



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Full Council of Stirchley and Brookside Parish Council
held on Tuesday 9 April 2024 at 6:30pm at the Sambrook Centre, Stirchley**

Present: Cllrs C Lloyd (Chair), S Vaughan-Hodkinson, A England, T Wood, C Turley, A Watkin,
C Addison, T Skidmore, G Sinclair, S Cook, K Jolly

In Attendance: C Maclean (Locum Clerk/RFO)

Members of Public: 1

FC/24/001 WELCOME

Cllr C Lloyd welcomed everyone to the meeting.

FC/24/002 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr J Loveridge.

FC/24/003 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr S Cook declared an interest in agenda item FC/24/009a.

Cllrs C Turley and A Watkin declared an interest in agenda item FC/24/010.

Cllr S Vaughan-Hodkinson declared an interest in agenda item FC/24/021.

FC/24/004 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No comments or points raised.

FC/24/005 POLICE REPORT

The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that the presence of representatives from the Brookside SNT team was expected but no apologies for absence had been received in advance of the meeting.

The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that there was now a new officer in the Nedge SNT team.

FC/24/006 MINUTES

Cllrs noted that the Locum Clerk was still working on the minutes of previous meetings and these would be presented at an upcoming meeting.

FC/24/007 MATTERS ARISING

None.

FC/24/008 COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that there had been some interest in the Brookside vacancy but no applications had been received to date.

FC/24/009 SAMBROOK CENTRE LONG TERM BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS

a. Sambrook Centre Long-Term Booking Arrangements for Community Groups

Cllrs noted the paper presented to Council noting that a number of groups that used the Centre were long-term bookings with a focus on the local community. Cllrs also noted that there had been previous discussion on providing the Clerk with an element of discretion in terms of a discount for some bookings and that the paper sought to define that level of discretion at up to 20% on the stated room hire charge.

Proposed by Cllr T Wood, seconded by Cllr A England and it was resolved with all in favour (with exception of Cllr S Cook who had declared his interest) that a discount of up to 20% on bookings be provided to long-term room hirers for community groups for the year 2024/2025 and that the arrangement be reviewed annually.

b. Recent and Planned Booking Arrangements within The Sambrook Centre
Cllrs noted the paper presented to Council advising of increasing interest in the use of the Centre.

The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that recent contact with the Chief Executive at FAIRshare had identified that FAIRshare wished to maintain access to the room dedicated for their use. Noting that there had been no increase in hire charges for several years Cllrs considered the proposal that the cost of hiring the room be increased in line with other users of the Centre.

Proposed by Cllr T Wood, seconded by Cllr G Sinclair and it was unanimously resolved the room hire rate to FAIRshare be increased 50%.

FC/24/010 ALLOTMENTS

a. Current Status on 2024 Invoices

The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that invoices for 2024 would be prepared and issued within next two weeks. Whilst it was noted that it had been resolved to increase the allotment rent this would be effective from 1 April 2024 and the period 1 January to 31 March 2024 would be charged at the previous rate.

b. Current Status on Production of Revised Allotment Agreement

The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that work continued on preparing the updated rental agreement.

FC/24/011 EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT ON 2022/2023 AGAR

Cllrs noted the Final External Auditor Report and Certificate for 2022/23. The contents of the report were noted. The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that the extended review on the key financial liabilities accounted for by the Council in previous periods had contributed to the delay in the final report being received.

FC/24/012 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023/2024

a. Process and Deadlines for Submission of 2023/2024 Return

Cllrs noted the communication that had been forwarded from PKF Littlejohn LLP, the external auditors advising of submission deadlines. The

Locum Clerk noted with Cllrs the criteria for review of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return set out in the JPAG Practitioners Guide.

Cllr T Wood suggested that a separate meeting be held of Councillors to consider the Guide, its contents and criteria requirements. The Locum Clerk would facilitate this.

b. Internal Auditor Invitation for 2023/24 Review

Cllrs noted the paper presented to Council documenting the merits of continuing with the current auditor.

Proposed by Cllr C Lloyd, seconded by Cllr C Turley and it was unanimously resolved to invite JDH Business Services Ltd to undertake the 2023/24 Review.

FC/24/013 FOI/DATA PROTECTION/GDPR/LEGAL SUPPORT

The Locum Clerk advised Cllrs that following the previous retirement of the Data Protection Controller the Council did not have formal cover in place. This was currently being reviewed and discussions are taking place with an external provider on the various support elements required.

Further discussions were required on a number of the elements on offer to ensure there was no overlap on support and costs.

