

STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

01903 746547
Office@storrington-pc.gov.uk
Clerk: Lauren Bailey Hansing

Annual Meeting of the Council

MINUTES

Held in The Chanctonbury Room, The Parish Hall, Thakeham Road, Storrington
Wednesday 29th May 2024
18:30

Present: Cllr Mark Cramer (Chair), Cllr Theresa Bennett, Cllr John Loney, Cllr Cassie Miller, Cllr Andy Castle, Cllr Charlotte Burnell, Cllr Ian Ward, Cllr Liz Greengrass, Cllr Melissa Moremon, Cllr Bill Aitkenhead

Also Present: Ms Lauren Bailey Hansing, Clerk
Two Members of the Public

1. Election of Chair for the Ensuing Year and to Sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Castle proposed that Cllr Cramer be re-elected as Chair and Cllr Loney seconded. All Councillors present voted in favour and Cllr Cramer was confirmed as the ongoing Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2. Election of Vice-Chair for the Ensuing Year and to Sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Miller proposed that Cllr Castle be elected as Vice-Chair and Cllr Aitkenhead seconded. All Councillors present voted in favour and Cllr Castle was confirmed as Vice-Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Hurley and Cllr Sadler due to prior commitments. These were duly **Noted** and **Approved**.

4. To Receive Declarations of Interest from Members

Cllr Castle noted that as Treasurer to Storrington in Bloom, he had a degree of Interest in Agenda item 11 (b).

5. To Receive and Consider Applications for the Office of Parish Councillor

The Council received an application from John Thompson. John introduced himself and described the qualities and skills which he believed he could offer the Council. The applicant was asked to leave the room whilst the Council considered the applications.

Cllr Burnell formally proposed that John Thompson's application be accepted and Cllr Aitkenhead seconded. Nine Councillors voted in favour and one Councillor abstained. John Thompson was therefor approved and was invited back into the meeting and took his place at the table as a Councillor. Cllr Cramer welcomed Cllr Thompson to the Council.

6. **To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th March 2024**
The minutes were duly **Approved** as being a correct record of the proceedings of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.
7. **Public Participation**
No Members of the Public made any comment on items on the agenda.
8. **County Council Matters**
Cllr Marshall was unable to attend the meeting due to prior commitments and sent his apologies.
9. **District Council Matters**
Cllrs Grech, Fisher and Beard were unable to attend the meeting due to prior commitments and sent their apologies.
10. **To Adopt Outstanding Committee Meeting Minutes**
All of the following minutes were **Adopted** by the Full Council:
 - a) Planning & Development Committee Meeting held on 10th April 2024, and 13th March 2024
 - b) Recreation & Property Committee Meetings held on 3rd April 2024, 6th March 2024, and 7th February 2024
 - c) Infrastructure, Communications & Environment Committee Meetings held on 6th March 2024, and 7th February 2024
 - d) Finance and Budget Committee Meeting held on January 17th 2024 and the Extraordinary Finance and Budget Committee Meeting held on January 24th 2024
11. **To Consider Grant Requests**
 - a) Storrington and District Museum
Noting the increased costs that Storrington and District Museum had been facing, the Council Agreed that a grant of £1250 be awarded. Cllr Cramer formerly proposed, Cllr Bennett seconded, and the Council unanimously agreed in favour. The requested further information from the Museum to see how the Council could potentially assist further.
 - b) Storrington Greenfingers
While the Council applauded the work that Greenfingers conducts in Parish and the positive impact they have on the High Street. Cllr Cramer proposed that the Council invited a representative from Greenfingers to talk further about how the Council could assist and how they could better understand the organisation's needs and future plans. Cllr Bennett seconded. All Councillors voted in favour.

Comments were made in general about raising the amount put aside for grant donations in a future budget.
12. **To Consider for Approval Adopting a Cycle to Work Scheme for Council Staff Employees**
Councillors showed interest in the proposal but ultimately felt that they required further information before making a decision. Questions of insurance were put forward. Some

Councillors approved any moves which may reduce traffic, while comments were also made that it was too dangerous to ride a bicycle through Storrington. Councillors requested more information on the payback scale. It was suggested to conduct a month survey on how many trips could have been done by bicycle. The topic was ultimately deferred to a later meeting.

13. To Ask all Committee and Working Groups to Consider Discuss Cycle Routes for Subsequent Full Committee Consideration

Cllr Cramer requested that all committees discuss within themselves how the Council could implement increasing safer school routes, footpaths and cycle paths which would not only enhance links between Storrington and Sullington, but also strengthen links to established local trails and neighbouring parishes.

14. Annual Review of the Following Documents:

a) Social Media and Press Policy

Cllr Loney proposed deferring this policy to the Infrastructure, Communications and Environment (ICE) Committee. Cllr Cramer seconded. All Councillors voted in favour.

b) Complaints Policy

Ten Councillors voted in favour of the policy, one Councillor abstained. The current Complaints Policy was therefore **Approved** and retained.

c) Parish Council's Pensions Discretions Policy

d) Eight Councillors voted in favour of the policy, three Councillors abstained. The current Pensions Discretions Policy was therefore **Approved** and retained.

e) Process for Public Participation in Meetings

Noting the need for the Standing Orders to include regulations regarding recording public meetings, the current Process for Public Participation in Meetings was **Approved** and retained.

Cllr Castle noted that this did not constitute all policies which should be reviewed at the Annual Parish Council meeting. The Clerk responded that the Standing Orders had been reviewed in September but would be reviewed at the next meeting, and that other policies would be considered over time so that Councillors had the opportunity to fully acquaint themselves with each document.

