

HOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 6th June 2023 at 19.00
at Houghton Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors: A Young (Chairman), L Adams (Vice Chairman), J Coombes, A Dougall
L Middleton, P Chant.

Members of the Public: 6
Minutes: Mrs C L Cotterell (Parish Clerk)

The meeting started at 19.01

Item Minute

- 1. Chairman's Welcome**
Cllr Young welcomed all to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
Apologies were received from Cllr Battey.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
To declare an interest in any items of business on this agenda – None.
- 4. Internal Audit Report**
 - a) To receive the Internal Audit Report for 2022/23 and agree an action plan – Cllrs accepted the Internal Audit report and noted one comment regarding the CIL reserves: *As a result of CIL funds received during the year, the reserves of the Council are at more than triple the precept, with no clear projects planned - The Council should work with the community over the next year to find appropriate uses for current and future CIL income.*
 - b) To approve payment of the Internal Auditor's invoice for 2022/23 - £250.00 – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Dougall, seconded Cllr Coombes.
- 5. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23**
 - a) To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 - Cllrs approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 which was signed by the Clerk and Chairman - **Resolved** - Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Middleton.
 - b) To approve the Accounting Statements for 2022/23 – Cllrs approved the Accounting Statements for 2022/23 which were signed by the RFO and the Chairman – **Resolved** - Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Dougall.
 - c) To agree the dates for the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights – Cllrs **agreed** the dates for the period to be from Monday 12 June – Friday 21 July 2023.
- 6. RoSPA Play Equipment Inspection 2023**
 - a) To receive the play equipment inspection report and agree any actions required – Cllrs received the inspection report and discussed issues raised. Cllrs agreed, that due to the plans to upgrade the play area equipment over the next few months, to remove the rocker chair as soon as possible and add cable ties, as suggested in the report, on the top of the swings to deter birds settling.
It was noted that the Village Hall committee has been approached to consider whether the caretaker may be able to take on regular cleaning of the play equipment, the Village Hall committee are holding a meeting next Monday – Cllr Dougall will update Cllrs at a future meeting.

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CLlr Coombes gave a brief update on the Parish Council plans to upgrade the play area so far. 3 companies have visited the site and will be providing proposed designs, with options in metal and wood and provide quotations. Once received and reviewed further consultation will take place with the community along with investigation into funding options available.

- b) To approve payment of the inspection fee for 2023 – £106.80 – **Resolved** – Proposed Cllr Adams, seconded Cllr Dougall.

7. River Pollution

To receive an update.

Borough Cllr Johnston had provided an update via email – *“I have raised the Test water quality concerns to officers at the council and our MP Caroline Nokes. Other parishes are reporting the same problems and there is an on-going dialog with Southern Water. There is a ‘pan parish group who were formed to address this problem specifically and I don’t know if Houghton is a member. If not, I can find out further details”.* – It was agreed that the Clerk will contact Cllr Johnston to request information about the ‘pan parish’ group.

A member of the public raised concerns over the pollution in river and informed Cllrs about equipment available to monitor pollution, the cost is approx. £9,000 to purchase the equipment with annual running costs at approx. £3,500.

After discussion Cllrs agreed that Cllrs Middleton, Coombes and Dougall will form a working group to follow up on information from other parishes, the Fishing Club, Southern Water, and review options available for monitoring pollution and engagement with the village community. Terms of Reference for the working group will be drafted for approval at the next meeting. The working group will provide recommendations for the Council to consider at future meetings.

It was noted that the Environmental group will be attending the Test Valley Community Energy event on 13th June.

8. Next Meeting

Full Council Meeting – Tuesday 4th July 2023 at 19.00

Meeting closed at 19.51

These Minutes were approved and signed at the meeting held on Tuesday 4th July 2023