

## **CHANDLER'S FORD PARISH COUNCIL – COUNCIL MEETING**

**13 SEPTEMBER 2012**

**Fryern Hill Pavilion, Greenways, Chandler's Ford**

**(7.00 pm – 9.12 pm)**

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Atkinson (Chairman); Councillors Boyes, Broadhurst, Bull, Davidovitz, Ms Gault, Ms Grajewski, Hodgson, Luffman, Olson and Streeter

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bicknell, Cole, Hosegood, Hughes, Oldham-Arnett, Pragnell and Roberts

In attendance: Stephen Mursell Parish Clerk

There were two members of the public present.

### **301. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Gault made a declaration of interest in respect of agenda item 7 should any discussion take place on photocopier leasing

Cllrs Olson and Atkinson also made a declaration of interest in respect of agenda item 7. They both stated that they would leave the room when the appointment of solicitors was discussed and not take part in any discussion or vote.

Cllr Grajewski made a declaration in respect of agenda item 7 in respect of the parish Newsletter should any discussion take place on appointment of an individual to produce a newsletter.

### **302. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members of the public present at the meeting were advised that they could address the Council.

### **303. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman advised members and the public present that she wished to make a statement. The Chairman stated that since the last meeting an article had been printed in a political circular distributed in the parish. The article stated that the Parish Council had been criticised by the Auditor for holding excessive reserves and the article also accused the Parish Council of mismanagement of Parishioner's money.

The Chairman stated that this was not her understanding of the Auditor's report and therefore the Chairman asked the Auditor for her comments on the published article and her reply was reported to councillors as follows:

"I object strongly to my reports being used for electioneering.

My report is to the council members and officers, not to the public. My point about reserves was primarily an aide-memoire to the Audit Commission that the council would be going through significant changes next year and so the high level of reserves prior to the 2013/14 budget was not a cause for concern.

I do not know whether the External Auditor has commented on the level of reserves – in which case Cllr Pragnell is permitted to comment as he has done.

However if Cllr Pragnell thinks that I support one political party over another he is woefully misinformed and I would like a written apology. My work depends on my being, and being seen to be, impartial and objective. Accusations of political viewpoints are not acceptable.

Thank you for informing me about this article.”

Cllr Davidovitz proposed that in the light of this article that Cllr Pragnell is instructed to withdraw this article and do this by a statement in the same publication and in the same format to all household to which the publication was delivered and by so doing publish an apology for the original article. This motion was seconded by Cllr Boyes.

Cllr Davidovitz also proposed that Cllr Pragnell’s actions should be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Eastleigh Borough Council in respect of this alleged breach of the Code of Conduct

Members stated that Cllr Pragnell was entitled to hold his own personal views about this matter and other matters affecting the Parish Council. Members felt that Cllr Pragnell is entitled to criticise actions of the Parish Council in respect of his personal opinions, however in this particular case he introduced an independent person in to the debate to support his personal opinion without their express consent and therefore an apology and action to withdraw the article should be taken. It was also noted that the Auditor was not being critical of the Parish Council as the monies held on reserves were required for the next financial year.

The Chairman summarised members opinions that individual councillors are entitled to express their opinion on decisions of the Parish Council, however on this occasion the article represented a misrepresentation by introducing the Internal Auditor in to the article.

The motion to instruct Cllr Pragnell to issue an apology by withdrawing the article and publishing this statement in the same publication, in the same format and to the households previously circulated was duly proposed and seconded.

Cllr Luffman wished to move an amendment that an apology should be sought from Cllr Pragnell for involving the Auditor in to his personal views and for introducing this in to the published article and a statement issued to that effect, without the need to involve

the Monitoring Officer. This amendment did not receive a seconder and therefore was lost.

The first part of the original motion concerning the article was put to the vote and eight members voted in favour of the motion with one member voting against and one abstention, Cllr Luffman, who wished his abstention to be noted.

Members then considered the second part of the motion moved by Cllr Davidovitz that in the light of Cllr Pragnell's comments in this article, that he should be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Eastleigh Borough Council in respect of this alleged breach of the Code of Conduct. The alleged breach of the Code of Conduct should also include the promoter of the political publication.

