



Bishopstoke Parish Council

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Email: clerk@bishopstokepc.org; Call: 07368 487464;
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**Members of the Parish Council are summoned to attend a meeting on
Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 7.30pm at Bishopstoke Methodist Church, Sedgwick Road.**

AGENDA

PUBLIC SESSION – Residents are invited to give their views and question the parish council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the chair. Members of the public may not take part in the meeting itself.

Presentation from Helen Brown regarding the tree and bee corridors

1. Apologies for absence
2. To adopt and sign Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 September 2023
3. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
4. Reports from Committees, Working Groups, Officers and Councillors
5. To approve and adopt the audited annual return for the year to 31 March 2023
6. To approve delegating authority to the Assets Committee to determine which open spaces and other areas could be included in the Tree and Bee programme
7. To approve the continued membership of and contributions to external bodies
8. To decide arrangements for travel tokens for 2024-25
9. To redesignate the Carnival budget heading as the Events budget
10. To consider staffing levels and decide upon a recommendation from the People Committee
11. To consider content for the next press release
12. To agree the date, time and place for the next meetings

D L Wheal
Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council
8th November 2023

Members: Cllrs Hillier-Wheal (Chair), Harris (Vice Chair), Candy, Daly, Dean A, Dean R, Francis, Kirby, Lyon, McKeone C, McKeone D, Moore, Thornton, Tidridge and Winstanley
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**Minutes of a Meeting of the Bishopstoke Parish Council
held at Bishopstoke Methodist Church
commencing at 7.30pm on 12 September 2023**

Present: Councillor Louise Hillier-Wheal (Chair)
Councillor Geoff Harris (Vice Chair)
Councillor Ralph Candy
Councillor Andrew Daly
Councillor Anne Dean
Councillor Ray Dean
Councillor Dave Francis
Councillor Mark Kirby
Councillor Chris McKeone
Councillor Dermot McKeone
Councillor Gin Tidridge
Councillor Anne Winstanley

In Attendance: Mr David Wheal (Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)

Public Session 0 members of the public were present.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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32 Apologies for Absence

32.1 Apologies were noted from Cllrs Lyon, Moore and Thornton

33 To adopt and sign Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 July 2023

33.1 The minutes of the above meeting had been included in the document pack for this meeting.

33.2 Proposed Cllr Daly, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RESOLVED** with one abstention that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 July 2023 be adopted as a true record.

Action: Clerk & Chair – to sign and publish the minutes and document pack

33.3 Cllr Daly voiced his concern over the bus shelter in Spring Lane. The Clerk noted that it has recently been cleaned but had almost immediately been vandalised again. Cllr Daly also asked whether the streets and gutters could be swept before Carnival. Cllr Tidridge offered to ask the Borough Council whether this could be done.

Action: Cllr Tidridge – to contact the relevant department at the Borough Council to see whether a pre-Carnival street sweep could be completed,

34 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

34.1 There were no such declarations or requests.

35 Reports from Committees, Working Groups, Officers and Councillors

35.1 The resolutions from Council Committees were noted. There were no recommendations to vote upon.

35.2 Cllr Tidridge asked for an update on the basket swing at Blackberry Drive. The Clerk informed the Council that he had contacted a play area company and been told that basket swings with ropes, like the one in Blackberry Drive, are taut when first supplied but can stretch over time. Other forms of swing are available with chain, or plastic, that already have the “dip” that people can sit in. The Clerk also noted that if the Council do decide to purchase a new swing for Blackberry Drive, then the existing one could be installed at Otter Close. Cllr Tidridge asked the Clerk to provide this information to the resident who has posed the initial question.

Action: Clerk – to email the resident with an update on the basket swing at Blackberry Drive

35.3 Cllrs also noted that the hedge planted at Stoke Common / Church Road play area is mostly dead, that the bin in the car park at Blackberry Drive is broken and that dogs are regularly let off the leash in the Cemetery. The Clerk will follow up on the hedge with Green Smile, add the bin to the replacement list and arrange a sign for the Cemetery

Action: Clerk – arrange for replanting of hedge at Church Road play area, the replacement of the bin at Blackberry Drive car park and a new dog sign for the Cemetery.

35.4 Cllrs Winstanley and Tidridge had submitted written reports which are attached to these minutes. Cllr Daly was seeking help for a disabled resident with their housing needs. Cllr Winstanley advised that the resident needed to be assessed as to their needs first, and then help – including grants for home alterations – could be provided by the Borough Council. Cllr Tidridge also noted that the Bishopstoke Neighbourhood Plan includes the need for more inclusive housing. Cllr Francis noted the recent meeting between Parish and Local Area officers and asked whether these could be held regularly with updates being provided to the Council. The Clerk noted that this was the plan.

36 To invite ideas for projects to add to the Community Investment Programme list

36.1 The supporting papers had included the most recent copy available of the Community Investment Programme list. The Clerk noted that the Finance Committee had recently discussed providing Community Planters and Book Swap locations. It was also thought that the paths across and around Glebe Meadow could be added to the list. The Clerk requested Cllrs think about what they might like to add to or remove from the list and to provide any suggestions by Tuesday 3rd October in order that they can be discussed at the October Finance Committee meeting. Cllr Ray Dean advised that smaller items are more likely to be achievable than large projects, due to the nature of the funding being requested. Cllr Kirby suggested low tech ideas rather than high tech.

