

ECCLESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Ecclesfield Parish Council held Thursday 11 June 2020, held remotely via Zoom.

Present:

Councillor J. Housley (Chairman), Councillor A. Brownrigg, Councillor J. Brownrigg, Councillor T. Bawden, Councillor V Bowden, Councillor P. Brunt, Councillor T. Grantham, Councillor K Guest, Councillor G Lakin, Councillor C Levery, Councillor D Ogle, and Councillor A Hooper

In attendance: Karen Mann (minute taker) and 4 members of the public.

The chairman reminded all in attendance about recording of meetings. Councillors informed the chairman that the meeting would be recorded and facebook livestream was also taking place with over 500 people watching the livestream.

2020/001. To Receive apologies and consider approval of reasons for absence (EOFC)

Councillor P Swift provided his apologies and the reasons for apology were accepted.

RESOLVED: That Councillor P Swift's apologies be noted and reasons be approved.

2020/002. Declarations of Interest (EOFC)

- 2a No dispensation requests were received.
- 2b No declarations of interests were provided.

2020/003. Public Participation (EOFC)

A member of the public asked a question regarding a facebook post by Councillor Brunt that notified the public that he was resigning as a councillor. Councillor Brunt explained that he had written to the clerk, the clerk had asked Councillor Brunt to send his resignation to the Chairman. Councillor Brunt then changed his mind and did not send the Chairman his resignation.

2020/004. Insurance Provision for 2020/2021 (EOFC)

Council considered the update from the Chairman of the Finance Committee with regard to three quotations that had been received. The current insurance provider, Zurich had offered the best value for money quotation and it was recommended that the Insurance premium of £1,968.00 be approved which was a 4% increase on the previous 3 year agreement.

RESOLVED: That Zurich Insurance Premium 2020/2021 be approved at a cost of £1,968.00 for a three year long term agreement from the Admin Budget 2020/2021 and the renewal invoice be paid.

2020/005. Councillor Resignation (EOFC)

- 5a. The advice from NALC regarding the resignation of a councillor was received.
- 5b. The Chairman of the Council had received the resignation of Mr Alec Henstock which had been provided, in writing, to the Chairman. A debate took place regarding the validity of the resignation.

- 5c. The Chairman updated council that Sheffield City Council had been notified of the casual vacancy. It was explained that should 10 electors call for a poll then a by-election would take place. However, after the 14 day notice period had passed and, should no electors call for a poll, then the Council could co-opt a councillor.

RESOLVED: That

- 5a The advice from NALC be noted;**
5b The written resignation was accepted by the Chairman from Mr Henstock; and
5c The Council would wait to hear from Sheffield City Council and when the notice of a casual vacancy was provided it would be displayed in a prominent place.

**2020/006. Employment
(EOFC)**

- 6a. The Chair of the Staffing Committee gave a verbal update. The Clerk had resigned on the 22 May 2020 and as she was in the probationary period had only provided one weeks notice. She had updated that the job was not for her and finished on the 29 May 2020. The Admin Officer had gone off sick which left the office in dire straits. There was 55 hours a week in hours not being currently covered.
- 6b. The Council considered appointing a Locum Clerk. It was agreed that a Locum Clerk should be appointed as soon as possible. An advert for the position needed to be provided. A Locum Clerk may be available from further a-field as it is only a temporary post. Council may consider that a Clerk is appointed full-time or that the post Clerk/RFO be split and the hours split accordingly. It was agreed to hold an Extraordinary meeting in 2 weeks time to look at a draft Locum Clerk advert, circulated previously by the Chair of the Staffing Committee, and advertise the post as soon as possible. The role of the Clerk/RFO would also be discussed at the Staffing Committee meeting.
- 6c. The Council agreed that the committee would investigate the reason for the current staffing problems. A debate took place around the reasons for the clerk leaving and whether the Staffing Committee should investigate the reasons. It was suggested that an outside company (not YLCA, NALC or SCC) be invited to investigate the current staffing issues and reasons for the clerk leaving. The costs would be identified and the Staffing Committee would provide feedback to Council.