It was agreed to defer the topic to an upcoming meeting.

FC/24/014 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. New Applications

Cllrs noted that no applications had been received that required consideration at the meeting.

b. Application Decisions

Cllrs noted the following recent decisions by Telford & Wrekin Council

- i. TWC/2024/0058: Site of Ridgeways, Hem Lane, Halesfield - Approved
- ii. TWC/2024/0078: The Old Butchers, 3 Stirchley Village – Approved
- iii. TWC/2024/0113: 28 Churchway, Stirchley – Approved

FC/24/015 FINANCIAL REPORT

a. Financial Report

Cllrs noted the paper presented to Council advising of the current status of the Council's finances.

Cllrs noted the amount paid under the Precept and discussed concerns raised over the level of increase which had been reported by Telford & Wrekin Council on household tax demands. Cllrs noted the demands issued showed an increase of 12.2% whereas the Parish Council had sought an increase of 9.59%.

Cllrs questioned the specifics behind the reported "special fund" within the demands and it was agreed that further advice be obtained on the Parish Council's position in this regard.

b. Payments Requiring Approval of Council

Cllrs noted no new invoices requiring approval at the meeting.

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Cllrs noted the payment of £1,056.00 made to PKF Littlejohn LLP on 3 April 2024 as this was immediately due at the time of receipt.

FC/24/016 BOROUGH COUNCILLOR UPDATES

Cllr C Turley advised he had no update for the meeting.

Cllr A England advised of two cases of fly tipping within Brookside which were being reported to Telford & Wrekin Council.

FC/24/017 PARISH MATTERS

Cllr G Sinclair advised of a recent litter picking initiative at Halesfield which included location of a burnt-out mini tipper.

Cllr T Skidmore raised concerns over continued litter piling up in back gardens of properties within Brookside. Discussion was held on the potential for the Parish Council to assist in clearance but the risks associated with this were recognised. Cllrs considered merits of education and culture around the topic. Cllrs noted drainage issues at the MUGA in Stirchley. A report would be sent to Telford & Wrekin Council.

Cllrs noted the continued poor status of the Co-op car park.

FC/24/018 NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA

- a. Cllr C Lloyd advised that a request had been received to discuss proposal for permanent salaried human resources in place of contracted.
- b. Cllrs noted the pressure on the start times of meetings of Council due to Centre bookings. It was agreed to consider alternative day and times for future meetings.
- c. Advice to Locum Clerk of items for next meeting.

FC/24/019 NEXT MEETING DATE

a. Annual General Meeting and Meeting of Council

Cllrs noted the date of the Annual General Meeting followed by the meeting of Council on 14 May 2024.

b. Annual Parish Electors' Meeting/Meeting

Cllrs noted the plan to hold the meeting at Brookside Central. Discussion would be held with the Centre Manager to identify possible date(s).

FC/24/020 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC

It is recommended that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information in relation to any individual, as defined in paragraph 1, and/or information relating to financial or business affairs, as defined in paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proposed by Cllr T Wood, seconded by Cllr G Sinclair and it was unanimously resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

In light of Cllr S Vaughan-Hodkinson declaring an interest in the next item she excused herself from the meeting at 7:42pm. The member of public also left the meeting.

FC/24/021 HUMAN RESOURCE MATTERS

a. Employee Payroll Adjustment: Environmental Services

Cllrs noted the paper presented to Council advising of the current situation relating to a member of the team covering environmental services. Cllrs noted the proposal to address the situation.

Proposed by Cllr A England, seconded by Cllr T Wood and it was unanimously resolved the adjustment to remuneration to align the team member with fellow team members be made effective from 1 April 2024.

b. Employee Payroll Adjustment: Honorarium

Cllrs noted from the paper presented to Council the proposal to recognise previous commitment and efforts of a team member.

Proposed by Cllr A England, seconded by Cllr T Wood and it was unanimously resolved that an honorarium payment of £2,000.00 be made.

c. Recruitment of Assistant to the Clerk

Cllrs noted the developments and advertising for the recruitment of a new team member. It was noted the closing date for applications had been set at 26 April 2024.

Cllrs agreed that the interview process would be overseen by Cllrs C Lloyd and T Wood but where it was identified that Cllr C Lloyd knew any of the candidates she would step back and be replaced by Cllr K Jolly.

The Chair noted the next meeting of Council scheduled for 14 May and thanked everyone, declaring the meeting closed at 7:53pm.

Signed

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Chair

Date: 14 May 2024