15. To Consider for Approval a Revision of the Co-option Policy

The Council reviewed the proposed revisions to the Co-option Policy. Cllr Cramer proposed that it be adopted, Cllr Aitkenhead seconded. Seven Councillors voted in favour and four Councillors abstained. The Motion to change the Co-option policy was therefore carried and **Approved**.

16. To Delegate Review of Financial Regulations to the Finance & Budget Committee, which will then Report Back to Full Council for Approval

All Councillors agreed to delegate a full review of the Financial Regulations to the Finance & Budget Committee.

17. To Approve the Deferral of the Annual Review of Financial and Non-Financial Risk Assessments to the Full Council Meeting on Wednesday 3rd July 2024

Cllr Loney proposed deferring the review of the Financial and Non-Financial Risk Assessments to the Finance & Budget Committee. Cllr Cramer seconded. All Councillors voted in favour.

18. Review of the Terms of Reference of Committees

Due to concerns regarding how the ICE and Recreation & Property overlap it was **Agreed** to defer this item to a combined ICE and Recreation & Property Committee meeting to consider how responsibilities should be divided.

It was questioned whether Environment should be separated from ICE and stand as its own committee. Other suggestions included adding aspects of environment to every Committee's agenda, and if all terms of reference (TOR) should be changed to include this, or whether to create a separate Environment Working Group.

It was **Agreed** to defer the ICE and Recreation & Property TOR to those Committees' next meeting and review the policy in full at the next Full Council meeting.

19. To Approve the Proposed Calendar of Meetings for the Upcoming Year

It was noted that it may be beneficial to reduce the number of Committee meetings. Cllr Thompson proposed to adopt the Calendar, Cllr Cramer seconded, and all Councillors **Agreed** to provisionally adopt the Calendar subject to any cancellations of upcoming meetings.

20. Receipt of Nominations to Existing Committees and Groups:

a) Planning & Development Committee

Cllr Greengrass stood down from the Planning Committee and Cllr Thompson joined Cllrs Cramer, Bennett, Loney, Ward, Moremon and Aitkenhead.

b) Recreation & Property Committee

Cllr Sadler stood down. Remaining are Cllrs Miller, Hurley, Cramer, Loney, Ward and Aitkenhead.

c) Infrastructure, Communications & Environment Committee

Cllr Cramer and Cllr Burnell stood down from the ICE Committee and Cllr Thompson joined Cllrs Sadler, Hurley, Loney and Castle.

d) Finance & Budget Committee

Cllr Thompson joined Cllrs Cramer, Bennett, Saddler, Loney and Castle.

e) Traffic & Transport Committee

Cllr Miller stood down from the Traffic & Transport Committee. Remaining are Cllrs Loney, Burnell, Aitkenhead and Bennett.

f) Traffic & Transport Working Group

The TTWG remains as Cllr Loney and Cllr Bennet.

g) Nature Recovery Working Group

Cllr Ward joined the NRWG.

h) Neighbourhood Wardens Steering Group

Cllrs Miller, Castle and Loney would represent the Parish Council on this group with two of the three Councillors being nominated to attend the meetings.

- i) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Cllr Greengrass stood down from the NPSG and Cllr Thompson joined Cllr Aitkenhead and Cllr Loney.
- j) Air Quality Steering Group
It was confirmed that the AQSG consisted of Cllrs Cramer, Loney and Aitkenhead.
- k) HDC Climate Action Group - Meetings Representative
Cllr Greengrass would be offered first refusal at these meetings. The Clerk already attended.
- l) West Sussex Association of Local Councils – Meetings Representative
Cllr Castle to attend these meetings if available.
- m) Horsham Association of Local Councils – Meetings Representative
Cllr Aitkenhead to attend these meetings if available.

21. Budget 2023-2024 Final Position

This was noted by Councillors.

22. To Review the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control and to Receive and Review the Internal Auditor's Report for the Financial Year 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Councillors noted the Internal Audit report that had been provided to them.

23. To Appoint the Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

The Council **Agreed** to continue using Mulberry as their Internal Auditors.

24. To Complete the Annual Governance Statement for the Financial Year Ended 31st March 2024 and to Authorise the Chair to Sign this Document

Councillors had been provided with a copy of the Annual Governance Statement and the effectiveness of the system of internal control had been reviewed and judged to be satisfactory. It was therefore **Agreed** to **Approve** the Annual Governance Statement and **Authorise** the Chair to sign Section 1 of the Annual Return.

25. To Consider for Approval the Annual Return and Accounting Statements for the Year Ended 31st March 2023 and if Approved, to Authorise the Chair to Sign these

Councillors **Agreed** to **Approve** the Accounting Statements and **Authorise** the Chair to sign Section 2 of the Annual Return.

26. Ratify the Decision regarding Bellacre (Land at Ryecroft) taken by the Council during Close Session which was erroneously omitted from the February 2024 Full Council Minutes

The decision to extend the Option Agreement made at the February Full Council meeting was duly **Ratified** and **Noted**. The Clerk apologised for mistakenly omitting the Closed Session on the March minutes (although it had been present as an Agenda item).

27. Items Available for Councillors to Read

The Clerk asked all Councillors to read the Standing Orders and outstanding policies and regulations for upcoming review.

28. Clerk's Correspondence

The Clerk had no correspondence to report.

29. Chairman's Announcements and Urgent Matters

The Chair had no announcements or urgent matters.

30. To Confirm Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Wednesday 3rd July.

31. Any Other Business

One Member of the Public made comments regarding Agenda item 26 being public information. The Clerk confirmed that it was.

Cllr Loney elected to consider a display for D-Day on Thursday 6th June.

32. Adjournment

There being no further matters to discuss, the meeting closed at 21:00.

Signed:

Date: