

ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 2nd December 2024

Monday 2 December 2024 at 7.00pm

The Small Parish Hall, 11 Links Lane, Rowlands Castle PO9 6AD

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Council at its next Meeting

PRESENT:

Cllr C Stanley (Chairman), Cllr F Ball, Cllr S Donald, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr Y Haggard (in part), Cllr V Matthews and Cllr B Wilson.

G Whatley (Administrative Officer) was also present, as were D Cllr M Maines and B Brown (representative from the local Community Speedwatch Team) in part.

MINUTES:

Taken by L Walker (Clerk)

THE CHAIRMAN'S SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE

1. To Receive and Agree any Councillors' Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and agreed from Cllr I Moore, and also received from C Cllr M Harvey.

2. To Receive any Declarations of Interest

The Clerk and Administrative Officer declared their pecuniary interests in Item 12 as Council employees.

3. To Receive and Confirm the Accuracy of the Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting on 4 November 2024, together with a Written Update on the Progress of Resolutions from Meetings

The Minutes (circulated previously) were unanimously CONFIRMED as an accurate record of the Meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

The Clerk's Update (circulated previously) was received and NOTED and a copy will be kept with these Minutes.

4. To Receive Reports from County & District Councillors, and other delegates, if appropriate:

C Cllr Marge Harvey Members noted Cllr Harvey's Report (circulated previously and a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes) on the following Hampshire County Council (HCC)-related matters:

- The near completion of the latest parking restriction lining on Woodberry Lane and Bowes Hill and a likely consultation in the future on a potential form of residents' parking scheme for The Green;
- Appropriate preparations in case of cold and icy conditions;
- Progress on flood alleviation measures including the possible installation of closable gates at the ford on Woodberry Lane.

Cllr Harvey stated that she would not be standing in the HCC elections in May 2025 but that a fellow Rowlands Castle resident had been nominated to do so by the local Conservative Party.

District Cllr Charlene Maines Cllr Maines gave a verbal report on the following East Hampshire District Council (EHDC)-related matters:

- Planning IT system planned maintenance meaning planning comments must be submitted by email;
- Her involvement with the recent queries over St John's School drop-off parking at The Harvester;
- Invitation for Rowlands Castle Surgery's Social Prescriber to attend a mtg with district cllrs;
- Attendance at further planning training in the near future;
- Continued concerns over the handling of several planning applications re Havant Thicket Reservoir, her objections to some proposals and her push to get one of the most recent applications decided at Planning Committee rather than by individual case officer(s);
- A recent meeting with the CEOs of Portsmouth Water and Southern Water (SW), and the local MP's increasing awareness of the issues with SW's latest draft Water Resources Management Plan.

5. OPEN FORUM – Limited to 15 minutes in total and a max 3 mins for each individual speaker

Members noted concerns from several local residents regarding the volume and frequency of the bird scarer sounds coming from land north of Woodberry Lane. It was also noted the land was outside the parish/district/county boundary. Whilst the Council has no direct powers to act, it was AGREED to write to the farmer in question (with copy forwarded to Stoughton PC), acknowledging the need for bird-scaring devices to protect crops but requesting the volume and frequency be reduced in line with a relevant NFU Code of Practice. **Action: Clerk to research and write to farmer, copy forwarded to Stoughton PC**

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6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS: To Consider and Agree Action on the following, if appropriate

NB: Council's full comments on these and all other relevant Applications can be read via EHDC's website: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/planning-application-process/search-and-comment-planning-applications> or a similar page on SDNPA's website.

58865/002 DETACHED GARAGE TO FRONT
36 Bowes Hill, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6BP

Cllr Matthews outlined the Application in accordance with her review (circulated previously). In line with Council's comments on Application 58293/001, it was unanimously RESOLVED to OBJECT on a number of grounds detailed in the review: non-compliance with EHDC Planning Policy CP29 including aspects of EHDC's Residential Extension & Householder Development SPD; no reference to protection of the roots of a tree in a neighbouring property or access to the existing garage; not in keeping with local streetscape and the RC Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy 5.

60276/003 VARIATION OF CONDITIONS 2, 4 AND 10 OF PERMISSION 60276 - TO VARY MATERIALS, ENERGY STATEMENT AND SUBSTITUTE PLANS PREVIOUSLY APPROVED
73 Links Lane Rowlands Castle PO9 6AF

Cllr Ball outlined the Variation in accordance with his and Cllr Matthews's review (circulated previously). Members noted objection from a neighbouring property about being over-looked whilst observing it was not directly opposite the site. It was unanimously RESOLVED to make NO OBJECTION, whilst commenting that EHDC may wish be satisfied that the proposed installation of the heat pump in the store and plant room would mitigate potential noise issues.

39683/002 INCREASE IN ROOF HEIGHT TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION AT 2ND FLOOR
For Note Only LEVEL AND SECOND STOREY SOUTHEAST EXTENSION
Locks Coppice Farm House, Whichers Gate Road, Rowlands Castle, PO9 5NE

It was noted Cllr Donald had reviewed the Application and, with the agreement of councillors, a response of NO OBJECTION had been submitted by the deadline of 25 November.

49574/012 Application for Consent for Works to Trees Subject to a Tree Preservation Order: T1
For Note Only OAK - CROWN RAISE TO 9ms ABOVE GROUND LEVEL AND REMOVE EPICORMICS
43 Finchdean Road, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6DA

It was noted councillors had reviewed the Application and agreed a response of NO OBJECTION be submitted by the deadline of 4 December.

38657/004 VARIATION OF CONDITION 10 OF 38657/004 - TO ALLOW FOR THE
For Note Only SUBSTITUTION OF PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANS
61 Links Lane, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6AF

It was noted Cllr Donald had reviewed the Variation and concluded NO COMMENT be made, given EHDC had dismissed Council's objection to the original Application re the property ie /003.

Action: Admin Officer to submit comments on relevant Applications to EHDC/SDNPA

At the suggestion of the Chairman, and with the agreement of all other cllrs, the order of the Agenda was varied for the benefit of the Speedwatch representative present.

9. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

b) Quarterly Report on Data from Council's Speed Monitoring Devices – The Chairman welcomed Bill Brown from the local Community Speedwatch Team to the meeting, who circulated copies of his report on the data from the ASW cameras. Further to decisions at Council's Mtg on 7 October 2024, all 3 cameras are currently on Manor Lodge Road but the manufacturer has confirmed 2 can be relocated to Durrants and Whichers Gate Roads in early 2025 for a small charge to enable re-calibration at their new locations. Mr Brown commented the devices are solar-powered meaning they yield less data during shorter, darker days but still indicated the peak, daylight hours for speeding are between 11am and 2pm (in line with Horndean PC's findings), just under half of those are light commercial vehicles eg transit vans and there were a worrying number of vehicles without a current MOT. Police are aware of the practice of 'cloning' where VRNs don't match the DVLA vehicle description. The Admin Officer has written to several companies whose vehicles have been repeatedly recorded as speeding. It was also noted the ASW manufacturer had advised that vehicle data such as car model and colour should not be publicly available

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for data protection reasons and that publishing such information on websites had led to some miscreants glorying in being listed. Mr Brown is due to attend a Hants Constabulary on-line event on 12 December and a question on the use of ASW data is likely to be tabled by Council.

Members noted the Administrative Officer's report from Council's speed indicator devices (circulated previously and a copy of which will be held with these Minutes). It was noted Council's 7+ year old speed limit reminder had been malfunctioning and the estimated cost of repair had not been financially viable so the device had been scrapped. Instead, it was AGREED to consider the purchase of further ASW cameras (possibly with battery/dual power to enable operation hours to be extended) and/or speed indicator devices at the next Council Mtg.

Action: Clerk to include on Agenda of next Mtg and Admin Officer to prepare Briefing

c) Local Community Speedwatch Team's results from October & November 2024 – Members noted the results (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes. Some sessions had been cancelled due to the cold and more locations were due in the new year. Whilst the importance of volunteers wearing hi-viz jackets was acknowledged, it was noted such visibility meant the ASW cameras provided a more realistic picture of speeding.

The Chairman thanked Mr Brown for his hard work on behalf of the Parish on speeding issues.

7. GENERAL MATTERS FOR DECISION: To Consider and Agree Action on the following:

a) Review of Council's Domain Name and Standardised, Council-controlled Email Addresses – Members thanked the Clerk for her Briefing (circulated previously) and noted the £100 in funding currently available from the UK Govt to facilitate the process of moving to a .gov.uk domain name. It was unanimously RESOLVED:

- To progress changing Council's domain name to rowlandscastleparishcouncil.gov.uk;
- That the Registrant should be the Clerk and the Approved Registrar would be Active Council;
- That 5 initial staff email addresses should be set up under the new domain name;
- To agree the consequent initial cost of £360.00 + VAT, plus £210 + VAT annually thereafter.

It was AGREED to factor in the likely costs of moving cllrs to email addresses under the new domain name when budgeting for 2025/26.

Action 1: Clerk to liaise with Active Council to progress steps identified above

Action 2: Finance Working Group to factor in costs of moving cllr email addresses in 2025/26

b) Review of Council's Strategic Objectives to inform Budget of 2025/26 and beyond – Members noted the need to budget for further works to the Pavilion and possibly additional equipment elsewhere in the Recreation Ground, and to review the Community Aspirations document, developed in association with the RC Neighbourhood Development Plan

Action: Finance Working Group to consider budgeting accordingly in 2025/26

c) Update from RC Flood Action Group on Flood Alleviation Measures for Winter 2024/25 – Cllr Donald reported most flood alleviation ditches had been cleared, though one riparian owner had yet to do so. HCC was considering the possible installation of closable gates at the ford on Woodberry Lane (see Item 4) and the use of builders' bulk bags had been suggested as a less permanent alternative. Progress was being made to prevent any flood water flowing onto the highway by the railway bridge just north of Finchdean. HCC's useful information about Emergency Planning was noted.

d) Renewal of Clerk's Annual Membership of Society of Local Council Clerks for 2025 – It was unanimously RESOLVED that this be paid for the forthcoming year, in the sum of £300.

Action: Clerk to renew membership for 2025 and include payment in December Schedule

e) Response to Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting Consultation Survey – It was AGREED Cllr Stanley would respond on Council's behalf by the deadline of 19 December.

Action: Cllr Stanley to submit a response via the Survey by the deadline

f) The Green: Request by Rowlands Castle Squirrel Scout Group to sing Christmas Carols around the Christmas Tree, date TBC but probably 9 December – It was unanimously RESOLVED to grant the request, noting that the Group had appropriate insurance and would undertake a risk assessment prior to the event.

Action: Clerk to inform Group and liaise accordingly

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8. FINANCIAL MATTERS FOR DECISION: To Consider and Agree Action on the following:

a) **November 2024 Schedule of Payments, for authorisation** – Cllr Haggard stated she had reviewed and confirmed the relevant invoices. It was unanimously RESOLVED to AUTHORISE the Schedule (circulated at the Mtg), which was then signed by the 3 signatories present.

b)

A list of payments is included below (incl VAT where appropriate, which is reclaimable by the Council):

Method	Amount £	Payee	Reason
DD	582.16	Cushon Group Ltd	2 x Monthly pension contributions + admin fees
DD	111.97	Focus Group	Monthly fee for Office phone and broadband
DD	22.00	Vodafone Ltd	Monthly fee for Facilities Officer's mobile
DD	11.28	Three Business	Monthly fee for CCTV SIM Card at Pavilion
DD	76.37	BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions	MFD quarterly rental fee
IBT	40,000.00	CCLA P Sector Deposit Fund	Further Transfer from Current Account
Chq	28.00	RBL Poppy Appeal	For Remembrance Sunday wreath
IBT	160.00	LawnPro	Hedge cutting around The War Memorial
IBT	1829.52	Quality Land Services Ltd	Litter/dog waste collection July to Sept 2024
IBT	460.00	Hampshire County Council	Fees for s178 and s72 Applications
IBT	1025.34	Morton Pattison Ltd	5 th phase of works at Rowlands Copse
IBT	87.00	Westcotec Ltd	Assessment of malfunctioning SLR
IBT	40.00	Rowlands Castle URC	Hall Hire: S & R Committee Mtg
DD	17.13	RC Home Hardware	Office, Rec Ground & Traffic Consumables
IBT	28.34	Cllr C Stanley	Part Cllr Allowance + Travel expenses
IBT	30.57	L Walker, Clerk	Reimbursements
IBTs	6,062.34	Staff salaries including HMRC, PAYE and NIC + additional hours	
Total	50,572.02		

IBT = Inter-bank Transfer, Council's main payment method

DD = Direct Debit SO = Standing Order Chq = Cheque PP = PayPal

Action: Clerk to make any remaining payments according to Schedule

A list of receipts into the Current Account in October 2024 is included below:

Method	Amount £	Payer	Reason
IBT	3,910.38	HMRC	VAT Repayment for July, August & September 2024
IBT	233.29	EHDC	Release of S106 monies for Allotments Shed

c) **Report on Council's Bank Accounts as at 30 November 2024, for acceptance** – Members noted and ACCEPTED the Report (circulated at the Meeting).

