**BLACKMORE, HOOK END & WYATTS GREEN PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

**of the Ordinary Meeting of the Blackmore, Hook End &**

**Wyatts Green Parish Council held on**

**THURSDAY 17th MARCH 2022 at 7.30pm**

**At Tipps Cross Remembrance Hall**

**Members present**: R Keeble (Chairman), T Lockhart, J Lewis, K Wood, V Dean, T Thomas, T Hinton, N McCarthy, K Parkinson and R Nelson (RFO), T Bridge & P Jakobsson, BBC

**Present on Zoom**: K Bennett, A Watley, S Clapham (Parish Clerk)

Cllr Keeble respectfully asked Members to observe one minute’s silence in support of Ukraine and the hardships it faces during the Russian invasion and to honour the fallen. The meeting resumed with the following items of business:

**0202 Apologies for absence –** Cllrs Clarke and Cannon

**0203 Approval of minutes –** The minutes of the meeting held on 17th February 2022 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**0204 Declaration of interest (for items on the agenda) –** A Watley, K Wood and R Keeble regarding Allotments.

**0205 Open Forum – ­** no residents were present.

**0206 Progress Check/Report –** Nil.

**0207 Correspondence/Communications –** The usual annual entry into the EPFA Best Kept Playing Field Competition was unanimously approved with an entry fee of £10 plus £2 for additional entries. The Clerk confirmed that this will include Ted Marriage.

**0208 Reports of Borough & Essex County Councillors –** Cllr Jakobsson reported that Purdah was due to start on 28th March, resulting in a large number of meetings being squeezed in before that date. Electoral boundaries are currently being reviewed with Borough Councillors favouring an increase of Councillors to 39 (considered reasonable in view of the increased number of dwellings) and a three-year rotation. The possibility of a Consultation is being considered. Cllr Jakobsson further reported on a recent Peer Review of BBC undertaken via the Local Government Association; the subsequent report was largely favourable but negative points will be actioned.

Following an approach by a resident of Wyatts Green Road, the problem of speeding and lorries exceeding the weight limits was raised. Cllr McCarthy pointed out that this matter had been discussed for at least 10 years with no action by the Council. Cllr Dean commented that even 20 years ago, the Police had said that they could do nothing about the problem. Cllr Jakobsson acknowledged the issue but explained that action was unlikely unless there was an accident. He further stated that the weight limit problem was unenforceable. However, he would raise the issue again with County Councillor Lesley Wagland.

Cllr Bridge reported that the BBC’s “backroom” work will now be handled jointly with Basildon and Castle Point Councils. The LDP is due for review next week and it is highly likely that this will be passed. It was noted that Basildon has rejected its LDP which leaves a planning vacuum. One Brentwood Town Centre plan was approved, being William Hunter House - the construction of 60 flats.

**POLICY & RESOURCES**

**0209** **Finance - Payments made online**: CLERK/RFO

S Clapham –

Pension -

HMRC –

Mrs R Nelson –

PWLB - £1521.00 – half-yearly payment

Digital Graphics Ltd - £115.20 (inc. VAT) – di-bond signs for Hay Green Lane fingerpost

Neil O’Riordan - £40.00 for removal and storage of the two fingerposts (Wenlocks Lane and Dines Corner)

Total Landscapes £144.00 (inc. VAT) – removal of old bench and installation of new memorial bench next to the War Memorial (ex Dorothy Mears).

BBC - £1170.00 (inc. VAT) – inv. no. 100378658 - dog and litter bins (1st Oct – 31st Dec 2021).

Bits & Bytes Essex - £70.00 – computer work and renewal of internet security licence.

NBB - £43.20 (inc. VAT) – ground fixings for memorial seats

NBB - £594.00 (inc. VAT) - memorial bench

Pitchcare - £537.60 (inc. VAT) – pitch fertiliser and weed killer - W.Hobbs

BBPCA membership renewal - £52.41

W H Norris - £100 for the annual rental of the Blackmore Allotment Garden.

W H Norris - £475 for half of the rentals due on the occupied plots.

Tipps Cross Remembrance Hall - £260 for Parish Office.

