Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of **Full Council** held on Wednesday 8th October 2025 at 18.30 in The Old School, 254 Lymington Road, Highcliffe. BH23 5ET.

Present: Cllrs A Sofianos (Chair), T Butcher, D Martin, W McNeill, B Hutchings, S Slatter, S Walters, and J Webster.
In attendance: Vanessa Ricketts FSLCC (Clerk and RFO), Nicki France (Assistant Clerk) and five members of the public.

175 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr A Martin, Cllr Skinner (personal reasons) Hilliard (prior engagement). It was therefore:

RESOLVED: That the apologies for absence be accepted.

Cllr R Ede was absent without apology.

176 Declarations of interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

177 Minutes of meeting of 10th September 2025

A Member noted that the minutes had not recorded his request to have the accounts presented in a different format. The Clerk advised that this could be addressed at Item 8 in the agenda if the Member was in agreement, which he concurred.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be accepted as a true record and signed by the chair.

178 Chair remarks:

The Chair welcomed the Officers, Members and public to the meeting.

179 Public Representation

A member of the public addressed the Council regarding concerns over antisocial behaviour and graffiti in the village particularly along Beacon Drive. The Clerk mentioned that she would be meeting with Inspector Dan Cullen the following week and would raise this issue. The BCP Ward Councillor also advised that he continued to report these incidents to BCP Council and would be addressing schools. He further advised public to continue take photos and report to Ward Councillors.

180 BCP Councillors Reports

Cllr D Martin addressed the council with the following updates.

1- Trees had been cut by the zig-zag path and he was awaiting an explanation from BCP Council.
2- Wortley Road car park EV chargers had sustained damage – BCP Council is investigating how these can be made more secure.
3- A meeting to discuss High Street improvements would be taking place in the next few weeks.
4- BCP Council finances current showed a £13m deficit for next year.
5- Staff shortages had impacted BCP Council dog bin emptying.
6- The Community Governance Review would be discussed at BCP Council meeting on 14th October.
7- An update was provided on the Cliffs Paths Project with an on-site meeting having been requested.

181 Resolutions report

Members received and reviewed the actions against resolutions report presented by the Clerk. It was noted that under minute 19 of 14th May Annual Council an action was still outstanding – the Clerk agreed to chase Stir Events for their report on the Clifftop Music Festival, as promised.

182 Finance

a) Members noted the approved schedule of Accounts and the current bank balance. A Member asked that the reports be presented in a different format. The Clerk advised that she had raised this with the Internal Auditor who had stated that the Council should continue to use the reports generated by the accounting programme and not transpose data into other formats as this would put the Council at risk of unnecessary error and additional workload. The Clerk however, reported that changing to Income/Expenditure may resolve the Members concern. The member asked that his disagreement with the Internal Auditors opinion be noted.

RESOLVED that the schedule of account and bank balance be approved and signed by the Chair.

b) Members noted the Bank reconciliation.

RESOLVED that the Bank Reconciliation be approved and signed by the Chair.

c) Members noted the 6-month budget comparison report.

RESOLVED that the budget comparison report be accepted and that the Clerk arrange a budget workshop meeting for the end of October.

d) Members noted that the second instalment of the precept of £112,000 had been received.

RESOLVED that £60,000 remain in the Council's current account to cover costs and invoices for the next few months and £52,000 be transferred to the CCLA account.

183 Conclusion of Audit 2024-2025

The Clerk presented the Conclusion of Audit received from the BDO, the Council's External Auditor. It was noted that the Auditor had raised matters of qualification. The Clerk

reported that, since the AGAR had been produced, stricter financial controls had been implemented and the Internal Auditor had concurred that the council was now compliant. The Chairman thanked the Officers for the improvements to systems. The Clerk advised that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been published prior to the 30th September deadline.

RESOLVED that the conclusion of audit be accepted and comments noted.

184 Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival

The Chairman provided and update on the festival and it was noted that the Council had supported the festival by means of a grant for a number of years. The festival organisers had provided a detailed grant application, requesting £15,000, that being the same amount as the previous year.

RESOLVED that a grant of £15,000 be awarded to the Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival (LGA1972 s145).

185 GDPR policy review

The Clerk advised that the current GDPR policy was lacking and not fully compliant and rather than review the policy she recommended that the Council receive a fully compliant policy and risk assessment at the next meeting, which Members agreed.

186 FOI policy review

The Clerk advised that the current Freedom of Information Policy was lacking and not fully compliant and rather than review the policy she recommended that the Council receive a fully compliant policy at the next meeting, which Members agreed.

187 Fees and Charges Review

Members agreed that this should be reviewed after the budget workshop had taken place at the end of October.

188 Health and Safety Insurance and Consultation Services

Members received a comprehensive report from Worknest, the Council's HR provider on its Heath and Safety Insurance with included carrying the responsibility of the Responsible Person in law for the Council's assets. Members noted that the yearly quotation was for £2,738 for a three-year contract.

RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Worknest. (Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19)

189 Date of the Next Meeting

Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 6.30pm

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 19:45.

Signed …….. Date……