**Alverdiscott and Huntshaw Parish Council**

**Draft Minutes of the council meeting**

**Held at Alverdiscott Parish Hall**

**On 10th May 2023**

**Present:** Graham White, Bernard Hardwick, Paul Matthews, Jim White, Helen Bolton, Liz Meaney, Caroline Lewis, Gill Ross

**Members Apologies for Absence:**  None

**Also Present:** Cllr Rosemary Locke – Torridge District Council: Alan Matthewman, Parish Clerk

**Apology for Absence:** Cllr Linda Hellyer, Devon County Council

**Members of the Public:** 1 present

As chairman of the council Graham White took the chair and welcomed Alan Matthewman ass the new clerk to the council.

**Item 1:To appoint a chair of the council for 2023-24:**

Graham White was proposed by Liz Meaney, Seconded Helen Bolton and it **was hereby unanimously resolved that Graham White serve as chair of the council for the coming year. (Minutes 2023-5-01)**

**Item 2: To appoint a vice chair of the council for 2023-24:**

Liz Meaney, was proposed by Bernard Hardwick, seconded by Helen White and it was **hereby unanimously resolved that Liz Meaney serve as vice shair of the council for the coming year. (Minute 2023-5-02)**

**Item 3: Consent to Serve:** The Clerk confirmed that both Graham White and Liz Meaney had properly completed their consent to serve notices and were thereby confirmed as councillors and as Chair and vice-chair respectively of the council.

**Item 4: To receive letters of consent to serve as councillors from other elected members:** The clerk confirmed that he had in his possession consent to serve notices from Bernard Hardwick, Paul Matthews, Jim White, Helen Bolton, Caroline Lewis and Gill Ross and that **all were duly recognised as elected members of the council with immediate effect. (Minute 2023-05-03)**

**Item 5: Submission of declarations of interest from elected members**

The clerk confirmed that he had received such a document from all elected members and, subject to checking these at the end of the meeting, they would, as required, be forwarded in electronic form to the Monitoring Officer at Torridge District Council withing the required 28 days of the meeting.

**Item 6: Meeting Suspended**

The technical aspects of the council business having been completed the Chair moved that the meeting be suspended to allow the Parish Meeting to take place:

**The Council meeting reopened at 7.35**

Report by Councillor Linda Hellyer (Devon CC). Councillor Hellyer was not present but sent a report after the meeting which is attached as Appendix A to these minutes.

**Item 7: Apologies for absence:** had been received from Cllr Hellyer (Devon CC)

**Item 8: Declarations of Interest:** No declarations of interest had been received in any of the items listed for discussion in the Agenda.

**Item 9: Urgent matters at the discretion of the Chair:**

**Item 10: Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th March 2023:** The minutes were tabled and, Proposed by Liz Meaney, Seconded by Caroline Lewis and **were accepted as a true record by all councillors present at the meeting.**

**Item 11: Matters arising:**

The Chair confirmed that the planning meeting with Helen Smith had been postponed and was now expected to take place on 17th May [Date confirmed after the meeting] The Clerk apologised that he would not be able to attend as he had another council meeting that evening. The possibility of members attending was raised but it was felt that this would be difficult and certainly should be cleared with planners. It was agreed that it would be inappropriate to invite any members of the public.

There was discussion about the rectification and application of enforcement for clearance of land occupied by Staines Trailers where some progress had been made but no final solution seems in sight.

**Item 12: Finance:**

The Chair had tabled the accounts and he had completed the Agar forms which clearly showed income and expenditure below £25000 and the clerk had confirmed with PKF Littlejohn that there were no issues which would require an external auditor. A local alternative was suggested and it was agreed that the Chair and Clerk should meet her to establish the possibility. The Agar processes were read out and agreed as having been met. This included the Annual Governance Statement which was read out in full and agreed.

A discussion followed regarding the requirement for registration under the ICO and GDPR regulations. The council believed, having completed a questionnaire on the ICO site, that they did not need to register. The clerk did not believe this to be true and agreed to get an opinion from the ICO on the matter. [the clerk did approach the Information Commissioners Office and received a clear and unequivocal response that all councils needed to be registered. The fee involved is £40 per year, reduced to £35 if paid on Direct Debit]

The question of Asset Valuation was raised and was thought to be adequate and up to date.