**Payments made on the PC Credit Card:** - £28.99 (inc. VAT) – Amazon – printer cartridge.

£125.82 (inc. VAT) – Aspli Safety – 15 litter pickers

**Cash drawn:** - nil

**Transfers:** – nil

**Memberships:**- EPFA - £30.00 – renewal of annual membership was approved.

**Income/receipts**: Nil.

**0210** **Financial Report to 28th February 2022**

Mrs Nelson had circulated the figures to the end of February to all members. There were no questions and these were approved without change.

Cllr Bennett reported (with amazement) that the BBC Council Tax statements for 2022/23 had again quoted incorrect information on percentage increases from 2021/22, the worst example being Adult Social Care. The Clerk will email Cllr Bridge with the details so that the issue can be raised with BBC. **Action: Clerk**

**Financial Powers:**

**0211 a)** The full Standing Orders for Local Councils, as adopted in July 2016 and updated in 2018 and the condensed Standing Orders used as a reference guide at meetings, as adopted 2004 and updated in 2007, were reviewed by the Council. Cllr McCarthy proposed, Cllr Hinton seconded and it was unanimously agreed that these are approved without amendment.

**b)** The Financial Regulations for Blackmore, Hook End and Wyatts Green Parish Council, as adopted by the Council in 2011 and updated in 2016 were reviewed in their present form by the Council. These detail the methods by which the Council’s financial matters are administered and regulated. Cllr Lockhart proposed, Cllr Parkinson seconded and it was unanimously agreed that these are approved without amendment. A comprehensive review of the Regulations is underway and is due for completion by 30th April 2022.

**c)** The Council’s systems of internal control, including the arrangements for the management of risk, were reviewed and considered to be both effective and adequate.

**d)** The Responsible Financial Officer reported on the quality of service provided by the Internal Auditor, Mr Trevor Brown CPFA. The Council reviewed the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor and Cllr Thomas proposed, Cllr Lockhart seconded and it was unanimously agreed that he be reappointed as auditor for the financial year 2021/21.

**e)** Cllr Bennett had prepared the annual proposal regarding salary changes and charges to/payments from Blackmore Village Hall and Tipps Cross Remembrance Hall. Cllr Keeble proposed, Cllr Dean seconded and these were approved without change for implementation with effect from 1st April 2022.

**0212** **HERALD YEAR BOOK** (May) – The Clerk has reported that preparation for the 2022 Year Book is underway. Cllr McCarthy considered that the editorial content could be reduced to avoid a direct repeat of 2021’s content. This would allow the number of advertisements to be increased. All Councillors are asked to spread the word that the year book offers good local advertising at very reasonable rates (£38 full page/£20 half page). Cllr Bennett reminded the meeting that the aim of the Year Book was to cover costs; it was not intended to be profit-making. It was noted that the magazine will be published after the May Assembly meeting and can therefore include a summary of the PC’s activities during the past year.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**0213** A Planning Committee meeting had been held on 14th March 2022. The planning reports as circulated ahead of the meeting were approved without change. Cllr Lockhart reported that two appeals had been dismissed. The applications discussed were as follows:

**22/0145/HHA –** 2 Woollard Way, Blackmore, CM4 0QL – No objection

**22/00304/HHA –** 19 Orchard Piece, Blackmore, CM4 0RX – No objection

**22/00237/HHA** – Langdon House, Church Lane, Blackmore, CM4 0RN – No objection

**22/00240/HHA** – Tulloch, Spring Pond Meadow, Hook End, CM15 0NS – No objection

**22/00391/CAT** – Walnut Tree Cottage, Blackmore Rd, CM4 0QX – No objection

**LDP**

Sites R25 and R26 – Flood Risk Assessment –The Clerk has contacted three consultants recommended by Holmes & Hills for quotations but it was again noted that this would normally be the responsibility of ECC, BBC or the developer to undertake such assessments as part of the planning procedure.

