

BRITWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BRITWELL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.02 P.M., REMOTELY VIA ZOOM

Present Cllr P K Mann (in the chair)
Cllrs. R. Anderson, P Brooker, Mrs S Brooker, P Murphy and S Wright

In Attendance : Mr. J. Holder (Locum Clerk) ;

20/194/PC Declaration of Interest

194.1 Cllrs. Anderson, P Brooker and Mann made a general declaration that each was a member of Slough BC, with Cllr Mann making a further declaration that she was a Cabinet member of Slough BC (for Planning) specifically in respect of agenda item 9.

20/195/PC Apologies

195.1 There were none.

20/196/PC Minutes of the meetings held on 21st October 2020

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 21st October were **approved** as an accurate record of the meeting. The Chair would sign and send a scanned copy to the Clerk.

20/197/PC Public Forum

197.1 There was none.

20/198/PC Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

198.1 *K9 Capers Dog Training Group (minute 156.9)* - Mr Holder noted the proposed pricing plan. The Group had only started in September and had closed for the lockdown so that the fee- free three month period would not be reached until the new year. Following discussion, the Council **agreed** in principle to charge £8 per hour but would review at the next meeting.
Action: Locum Clerk

198.2 *Installation of Goal Posts (minute 170.1)* Mr Holder noted that the cost of £1,650 plus VAT agreed at the last meeting would need to be *vired* from general reserves. The Council **confirmed** that the money be *vired*. .

198.3 *Cllr John Finn (minute 165.2)* – Cllr Murphy said that she had received a card from Mrs Finn to express her thanks to the Council for the flowers provided for Cllr John Finn's funeral and the letter of condolence sent to her by Cllr Brooker in his capacity as Mayor of Slough.

198.4 *Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019 -20 (minute 100.5)* - The Locum Clerk reported that the external auditors had confirmed the governance and the accounts satisfied Proper Practices. They had made one observation, which did not affect their opinion, that the Council should have regard to the level of reserves when considering future precept requests. He noted that moneys had subsequently been transferred to earmarked reserves but such moneys had been in the general reserves as of the last year end.

20/199/PC Neighbourhood Police

199.1 Mr Holder said he had requested but had received no update this month. Noting it had been some time since the Police had responded, Cllr Mann said that she intended to

write to her Police contact.
Mann

Action: Cllr.

20/200/PC Co-option of a Member

200.1 The Locum Clerk said that as there had not been a request from 10 local electors seeking a poll for an election, further to the recent notice, there will not be an election to replace Cllr John Finn. Accordingly the Council may co-opt someone to take this casual vacancy. He had heard earlier that day via Cllr Mann from one local person expressing an interest. The Locum Clerk would invite him to attend the next meeting to put himself forward. He would also put details on the website and Council members should in turn notify him of anyone else who might wish to put themselves forward at the January meeting. Candidates would be asked to provide a short statement and be invited to present/be questioned by the Council. The Council can choose to co-opt or not so choose. If there were more than one person, then councillors would have to vote.
Action: Locum Clerk/ALL

20/201/PC Updates from Outside Bodies

201.1 *Youth Club* - Cllr Murphy said that with this second Lockdown, the Youth Club was again closed.

20/202/PC Coronavirus

202.1 *Slough Covid Outbreak group* - The Chair said that Slough had gone into Tier 2 shortly before Lockdown. Their activity had been overtaken then by Lockdown. There was intended to be a drop off of information in the area in the next week. Concern this week had been in respect of younger people. Breakdown percentages of those affected in local areas could be found on Berkshire Public Health website. Cllr Anderson said that if levels remained as high at the end of Lockdown, Slough could go back to Tier 3.

202.2 *Mobile Covid Testing Site at Britwell* – There had been no further communication on this; Cllr Mann would seek an update.
Action: Cllr Mann

202.3 *Lockdown* – Mr Holder said that further to Lockdown, both Glad Tidings and Slimming World were unable to use the hall; however Slough foodbank was permitted and was still operating.

20/203/PC Planning

203.1 Cllr Mann, as Cabinet member of Slough BC (for Planning), vacated the chair and excused herself for this item, with Cllr Brooker taking the chair. Council members reviewed the following applications.

