

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 13th September 2021 at 7.30 pm in Tanners Wood Hall, School Mead, Abbots Langley WD5 0LA.

Those Present:

Vice-Chairman Councillor Fran Deschampsneufs

Councillors: Councillor Sara Bedford
Councillor Liz Burns
Councillor Ruth Clark
Councillor Jane Lay
Councillor David Major
Councillor Owen Roe
Councillor Jon Tankard

Officers: Tim Perkins - Chief Officer & Clerk to the Council ^[1]
Isabel Montesdeoca - Chief Officer & Clerk to the Council ^[2]
^[1] Retiring ^[2] Appointed

Others: Mr Peter Warman - Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.

148. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, accepted and recorded from Councillors Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Jean Bowman, Robin Powell, Simon Stanley, John Swallow, John Wyatt and Roxanne Yau (unavailable).

149. Declarations of Interest

None.

150. Public Participation

A member of public had signed in and indicated that they wanted to address the Parish Council on agenda item 7, Review Panel.

As the above may identify a member of the Parish Council's staff, under Standing order 14 the Chairman varied the agenda and moved this item and agenda item 7 to Part II so it could be discussed in confidence.

A vote was requested and all members were in favour.

151. Hertfordshire Police

Not present.

152. To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns, seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2021, copies of which had been sent to all members of the Parish Council prior to the meeting, be taken as read and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

153. Minutes for adoption

The following committee minutes were adopted, approved for publication on the Council's website and passed to the committees for resolution.

Planning & Highways Committee - 14th July, 4th & 25th August.

Finance & Administration Committee - 26th July 2021.

Leisure Committee - 18th August 2021.

154. Review Panel

As minute 150 above, discussion on this item was moved to Part II below.

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155. Internal Audit Report (Final Report) 2020-2021
(Referred from the Finance & Administration Committee min. 109.)
Members noted the Final Internal Audit Report for 2020-2021 has been reviewed by the Finance & Administration Committee and that no significant matters were raised.
156. Depot Surface Project
(Referred from the Leisure Committee min. 135.)
It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford, seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that the above project be funded from the Capital Reserve (£85,000) with the balance from the General Fund.
The tendered project cost is £121,236, with unconfirmed costs for works to the drainage sump which cannot be quantified until the works commence and also the temporary relocation costs which cannot be confirmed until a works date is agreed.
Full details on the project costings are covered in the Clerk's report to the Leisure Committee (August 2021)
157. Staffing - Recruitment of the Finance Officer & Deputy Clerk
Members noted the retirement of the Finance Officer at the end of November.
The incoming Chief Officer briefed members that following discussions with the Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Finance & Administration Committee and due to the tight timescales Hayes Recruitment have been engaged to commence the search for a new Finance Officer. The company will also support if the initial search is not successful and an interim appointment is required.
It has also been agreed that the appointment will be on a full time basis and will include the role of Deputy Clerk to provide further resilience to the Parish Council.
158. Location of Parish Council & Committee Meetings
Members agreed all meetings to the end of the calendar end should be held in Tanners Wood Hall, at which time a decision will be taken on meetings in the New Year.
Ideally, Planning and Highways Committee meetings will be held in the Manor House. Members found it difficult to read plans when they were projected in the Manor House and the Facilities Manager will be asked to see if it is possible to use the hall screens.
159. Henderson Hall - Managing Trustee Appointment
No nominations were received.
Councillor Sara Bedford asked that the details of the role of the Managing Trustee, including how many meetings take place per annum, be circulated.
160. Christmas and New Year Working 2021-2022
Members noted the arrangements.
161. Three Rivers District Council - Response to the Local Plan
It was proposed by Councillor Jon Tankard, seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that the report submitted by Councillor Jon Tankard which included input from members of the Parish Council be accepted as the formal response from the Parish Council.
The Chief Officer will confirm accordingly to Three Rivers District Council.

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162. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report

Members noted the report.

Towards the end of October the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group expects to be in a position to make available a final draft of the plan for members comments. This is dependant on consultancy and mapping work being finalised.

Councillor Sara Bedford advised that due to the volume of public comments received and the number of new sites coming forward for consideration the Three Rivers District Council Local Plan may be delayed to at least end 2022.

163. District and County Council Member's Reports

County Councillor Sara Bedford

- Work is ongoing with Hertfordshire County Council officers to minimise disruption to bus routes and local traffic caused by poorly planned road works. At times these are completely uncoordinated so involving impractical bus diversions and major traffic delays. Members are asked to advise Councillor Sara Bedford of any road works which do not have the statutory signage with contact details.
- Watford Community Housing Trust are failing to maintain fencing on the Hillside Estate and it is becoming unsightly and causing trip hazards. This is being progressed at a senior level with the trust.
- Lights in the East Lane pedestrian tunnel have finally been repaired. A cable break due to vandalism was finally traced.

164. Chairman's Report

The Chairman and Vice Chairman have attended the following events.

12th September - battle of Britain Service & Wreath Laying, St Lawrence Church. (Vice-Chairman.)

165. Clerk's Report

Members noted:

- Lemonfield Play Area - Liability Claim
- Members Attendance - Six Month Rule
- Office Copies

166. Monthly Statement of Accounts

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns and seconded by Councillor Ruth Clark and RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts for July & August 2021 as notified to the Council be approved and published on the Parish Council's website.

167. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that as the following matters related to the terms and conditions of Parish Council staff, the press and public be excluded from the discussion, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972, ss100 & 102.

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168. Public Speaking

A member of the public spoke on the following agenda item. The Chairman advised they had three minutes to speak.

When the three minutes was reached the member of the public repeatedly refused the Chairman's instruction and continued to speak.

The Chairman suspended the meeting for ten minutes and all members and officers present withdrew. The member of the public eventually stopped speaking and left the premises.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting after ten minutes and business was continued.

169. Review Panel

Members noted the outcome of the Review Panel meeting and that the complaint was not upheld.

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that members accepted both the decision of the Review Panel and the confidential notes of the meeting which had been circulated to members. The notes will be held as a confidential record as they identify a member of staff.

A vote was requested and all members were in favour.

170. Abbots Langley Tennis Club - Club Supreme

Members noted the update from the Clerk.

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and RESOLVED that members agreed with the Clerk's instructions to the Parish Council's solicitors to surrender the above lease.

To avoid any delays, it was further agreed that the lease surrender should be executed under the signature of the Chief Officer.

The meeting closed at 9.09 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____