

BENTWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held in the School Hall
on Tuesday May 1st 2012 at 7.30pm

16.74 Present Cllrs J Moir (retiring Chairman), J French (new Chairman), T Costigan, C Hurley, J Lewis, V Parker, and P Wait; PC Richard McLaren; Barbara Lees (clerk) and 25 members of the public.

16.75 Public session

No members of the public wished to speak on agenda items. A member of the public had expressed a wish to speak on the subject of traffic but was not permitted to do so. PC McLaren was invited to make a contribution. He warned that parishioners needed to take measures to safeguard against theft from garages and sheds by putting identifying marks on property. There had been a recent opportunist burglary in Bentworth and heating oil had been stolen from domestic tanks in the area.

16.76 Election of Chairman for 2012/2013

Cllr Moir announced her decision to retire from the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Costigan that Cllr French be elected as the next Chairman. Councillors voted unanimously in favour.

Cllr French signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Proper Officer (clerk).

Cllr Moir thanked everyone who had helped her during her time as Councillor and Chairman and congratulated Cllr French on her election.

As Cllr Moir retired from the room and Cllr French took the Chair, a member of the public expressed thanks and gratitude to Cllr Moir for her sincerity and commitment to the parish. The sentiment was endorsed by Cllr French and by all councillors and members of the public present.

16.77 Election of Vice Chairman for 2012/2013

Cllr Parker was nominated by Cllr Costigan and seconded by Cllr Lewis.

Cllr Hurley was nominated by Cllr Wait and seconded by Cllr French.

Voting was 2:2.

The Chairman gave her casting vote in favour of Cllr Hurley and declared that Cllr Hurley had been elected.

16.78 Apologies for absence had been received from County Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee.

16.79 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

16.80 The draft **minutes of the meeting of April 4th 2012** had been circulated to councillors. It was proposed by Cllr Lewis and seconded by Cllr Parker that they be accepted as a true record. Councillors voted unanimously in favour.

The minutes were signed by Cllr French.

16.81 Matters arising from those minutes

None were raised.

16.82 Casual Vacancy: Co-option of a Councillor

Philip Guest had asked to be considered for co-option.

It was proposed by Cllr Costigan and seconded by Cllr Wait that he should be co-opted. Councillors voted unanimously in favour. He signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. He asked to take his place as a voting councillor immediately; the Chairman agreed in view of his known previous knowledge of Council affairs.

16.83 Planning Committee

Cllrs Costigan, Wait and Parker agreed to be members.

They indicated their awareness of the need to determine formal Terms of Reference.

16.84 Finance Advisory Group

Cllrs Parker, Costigan and Hurley volunteered to be members. Cllr Parker proposed that they be accepted, Cllr Lewis seconded and councillors voted unanimously in favour.

16.85 Councillors' Areas of Responsibility

It was agreed that these would be as follows:

Bentworth Community Association representative: Cllr Lewis

Broadband: Cllr Guest

Environment: Cllr Lewis

Footpaths: Cllr Lewis

Health and Safety: Cllr French

Open Spaces: Cllr Wait

Pond: Cllr Wait

Traffic and Highways: Cllr Hurley

Transport: Cllr Hurley

Trees: Cllr Parker

Young People: Cllr Guest

Cllr Guest indicated that he thought it would be useful to have someone to look after Communications and said he would circulate councillors with his thoughts about such a role.

16.86 Arrangements for Summoning Councillors

Cllr Lewis proposed and Cllr Costigan seconded the Motion that Service of Summons on Councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting by delivery or post at their residences is not expedient and that such summons shall be served electronically, provided any such email contains the title of the proper Officer.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour.

16.87 Review of Standing Orders

A working group of Councillors had examined the Model Standing Orders provided by the National Association of Local Councils and had proposed slight modifications; a draft of the proposed document had been circulated to Councillors. It was proposed by Cllr Lewis and seconded by Cllr Parker that the draft should be accepted. Councillors voted 5 in favour and 1 against and 1 abstained. The motion was carried.

16.88 Review of Financial Regulations

It was proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Hurley that the Financial Regulations adopted by the Council at its meeting on March 7th 2012 be confirmed for the year 2012/2013. The vote was unanimously in favour.

16.89 Review of Assets

It was proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Lewis that the Finance Advisory Group be asked to review the Council's assets and report back to the Council. Councillors voted unanimously in favour.

16.90 Signatories for Cheques

Two signatures are necessary on each cheque paid by the Council; following the resignation of Cllr Moir from the Council, remaining signatories were the clerk and Cllr Parker. It was felt advisable to have several more. Councillors French, Costigan, Hurley, Lewis and Wait indicated their willingness to be signatories and the clerk agreed to make the necessary arrangements.