**BBC Local listing of Heritage Assets**

Cllr McCarthy explained that whilst Blackmore village is well represented on the national listings, there may be other properties/sites around the whole Parish which should be included to the BBC list, giving Mill Mound and the new Beacon as an example. He will prepare a presentation covering any suitable sites and would like this to be submitted via the PC.  **Action: All Councillors to suggest suitable locations**

**PARKS & OPEN SPACES**

Committee to report on the meeting held on 11th March 2022 at 10.00am (Zoom). To accept the Minutes circulated to all Members. The following items to be discussed:

**0214 FOB’s event – Millennium Park –** Cllr Parkinson reported that FOBs are liaising with the Sports & Social Club regarding the provision of alcohol. All other arrangements are proceeding satisfactorily.

**0215** **Queen’s Platinum Jubilee commemoration – June 2022 –**  Cllr Parkinson reported that the construction cost for the Beacon basket will be £1,450 and she enquired if the Parish Council would be prepared to meet 50% of the cost. It was noted that the PC has paid the planning fee (£259) and has committed to the on-going maintenance cost of the beacon. This will be referred for discussion at the next POS meeting.

**Action: Clerk for POS Agenda**

**0216 Spring Litter Pick – Saturday 26th March 2022 –**

The Clerk had purchased 15 new litter pickers and had plenty of free sacks in store.

**0217 Allotment fencing wind damage** – A quote had been received from Land Vista £315.20 (plus VAT) to repair the damage caused to the Allotment Garden fence. Cllr McCarthy proposed, Cllr Dean seconded and this expenditure was approved. **Action: Clerk**

**0218 Dines Corner broken fingerpost** – The Clerk reported that a quote had been received from Deckanon for the repair of the broken fingerpost but they have assumed that the installation will be carried out by Parish volunteers. The quote at £540.80 was considered to be high and the Clerk will ask N O’Riordan and Total to quote for this work.

**Action: Clerk**

**0219 Christmas Lights** – The Clerk had received an alternative quote (£695.40 plus VAT) for the advance purchase of Christmas lights. Cllr Bennett proposed, Cllr McCarthy seconded and this expenditure was unanimously approved. **Action: Clerk**

**0220** **Planters (old Post Office)** – It was felt that the existing planters outside the old Post Office were too small and agreed that these would be used to replace the planters on Gunnels Corner. Purchase of 2 rectangular “Holmfirth” planters at a cost of £535 (plus VAT) each was proposed by Cllr Keeble, seconded by Cllr Lewis and unanimously approved.  **Action: Clerk**

**0221 Electricity hook-up (The Green)** – The Clerk had circulated details of a quote from A E Elmes (£330.00 no VAT) – to upgrade the supply of electricity to the main village green. This expenditure was proposed by Cllr Parkinson, seconded by Cllr Wood and approved.

**Action: Clerk**

**0222 EPFA Best Kept Playing field competition –** The meeting approved the entry to this annual competition (£10 fee plus £2 for additional playing fields). It was noted that Ted Marriage is included. **Action: Clerk**

**CLERK’S REPORT (Governance)**

**0223** **General Power of Competence** – The Clerk had circulated details of the General Power of Competence which gave the Council the authority to spend on items not normally coming under the remit of PC expenditure. She explained that the Internal Auditor had suggested that the Council could adopt this power as she is a CILCA qualified Clerk and 2/3rds of Councillors are elected. Cllr McCarthy proposed, Cllr Lockhart seconded and it was unanimously agreed that the Council will adopt the General Power of Competence. This power will be reviewed annually.

**0224** **Date of next meeting(s)**:

**POS – Monday 11.4.22** – 10.00am

**PC** – 21.4.22 at 7.30pm – Tipps Cross R Hall Committee Room

**Planning** – TBC upon receipt of planning applications.

**INFORMATION EXCHANGE/NEXT AGENDA ITEMS**

**0225** Cllr Parkinson had reported a fly tipping incident to BBC on 20th February and was informed that this had been cleared. However this was not the case and when she spoke again to BBC she received a confused reply. She will pass the relevant reference information to Cllr Bridge who will follow up with BBC. **Action: Cllr Parkinson**

Cllr Bridge reported that fly tipping is a significant problem with the situation in Navestock being particularly bad.

**- CLOSE OF MEETING -** The meeting closed at 20.47 hours.