Account	Balance
Current Account	£10,518.53 <i>(Reconciled balance of £10,481.22 accounting for payments not yet made/direct debits not yet take/cheques not yet presented)</i>
Public Sector Deposit Fund	£92,839.26
6-month Fixed Rate Bond	£20,000.00
12-month Fixed Rate Bond	£15,491.33

d) **Review of Council's Reserves and Bank Accounts** – Members unanimously RESOLVED that, upon the maturity of its Cambridge & Counties Bank 6-month Fixed Rate Bond in mid-December, the original sum of £20,000 be reinvested in Cambridge & Counties Bank current 12-month Fixed Rate Bond.

Action: Clerk to reinvest agreed funds accordingly

9. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION (cont – see Page 2):

a) **Summary of Residents' Dealings with Parish Office in November 2024** – Members noted the Admin Officer's Summary (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes.

d) **Update on Youth Provision within the Parish** – Members noted Cllr Matthews report (circulated previously) and that a survey was being developed to gauge young people's needs. It was hoped this would include some small, early wins coupled with longer-term projects.

Action: Youth Group to publish Survey as soon as possible

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e) **Period of Closure of the Parish Office over the Festive Season** – It was AGREED that the Parish Office will close to the public from 24 December 2024 to 1 January 2025 inclusive, re-opening Thursday 2 January, though the voicemail and emails would be monitored on an irregular basis during that period.

Action: Clerk to publish on RCPC's noticeboards and website

10. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION:

a) **Schedule of EHDC's and SDNPA's Planning Decisions up to 29 November 2024** – Members noted the Admin Officer's Schedule (circulated previously), a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes.

b) **Report on Parish Hall Boiler Incident and Progress thereon** – Cllr Ball explained that the boiler had been taken out of action due to a roofing issue that affect the flue, which was due to be fixed on 4 December. *The issue has since been rectified and the boiler is now working again.*

Cllr Haggard left the Meeting at 9.15pm, before the discussions under Item 10 c)

c) **Report on EHDC's Conference on the Future of Community Development on 12 November** – Members noted the Clerk's report (circulated previously), a copy of which is available on request.

d) **Report on Havant Group's Meeting with CEOs of Portsmouth Water (PW) and Southern Water (SW) on 13 November** – Members noted Cllr Stanley's report (circulated previously), a copy of which is available on request. He led the Mtg, in the absence of the original lead, which involved representatives from various Havant-based organisations with whom the Council is co-operating. SW's CEO was presented with some challenging questions to answer with respect to SW's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP). The organisations agreed to compile 5 priorities for SW to consider after 4 December ie once the deadline of DEFRA's consultation on SW's WRMP had passed.

e) **Report on East Hampshire Association of Parish & Town Councils Mtg on 25 November** – Members noted Cllr Ball's report (circulated previously), a copy of which is available upon request.

f) **Report on HALC County Forum on 28 November** – Members noted Cllr Stanley's report (circulated previously), a copy of which is available upon request.

11. To pass a Resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussions regarding employment matters where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business

It was unanimously RESOLVED to pass the Resolution though no members of the public remained at the meeting at this point.

12. To Receive a Report and Recommendations from the Staffing & Remuneration Committee regarding the Council's Employees and their remuneration, and Agree Action thereon

It was unanimously RESOLVED to:

- i) Award a pay increase (pro rata) to the Admin Officer, Facilities Officer and Parish Hall Admin Officer (ie all staff not on National Minimum/Living Wage) in line with the National Joint Council for Local Govt's 2024 offer, back-dated to 1 April 2024;
- ii) Award a pay increase (pro rata) to the Clerk, commensurate with the average % increase for other staff not on NM/LW, also back-dated to 1 April 2024;
- iii) Noting the general delay in the NJC reaching an Agreement each year, with effect from 1 April 2025 to award a pay increase (pro rata) of 3% to all staff not on NM/LW unless there is a significant variation in inflation beforehand;
- iv) Review the decision in iii) later in 2025/26 should the NJC Pay Agreement 2025 amount to more than an average of 3%.

Action: Clerk to action the above accordingly

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 13 January 2025 in The Meeting Place, The Church on The Green, Rowlands Castle

The Meeting ended at 9.55pm

During the course of the Meeting (both part and whole) there was 1 member of the public present, as well as those listed at the beginning of these Minutes, and no members of the Press in attendance.