|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on**  **Monday 5th February 2024 at 7.30pm. The meeting was held in the Venue, Liverpool Road, Much Hoole.** |

**Present:** Cllrs N. Woodcock (Chairman), P. Cocker, K. Hayes, E. Jackson, R. Lea, A. Taylor. Temporary Clerk Mr P Cafferkey.

One member of the public was in attendance.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs T. Hewitt and E. Houghton

**2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

Cllr A. Taylor (non-pecuniary) re Village Hall: item 8.

P Cafferkey pecuniary interest in item 10a and a non-pecuniary interest in item 11.

**3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

It was **resolved** that the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 8th January 2024 were approved. This was proposed by Cllr R. Lea, seconded by Cllr A. Taylor; and agreed unanimously.

Chairman Cllr N. Woodcock signed the minutes.

**4. Public Time**

No matters were raised.

**5. Correspondence from Members of the Public**

None received.

,

**6. Reports from other meetings and information on future events.**

None of either to report.

**7. No agenda item** There was no agenda item 7 due to an error in numbering the agenda.

**8. Village Hall**

Cllr A. Taylor provided a verbal update on the Village Hall. The management group is still progressing the planning application for the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area). Bookings remain high and the Village Hall finances are “healthy”. A grant has been applied for in respect of improvements to the grass verge on the left-hand side of the gravel roadway which leads to the tennis courts. A roof for the Village Hall bin area is on order.

**9. Off Road Cycle Track**

a) **To consider any updates on the cycle track and resolve any action required** Cllr A. Taylor inspected the cycle track and its surrounding area in week commencing 22 January 2024; no issues noted and the litter situation had improved. Cllr P Cocker informed the council that he had been missed off the inspection rota. Cllr A Taylor will rectify that.

b) **To consider any revised quotations from C Hewitt in respect of track maintenance.** No new quotations have been received as yet.

**10. Finance**

a) **Payments for approval.** It was **resolved** to pay Paul Cafferkey’s invoice for £90.12 for advice and assistance provided to the previous two Clerks to Much Hoole Parish Council. Proposed by Cllr R. Lea, seconded by Cllr K. Hayes and agreed unanimously.

b) **Defibrillator.** Cllr K. Hayes is to place the order and obtain a pro-forma invoice for payment which has already been agreed by the Council.  
  
However, this raised the question as to how payments through the bank would be initiated and approved, given that there was currently no permanent Clerk/Financial Officer in post. It was **resolved** that Cllr R Lea contact the bank to arrange for three signatories (Cllrs R. Lea, K. Hayes and N. Woodcock) to be able to individually initiate payments from the bank current account and these same three signatories be able to approve a payment, provided that the bank does not allow the same signatory to both initiate and approve the same payment. This was proposed by Cllr N Woodcock, seconded by Cllr P Cocker and agreed unanimously.

**11. Grant Applications**

The temporary Clerk (Paul Cafferkey) left the room for this item. Following clarification, as queried at the previous meeting, that the equipment is not a replacement of the existing machine but is required for a separate green care process at a different period of the year, it was **resolved** that a grant of £3,000 be awarded to Hoole Village Hall Bowling Club. Proposed Cllr R. Lea, seconded Cllr K. Hayes and agreed unanimously.

**12. No agenda item**There was no agenda item 12 due to an error in numbering the agenda,

**13. Parish Clerk and Financial Officer**

Following liaison with the Clerk for Little Hoole Parish Council it was **resolved** that any new Clerk/Financial Officer appointed to Much Hoole Parish Council would be paid on the number of hours actually worked each month, as recorded via a detailed timesheet, rather than a set number of hours per month. The contract of employment and job specification are to be amended by Cllr R Lea to reflect this new arrangement. Proposed by Cllr R Lea, seconded by Cllr N. Woodcock and agreed unanimously.   
  
It was **resolved** that the existing three applicants for the vacant Clerk and Financial Officer position would be provided with the revised job and person specifications and invited for interview, and given the chance to amend their applications, if they so wished, in light of the new job specification. Simultaneously, the vacancy would be advertised again with a closing date of 16th February to see whether there is any further interest. Depending on the outcome of these two actions there could be two rounds of interviews, a round of interviews for the initial three applications and a second round of interviews for any new applications. The interview panel would be Cllrs N Woodcock and K Hayes who will jointly make all the necessary arrangements for interviews, plus P Cafferkey. Proposed by Cllr R Lea, seconded by Cllr N. Woodcock and agreed unanimously.

**14. Lengthsman**

The potential lengthsman is still trying to source public liability insurance. Cllr R. Lea kindly offered his help in this matter if required. This agenda item was therefore deferred pending the lengthsman obtaining public liability insurance.

**15. Review and Adoption of Policies – Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

It was **revolved** to approve the proposals regarding Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to the Council set out in two reports prepared by Cllr R. Lea and the previous Parish Clerk (L White). In agreeing these, the length of a parish meeting was set at not more than one and half hours, the length of public participation was set at not more than 16 minutes, and the limit for speaking by a member of the public set at not more than two minutes; all subject to extension at the discretion of the Chair. And many other proposed amendments were agreed to both documents.

Cllr R. Lea to circulate the amended and updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to all Cllrs for any final feedback. If no feedback is received then the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations will be deemed to have been formally approved and adopted by the council. Proposed Cllr K. Hayes, seconded by Cllr N. Woodcock, and agreed unanimously.

**16. Footpaths**

1. Cllr P. Cocker gave a verbal update on the maintenance of footpaths FP11, which is awaiting the contractor to undertake the second stage of the refurbishment, and FP12 which is waiting for LCC to progress the resident to make improvements to access.
2. FP 14, 17 and 18 need improvement and these have been reported by Cllr P. Cocker to LCC.
3. Six footpath finger signs have been received free of charge from Lancashire County Council; and they now need erection by Cllrs A Taylor and P Cocker. When completed another six signs will be requested.
4. Trafalgar Garden flooding, community garden and living Christmas tree. A response has been received from South Ribble Borough Council who own the area and this will be followed up by Cllrs K. Hayes and E. Houghton.

**17. Planning**

The five planning applications on the agenda were noted by Council as no representation had been made to the council or was made at the council meeting by Cllrs or the public.

**18. List of Events to Approve**

This agenda item was deferred to the March meeting.

**19. Items for next Agenda**

* Grant application from Much Hoole Village Hall re grass verge.
* Lengthsman – public liability insurance
* List of future events for approval
* Ratification of adoption by Council of the Standing Orders & Financial Regulations if no further request for amendments from Cllrs are received.
* Trafalgar Gardens

**20. Date of next meeting**The date of the next meeting will be held on Monday 4th March 2024 at 7.30pm.

The meeting will be held at The Venue, Liverpool Old Road, Much Hoole PR4 4QA.  
Cllrs N. Woodcock, P. Cocker and R. Lea gave their apologies in advance.