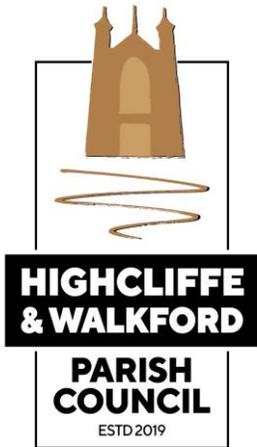


HIGHCLIFFE & WALKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Business Plan 2020 -2023



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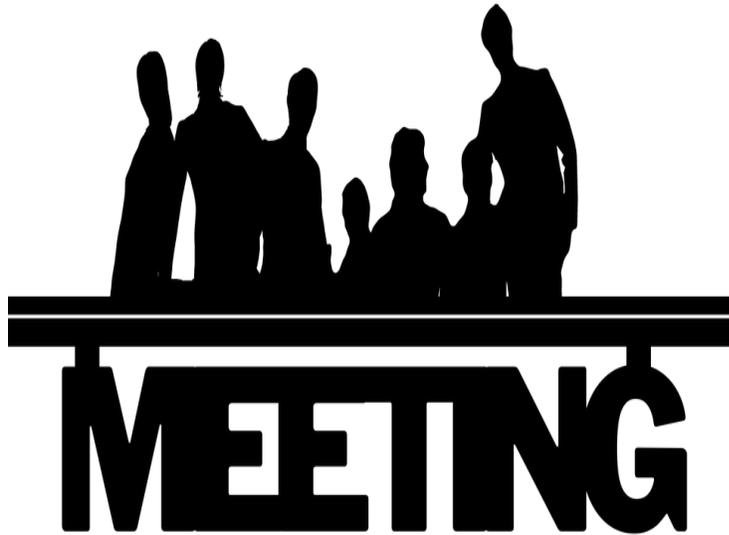
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1. INTRODUCTION



- ▶ This is the first Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council (HWPC) Business Plan. We were formed by statute in 2019 following the dissolution of Christchurch Borough Council and this first plan sets out our vision, our purpose, our values and our objectives for the next four years.
- ▶ The aim of this plan is to enable our residents to have a clear understanding of what we do, what we believe and how we set out to achieve our plans and manage our resources.
- ▶ Specifically the plan sets out to describe what the parish council aims to achieve for the benefit of the local community.

2. H&W PARISH COUNCIL

► Who are we?

HWPC is the 1st, most local, tier of local government in our area, responsible for local matters including consultation on all planning applications. The 2nd tier, Bournemouth Christchurch Poole (BCP), is responsible for major services including Planning, Housing, Education, Highways and Social Services.

► What is our Vision?

- Our vision is very clear: we want Highcliffe & Walkford to be a successful, vibrant and attractive place to live, work and visit.
- We want to achieve our vision in an honest, open and straightforward way; we will co-operate with BCP and others to deliver the best possible service we can.

► What is our Purpose, our values and our objectives?

- Our purpose is to provide high quality, efficient, cost effective and sustainable services.
- We want to provide a channel for the views of the community and be responsive to their needs and wishes.

3. MANAGING OUR ASSETS

Allotments

With 350 allotments at Roeshot Hill and Walkford, the Council spends a considerable portion of its time managing these important assets.

Our business plan for the allotments is to ensure that they are managed actively and effectively and at no net cost to our budget.

Over the four years of this plan we will:

- ✓ *Review all outgoings to minimise waste and inefficiency,*
- ✓ *Invest from within the budget to improve the allotments,*
- ✓ *Aim to raise rents by no more than the previous year's CPI.*
- ✓ *Establish an earmarked reserve for future liabilities.*



Nea Meadows

Nea Meadows, our country park, and is vitally important to the health and wellbeing of many active residents, their sporting activities and their dogs.

Our business plan for the country park is to maintain all the facilities and improve them where necessary. In our inaugural year we noted inadequacies in car parking and took action to improve this.

Over the four years of this plan we will:

- ✓ *Work with BCP's Countryside Division to plant more trees,*
- ✓ *Maintain close liaison with the Friends of Nea Meadows*
- ✓ *Closely monitor the lake, acting where necessary to maintain its health*

3. MANAGING OUR ASSETS.

LAKWOOD

The Friends of Lakewood have worked tirelessly to improve and maintain this important green asset in our parish. They also offer tuition for young people in the art of fishing. Our business plan for Lakewood is to effectively support this initiative.

Over the four years of this plan we will:

- ✓ *Continue to offer support to the Friends of Lakewood*
- ✓ *Work with BCP's Countryside Division to maintain the area in general, the trees in particular.*
- ✓ *Promote the planting of the Lakeside with indigenous flowers.*



WINGFIELD RECREATION GROUND

This multi use outdoor facility supports the Highcliffe Hawks operating up to 14 football teams for young people. In Summer months several nearby cricket teams make use of its artificial wicket.

Our business plan for Wingfield is to maintain and, where possible, improve the quality of the pitches and the surrounding area. Also to modernise the pavilion.

Over the four years of this plan we will:

- ✓ *Work with the Hawks and the Football Association to have a pavilion fit for use in the 21st Century.*
- ✓ *Continue to work with BCP to maintain and improve the pitches*
- ✓ *Seek to improve the car parking provision at the site.*



4. MAJOR OBJECTIVES (1)

As a newly formed Council we had our own ideas of important issues we need to address. However, we also felt it vitally important to listen to the views of residents. We started this process by listening to views put forward at two public meetings we held in December 2019. The objectives set out below reflect those views and, given the success of the meetings in 2019, the Parish Council hopes to repeat the exercise annually.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES:

► Neighbourhood Plan

To provide clear parameters for what we consider acceptable in future planning applications in our parish we need an effective Neighbourhood Plan. We have already established a vibrant Neighbourhood Plan Group. Our business plan objective is to support this as a top priority.

Over the next two years we will:

- ✓ *Consult, discuss and deliver a Neighbourhood Plan*
- ✓ *Monitor all planning applications to ensure compliance with our Neighbourhood Plan.*

► Revitalising the High Street

Without exception, the issues surrounding the state of our High Street are the most frequent to be referred to by residents. For this reason alone we have already set up a sub group with the widest remit to look into ways to improve matters associated with our High street.

Our business plan objective is to monitor progress and support our sub group.

Over the four years of this plan we will:

- ✓ *Complete our sub group's work (year 1)*
- ✓ *Discuss its finding with BCP (Year 1)*
- ✓ *Seek to implement improvements (Years 1 - 4)*

4. MAJOR OBJECTIVES (2)

► State of our Pavements

Another frequent cause for concern is the general lack of maintenance of our pavements. Years of inadequate care have left them in a deplorable and, in some cases, dangerous state. The overall impression that is given to residents and visitors alike is one of neglect. Inspection readily discloses that this problem is far more serious than simply a gathering of autumnal detritus and serious efforts are needed to clear this.

Our business plan objective is to improve the current state of affairs so we can all be proud of our surroundings. We have therefore established a sub group to address this issue.

Over the course of the next four years we will:

- ✓ Identify the extent of the problem
- ✓ *Discuss our suggested solutions with BCP*
- ✓ *Implement a plan to improve the state of our pavements*

➤ Sensory Garden & Activity Trail

The provision of a Sensory Garden and Activity Trail within the Lymington Road Recreation Ground would, in our view, be a valuable addition to the central facilities available to residents.

Our business plan to achieved this in the coming years is as follows:

- ✓ *Make application to BCP to transfer ownership of the Recreation Ground to the Parish Council (Year 1)*
- ✓ *Design, plan and seek finance to achieve this (Year 1- 2)*
- ✓ *Proceed to construction (Year 2-3)*

5. OTHER OBJECTIVES

In addition to our Major Objectives we have other objectives that we have included in this plan. But the Plan is not a static document and both lists of Objectives will be added to as we progress through the period.

➤ **Fencing on A337**

A significant length of the A337, Lymington Road, to the West of the village is extremely dilapidated and a potential danger to pedestrians.

Our business plan objective is simply to prioritise its repair and we will do that by taking the following actions:

- ✓ *Ascertain the various ownerships of the land*
- ✓ *Discuss with all owners how to finance and construct a replacement fence .*

➤ **Supporting Others**

The Parish Council readily recognises that it is not alone in seeking to improve the life we enjoy and, with that in mind, our Business Plan includes this provision for supporting others.

Over the four years of this plan we will:

- ✓ Entertain requests for assistance from local organisations that qualify under the terms of our policy
- ✓ Actively seek to support these organisations in both financial and non-financial ways.