RESOLVED: That

- 6a The resignation of the Clerk be received;**
6b The Staffing Committee be delegated to put a Locum Clerk advert out as soon as possible; and the first item on the agenda of the Staffing Committee would be the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Staffing Committee in accordance with the Staffing Committee Terms of Reference; and
6c The Staffing Committee find an outside company, not YLCA, NALC or Sheffield City Council, to investigate the reasons for the Clerk leaving and other staff being on sick leave and to provide a cost for appointing an outside company to complete this work; and a report be provided, at a future date, to the Council.

Council resolved to exclude members of the press and public for items 7f and 7g due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted by virtue of the Public (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 exclusion of the press and public.

**2020/007. Ecclesfield Parish Council Administration
(EOFC)**

- 7a. The council considered the appointment of the Proper Officer for statutory purposes defined in law. A discussion took place and nominations for the appointment of

- Proper Officer were considered. A councillor heard an expletive whilst the debate took place. The Chairman said that this would be investigated.
- 7b. Council considered the appointment of a Council Member as temporary unpaid Clerk/RFO on a volunteer worker contract and job description. A debate took place about this temporary post. It was suggested that the Council's previous advisor be asked to assist with matters of finance. Councillor J Brownrigg offered to be the temporary unpaid Clerk/RFO and could offer assistance on a Monday or Friday. It was agreed to discuss the advisor to Council providing assistance at the end of the meeting and the Standing Orders would be suspended to allow Council to discuss this matter further as it was not an agenda item.
 - 7c. Council considered this item at 6c.
 - 7d. An update was provided with regard to the One Drive password. Recently there had been problems with the Council's email's and three councillors did not use the councils email addresses. (This was the choice of the three councillors) The Council's website had also been down but it was working once again. One Drive had been set up in 2007 with an Aol.com account, this needed moving across to the Microsoft account. It was agreed that all passwords would be changed, by members of staff, once the One Drive password was amended and the change across to the Microsoft account was completed.
 - e. A discussion took place regarding who were the designated key holders. The current standing orders state staff and the Chairman of Council were the keyholders. Councillors Lakin and Bawden were the fire and intruder alarm keyholders.
 - h. Council considered the advice from NALC with regard to the legality of the Annual meeting of Council and the wrongly dated Standing Orders. It was agreed that the Standing Orders from the 9 January 2020 were adopted at the Annual meeting of Council held on the 14 May 2020.

Members of the public were asked to leave the remote meeting and the recordings were switched off as the Council resolved to exclude members of the press and public for items 7f and 7g due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted by virtue of the Public (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 exclusion of the press and public.

- f. Council noted that a FOI request had been made. The Chairman had received advice from YLCA and was in contact with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) on how to respond in the absence of a Clerk.
- g. Council noted that a SAR had been received and the Chairman updated the Council that he sought advice from the ICO.

RESOLVED: That

- 7a (i) Councillor J Brownrigg be appointed the Proper Officer of the Council until a Clerk was appointed;**
- 7a (ii) The Chairman would investigate who spoke an expletive during the debate.**
- 7b (i) Councillor J Brownrigg be appointed the temporary unpaid Clerk/RFO, offering assistance on a Monday and Friday during office hours (9am – 12 noon) and that he would not go into the office unless a member of staff was in attendance;**
- 7b (ii) YLCA be asked to provide a volunteer worker contract and draft Job Description, for Councillor J Brownrigg. Once the contract was signed and Job Description accepted Councillor J Brownrigg would be the Volunteer Clerk/RFO.**
- 7d Councillor T Bawden assist with changing the One Drive password, with a member of staff present, to ensure the password could be changed again, once it was working correctly.**

- 7e Councillors Lakin and Bawden continue to be keyholders, for alarm purposes only, the Chairman and staff also be keyholders. No other councillors to be keyholders.
- 7f The Chairman feed back to Council with regard to the Freedom of Information request after he had contacted the ICO for advice.
- 7g The Chairman feed back to council with regard to the Subject Access Request after he had contacted the ICO for advice.
- 7h The update from NALC was noted and the Standing Orders dated 9 January 2020 were adopted on the 14 May 2020.

**2020/008. Ecclesfield Parish Council Meetings
(EOFC)**

- 8a. It was agreed that the next meeting would be an Extraordinary Staffing Committee meeting to be held in 2 weeks time. Dates of future Council meetings would be decided upon at a later date.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.