Members discussed whether in the light of a written apology if this further action would need to be taken and following a vote it was agreed to refer Cllr Pragnell and the promoter of the publication to the Monitoring Officer as an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct with five members voting in favour and four against with one abstention.

The Chairman then concluded her report by advising members of the meetings that she attended at the Velmore Community Centre together with the official opening of the centre. Members felt it was appropriate that the Parish Council should send a letter to the Velmore Community Centre noting the outstanding work by all concerned in bringing this project to a very successful conclusion.

### **304. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A resident, Mr Sprague, wished to address the Parish Council on a number of issues concerning the operations and the Council's intentions to take over assets in the parish.

The Clerk took a note of the points raised and the Chairman agreed to contact Mr Sprague with responses to the points that he had raised.

### **305. MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3 July 2012 were considered for accuracy.

It was AGREED that:

1)The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3 July 2012 be signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting.

Minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 27 June 2012 were considered for accuracy.

It was AGREED that:

1)To receive the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 27 June

2012 as an accurate record of the meeting.

Minutes of the Asset Transfer Team meeting held on 17 July 2012 were considered for accuracy.

IT was AGREED that:

1) To receive the minutes of the Asset Transfer Team meeting held on 17 July 2012 as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **306. MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr Olson queried whether Hampshire County Council had agreed to release the amount of land at Stoneham Park to allow for the amount of new homes designated in the Local Plan. It was concluded that it was still uncertain whether the land had been released as this was subject to a report being produced by Hampshire County Council early in October.

### **307. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

Members considered the recommendation that the recreation grounds be transferred to the ownership of the Parish Council. The Chairman tabled a paper which summarised the financial implication of the transfer of assets which was the result of many months' discussions between members and officers of Eastleigh Borough Council.

Members were advised that the Policy and Finance Committee had agreed to the words "in principal" to be inserted in the recommendation to take account of the fact that due diligence was still being undertaken. The final decision on the transfer of assets will be taken by the parish Council once all relevant information that had been requested, was received from officers of Eastleigh Borough Council.

It was unanimously AGREED that:

1) The Parish Council would agree in principal to the transfer of the recreation grounds at Hiltingbury, Fryern and Pennine Way and other assets within the curtilage of the recreation grounds subject to the continuation of the due diligence process and the transfer may include the children's play areas

Members considered the recommendation to confirm the appointment of solicitors to the Parish Council to act for them in the transfer of the recreation ground assets. Members considered the further information on the two firms of solicitors that were short listed by the Policy and Finance Committee, however from the information provided it was still unclear of the basis on which members could select one firm over the other.

Members felt that a more detailed brief on the asset transfers to each of the solicitors and members interviewing each solicitor would assist in this short-listing process. Cllr Boyes agreed to assist the Clerk with this tendering process and they would produce a more detailed report and recommendation to the next Policy and Finance Committee to

enable a decision to be made on the appointment of solicitors and a recommendation to be made to the next Parish Council meeting.

It was AGREED that:

1) A full report and recommendation to appoint solicitors to act for the Parish Council in the transfer of the recreation grounds will be presented to the next Parish Council meeting on 5 November

Members considered the recommendation to produce a Parish Newsletter to a professional standard. Members were fully supportive of this recommendation

It was AGREED that:

1) The Parish Council would produce a Parish Newsletter of a professional standard by engaging a third party to produce the newsletter and engage a suitable delivery company to deliver the newsletter to all households in the parish

Members considered the recommendation to transfer the parish office to the Fryern Pavilion.

It was AGREED that:

1) The parish office would relocate to the Fryern Pavilion with effect from 31 October 2012

### **308. AGREE FINAL REPRESENTATIONS ON THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN**

The Chairman advised members that a further consultation period had commenced on the Local Plan and asked members to consider whether the representations that had been previously made by the Parish Council should be re-submitted. Members were reminded that the current period of consultation called for consultees to comment on the soundness of the Local Plan and as such consultees were requested to comment on factors such as the soundness and sustainability of the Local Plan. In addition it was noted that the employment land previously identified at Allbrook Hill had been withdrawn and as such the previous representation made by the Parish Council in this respect would need to be amended.

