



## **Minutes of Annual Meeting of Hart Parish Council held at 7.00 pm on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 at Home Farm, Hart.**

*Cllr Littlefair welcomed everyone to Home Farm and explained that, due to Covid-19 restrictions this meeting was originally planned to be a virtual one, held using Zoom. As a physical meeting was preferred by Councillors, and the weather being fine, it had been decided only the previous day to hold the meeting at the top shed, Home Farm, with all present seated 2 metres apart. Due to the restrictions no members of the public, nor Ward Councillors were able to attend.*

**Present:** Cllrs. J. Littlefair, T. Britcliffe, K. Brown, K. Park, J. Quarmby, D. Simmons

**In Attendance:** M. West, Clerk

- 1. Election of Chairman:** Cllr Park nominated Cllr Britcliffe – Cllr Britcliffe declined the nomination. Cllr Quarmby proposed Cllr Littlefair, seconded by Cllr Simmons – the vote in favour of the proposal being unanimous, Cllr Littlefair was duly elected Chairman for 2020-21. Cllr Littlefair having signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office wished to make clear that he did not wish to remain Chairman ad infinitum.
- 2. Election of Vice-Chairman:** Cllr Littlefair proposed Cllr Britcliffe, seconded by Cllr Park - the vote in favour of the proposal being unanimous, Cllr Britcliffe was duly elected Vice-Chairman for 2020-21. Cllr Britcliffe signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 3. Declarations of Interest:** None
- 4. Apologies:** Cllr Geddes, Ward Cllr Cassidy.
- 5. Formation of Sub-Committees:** Cllr Park was nominated by Cllr Littlefair, to Chair the Maintenance Committee, but declined as he would no longer be available on Saturdays. Cllr Simmons agreed to take the Chair, and was then nominated by Cllr Littlefair and seconded by Cllr Park, with unanimous support. Cllr Park offered to continue as a member of the committee and to continue to produce the 'To Do' list, Cllr Simmons agreed to organise the Litter Picks and other practical maintenance required. Cllr Littlefair noted that several residents had volunteered to join the group, and agreed to remain a member of the group himself.
- 6. Banking Arrangements:** There being no concerns raised by the Clerk, it was **resolved** to remain with HSBC and with the same signatories on the Accounts.
- 7. To Note the Assets Register:** The Assets Register having been circulated in advance, all agreed it was accurate. Cllr Park asked which piece of land had been passed into HPC ownership by HBC in 1974. It was confirmed that the land in question was the current car park beside the church – which lay above the archaeological remains the site of 'The Great House' - a Scheduled Monument.

- 8. To Approve the Risk Register dated 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020:** The Clerk noted the format of the Register had been amended to provide a 'traffic light' system to give a visual indication of the level of risk, with those items highlighted in red being a potential high risk, those in green a low risk, and amber a medium risk. For the first time, she had given a red for both Security of, and Maintenance of, buildings, equipment etc. to reflect the current state of the Chare Wall, which was in imminent danger of collapse. Councillors concurred with this and **resolved** to approve the Risk Register.
- 9. Insurance Cover: (a) Proposed insurance cover and (b): Insurance premium:** The Clerk explained that the insurance cover provided by BHIB was a standard parish council cover, being sufficient to meet the current needs of the Council. In the light of the Coronavirus crisis, with meetings having been cancelled, and the insurance renewal due on 1<sup>st</sup> June, the decision had been made via email to renew the policy with BHIB. The Clerk assured Councillors that, having researched other insurers, the premium quoted was a competitive rate. The Chairman asked if it continued to provide cover for the Fireworks Display, but Cllr Simmons informed that as this would not be taking place this year, this extra cover was not required. It was **resolved** to ratify the decision to approve payment of the premium of £377.76.
- 10. Annual Governance and Accountability Return:** (circulated in advance of the meeting)
- a) **To accept the Internal Auditor's Report, note any recommendations and identify any actions required:** The Clerk informed that the Internal Auditor, Andrew Dixon, had completed his examination of the accounts, minutes, and other relevant papers including the Receipts & Payments Account and Bank Reconciliation and found no issues on which to make recommendations. He had completed the form on Page 4 of the AGAR once he had completed the examination. Councillors **resolved** to accept the report.
  - b) **To agree the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 of the Annual Return.** The Clerk read out each statement in turn, inviting Councillors to indicate their agreement or otherwise with each statement as made and completing the form as they did so. Once completed the Chairman signed and dated the form.
  - c) **To accept and approve the Receipts & Payments account 2019/20 and the Bank Reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020:** This had been circulated in advance of the meeting and approved by the Internal Auditor. The meeting **resolved** to accept the accounts as presented.
  - d) **To agree the Accounting Statements 2019/20 of the Annual Return:** Councillors **resolved** to accept the Accounting Statements.
  - e) **To agree the dates for the Exercise of Public Rights:** The Clerk had calculated the dates in order to meet the legal requirements, which were that, exceptionally in 2020 due to Covid, the dates must start no later than 1<sup>st</sup> September and must cover 30 working days (Mon-Fri, excluding Bank Holidays). She therefore recommended they start on 1<sup>st</sup> July and complete on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Councillors **resolved** to accept the Clerk's recommendation.
  - f) **To approve the submission of the Certificate of Exemption:** The Clerk explained that any parish council with a turnover of less than £25,000 was exempted from an External Audit, provided the said council had agreed to request exemption and had received no negative findings in the previous year's audit. HPC fully met these criteria however, as the External Auditor would sample from any council self-certificating as exempt, there may still be an External Audit fee to pay, should Hart be one of those selected this year. Councillors **resolved** to submit the Certificate of Exemption. The Chairman then signed and dated the Exemption Certificate.

g) **To agree the Clerk be the RFO for the year 2020/2021:** Councillors **resolved** the Clerk should remain the RFO for the year 2020-2021.

**11. To agree the Internal Auditor for 2010-2021:** Councillors **resolved** that Andrew Dixon be appointed again as Internal Auditor. Mr. Dixon very kindly gave his services free of charge.

*This concluded the business of the Annual Meeting at 7.20pm. The meeting then proceeded to deal with normal Parish Council business.*