



Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council
held on 10th January 2024 at 19:00
in The Old School House, 254 Lymington Road, Highcliffe.

Present: Cllr A Sofianos (vice-chair), Cllr R Ede, Cllr A Martin, Cllr S Skinner, Cllr S Walter, Cllr J Webster, Cllr T Butcher, Cllr R Dickson, and Cllr W McNeill

Also Present: 13 members of the public. **In attendance:** the clerk, Tom Brindley, the Assistant Clerk, Nicki France

24/1 (Agenda Item 1) Apologies for Absence: Apologies accepted from Cllr L Dedman and Cllr D Martin,

24/2 (Agenda Item 2) Chairman's remarks:

1. The vice-chairman welcomed the public, members and officers and explained that Cllr Dedman was unable to attend and so he would take the chair.
2. The chairman noted the well attended meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Christmas Tree lights switch on with Carol singing.

24/3 (Agenda Item 3) Declarations of Interests from Members: None.

24/4 (Agenda Item 4) Public Questions:

1. A member of the Highcliffe Residents Association asked: "Could the Parish Council please give an indication of the timetable of works which are needed to be carried out on the paths and steps at Highcliffe Beach. After the severe rain we have just experienced, the condition in particular of the path from the overflow car park is becoming extremely dangerous. The steps at the various access points are once again deep and making it very difficult for people to use. The paths are increasingly becoming uneven and prone to water gathering forcing residents to detour round them. Whilst it is realised that any such works are unlikely to commence until the spring, some kind of reassurance that arrangements are being made would be appreciated."
2. Cllr Andy Martin responded in his role as a BCP councillor saying that this was a BCP Council responsibility. A report will be circulated to Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council and the Highcliffe Residents Association with a list of options.
3. A contribution of £100,000 had been included in the parish council's draft budget for 2024/25.
4. A supplementary question as to whether this project would include cutting back vegetation was noted. Cllr Martin advised vegetation was down to a separate team with a different budget.

24/5 (Agenda Item 5) Presentations from members of the BCP Unitary Authority

1. BCP Cllr Andy Martin gave a verbal report on activities at BCP Council.
2. Members noted that the BCP Local Plan, to replace the three individual local plans was agreed by cabinet and will go to public consultation in February. The plan included an allocation, from windfall sites, for 450 houses in Highcliffe and Walkford.
3. A consultation on the future of the Day Centre was due to conclude on 12th January. Members agreed that the clerk, in consultation with Cllrs A Martin and A Sofianos, would draft a response.
4. A consultation on libraries would be considered by cabinet in February.
5. The tender for operating the tea rooms at Highcliffe Castle was to be rerun. The tea rooms are currently closed. A temporary provision is being investigated while the tender process is run.

24/6 (Agenda Item 6) To confirm minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2023

The minutes were taken as read, confirmed as true record and signed by the chairman.

24/7 (Agenda Item 7) To receive the clerk's report

1. The clerk presented his report which was noted.

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24/8 (Agenda Item 8) To note the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting of 4th December 2023

1. The minutes were noted.

24/9 (Agenda Item 9) To note the minutes of the Budget Audit and Grants sub-committee meeting of 8th January 2024

1. The minutes were noted.
2. The Budget Audit and Grants sub-committee had made two recommendations:
 - i. (23BAG/1.2) That Cllr Adam Sofianos was appointed chair of the BA&G sub-committee.
 - ii. (23BAG/4.4) That the Terms of Reference for all committees and sub-committees which include the sentence to: "These terms of reference will be reviewed annually, at the Annual Council Meeting" be amended to remove the words "at the Annual Council Meeting" to give more flexibility in the review.
3. Members **RESOLVED** to accept the resolutions.

24/10 (Agenda Item 10) Finance and Risk:

1. Members noted the bank reconciliation and financial reports to 31st December 2023.
2. Members noted the list of payments made since the last meeting and the forecast of payments to be made in January.
3. Members considered a request by the RFO to engage a part time contract bookkeeper to assist in the accounting process.
4. Members **RESOLVED** to engage Cathy Smith TAAT on a rolling monthly contract for an initial 5 hrs per week.

24/11 (Agenda Item 11) 2024/25 Budget

1. The chairman of the Budget Audit and Grants sub-committee presented the budget as amended by the sub-committee.
 - a. The budget showed an expenditure of £870,392
 - b. The budget showed borrowings of £350,000
 - c. The budget showed other income of £35,686
 - d. The budget showed CIL income of £50,000
 - e. The budget showed use of reserves of £302,839
 - f. To balance the budget required a precept of £180,000
2. The budget included major projects:
 - a. Shoreline paths
 - b. High street pavements
 - c. Save The Old School
 - d. Highcliffe Recreation ground and pavilion
3. The budget established capital reserves for:
 - a. Car parks at Wingfield and Nea Meadows
 - b. Play equipment at Highcliffe and Bluebell Close
 - c. The Old School
4. Members considered the recommendation from the Budget Audit and Grants sub-committee that the budget be adopted.
5. Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the 2024/25 budget.

24/12 (Agenda Item 12) 2024/25 Precept

1. The clerk advised BCP had confirmed a council tax base of 6,555. To receive income of £180,000 would therefore require a precept of £27.46 per Band D house.
2. Members noted that while this was a year on year increase of 19.70% (an annual increase of £4.52 per household) due to previous cuts this was only 2% higher than the precept of 2019.
3. Members **RESOLVED** to set a precept of £27.46 per Band D house.

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24/13 (Agenda Item 13) Matters for future meetings:

- BCP Local Plan
- Library consultation
- "Green Fair"

24/14 To adopt a calendar of meetings

1. Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the calendar of meetings annexed to these minutes.

24/15 Date of the next meeting of Full Council: Wednesday 20th March venue to be confirmed

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:15.

Signed

Date.....

DRAFT