Members felt that the Planning Committee should consider the Local Plan representations and it was suggested that a meeting of that committee be called on 8 October to agree the representations to be made by the Parish Council.

It was AGREED that:

1) The Parish Clerk would call a meeting of the Planning, Highways and Licensing on 8 October to agree the representations made on behalf of the Parish Council

### **309. FINANCIAL RISK REGISTER**

Members were asked to approve the Financial Risk Register that had been

recommended for approval by the Policy and Finance Committee. There were no issues raised by members in respect of this document.

It was AGREED that:

1) The Financial Risk Register is approved by the Parish Council and this document would be subject to annual review by the Parish Council

### **310. DRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Chairman advised members that the draft Code of Conduct attached to the agenda was in the same format of the Code of Conduct that had been already agreed by members of Eastleigh Borough Council. In this respect it was considered appropriate to adopt a Code of Conduct in order that any issues brought to the Monitoring Officer at the Borough Council could be considered in a consistent manner.

It was AGREED that:

1) The draft Code of Conduct was approved by the Parish Council

### **311. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk advised members that the official letter to appoint BDO LLP as external auditors for the Parish Council was attached to the papers and members noted the appointment.

The Clerk advised members of consultation events to invite comments on local flood risk management. Members requested that the Clerk attend one of the road shows and report back to Council.

### **312. FINANCE MATTERS**

The Clerk tabled a list of cheques drawn on the Council's bank account for various expenditure items since the last Council meeting.

It was AGREED that:

1)The following cheques be endorsed

The following cheques have been drawn since the last council meeting which members are asked to endorse:

| Cheque No                           | Net    | VAT    | Gross  |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 100176 Cash<br>Office petty cash    | £80.37 | £13.87 | £94.24 |
| 100177 S Mursell<br>Office expenses | £86.16 | £6.80  | £92.96 |

|  |         |        |          |
|--|---------|--------|----------|
| 100178 Do the Numbers<br>Internal Audit service                    |         |        | £475.00  |
| 100179 Underhill House<br>Diamond Jubilee garden plaques           | £304.00 | £60.80 | £364.80  |
| 100180 Chandler's Ford UR Church<br>Room hire                      |         |        | £32.50   |
| 100181 British Gas Business<br>Electricity Eagle Close             | £6.26   | £0.32  | £6.68    |
| 100182 S Mursell<br>June salary                                    |         |        | £1019.40 |
| 100183 HMRC<br>Tax and NI  |         |        | £442.87  |
| 100184 Community First<br>Allotment equipment insurance            |         |        | £101.58  |
| 100185 Neighbourhood Watch<br>Grant                                |         |        | £180.00  |
| 100186 Velmore Community Centre<br>Grant                           |         |        | £550.00  |
| 100187 S Mursell<br>July salary                                    |         |        | £1019.40 |
| 100188 HMRC<br>Tax and NI  |         |        | £442.87  |
| 100189 M & S Enterprises<br>Allotment equipment repair             | £44.87  | £8.97  | £53.84   |
| Members are asked to authorise the following requests for payment: |         |        |          |
| CiLCA<br>CiLCA Certificate registration fee                        |         |        | £150.00  |
| British Gas Business<br>Eagle Close electricity                    |         |        | £6.36    |
| S Mursell  |         |        |          |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Chandler's Ford in Bloom expenses               | £139.77  |
| British Gas Business<br>Eagle Close electricity | £6.57    |
| Cash<br>Office petty cash                       | £98.87   |
| HCC<br>NCCZ signs                               | £209.00  |
| Velmore Community Centre<br>Room hire           | £86.25   |
| ISL<br>Printer supplies                         | £48.00   |
| Southern Water<br>Ramalley water charges        | £448.53  |
| HALC<br>Office rent and stationery charges      | £449.28  |
| S Mursell<br>August salary                      | £1019.40 |
| HMRC<br>Tax & NI                                | £442.87  |

For members information there is a balance at bank of £20,245.94, once all the above cheques have been presented.

### **312. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

Cllr Gault raised a question on the organisation of the Parish Council stand at the Hiltingbury Extravangansa in the absence of the Clerk. Various members indicated that they would attend the event and Cllr Gault agreed to work with the Chairman to organise a rota for the Parish Council stand and to organise the resources required.