTRUCTED to refund Councillor Page. Councillor Page will carry out the survey. Pond clearing was discussed, the silt will need to be cleared by an external company. The Council unanimously AGREED to allocate £7,000.00 for this from the CIL. It was NOTED that the silt will need to be removed each Autumn and that in future an annual clear up will be required; maybe a village 'work party'.
 - b) 22/0024 (a) / 22/0033 (a) iii [CIL: Parking next to the Memorial Hall] – Councillor Butler updated the Council on the progress to install matting to create additional Memorial Hall parking. Three quotes were considered (Multimatts, Ultimate One Limited and Grass Mats Limited). Ideally the work should be undertaken now and certainly before the start of the cricket season. It was unanimously AGREED to accept, in principle, the 220m² quote provided by Grass Mats Limited for £2,452.00, but to implement it after the Annual Meeting.
- 23/0007 – The Chair updated the Council, advising that The Chiltern Society will need to see written permission from the landowner before undertaking any work. The cost c£500.00 was unanimously AGREED.
- It was unanimously AGREED that 22/0040 (a) (i) 22/0067 (b) could be moved to the completed list.

23/0021: Finance

- a) To CONSIDER and APPROVE the financial pack and bank reconciliation
 - The finance pack for the period ending 31 March 2023, was considered. The finance pack and bank reconciliation were unanimously APPROVED.
- b) To CONSIDER and APPROVE the regular monthly payments made, and the payments to be made
 - The following payments made since the last meeting, details of which had previously been circulated to Councillors, were unanimously RATIFIED, and those not yet paid were unanimously APPROVED.

List of payments approved on 7 March 2023 and now paid

Invoice Date/Due date	Payment to	Amount/Description	Online set up	Administration
14 March 2023	TDP Ltd	£467.35	14 March 2026	Paid by debt card by N Baxter in the presence of the Chair

List of direct debit payments made since the last meeting (7 March 2023 to be verified on 4 April 2023)

Invoice Date	Payment to	Amount/Description	Administration
28 Mar 2023	BT	£39.35 (Broadband Memorial Hall)	DD

List of payments made since the last meeting (3 January 2023 to be further verified on 4 April 2023)

Invoice Date/Due date	Payment to	Amount/Description	Online set up	Administration
16 March 2023	N Baxter	£369.60 Clerk salary Jan, Feb & Mar 2023	N Baxter	F Smith (14 Mar 2023) K Butler (16 Mar 2023)
16 March 2023	HMRC	£246.00 PAYE on Clerk salary Jan, Feb & Mar 2023	N Baxter	F Smith (14 Mar 2023) K Butler (16 Mar 2023)
17 March 2023	Epson	£37.99 printer ink	N Baxter	Debit card
21 March 2023	DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd	£45.60 payroll administration Jan, Feb & Mar 2023	N Baxter	K Butler (22 Mar 2023) C Page (22 Mar 2023)
23 March 2023	N Baxter	£31.44 Repayment of stamp purchase costs	N Baxter	F Smith (23 Mar 2023) K Butler (23 Mar 2023)

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25 March 2023	F Smith	£98.00 refund of DoE Memorial tree costs	N Baxter	K Butler (27 Mar 2023) C Page (28 Mar 2023)
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Payments to be approved on 4 April 2023

Invoice Date	Payment to	Amount/Description	Online set up	Administration
		None		

Known forward payments (not including DDs to be approved on 4 April 2023)

Invoice Date	Payment to	Amount/Description	Online set up	Administration
		None		

c) To CONSIDER and APPROVE the first draft of the AGAR

- The Council noted and unanimously AGREED that the Council meet the qualifying criteria contained in the Certificate of Exemption and on that basis, as a “smaller authority”, declared itself exempt from sending the completed AGAR to the external auditor.
- The Clerk advised that the Council should receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before finally approving the AGAR and that the purpose of this agenda item was for the Council to see the first draft of the AGAR before the data is sent to the internal auditor.
- The Council REVIEWED the handwritten first draft of the AGAR and noted the contents.
- The annual accounting information, section 2. Following a discussion regarding the carried forward figures and noting that the last two transactions in the 2021-2022 cashbook (joint value £135.00) were debited to the bank account in the 2022-2023 year, the data was unanimously AGREED as correct.
- The Council NOTED that the internal auditor will be required to confirm the following. The Council unanimously AGREED that in its view the answer to each of the following questions would be ‘yes’:

“A. *Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.*

B. *This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*

C. *This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.*

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- D. *The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.*
- E. *Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.*
- F. *Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.*
- G. *Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.*
- H. *Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.*
- I. *Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.*
- J. *Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.*
- K. *If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2021/22, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2021/22 AGAR tick "not covered")*
- L. *The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.*
- M. *In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2022-23 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2021-22 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*
- N. *The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2021/22 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)."*

- The following statements were REVIEWED and it was unanimously AGREED that the Council could, to its best knowledge and belief, answer 'yes' to each of the following statements at the time they are required to do so, which is once the Annual Internal Audit Report has been received:

1. *"We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.*

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2. *We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.*
 3. *We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.*
 4. *We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.*
 5. *We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.*
 6. *We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.*
 7. *We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.*
 8. *We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.”*
- The Clerk was INSTRUCTED to provide the requested information to the internal auditor and proceed with the AGAR process so that the formal AGAR forms can be signed once the internal auditor has finished their internal audit.
 - The Clerk reminded the Council of the critical dates
 - Certificate of Exemption deadline Friday 30 June 2023
 - AGAR submission deadline Monday 3 July 2023
 - AGAR publication on our website deadline Monday 3 July 2023
 - Public Rights Exercise lasts 30 consecutive working days which must include the first 10 working days of July. At this stage this is likely to be Monday 5 June 2023 to Friday 14 July 2023, but this is dependant on the timings of the Annual Internal Audit Report, the progress of which was outside the control of the Clerk or Council.
- d) To CONSIDER and APPROVE the amended Asset Register
- The asset register, as at 31 March 2023, showing assets of £2,972.25 was unanimously AGREED.

23/0022: Reports

- a) To RECEIVE a crime report: no report received.
 - The Clerk advised that the February 2023 month was a 'nil' return.
- b) To RECEIVE reports from Councillors (not covered elsewhere):
 - No additional reports were given.
- c) To RECEIVE a report from the Clerk on matters not covered elsewhere in the agenda or Minute Action Tracker:
 - The Clerk raised no additional items.

23/0023: Planning

- a) To CONSIDER for response any planning applications since the previous meeting and CONFIRM the response:
 - None received.
- b) To RECEIVE an update on any RECEIVED and/or DECIDED planning applications and appeals:
 - The Clerk reported that the planning application at 38 Great Hampden had been approved by the relevant authority.

23/0024: Strategy

- a) Policies
 - i. To CONSIDER and APPROVE annual insurance arrangements
 - It was noted that the current insurance renewal is in the month of May. The Clerk was asked to try to obtain quotes from alternative insurers before the renewal.
 - ii. POLICY REVIEW: Annual financial Standing Order review
 - The following standing orders were unanimously AGREED for the financial year 2023-2024; BT (currently £39.35 monthly), ICO (£35.00 annually) and The Chiltern Society (£30.00 annually).

23/0025: Correspondence

- a) To REVIEW items of correspondence received since the last meeting.
 - i. To CONSIDER correspondence from a parishioner regarding footpath signage.

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- The Clerk advised that the litter pickers had requested that the Council purchase road warning signs for future litter picks. It was unanimously AGREED that if the road was so dangerous that special warning signs were needed then volunteers should not be clearing litter on those roads. It was unanimously AGREED that these roads should be left to the professional services of Buckinghamshire Council. The Council unanimously AGREED, therefore, not to purchase such signage. The Council did, however, note that the litter picking equipment needs to be replaced and the Clerk was instructed to source such equipment. It was unanimously AGREED that in future years the Clerk would prepare a 'litter picking' briefing/guidance document for the litter pickers.

23/0026: Urgent Items - To AGREE urgent items to be added to the next agenda

- a) To AGREE items to be added to the next agenda.
- Annual meeting (24 May 2023) – it was unanimously AGREED to add “CIL spend position” update (Memorial Hall parking and Pond redevelopment) to the Agenda.
 - It was unanimously AGREED that tea and cakes will be provided at the Annual Meeting

23/0027: Next Meeting

- a) To AGREE the date of the next meeting (24 May 2023)
- The date of the next meeting, 24 May 2023, was unanimously AGREED.
 - It was NOTED that the Annual Meeting will also be held on 24 May 2023. The Clerk was asked to advertise the annual meeting on the village email and add an item 'CIL spend update'.

Signed Date

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