Payment of the cheques requiring issue, including those issued since the previous meeting was unanimously approved. **(See Appendix B). It was also agreed and resolved that a revised mandate be set up with Lloyds Bank to add the Clerk and Councillor Meaney in addition to the existing signatories Councillors White and Hardwick.** Councillor White agreed to submit the necessary paperwork to Lloyds Bank.

13: To approve the Agar Documentation:

Cllr White proposed that the council agree that the accounts for A & H Parish Council, falling as they did well below the £25,000 limit for income or expenditure, and having regard to the assurance given by PKF Littlejohn, the council met the requirements for exempt status under the AGAR regulations and that the Exemption Certificate be signed and sent to PKF.

It was further proposed by Cllr White, Seconded by ??????? that all documents be approved and it is **Hereby resolved that the Clerk be authorised to sign and forward to the Internal Auditor, and as required to PKF Littlejohn, all documents required under Agar level 2.**

**The dates for the exercise of public rights should await agreement on the date of audit.**

**Councillor Locke** pointed out that she had not been invited to make her presentation on behalf of Torridge District Council. TheChair apologised and invited her to do so. Cllr Locke began by confirming her re-election along with Thomas Elliott from Doulton. He was attending another council that evening and will attend High Bickington on the 17th.

She mentioned that the planning application for the Xlinks project appeared increasingly imminent and was expected by July. This would obviously generate a lot more information and given its scale it was almost certain to be called in. She had attended a presentation and had been impressed with their information and approach. Information had been requested of the MP, Sir Geoffrey Cox, to which answers were still required. A key unknown was still the landing point for the cables and the National Grid approach to location of the link.

Finally she thanked members for their support following the death of her husband and she looked forward to a continued relationship in the future. She commented on the refreshing energy and commitment shown by the council compared with the more troubled times of the recent past.

The Chair reminded members that they had two vacancies for co-opted members, one for each ward which could be actioned at any time. The Clerk was asked about advertising the vacancies on The Local Rag and the Website. Agreed that the web designer be asked if he could act as the person to maintain the website and load documentation.

Councillor Locke left the meeting

**14: Accept and agree updated policy documents:**

All councillors had received copies of the revised Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Risk Assessment. The frequency of meetings was as stated and it was agreed that normally they would take place on the first Wednesday of the designated month. The clerk would produce a schedule of meeting dates for the year for agreement at the next meeting. Once the position of the ICO regarding registration was agreed then the Standing orders would be finalised.

**Subject to the above it was agreed that the revised documents, prepared by Cllr Meaney were accepted and would replace those currently in force. They would be reviewed, and where necessary revised, in March 2024**

**15: Planning:** Cllr White had issued a report to all councillors **(See Appendix ??).** He apologised that it stated that two applications had been received whereas an additional one had been received after the report was issued.

He had booked the Huntshaw Village Hall for the planned training next Wednesday so there may be a charge. He assumed that most, if not all, would have attended the Xlinks presentation and there were suggestions regarding the possible use of Section 106 monies arising from the development.

Virtually all properties are off grid for gas and electrical supplies are limited. This pointed to a focus one dramatic improvements to the electrical supply.

Cllr White pointed out that TDC were intending to develop a substantial waste sorting facility which would generate substantial additional traffic on a daily basis around Huntshaw. The Torridge Planning Meeting was put up on You Tube but sound was unreliable and the meeting was disrupted by protestors. At the meeting the Transport Officer, presumably from Devon CC rejected the traffic objections and his understanding is that the project got approval to go ahead.

A proposal to replace a mobile home be replaced with residential development, which went through due to the well established practice. Cllr Bolton raised the issue of potential conflict with residents where councillors reported planning non compliance or objected to proposed development. The Clerk pointed out that such correspondence between the Council and TDC should go through him as the mouthpiece of the council as a whole rather than from an individual councillor. This would greatly reduce any pressure on individual councillors.0

Application for an agricultural residential was recommended subject to an agricultural tithe be imposed as a condition of development.

Application for a new residence at a property which already has permission for conversion of the barn. Councillors were concerned that the ongoing development might lead to two properties being built.

Following a brief conversation it was agreed to continue remote meeting, possibly utilising Zoom,

**15: Correspondence –** None had been received not covered above

Chairman Councillor White declared the meeting closed at 9.25pm

**Date of next meeting:** The next meeting of the council will be held on Wednesday 5th July at Huntshaw Village Hall commencing at 7.30 pm.

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