<u>Application Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Council Comment</u>
Y/19049/000	46, GOODWIN ROAD, SLOUGH, SL2 2ET	The erection of a single storey rear extension, which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 4m, with a maximum height of 2.99m, and an eaves height of 2.92m	No comment
P/10238/003	379, FARNHAM ROAD,	Construction of a two storey	No comment

	SLOUGH, SL2 3AF	side and rear extension.	
Y/06189/003	8, TRAVIS COURT, FARNHAM ROYAL, SLOUGH, SL2 3SB	Prior approval for an additional storey to dwellinghouse	No comment

203.2 The Locum Clerk to notify Slough BC Planning.

Action: Locum Clerk

20/204/PC Site Vision & Building Works

204.1 Cllrs Anderson and Mann were still to get input from Stephen Gibson , Regeneration director at Slough BC, to help inform possible options and it was confirmed accordingly that this should continue to be carried forward as an agenda item. **Action: Cllrs Anderson / Mann**

204.2 The Locum Clerk reported that he had written out and was seeking three quotes for each of the following items of work:-

- a) Minor asbestos work;
- b) Repair to damaged panels on the outside of the building;
- c) Repairs to the fencing at both the front and around the perimeter;
- d) The insertion of a disabled toilet in the Bar area.

As there might be possible refurbishment in the near future, he requested confirmation that, notwithstanding previous approval for such work, the Council still wished to proceed with all four items of work. The Council **confirmed** all four.

204.3 Bearing in mind the next scheduled meeting would not be till January, ,the Council **agreed** it would consider tender responses for individual items of work over this period , with any decisions to be ratified at their next meeting. The Locum Clerk said if there were matters which might need debate, he would seek an extraordinary meeting in between time. **Action: Locum Clerk**

20/205/PC Parish Communications

205.1 There was nothing to report.

20/206/PC Community Centre and Sports Ground

206.1 *Waste Contract* – Mr Holder had previously circulated his comments on the draft contract issued by Slough BC. He regarded a number of terms as onerous, such as the requirement placed on the Council as customer both to provide an indemnity and accept liability for indirect or consequential loss. Cllr Anderson noted that such terms were standard for such service and similar terms had been previously accepted from Amey. The Council **agreed** that it should accept such contract and instructed the Locum Clerk to sign the contract on the Council’s behalf. **Action: Locum Clerk**

20/207/PC Internal Auditor for 2020 - 2021

207.1 The Locum Clerk reported that Mr Barrie Dancer had completed his interim internal audit. The Council considered each of the three issues he had raised.

207.2 First, that the Council should review the system of making online payments to ensure the potential for duplicate and small payment errors are minimised. Mr Holder noted that with Covid 19 and remote meetings, the Council had moved from its previous practice of the

Locum Clerk writing out cheques for payment at the meeting, after approval, which were then verified by councillors against the invoices and signed. Now following approval at the meeting, two councillors would upload details and approve electronically. As the internal auditor had noted, there had been two recent errors. Both of these had been picked up by the Locum Clerk the following month when he completed that month's cashbook and bank reconciliation and that check system would continue to operate. On both these occasions, the respective payees had made good but there might be a future risk if that were not to happen. Councillors approving online payments were therefore requested to check items carefully. **Action: Signatory Councillors**

207.3 Second, that there was £12,000 accrued in the 2019/20 Accounts for legal costs to be reimbursed to the Council by Slough BC. The Locum Clerk reported that the Council's lawyers had settled the outstanding issue on the amount of costs in the last fortnight and this sum with interest should shortly be paid.

207.4 Third, that whilst the Council did, following consideration, exceptionally approve a payment without an invoice, the Financial Regulations did provide the need for invoices to be checked and verified by the RFO before submission to the Council. Cllr Wright said that the work had been done as an urgent matter to make safe metal protruding from the ground which had been claimed to cause injury to a child. The contractor had left his invoice at the bar but this had not been forwarded on. It had been necessary for the contractor to be paid which he had done. The Council at meeting had previously recognised the exceptional nature of this and approved such payment but Council members recognised the requirements to follow the practice set out in the Financial Regulations.