Action: Councillors – to consider ideas for projects to receive developer funding and submit them by Tuesday 3rd October

37 To discuss, amend and adopt the Policy on Ethics and Ethical Procurement

37.1 The draft policy had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting.

37.2 Cllrs agreed the policy was an excellent start but wished to see additional clauses covering such things as applying minimum wage requirements for anything ordered from overseas, international trade difficulties, bonded labour and paper sourcing. It was also suggested that clause 1.5 have the following added at the end: “In addition, all other procedures contained within the Financial Regulations will be followed.”. Cllrs felt able to adopt the policy but requested an early review date for additions.

Initial: _____ Date: _____

37.3 Proposed Cllr R Dean, Seconded Cllr Tidridge, **RESOLVED** with two abstentions to adopt the policy, amended to include Financial Regulations and to review the policy in 6 months.

Action: Clerk – to update and publish the Policy on Ethics and Ethical Procurement, to add a review of the Policy to the March Council meeting and to remind Cllrs in advance of that meeting to suggest any amendments they might wish.

38 To decide whether to request a .gov domain name for the Council website

38.1 The Clerk noted that this item had been included on the item following a push by government persuade more Councils to adopt the .gov.uk domain, and previous Cllr interest in the subject. Additionally the Clerk noted that this decision would be likely to leave the Council needing to redesign the website, and with far less flexibility to do so. It would also likely lead to increased costs.

38.2 No Cllr wished to proposed requesting a .gov domain name and so the Council's online presence will remain at bishopstokepc.org.

39 To consider the Council's involvement in D-Day 80

39.1 Cllrs generally supported the Council's involvement in D-Day 80 but had concerns over the use of bonfires.

39.2 Proposed Cllr Kirby, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Clerk obtain more information prior to the Council making a decision.

Action: Clerk – to obtain more information about D-Day 80 and bring it forward for discussion at a future meeting.

40 To consider content for the next press release

40.1 The Council agreed that the next press release would include Carnival, nominations for Bishopstoke Champion 2024 being open, the availability of litter picking equipment, the grant provided to ARK, and an update on the Cemetery gates and the relocation of the War Memorial.

Action: Clerk – to draft the press release and circulate it to the Communications Group for approval

41 To agree the date, time and place for the next meetings

41.1 The next meeting will take place on Tuesday November 14th 2023. It will take place at 7:30pm at the Bishopstoke Methodist Church, following the Parish Assembly. The Clerk requested any agenda items and supporting papers be with him by November 7th.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8:29pm.

Chair's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Clerk's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of

Bishopstoke Parish Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2022/23

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None

3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

External Auditor Name

BDO LLP - Southampton OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature



SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

24 September 2023 YY

Full Council – November 14th 2023

Item 6 – Tree and Bee corridor

The Assets Committee has the power to make decisions on:

6.1.7 All matters pertaining to the management of existing open spaces and trees owned by, run by, or the responsibility of the Parish Council. This excludes taking over or creating any new open spaces.

However, as the decisions regarding the tree and bee corridor spaces are not just about managing the space but allowing an external body to make decisions about planting there, I would request the Council to formally delegate the authority over this matter to the Assets Committee.

Recommendation: That the Council delegate authority to the Assets Committee to make decisions on which areas of Parish held land can be included in the Tree and Bee project.

Full Council

Membership of external bodies

Current list

The Council is currently a member of and / or pays subscription fees to the following external bodies:

NALC (National Association of Local Councils)

HALC (Hampshire Association of Local Councils)

SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks)

Hampshire Playing Fields Association

ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management)

National Allotment Society

ICO Data Protection Registration

It is recommended that the Council approves the continued membership of all bodies on the list.

Full Council – November 14th 2023

Item 8 – Travel Tokens

The scheme continues to be popular and helps between 30 and 40 people every year who have difficulty using the local bus service. For the past two years the number of tokens given out has been 120 per person, with a 24 token bonus if the recipient cannot travel without a companion.

Since the Parish Council began the Travel Token scheme in 2011 (with 12 applicants receiving 48 tokens each), the number of allocated tokens has increased by 12 every two years (with one exception).

Generally it is the case that not all tokens handed out in a year are used and returned. It is therefore possible to budget for a lower number of tokens to be refunded than are actually handed out.

It is likely that further tokens may need to be purchased during the year. The cost of purchasing another 4,000 tokens is likely to be around £150.

I recommend that this year the budget for Travel Tokens be set at £2,800 for token refunds with an additional £200 to purchase new tokens.

Full Council – November 14th 2023

Item 9 – Events

Recently the Council has either considered or been asked to consider a number of different events outside of the Carnival umbrella. One obstacle standing in the way of these extra events is the lack of a budget heading and allocated funds. Redesignating the Carnival budget heading as Events would mean that these events could proceed more swiftly and with less fuss.

Another obstacle is that each event requires separate approval from the Council. This could be eased by allowing the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk to decide, if the timing requires it, whether an event should be added to the calendar without having to gain approval from Full Council. This would be subject to the event planner providing details of expected costs as well as the required insurances and risk assessments. An event would not be permitted to be added in this fashion if it would lead to an expected overspend of the Events budget.

Recommendation: That the Council redesignate the Carnival budget heading to be Events and that, if circumstances warrant it, a decision on allowing an event to be added to the calendar could be taken by the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk.