Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of **Full Council** held on Wednesday 14th October 2026 at 18.30 in The Old School, 254 Lymington Road, Highcliffe. BH23 5ET.

Present: A Martin (Chair), T Butcher, R Ede, S Skinner, S Slatter, S Walter.
In attendance: Vanessa Ricketts FSLCC (Clerk and RFO), Nicki France (Assistant Clerk) and 11 members of the public.

187 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Hutchings (Vice Chair) and W McNeill.

RESOLVED that the apologies be accepted.

188 Declarations of interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

189 Minutes of the previous meeting of Council

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Council meeting of 2nd September 2026 be accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

190 Chair remarks:

The Chair stated that the BCP Ward Councillors had all be at a five hour long Council meeting the previous evening.

191 Public Representation:

No members of the public which to make representation.

192 Casual Vacancy

Members then were advised that there had been three applications for the current vacancy on the parish council for the West Highcliffe Ward following the resignation of Councillor Adam Sofianos. Each applicant was invited to address the council in turn and members asked questions of the applicants. In accordance with the council's policy, it was proposed and seconded that all applicants be put to the vote. Following the vote it was –

RESOLVED that Kirsty Rolt be co-opted onto the council.

Councillor Kirsty Rolt read and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

193 BCP Councillors Reports

Cllr L Dedman addressed the Council regarding the sale of Poole Civic Offices and the sad passing of former Christchurch Borough Councillor, Coin Jamieson.

Cllr D Martin addressed the council regarding van-life issues at Friars Cliff and Traffic Regulation Orders.

Cllr A Martin addressed the council regarding the BCP budget, Ringwood Road crossing, the current work on the cliff paths and the proposed High Street improvement works.

195 Resolutions Report

Members received and reviewed the Actions Against Resolutions report.

196 Finance

Members considered Part A (schedule of accounts and current bank balance), Part B (bank reconciliations for the same period).

a) Members noted the schedule of accounts and current bank balance.

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

b) Members noted the bank reconciliations.

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

197 Quarter 2 Budget Report

Members received the Q2 budget report.

RESOLVED that the budget be accepted.

198 Budget Workshop

Members considered a date for the annual budget workshop..

RESOLVED - That the budget workshop be held on 4th November at 6pm..

199 Conclusion of Audit 2025-2026

The Clerk presented the Conclusion of Audit received from the BDO, the Council's External Auditor. It was noted that there had been no matters of qualification. The Chair thanked the Officers for work involved in producing the accounts for audit. 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.

200 CCLA correspondent

The Clerk advised that it was necessary to change the correspondent on the CCLA account.

RESOLVED - That the Clerk be appointed the correspondent on the CCLA account.

201 NJC Pay scales 2026-2027

Members noted and accepted the recently published NJC pay scales which included a 3.3% increase on last year.

202 Stress at work policy

Members received the stress at work policy prepared by the Clerk.

RESOLVED that the policy be adopted.

203 Memorial Plaque

Members considered a request from a member of the public wishing to install a memorial plaque on an existing council bench at Nea Meadows. Members referred to the adopted policy on new memorial benches and extensions to memorial benches.

RESOLVED that a cost of £500 be applied for any memorial plaque to be affixed to an existing council bench.

204 Amenities Committee Dates

Members considered a request received from my counsellor to change the dates of the amenities committee meetings to the third Wednesday of each month.

RESOLVED that The new dates as circulated be accepted.

205 Date of the Annual Parish Meeting

Due to 2027 being an election year, and the proposed nature village festival taking place in May, it was:

RESOLVED that the annual parish meeting take place on the 17th of March 2027.

206 Nature Village Working Group Recommendations

Members considered the following recommendations from the Nature Village Working Group:

1. To confirm the revised Strategy for the Nature Village project.
2. To appoint an events company to prepare and deliver a plan for a Nature Festival in 2027.
3. To authorise the Working Group to get quotes the preparation and erection of Information Boards and a Nature Village leaflet, all within the approved NV budget.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be accepted.

207 Matters for consideration

A Member raised concerns about Beacon Drive open space. The Chair advised the Member to submit a motion in writing to the Clerk.

208 Delegated Decisions

The Clerk reported there had been no delegated decisions made since the previous council meeting.

209 Exclusion of the Press and Public:

Resolved that the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the following business. (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) 1960, s1 (2)).

210 Recommendations from Staffing Committee

Members considered the following recommendations from staffing committee of 30th of September 2026:

175 Amenities Officer:

Members considered increasing the current working hours of the Amenities Officer to meet the needs and future needs of the business and further considered the salary point.
Recommended to Council that:

a) The Amenities Officer's hours be increased to 15-20 hours per week, upon acquisition of the Old School
b) The Amenities Officer be appointed to SCP 33, effective from 1 October 2026.

176 Clerk and RFO - Hours:

Members considered increasing the current working hours of the Clerk and RFO to meet the needs and future needs of the business.
Recommended to Council that the Clerk and RFO's hours be increased to 24 hours per week from 1 November.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be accepted and approved.

211 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of Council would take place on **Wednesday 11th November 2026 at 6.30pm**

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 19:24 june 1160.