20/208/PC Precept/ Budget for 2021 - 2022

208.1 Mr Holder highlighted Income & Spend to end October and forecast for 2021-2022. The impact of Covid 19 had severely affected income, both from Hall hire and from the Bar. This loss of income from Covid was also forecast into 2021-2022. Although the Bar might re-open in the near future, any future refurbishment/rebuild affecting the building, which had still to be determined, would both affect income and increase spend. Maintaining the precept next year at the same level as this year would mean a deficit budget and accordingly being covered from general reserves. Reducing the precept would require even greater moneys from current general reserves. Cllr Anderson said that with such uncertainty over income, he would wish to keep the precept at the same level. Following discussion, the Council **agreed in principle** to approve the 2021/22 budget and maintain the precept next year at the same level but to review and finalise at the January meeting. **Action: Locum Clerk**

20/209/PC Finance

209.1 *Income & Expenditure* - Mr Holder highlighted a few items in the cashbook. The income and expenditure and bank reconciliation for October 2020 were **approved**.

209.2 In addition to bank payments and direct debits, it was **agreed** to approve the following payments by BACS :-

- £175.00 to B Dancer for the Interim internal audit (2020-21);
- £480 (inc VAT) to PKF Littlejohn LLP for external Audit (2019 -20);
- £1,455 .00 (inc VAT) to Manorcott Legal & Business Services LLP for locum clerk work;
- £14.39 (inc VAT) to reimburse J Holder for November Zoom charge.

209.3 Mr Holder noted that the monthly invoice from Slough BC for December waste collection was expected shortly but had not yet been received. Such payment was **authorised**.

209.4 Noting that there was no meeting scheduled for December , it was **confirmed** that payments falling due in this period could be authorised for payment and ratified at the January meeting.

209.5 *Additional bank Signatories* - Cllr Anderson had provided additional details required earlier that day as required by the bank, which the Locum Clerk would process.
Action: Cllr. Anderson/ Locum Clerk

209.6 *Revised Asset List* - The Locum Clerk highlighted a revised Asset List which had been previously circulated. Further to a review he had had undertaken with Cllrs Wright and Murphy at the time the previous tenant had vacated the premises, the List was updated to remove items which had been agreed to over the course of the tenancy. Following the purchase of the bar chiller, as part of exit arrangements, this had been added to the List. Following consideration, the revised Asset List was **approved**.

20/210/PC Chicken Ranch Bar

Interim Licence

210.1 The Locum Clerk reported that Mr Lodhi had agreed to the commercial terms proposed. He had since provided Mr Lodhi access to the premises so that he could get quotes for work to be done. Mr Lodhi had indicated that he would hope to be in by Christmas.

210.2 In view of the continued uncertainty over when the Council might commence any building works which would in turn require closure of the Bar, the Council's solicitors had advised two options for contracting. First, to have a six month licence which would end after the six month period ; on the basis that the Council was not at that stage ready to proceed, it could issue a further six month licence and so on until ready to proceed with building works. Alternatively the Council could issue a three year lease but build in break clauses at six monthly intervals, to provide for the lease to terminate early. Following discussion and noting that building work was not expected to start in the near future, the Council **agreed** to enter into a three year lease, with the first break clause after 12 months and at six month intervals thereafter. The Locum Clerk would so instruct solicitors. **Action: Locum Clerk**

210.3 The Council having agreed the key terms, and on the basis it might complete by Christmas, the Council **authorised** the Locum Clerk to proceed to complete, with completion to be ratified at the January meeting. **Action: Locum Clerk**

20/211/PC Agenda items for Next Meeting

To include approval of Precept for 2021-2022.

Action: Locum Clerk

20/212/PC Any Other Business

212.1. *Christmas Present* – It was agreed to provide a £50 Christmas gift to both staff members; Cllr Mann would provide gift vouchers and pass to Cllr Murphy to distribute
Action: Cllrs Mann/Murphy

20/213/PC Next Meeting

213.1 The next Full Council Meeting to be at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 20th January 2021 remotely via Zoom.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

.....Chair

Dated.....