

**MINUTES OF THE SOUTH HEIGHTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 13th FEBRUARY 2018 at 7.00 p.m.
AT THE VILLAGE HALL, HEIGHTON ROAD, SOUTH HEIGHTON**

Present: Councillors: C Bradshaw (Chair), G Hazell, P Julian (Vice Chair), S Lo-Fan-Hin, J Miller and A Turner.

In Attendance: S Mills (Clerk).

SHPC 1. Public Participation

417-18

No members of the public were present. The Chairman commenced the meeting by welcoming the new Parish Clerk Stephanie Mills; Cllr Bradshaw further extended the thanks of the Council to the temporary Clerk Mrs Linda Butcher for her help and support over the previous months.

SHPC 2. Apologies

418-18

There were no apologies of absence to note.

SHPC 3. To receive declarations of interest from Councillors in respect of items on the agenda

419-18

Cllr Turner declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6 regarding the bonfire site restoration and deposit, being a member of the bonfire society. It was **RESOLVED** that this was not a prejudicial interest and that Cllr Turner could take part in the discussion and decision.

SHPC 4. Minutes

420-18

4.1. To Approve and sign the minutes of the meeting on 16th January 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2018 circulated prior to the meeting were reviewed and the following amendments made: minute ref. SHPC 405-18a change 'Temporal to Temporary', remove cheque number 300295 from the table as this was entered in error, add 'and sundries' after 'Christmas Tree and Lights' in the table; 416-18 change the date of next meeting from 16th to 13th.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk shall make the above amendments to the minutes and bring these to the next Council meeting to be signed as a true record.

4.2. Matters Arising (not covered below)

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the items on the agenda.

SHPC 5. Finance

421-18

5.1. Finance update and bank account progress

The Clerk did not have access to the latest Council bank statements and could not locate an up-to-date working cashbook or accounts payable file in the hard and soft copy files held by the Council and was therefore unable to provide an accurate financial overview of the Council's finances during the meeting. The Clerk further expressed concern that the last external audit completed by PFK Littlejohn noted that the Annual Return was not completed accurately; specifically, the auditor's had no confidence in the figures in Section 2, the Council accounted for un-presented cheques incorrectly despite this error being highlighted in the previous year's audit and the bank reconciliation figures were also inaccurate. Given the lack of up to date information, the Clerk intends to review all payments made by the Council from the beginning of the current financial year to reconcile these against the Council bank account and to implement a more robust format for presenting payments for authorisation to the Council; this will also provide more transparency and ease of auditing. The Clerk will complete this ready for the next Council Meeting.

The Chairman updated members regarding the Council's PAYE and National Insurance obligations as an employer. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk will look into suppliers to provide these services and will obtain 3 quotes based on cost effectiveness and efficiency and bring these to a future meeting of the Council for consideration.

The Chairman advised members that the Council's Expense Policy, which was approved by the Council in November 2017, requires an Expense Claim Form and this will be put together by the Chairman and the Clerk for consideration by the Council at the next Council Meeting.

5.2. Payment of invoices

The Council reviewed the list of payments circulated with the Agenda to be paid this month subject to their approval at this meeting. The Clerk reported that the Council does not currently have a cheque book. The Co-op confirmed that 2 cheque books were dispatched to the previous Clerk's address but neither has been received. A new cheque book has been ordered and is expected to arrive by the end of the week.

Name Cheque made payable	Product/Service	Amount
Lewes District Council	Monthly play area inspections	£18.00
Temporary Clerk	Invoices for temporary Clerk/Advisory services	£630.25
Parish Clerk	Expenses (purchase of mobile phone/postage)	£21.74
Parish Clerk	Salary for February 2108 - authorisation to pay on Friday 23rd February as per Clerk's contract. February salary plus 3 hours worked in January.	£352.67
Total:		£1,022.66

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The payments in the above table be approved by the Council totalling £1,022.66;
- The cheques for the above payments be signed by 2 of the Council's authorised signatories as soon as the new cheque book arrives;
- The Clerk will contact all suppliers and individuals with outstanding payments to advise them of the delay.

SHPC 422-18 6. Bonfire Site Restoration and Deposit return to SHVHMC

The Chairman confirmed that South Heighton Village Hall Management Committee (SHVHMC) have completed re-turfing the bonfire site following the last display and the area is fenced off whilst the new turf settles. The site had been inspected by the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Chris Bibb and the restoration was considered satisfactory and the terms of the Bonfire Licence complied with.

It was **RESOLVED** to return the remaining deposit of £200, paid by the SHVHMC, as soon as the new Council cheque book arrives.

