



SPEEN PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING AND FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ONLINE ON THURSDAY 6TH MAY 2021 AT 7PM

Present	Parish Councillors	Cllr Dudman (Chair), Cllr Amirtharaj (Vice-Chair), Cllr Phillips, Cllr Black, Cllr Newell-Hart Cllr Clifford, Cllr Butter
	In Attendance	Cllr Doherty (District Ward Councillor)
	Members of the Public	None Present
	Clerk & RFO	Jean Lindsay

Meeting started at 7.04pm

Resolution	Item	Action
Resolved	<p style="text-align: center;">ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING</p> <p>1. Election of Chair</p> <p>Proposal: To elect the Chair and resolve the Chair sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at a later date.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman advised he would be willing to stand as Chair for the next year if there were no other nominations. There being no further nominations Cllr Dudman was nominated as Chair.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart thanked Cllr Dudman for the support he had given him during a difficult period.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Newell-Hart Seconder: Cllr Phillips All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Dudman was duly elected Chair for 2021/22.</p>	
Resolved	<p>2. Election of Vice Chair</p> <p>Proposal: To elect the Vice Chair and resolve the Vice Chair sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at a later date.</p> <p>The Clerk advised although Cllr Amirtharaj had not yet joined the meeting he had formally advised her that he would be willing to stand as Vice Chair for the next year if there were no other nominations. There being no further nominations Cllr Amirtharaj nominated as Vice Chair.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Black All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj was duly elected as Vice Chair for 2021/22</p>	
	<p>3. Apologies: Cllr Booth, Cllr Gourley and Cllr Masters (WBC)</p>	
	<p>4. Declaration of Interests: None declared</p>	
	<p>5. Chair Opening Remarks</p> <p>Cllr Dudman advised this was theoretically the Council's last remote meeting and looked forward to meeting everyone again face to face in the near future.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman thanked all Councillors for electing him as Chair for another year.</p>	
	<p>6. Open Session: No members of the public present</p>	
	<p>7. Minutes – to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 22-</p>	



Resolved	<p>03-21 (draft)</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p> <p>8. Finance Committee</p> <p>8.1 Proposal: To receive nominations and appoint Councillors to Finance Committee for 2021/22</p> <p>Cllr Dudman asked if current members of the Finance Committee were willing to stand for the next year and if there were any new nominations.</p> <p>The Clerk advised Cllr Gourley had advised he wished to remain on the Finance Committee.</p> <p>There being no new nominations all current members were nominated as members of the Finance Committee.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Phillips All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Dudman, Cllr Black, Cllr Clifford, Cllr Newell-Hart and Cllr Gourley were duly appointed as members of the Finance Committee for 2021/22</p>	
Resolved	<p>8.2 Proposal: To delegate powers to Finance Committee for 2021/22 in accordance with Finance Committee Terms of Reference approved by Full Council on 09-11-20</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Black All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p>9. Planning & Highways Committee</p> <p>9.1 Proposal: To receive nominations and appoint Councillors to Planning & Highways Committee for 2021/22</p> <p>Cllr Dudman asked if current members of the Planning & Highways Committee were willing to stand for the next year and if there were any new nominations.</p> <p>The Clerk advised Cllr Booth and Cllr Gourley had advised they wished to remain on the Planning & Highways Committee.</p> <p>There being no new nominations all current members were nominated as members of the Planning & Highways Committee.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p> <p>Cllr Dudman, Cllr Newell-Hart, Cllr Butter, Cllr Booth and Cllr Gourley were duly appointed as members of the Planning & Highways Committee for 2021/22</p>	
Resolved	<p>9.2 Proposal: To delegate powers to Planning & Highways Committee for 2021/22 in accordance with Planning & Highways Committee Terms of Reference approved by Full Council on 04-07-20</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Phillips All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p>10. Year End Accounts 2020/21</p> <p>Proposal: To review and agree Year End Accounts 2020/21</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Black</p>	



Resolved	<p>All in Favour</p> <p>11. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21</p> <p>11.1 Proposal: To approve Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21 (detailed auditor's report and page 3)</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Black All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p>11.2 Proposal: To approve Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 (page 4)</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p>11.3 Proposal: To approve Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 (page 5)</p> <p>Cllr Dudman asked why there was a difference in income reported in the year end accounts and the figure stated in the AGAR.</p> <p>The Clerk advised the difference was £15398 which related to monies raised by the Stockcross footpath fund raising team which had been transferred into SPC's bank account as SPC was responsible for payment of the contractors invoice but this was not income. It had been necessary to report this in the year end accounts in order for the bank reconciliation to be correct but not for the purposes of the AGAR.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p>11.4 Proposal: To approve Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 be submitted to External Auditor and published on SPC website in accordance with statutory deadline of 1st July 2021</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Seconder: Cllr Clifford All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p>12. Ordinary Meeting Dates 2021/22 and Annual Meeting 2022/23</p> <p>To agree provisional Ordinary Council meeting dates for 2021/22 and to further agree these dates may require review dependent upon Government easing of COVID-19 restrictions and NALC/SLCC recommendations.</p> <p>To set the date of the Annual Council Meeting for 2022/23 term as Monday 16th May 2022.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman advised there was a possibility that the dates agreed might change but it was important to get dates in diaries.</p> <p>Cllr Phillips and Cllr Clifford advised they would be unable to attend the August meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty advised the Council that most parish councils did not have a meeting in August due to summer recess.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman suggested the August date remain as the majority of Councillors had indicated they would be able to attend.</p> <p>All Councillors unanimously agreed the proposed dates.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj joined the meeting</p>	



Resolved	<p style="text-align: center;">FULL COUNCIL MEETING</p> <p>13. Financial Report Clerk as RFO</p> <p>13.1 Balance in bank as at 30-04-21 reported as £51,074</p> <p>13.2 To retrospectively note payments for April 2021</p> <p>All Councillors noted payments made.</p> <p>13.3 Proposal: To accept Finance Reports to 30-04-21</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Black Seconder: Cllr Newell-Hart All in Favour</p> <p>14. District Ward Report (previously circulated)</p> <p>Cllr Doherty apologised for the slight delay in sending out the report but this had been to enable the inclusion of some changes announced at the WBC Annual meeting on 4th May regarding portfolio holders and Committees and not only recognise the work carried out to date in the first two years of the administration but also look at the Council's strategy refresh and what still needed to be done.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty added this was a 4 year plan and the refresh was to recognise it was prudent to look halfway through to ensure the values and direction were aligned with what was needed in West Berkshire and even more importantly the impact on residents due to the pandemic.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty advised there no change in direction in respect of travel but it was recognised that some of the recovery renewal plan needed to be incorporated into the overall strategy and there were additional actions in the next 2 years focussed around the recovery from COVID-19 and the help required for residents. The three key areas being the health and wellbeing of residents, education in particular understanding the long term impact on children and young people with the disruption they have had to their education over the past year and the local economy and how to ensure that bounces back.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty advised she had received numerous questions around the changes regarding the inability for councils to hold remote meetings but also that it was now not even possible to hold hybrid meetings from 7th May. Cllr Doherty added she was disappointed with this decision and the Council was lobbying Central Government together with providing evidence via the Government's 'call for evidence' as to why Local Authorities and Parish Councils should be enabled to take virtual decision making going forward.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart commented that University College Newbury potentially looked like a great breakthrough for communities and asked to what extent WBC was working with the community and businesses to open this up not only for young people but for others who were unable to find the type of employment they were looking for.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty advised a consultation around lifelong learning had opened on 5th May to better understand what residents in West Berkshire would like to have as regards lifelong learning. In conjunction with that WBC was also working with Newbury College to understand what courses were most needed and with the Local Enterprise Partnership to identify the skills gap so that courses were not just focussed on 16 – 21 year olds.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart advised there appeared to be that many people were re-looking at their career path but some particularly in middle age could potentially be left behind and this should also be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty gave assurances this was being done and commented it has been recognised throughout the pandemic how resilient the economy was in West Berkshire because of the employment opportunities in the area being fortunate enough to have a good number of the industries that have flourished over the past two years. Cllr Doherty added it was however vital as part of the recovery to attract</p>	
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inward investment and business to start, grow and prosper in the area which was key in the new Council strategy refresh.

Cllr Dudman asked what the uptake had been to date regarding the community collect LFD test kits mobile service.

Cllr Doherty advised it was the biggest take up they had seen with the number of kits being distributed increasing significantly in the first few weeks and feedback was that the service was welcomed by communities. Cllr Doherty added this was being constantly monitored and would be adjusted as necessary based on demand.

15. Development

15.1 Parish Improvement Plan – update from WP

Cllr Black advised the majority of 2020/21 improvements had been completed and the WP had met to discuss the plan going forward.

Cllr Black advised the WP had discussed the possibility of installing a defibrillator in the telephone box in Stockcross but had agreed not to go ahead. The WP felt due to the significant costs involved and as there was already a defibrillator at Sutton Hall that an alternative location for a defibrillator should be looked in to.

Cllr Clifford advised the WP were scheduling a meeting with an organisation who provided advice to parish councils regarding defibrillators.

15.2 War Memorial Project

Proposal: To agree to the allocation of funds from Unallocated Reserves to Earmarked Reserves for the War Memorial Project (Full Council to be advised of exact amount for final approval once actual costs are available)

Cllr Black asked the Clerk for clarification of the proposal.

The Clerk advised Full Council needed to formally approve funding for the project prior to progressing any further. The Clerk added normally this would be done once quotations had been received however as the deadline for the Members' Bid application was mid-June and the Council was not scheduled to meet again until July agreement to fund the project was required and once the actual costs were known these could be circulated via email for final approval.

Cllr Newell-Hart felt the proposal was incorrectly worded as actual costs implied final costs once the project was completed and could therefore not be voted on.

The Clerk advised the term actual referred to the fixed price quoted cost of the project which would be known once quotations were received.

