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PAUNTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
Monday 11th December 2023
7.30pm in Pauntley Village Hall, Brand Green.**

Present: Cllrs P Eastabrook (Chair), M Hargreaves, N Fowke, C Philipps, M Hampton,
C Chapman-Hughes

In attendance: Rachel Freestone - Clerk

Public: 4

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence.

District Councillor Clayton Williams was absent with no apology received. Apologies received and accepted from County Councillor Gill Moseley. District Councillor Philip Burford had notified of a late arrival.

2. To receive any declarations of interest or written applications for dispensation from Councillors on agenda items.

Cllr Hargreaves declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 8b P1312/23/FUL.

3. Open Session:

a. To receive a report from District Councillors Philip Burford and Clayton Williams:

Item deferred to the arrival of District Councillor P Burford.

b. To receive a report from Gloucestershire County Councillor for Newent Gill Moseley:

In her absence there was none.

c. To receive representations from the Public:

A member of the public commented that tractors are overloaded and leaving a mess on the roads which are then not cleared. **It was RESOLVED:** Cllr Hargreaves to contact the landowner.

A member of the public commented that hedges are encroaching on the road. They had reported these to Gloucestershire County Council Highways who had replied that they were safe. **It was RESOLVED:** member of the public to inform the clerk of the 'what 3 words' position of the hedges to refer to County Councillor Gill Moseley for advice.

A member of the public requested an update on the churned footpath and possible 'No Horses' sign. Cllr Eastabrook reported that he had visited the footpath and had found it to be in an adequate condition. The member of the public updated that following the recent bad weather the footpath was once again in a poor condition. **It was RESOLVED:** clerk to contact GCC regarding a sign.

4. Minutes:

a. Members considered the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 9th October 2023. It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. They were duly signed by the Chair.

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- b. **Members considered the minutes of the Extra Parish Meeting held on the 20th November 2023. It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. They were duly signed by the Chair.

5. Parish Council Vacancy:

- a. The clerk advised that one expression of interest had been received. Co-option of Mr Josh Thomas was proposed and seconded and agreed by all. Mr Thomas was welcomed by all and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and returned to the Clerk. He was reminded to return his Register of Interest form with 28 days.

6. Policy:

All policies had been previously circulated.

- a. **Health and Safety Policy. It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the policy for 2023/24.
7.42pm – two members of the public left the meeting.
- b. **Grants and Donations Policy. It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the policy for 2023/24.
7.45pm District Councillor Philip Burford arrived.
- c. **Publications Scheme. It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the policy for 2023/24.

7. Finance:

All reports had been previously circulated.

- a. **To note the Finance Report and Bank Reconciliation to November 30th 2023:**
Members considered the bank reconciliation to November 30th 2023 with the bank balance noted as £6246.11.
- b. **To consider the 2024-25 Budget and Precept:**
Members noted the Tax Base figure of 153.62 for 2024/25 received from FoDDC as the number of Band D equivalent households in the parish.
A member requested clarification on the VETS scheme. A member commented that it hadn't worked well when it had been needed earlier in the year. **It was RESOLVED:** to retain the figure in the budget but to review the value to the parish of this service. The Clerk to forward details to Cllr Hampton to review the residents currently on the VETS register.
The clerk explained that calculations for the precept figure had been made with consideration to cost increases in the Budget and the impact to parishioners of the proposed Band D increase of £39.05 per annum in 23/24 to £42.96 per annum in 24/25. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the budget and increase the precept by £600 (10%) to £6600.
- c. **Risk Schedule 2023/24:**
The clerk commented that the intention is to review the Risk Schedule at each full meeting as part of the Health and Safety/Asset register review. **It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the Risk Schedule and create a regular Agenda item.
- d. **To receive an update on the Build Back Better Grant Application:**
Members noted that the application had been completed, submitted and received. The clerk had been notified that a judgement would be made by the end of December.

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- e. **To consider the NJC recommendation for increase in salary scale and agree action as required:**

It was RESOLVED: to award the clerk with the recommended salary scale increase backdated to 1st April 2023. The clerk to inform payroll.

- f. **To consider the following invoices for payment:**

It was RESOLVED: to approve the following payments:

- GAPTC Planning in Plain English C.CH £35.00
- Clerk Expenses – Arnold Baker on Local Council Admin £72.68

The clerk requested that a further invoice received on the 11th December be considered. **It was RESOLVED:** to pay the following invoice:

- Clerk Expenses Norton Anti-virus Jan 24 – Jan 2025 £13.99

- g. **To ratify payments made between meetings:**

It was RESOLVED: to ratify the following payments made between meetings:

- Clerk Salary October/November 2023 As per contract
- Nest pension contribution October 2023 £20.40
- Nest pension contribution November 2023 £20.41
- Nest pension contribution December 2023 £20.40
- ICO £35.00

- h. **To note income received:**

Members noted that none had been received.

8. Planning:

Members considered the Planning Working Group following the co-option of Cllr Thomas. **It was RESOLVED:** to add Cllr Thomas to the Planning Working Group.

- a. **To receive an update on the Ketford Cabin application. DF16254 P1021/23/FUL:**

Members noted that the site visit and committee meeting review of this application had been postponed by FoDDC until the New Year with a date yet to be confirmed. Cllr Thomas had drafted a response to be submitted to FoDDC planning department ahead of the committee meeting. **It was RESOLVED:** the Planning Working Group alongside the Chair to complete and approve the response and the clerk to submit prior to the consultation expiry date of the 15th December 2023.

- b. **To comment on Planning Applications for Determination by Forest of Dean District Council:**

- Planning Reference DF3550 P1414/23/FUL:

Members considered the resubmission. **It was RESOLVED:** to defer for the Planning Working Group to review the changes and for the Clerk to submit comments under delegated authority to respond between meetings.

Cllr Hargreaves left the room.

- Planning Reference P1312/23/FUL:

Members considered the application. **It was RESOLVED:** to SUPPORT the application.

Cllr Hargreaves returned to the meeting.

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c. Members Noted the Planning Decisions made by Forest of Dean District Council:

- P1303/23/LD1 Leadon Lodge. Decided, Lawful
- P1274/23/FUL Appledeck, Hayes Farm. Consent.

9. Highways:

a. To receive an update on grit bins and consider any actions:

Members noted that the grit bins had been received along with the 10 bags of salt requested.

10. Email Addresses:

- a. Members reviewed the current councillor GMX email addresses and the problems encountered. Cllr Eastabrook commented that Yahoo would be a viable alternative. **It was RESOLVED:** to defer any changes pending a further performance review of the GMX email system.

11. Training:

a. To receive an update on training undertaken and consider any training needs:

Councillor Chapman-Hughes confirmed her attendance on the GAPTC Planning Course which had been both interesting and beneficial. The second part of the Better Councillor training course had been missed due to work commitments but information had been provided by GAPTC. Cllr Hampton is to attend the Planning Course in January 2024.

12. Correspondence:

Members noted the Forest of Dean Biosphere Briefing Notes. District Councillor P Burford added that the matter is being taken to the full FoDDC committee meeting in the coming week for consideration.

13. Next Meeting:

Members noted the next ordinary meeting to be held on the 12th February 2024 at 7.30pm following the Village Hall Meeting.

Signed...*Paul Eastabrook*
Chair

Date.....12th February 2024.....

Meeting Closed 8.50pm