SHPC 423-18 7. Purchase of new notice board

Cllr Julian gave a verbal report referring to papers circulated at the meeting regarding the purchase of a new Parish Council notice board to facilitate the replacement of the small board at Norton with a larger one. Cllr Julian had approached Veolia regarding providing a grant to purchase a notice board and was pleased to report that Veolia had offered to fund the full amount. Members discussed options and timing for the siting of the notice board.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The Council accept Veolia's kind offer of a grant of £2,216.06 to purchase a new notice board and the Clerk will write a letter of thanks to Veolia on behalf of the Council;
- The new board will be sited at The Hollow in place of the current board which will be moved to replace the existing notice board at Norton; the work will be scheduled to coincide with the replacement of the new play area fencing to minimise disruption and best utilise resources;
- The Clerk will submit the invoice for the notice board from Greenbarnes Ltd for payment at the next Council Meeting and will send a copy of the invoice to Kelly Booth at Veolia to arrange payment of the grant.

SHPC 424-18 8. Spring/Summer Newsletter

The Chairman referred to the possible topics for inclusion in the next Parish Council newsletter which were circulated as supporting documentation prior to the meeting and Members discussed these and other possible items as well as the A3 colour format which had proved popular with residents.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The format will again be the large colour A3 version;
- The following additional topics be included: 'Meet the Council' at the summer fete; Details regarding an opening event for the new play area dependent on timings and notice about the bonfire as the winter newsletter goes out too late to add this;
- Cllr Bradshaw to prepare the articles ready for review at the next Council Meeting.

SHPC 425-18 9. Grant Awarding Policy and Process

The Clerk gave a verbal report on the proposed Grant Awarding Policy and Application Form circulated as supporting documentation prior to the meeting, explaining that the Council should have adopted guidelines and criteria for a grant allocation process.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Policy and Form with the following amendments:

- Notes and Background: Remove the words 'solely' and 'the Parish Clerk and' from paragraph 5; remove the last 2 paragraphs;

- Section 2.3: add 'or terms of reference' after 'constitution';
- Section 2.5 should read 'Grants will not normally exceed 50% of the cost of the project or activity or 50% of the overall grant fund';
- Section 2.7 should refer to 'unspent Grant money';
- Grant Application Form: remove Councillor details from the header; Question 4 - Add Parish/Area; Question 9 – Amend to ask the full cost of the activity and what percentage of the Grant fund makes up the full cost; Question 11 – Replace 'for' with 'or' and delete 'other'; Question 14 – Change 'confirm' to 'print'; End of Form – Add a section to 'Print Name' and input 'Position in Organisation'.

SHPC 426-18 10. Review of Staff Management and Appraisal Policy and Protocol

The Chairman gave a verbal report regarding the need for the Council to have an updated Staff Management and Appraisal Policy and referred to the 'Performance Management and Appraisal Policy and Protocol' circulated as supporting documentation prior to the meeting. Cllr Miller suggested that it would be useful to have a copy of the Clerk's Contract of Employment to cross-reference against the Policy and that Members needed more time to consider the detail of the Policy/Protocol.

It was **RESOLVED**, with the Clerk's consent, to provide a copy of the Clerk's Contract to Members and to defer the Council's review of this policy until the next Council meeting.

SHPC 427-18 11. Sickness and Absence, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety Policies

The Chairman gave a verbal report confirming that, in conjunction with the Clerk, some of the policies of the Council needed to be reviewed and updated to ensure that the Council is meeting its responsibilities as an employer. The Chairman referred to three policies circulated as supporting documentation prior to the meeting: 'Sickness and Absence Policy', 'Equal Opportunities Policy' and 'Health and Safety Policy and Home Working Risk Assessment'. Members requested more time to review the policies as they had only received them 3 days before the meeting. The Chairman appreciated that reviewing policies was a time-consuming process, but emphasised that the Council needed to have all the employment related policies in place as soon as possible.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer the Council's review of the above policies until the next Parish Council meeting and that Members comments regarding the policies should be sent to the Chairman by 27th February to enable these to be incorporated.

