

**Minutes of a meeting of Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council  
Held in the King Edward VII Meeting Room, Ascot Racecourse, SL5 7JX  
On Tuesday 16 May 2023 at 7.00pm**

Members present: A Sharpe (Chairman), B Hilton (Vice Chairman), L Davison West, J Gripton, C Herring, D Hilton, C Revilla, C Roberts, D Sanders, B Story, R Tavoletti, S Verma and R Wood.

In attendance: Mrs Ceri Richardson; Helen Goodwin, Clerk to the Parish Council.

**8452 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

Two councillors expressed their interest in standing as chairman:

- Cllr John Gripton - nominated by Cllr L Davison West, seconded by Cllr Sanders.
- Cllr A Sharpe was nominated by Cllr B Story, seconded Cllr B Hilton.

Both councillors addressed the council and answered questions.

Following a secret ballot Cllr A Sharpe was appointed Chairman by a majority vote of seven to four and duly signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**8453 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

Cllr B Hilton was nominated by Cllr A Sharpe, seconded by Cllr D Hilton, and was appointed Vice-Chairman of the council as agreed unanimously by show of hands. Cllr Hilton duly signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**8454 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

The Clerk confirmed that all councillors had submitted their signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**8455 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies were received.

**8456 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The chairman asked to receive any Declarations of Interest in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

**8457 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS**

The Clerk advised the council that two previous parish councillors had emailed to express an interest in being co-opted onto the council: Mr Phil Carter and Mrs Ceri Richardson. As Mrs Richardson was present she was asked to address the council, following which it was unanimously agreed by show of hands to co-opt her. Mr Phil Carter will be invited to address the council at a later date with a view to being co-opted.

**8458 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The chairman asked the councillors present to state on which committees they wished to serve. Councillors responded as follows:

- Planning Committee: Cllrs J Gripton, C Herring, B Hilton, D Hilton, A Sharpe, B Story, S Verma and R Wood.
- Leisure & Cultural: Cllrs L Davison West, B Hilton, C Richardson, C Roberts and A Sharpe.

The chairman explained that the Finance & Personnel Committee comprised the chairmen & vice-chairmen of the full council and other committees and the lead member for finance.

#### **8459 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN & VICE-CHAIRMEN**

Appointments made were:

- Planning Committee Chairman - Cllr R Wood, nominated by Cllr C Herring, seconded by Cllr S Verma.
- Planning Committee Vice-Chairman – Cllr D Hilton, nominated by Cllr A Sharpe, seconded by Cllr R Wood.
- Leisure & Cultural Committee Chairman – Cllr L Davison West, nominated by Cllr C Richardson, seconded by Cllr B Hilton.
- Leisure & Cultural Committee Vice-Chairman – Cllr C Richardson, nominated by Cllr R Wood, seconded by Cllr L Davison West.
- Lead Member for Finance – Cllr R Wood.

All appointments were agreed unanimously by show of hands.

#### **8460 DEEDS & TRUST DOCUMENTS**

The Deeds and Trust documents in the custody of the council were produced for councillors to inspect.

#### **8461 APPROVAL OF PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2023/24, THE INTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS AND THE INSURANCE QUOTE FOR THE YEAR 2023/24**

The procedural documents which had been provided to the council as backing papers ahead of the meeting for approval were:

- Standing Orders 2023 (NALC model);
- Financial Regulations 2023;
- Committee Terms of Reference 2023;
- Risk Review 2023.

All were agreed unanimously by show of hands.

The Internal Audit Arrangements, as advised by the Clerk in a backing paper ahead of the meeting, were agreed unanimously by show of hands.

The clerk had obtained three quotes for insurance for the year 2023/24, as set out in a backing paper ahead of the meeting. The clerk recommended the BHIB quote and this was agreed unanimously by show of hands.

#### **8462 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

This item was deferred to next meeting.

#### **8463 FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- (a) The chairman and clerk met recently with Alastair Warwick, newly appointed CEO of Ascot Racecourse.
  - Alastair advised that the Racecourse is planning to introduce a parking charge for those using car park 3, as a response to a general change in the use of the car park and the increasing number of people using it for commuting, rather than to support the High Street businesses.
  - Ascot Authority will now be bringing forward their plans for the development of Ascot and this will be very much in keeping and in line with what is in the Prince's Foundation Report and what residents want.
  - He agreed to the Racecourse being a sponsor of this year's Sunninghill Victorian Street Fayre.
- (b) The clerk has received information from the borough indicating that a member of the public may wish to make a claim having hit his head on a hanging basket on Ascot High Street. The clerk has referred the issue to our insurance company; should any councillors be approached by the press they should make no comment but refer them to the clerk's office.
- (c) The chairman is continuing with correspondence with a landowner in Coombe Lane who has a piece of land he is considering selling. This may, in due course, be a consideration for the council to purchase either as cemetery land or in order to maintain the green space.

**8464 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was not adjourned.

**8465 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 March were approved as a correct record and signed as such.

**8466 PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 18 April were presented by Cllr R Wood.

**8467 FINANCIAL UPDATES AND APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS LISTS**

Cllr R Wood produced a brief document showing the position at year end prior to audit. He explained that, overall, matters are in line with expectation. He went on to say that:

- Actual income in the year was £242,000, some £6,000 higher than forecast, driven by £4,000 higher burial income and £2,000 of interest on deposits owing to increased interest rates. On the expense side, total expenses in the year were £252,000, some £5,000 below forecast. This is caused by savings on Leisure Capital projects of £3,000 and lower expenditure on General Grounds Maintenance of £7,500 offset by higher legal fees of £4,000 arising from the Village Green application (Coombe Lane) and un-forecasted charitable grants.
- Costs have been well controlled and kept to budget levels and income is slightly above expectation so, overall, reserves have not been used as much as expected. There are no items of income or expenditure that would cause any concern in the budget set for 2023/24. The 2023/24 budgeted expenses of £387,000 are very much higher than 2022/23 due to the higher number of capital projects, in particular £70,000 for Victory Fields, plus £5,000 for the 'coffin' planters previously funded by RBWM. There is an inflationary contingency included of £15,000, election costs and staff increases amounting to £19,000.
- An increase to the precept of £46,000 has been agreed, being the first of the 4-year plan to increase by 12.5% plus inflation, so as to build reserves to allow for replacement of capital items from reserves rather than needing to fund from the precept in the year of replacement.
- The 2023/24 budget is viable only due to the fact that the £90,000 reserve previously earmarked for South Ascot can be released, which nearly covers the excess of budget expenditure over income of £93,000. This has been enabled by the council agreeing that the planned South Ascot recreation ground revitalisation (subject to lease), and the new Toddlers play area at Victory Field, will be funded from CIL.

The clerk presented the lists of payments for February and March for approval by the council and these were duly signed.

Cllr Wood gave a brief update on CIL funds which are currently standing at £1.2 million. The council recently agreed to fund a new lighting rig for Cordes Hall. There will be more CIL coming from developers in the coming months and Cllr Wood emphasised the need to ensure it is spent correctly

**8468 APPROVAL OF NEW BANK SIGNATORIES**

The clerk advised the council that two of the bank signatories have now left the council and would need to be replaced. Cllrs D Hilton and C Richardson volunteered; the clerk will arrange the necessary paperwork to be sent to them.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

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Cllr A Sharpe, Chairman