Cllr Dudman suggested the wording could be changed from actual costs to fixed price costs but added he was concerned at the lack of figures and felt a maximum should be added to the proposal but acknowledged this proposal was being considered now in order to meet the Members' Bid deadline.

Cllr Dudman asked what the position was if a Members' Bid grant was awarded but the project did not go ahead.

Cllr Doherty advised there were no issues as it was recognised that some projects did not come to fruition for whatever reason and applications were viewed as a mark of intent.

Proposer: Cllr Dudman
Secunder: Cllr Newell-Hart
All in Favour

Amended Proposal: To agree to the allocation of a maximum of £2500 from Unallocated Reserves to Earmarked Reserves for the War Memorial Project in order to enable the submission of a Members' Bid application (Full Council to be advised of exact amount of the fixed price quotation for final approval once these costs are obtained)

Resolved



Resolved	<p>Proposal: To approve submission of Members' Bid application for 50% of total costs for War Memorial Project. Total bid application not to exceed £2500</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Secunder: Cllr Black All in Favour</p> <p>15.3 Stockcross Telephone Box</p> <p>Proposal: To approve quotation in the sum of £2800 for refurbishment of Stockcross Telephone Box including supply and installation of light and shelving</p> <p>Cllr Black advised the WP had agreed in addition to the refurbishment of the telephone box shelving for a book swap be installed together with some form of lighting. Cllr Black added a quote for these works had just been received so the WP had not had the opportunity to discuss it.</p> <p>The Clerk advised the quote was broken down into three parts being the internal and external refurbishment works (£1890), the shelving (£485) and a light (£425).</p> <p>Cllr Butter asked if it was worth investigating the use of a solar panel to run the light.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman felt this was a good idea but queried if there would be sufficient sunlight as the telephone box sits on the north side of the post office and as a new quote would be required this could delay in the project even further.</p> <p>The Clerk advised the proposal could be amended if the Council wished to progress just with the refurbishment works as these were weather dependant whilst further quotes were obtained for the lighting.</p> <p>Cllr Black advised he would like the shelving to go ahead with the refurbishment.</p> <p>Cllr Clifford asked if the contractor could be asked if there was any impact if the light was not installed at the same time as the other works.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman suggested the proposal be amended to approve the refurbishment works and shelving in the sum of £2375 subject to there being no impact regarding the installation of a light at a later date.</p> <p>Cllr Amirtharaj asked if the contractor advised there would be an impact such as increased costs that would potentially mean the refurbishment works were subsequently put on hold resulting in further delays with the project.</p> <p>Cllr Newell-Hart suggested in order not to delay the project the quotation in the total sum of £2800 be voted on but it be subject to a review of solar lighting being carried out the cost of which must not exceed £425 the current quoted cost for the light.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Secunder: Cllr Butter All in Favour</p>	
Resolved	<p>Amended Proposal: To approve the quotation in the sum of £2800 for the refurbishment of Stockcross Telephone Box including supply and installation of light and shelving subject to a review and costing of solar lighting as an alternative. Solar lighting to be installed only if the cost does not exceed £425 being the current quoted cost for a light.</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Secunder: Cllr Amirtharaj All in Favour</p> <p>15.4 Stockcross to A4 Footpath Project</p> <p>Cllr Phillips advised he had received an update from Cllr Doherty informing him the Highways team had looked at the proposed project and had stated the cost would be approximately £230,000 excluding any costs associated with diverting underground cables. Cllr Phillips added the Highways team had advised the project</p>	



	<p>and the Proper Officer to witness their signatures</p> <p>Proposer: Cllr Dudman Secunder: Cllr Phillips All in Favour</p> <p>All members of the Council unanimously approved the proposal and Cllr Dudman and Cllr Phillips were appointed as signatories of the lease.</p> <p>Clerk to arrange to meet with Cllr Dudman and Cllr Phillips to sign the lease and as Proper Office of the Council witness their signatures.</p> <p>17. Correspondence: To receive & consider correspondence (all relevant correspondence is circulated electronically on receipt and where possible dealt with by the Clerk) – None to report</p> <p>18. Matters for consideration and information arising after the preparation of this Agenda which the Chair agrees to take as urgent (all Councillors) None raised</p> <p>The Clerk advised a request for input from SPC to a questionnaire regarding WBC Welcome Back Fund had been received and asked if the Council wished to respond.</p> <p>Cllr Doherty advised the fund was focussing on the return to the high street and SMEs.</p> <p>Cllr Dudman offered to review the questionnaire and advise Councillors if a response from SPC was appropriate.</p> <p>Cllr Phillips gave a vote of thanks to Cllr Dudman for his excellent work over the past year.</p> <p>19. Date of Meeting – Monday 12th July 2021 venue to be confirmed</p> <p>20. Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>No vote required as no PART II items</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.12pm</p>	<p>Clerk/ Cllr Dudman / Cllr Phillips</p> <p>Cllr Dudman</p>
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<p>Signed:</p>	<p>Name (print):</p> <p>Position:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
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Abbreviations Used:

- SPC = Speen Parish Council
- WBC = West Berkshire Council
- WP = Working Party
- PROW = Public Rights of Way

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