16.91 Financial Report April 2012

No payments had been made since the last meeting

Receipts since last meeting: 4.4.2012 from East Hampshire District Council:

Precept	£5,000.00
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Bank balances at 29.4.2012 were reported as:

Deposit Account	£16,960.02
Current Account	£1,012.50

Payments to authorise:

Clerk net salary April 2012	£236.80
HMRC: tax re clerk salary April 2012	£59.20
Clerk's expenses Jan – April 2012	£57.43

It was proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Hurley that the payments be made. Councillors voted unanimously in favour.

16.92 Review of Insurance Cover

Cllr Guest asked that the clerk should check with the Council's insurers whether they required disclosure of a potential legal dispute before agreeing terms for the next year. The clerk agreed to do so.

The existing policy was due to expire on May 31st 2012. Came and Co had quoted a premium for 2012/2013 of £414.28 or £393.57 if the Council were to sign a 3 year binding contract with Aviva.

Cllr Hurley proposed and Cllr Lewis seconded the motion that the quote for one year only be accepted. Councillors voted 6:1 in favour. The motion was carried.

16.93 Review of the Council's membership of other bodies

Cllr Parker proposed and Cllr Guest seconded the motion that membership of Hampshire Association of Local Councils be continued and the fee paid. Councillors voted unanimously in favour. The fee for 2012/2013 was £202.00.

Membership of the Campaign to Protect Rural England had been confirmed at the meeting of March 7th 2012.

16.94 Hire of School Hall

A revised contract had been circulated to councillors. Acceptance of it was proposed by Cllr Hurley and seconded by Cllr Wait and the vote was 5 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. Authorisation to pay the first instalment of £245.00 was proposed by Cllr Parker and seconded by Cllr Hurley; councillors voted 6:1 in favour.

16.95 Update on new Bus Shelter for Holt End Lane

Cllr Wait read out details of 3 quotes, which had already been circulated to councillors. Cllr Costigan proposed and Cllr Lewis seconded a motion to accept the quote submitted by Southern Textures (I Hughes). Councillors voted unanimously in favour. The clerk agreed to ask Southern Textures to liaise with Cllr Lewis over the construction and to ask East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) to remove the old shelter and base at the beginning of the school holiday, in July.

16.96 Update on Housing Needs Survey

Councillors discussed the advisability of a survey. Cllrs Costigan, Guest and Parker volunteered to draft a questionnaire and to suggest ways of communicating with the Parish on the matter. They agreed to report back to the Council.

16.97 Litter Picks

Cllrs Lewis and French offered to draft a risk assessment for the Council's consideration.

16.98 Other procedures

The clerk agreed to look for templates for procedures on (a) dealing with complaints; (b) dealing with freedom of information requests and (c) relations with the media. Cllr Guest offered to make suggestions on (c).

16.99 Report from Planning Committee

Cllr Wait reported on the following planning applications:

36405/002 18 Glebe Fields

53483/001 17 Glebe Fields

The Planning Committee had had no objections to these applications.

17.00 Councillors' Reports

There was news in the following areas:

Broadband: Cllr Parker said that Hampshire County Council (HCC) had been awarded £5m and were in the procurement phase of finding a partner to match that and work with them to start rolling out faster Broadband, starting in 2013. HCC were urging people to continue to register interest on their website.

Footpaths and Environment: Cllr Lewis described a site meeting, held with representatives of HCC, EHDC, other local councils, Police and motorbike clubs, along with local farmers and a resident, to discuss a response to the degradation of the surfaces of Jenny Green Lane and nearby lanes. It was acknowledged that the lanes were in an atrocious state and that a Temporary Closure Order would be needed while the surfaces were improved. It was said to be likely that HCC would ask local councils to contribute to the cost.

Traffic and Highways: Cllr Hurley had re-erected 2 signposts. He had already requested that potholes should be filled on the part of Jenny Green Lane which had a road surface. He reported that some potholes on Well Lane had been patched and that he had asked for a further length to be re-surfaced.

17.01 Meetings attended

The clerk had attended a useful Forum dealing with Audit and Data Protection.

17.02 Forthcoming meetings

Cllr Wait was intending to attend Planning for Non-Planners on May 17th; Cllrs Costigan and Guest indicated their wish to attend Core Skills for Councillors on June 12th.

17.03 Dates for Parish Council meetings 2012/2013

Already decided for 2012: June 6; July 4; September 5; October 3; November 7

Confirmed for 2013: January 2; February 6; March 6 (following the Annual Parish meeting); April 3; May 1 (Annual Parish Council Meeting)

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.17pm.