SHPC 428-18 12. Arrangements for new email addresses for Councillors

The Clerk gave a verbal report on the upcoming General Data Protection Regulation that will replace the current Data Protection Act on 25th May 2018. A key component of the new regulations is that it gives people more control over who can use their data, including the right to seek clarity over what information is held on them and how it is processed in addition to the right for an individual to ask an organisation to delete what information it holds on them (known as 'the right to be forgotten'). There is also increased onus on organisations to demonstrate compliance with the new regulation. The Clerk referred to the fact that the Councillors all use their own personal email addresses for Council communication as a potential area in which the Council could fall foul of the new regulation as it would be impossible for the Council to access these emails to process a request under the GDPR once a Councillor has left the Council; this could mean the Council is in breach of the new regulation. The Clerk confirmed that each Councillor could be provided with a Parish Council email address in the format cllrname@southheighton-pc.org.uk which could be set up by the Clerk at no extra cost and accessed from any web-browser, email package or smart phone. Members expressed concern that this would mean that the Council could look at their emails at any time but the Clerk confirmed that each Councillor could change their password and it would only be upon them leaving the Council that the Clerk or Chairman would access the email if the need to process a GDPR request arose. After some discussion, Members considered that the volume of Parish Council related emails that they received to their email addresses was so small that they did not feel the need to have Council email addresses. It was **RESOLVED** that Councillors will continue using their existing email addresses for Council emails and the Clerk will put together an Email and Communication Policy outlining how the Council will demonstrate its compliance with the new regulation to a future meeting of the Council for consideration and adoption.

SHPC 429-18 13. Arrangements for a new contract for the Council's Mobile Phone

The Clerk gave a verbal report confirming that, in consultation with the Chairman, a new mobile phone had been purchased for £9.99 for use as the Council's main contact telephone number (under the Clerk's abilities for purchases under the Council's Financial Regulations)

and the existing Council phone number of 07432 478248 was active again. The mobile phone is on a pay-as-you-go basis and will be topped up at a maximum cost of £10 every other month to be approved by the Council at a Parish Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the purchase and new contract arrangements be ratified.

SHPC 430-18 14. The Hollow Project

The Chairman and Clerk gave a verbal update on the progress of the Hollow Project. The Chairman and Vice Chairman met with Chris Bibb from LDC on site at the Hollow on 25th January 2018. The Clerk also attended this meeting to meet Chris Bibb and get an overview of the project although she had not formally started in the role at this point. In line with Minute SHPC 406-18 a) the Member's concerns as to the proposed use of replacement wooden edging for play area surfaces as opposed to some existing concrete edging was discussed. Under guidance from Chris Bibb, who explained that the wooden edging provided better securing of the safety surface and, being properly treated and installed, should last for approximately 10 years and not suffer from grass cutting damage, the Contractor's proposal for the use of wooden edging was accepted. The location of the play equipment, surfacing and fencing was confirmed as per the tender and overhanging branches were reviewed for safety. In light of the outcome of the on site meeting and in compliance with Minute SHPC 406-18 a) the Clerk has put together a Tender Acceptance document to accept the Tender by Playsafe Playgrounds for the 'Design and Build of The Hollow Playground' which Chris Bibb is currently reviewing. This will be signed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman on behalf of the Council and will then be sent to Playsafe for signing. Once all parties have signed, Playsafe will be able to schedule the work; the Clerk will advise the Council as soon as a start date has been confirmed.

The progress and actions were **NOTED** and ratified.

SHPC 431-18 15. Action List

The Chairman gave a verbal report regarding the Parish Council action list, circulated as supporting documentation prior to the meeting, and confirmed that the format needed to be reviewed by the Chairman and Clerk as some of the actions require updating and combining. It was **RESOLVED** that progress on the Action List be **NOTED**; the completed items be removed from the list; Cllr. Bradshaw prepare an updated list, incorporating new agreed actions, for the next Parish Council meeting and that the format of the Action List be revised by Cllr. Bradshaw and the Clerk and presented to the Council for consideration at the April Parish Council Meeting.

SHPC 432-18 16. Planning and Tree application consultations

The Council had not been consulted on any applications.

SHPC 433-18 17. Parish Clerk's Announcements

The Clerk had no announcements to note.

SHPC 434-18 18. Rolling Programme and Agenda Items

The Chairman referred to the rolling programme of Parish Council Agenda items circulated as supporting documentation prior to the meeting. Members noted that Parish Council Meetings were only scheduled up until May 2018; the Chairman will liaise with the Clerk to schedule meetings for the coming year to be formally agreed at the Annual Meeting in May.

SHPC 435-18 19. Councillors' Update

Cllr Turner queried whether he was definitely booked on the Councillor Briefing and Awareness training on 12th June. The Clerk confirmed that the Temporary Clerk had requested this but the Clerk would check with SSALC and confirm.

Cllr Julian stated that he had reported a number of untaxed or abandoned vehicles identified next to the Hollow. Councillors will continue to report any abandoned vehicles so that the situation can be monitored by SHPC and LDC.

There were no further updates from Councillors that had not already been covered by items on the Agenda.

SHPC 436-18 20. Date and location of next Council Meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for 7pm on 13th March 2018 in South Heighton Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 9pm

Signed:

Date:

Print Name: Cllr.

of South Heighton Parish Council