6. OUR NUMBERS IN PERSPECTIVE

HWPC Annual Budget for 2019/20
{reduced by 6% for 2020/21}

£176,592 {equivalent
to £14 per house}

Our money is spent exclusively for the benefit of Highcliffe & Walkford	(£)
Open Spaces maintenance	23,000
Administration Costs	15,000
Premises rent	3,500
Furniture and Equipment	2,100
IT/Website	4,000
Donations to Voluntary Bodies	12,500
Nea Meadows Car Park	11,700
Other Projects	6,600
Professional Fees	2,500
Reserves for Future schemes	80,000
Other Balances	15,700

BCP Annual Budget for 2019/20 is £274millions

7. LOOKING AFTER OUR FINANCES

Almost 90% of our annual spend is raised by Precept on BCP who, in turn, adds it to our Council Tax. For that reason, if no other, we need to be exceptionally watchful how we use it.

Our precept will change from year to year and we are determined that the main reason for change will be to reflect what activities the community wants the parish council to undertake.

We have two sets of auditors to help look after our finances but it is primarily the responsibility of your Councillors to manage prudently and efficiently.

This business plan sets out a series of actions we will initiate and each of these will be tightly controlled.

In particular, our business plan pledges that we will:

- ✓ Approve all costs at our Monthly Council meetings
- ✓ Additionally inspect carefully all invoices in excess of £500
- ✓ Examine our costs against budget at quarterly intervals
- ✓ Set our annual precept prudently, endeavouring to ensure that any increase that does become necessary does not exceed increases in a Cost of Living index.



8. MONITORING THE PLAN – The actions contained in this plan are all set out below. They will change as the plan evolves but they, together with any new actions, will be monitored closely and regularly by the Council and reported on an annual basis to the Annual Parish Meeting.

<p><u>ALLOTMENTS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Review all outgoings to minimise waste and inefficiency,</i> ✓ <i>Invest from within the budget to improve the allotments,</i> ✓ <i>Aim to raise rents by no more than the previous year's CPI.</i> ✓ <i>Establish an earmarked reserve for future liabilities.</i> 	<p><u>NEA MEADOWS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Work with BCP's Countryside Division to plant more trees,</i> ✓ <i>Maintain close liaison with the Friends of Nea Meadows</i> ✓ <i>Closely monitor the lake, acting where necessary to maintain its health</i>
<p><u>LAKWOOD</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Continue to offer support to the Friends of Lakewood</i> ✓ <i>Work with BCP's Countryside Division to maintain the area in general, the trees in particular.</i> ✓ <i>Promote the planting of the Lakeside with indigenous flowers.</i> 	<p><u>WINGFIELD RECREATION GROUND</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Work with the Hawks and the Football Association to have a pavilion fit for use in the 21st Century.</i> ✓ <i>Continue to work with BCP to maintain and improve the pitches</i> ✓ <i>Seek to improve the car parking provision at the site.</i>
<p><u>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Consult, discuss and deliver a Neighbourhood Plan</i> ✓ <i>Monitor all planning applications to ensure compliance with our Neighbourhood Plan.</i> 	<p><u>REVITALISING THE HIGH STREET</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Complete our sub group's work (year 1)</i> ✓ <i>Discuss its finding with BCP (Year 1)</i> ✓ <i>Seek to implement improvements (Years 1 - 4)</i>
<p><u>STATE OF OUR PAVEMENTS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the extent of the problem ✓ <i>Discuss our suggested solutions with BCP</i> ✓ <i>Implement a plan to improve the state of our pavements</i> 	<p><u>SENSORY GARDEN AND ACTIVITY TRAIL</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Make application to BCP to transfer ownership of the Recreation Ground to the Parish Council (Year 1)</i> ✓ <i>Design, plan and seek finance to achieve this (Year 1- 2)</i> ✓ <i>Proceed to construction (Year 2-3)</i>
<p><u>FENCING ON THE A337</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Ascertain the various ownerships of the land</i> ✓ <i>Discuss with all owners how to finance and construct a replacement fence .</i> 	<p><u>SUPPORTING OTHERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Entertain requests for assistance from local organisations that qualify under the terms of our policy</i> ✓ <i>Actively seek to support these organisations in both financial and non-financial ways.</i>
<p><u>LOOKING AFTER OUR FINANCES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Set our annual precept prudently, seeking to ensure that any increase that does become necessary is restricted to increases in a Cost of Living index (CPI).</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Approve all costs at our Monthly Council meetings</i> ✓ <i>Additionally inspect carefully all invoices in excess of £500</i> ✓ <i>Examine our costs against budget at quarterly intervals</i>