

# ROWLANDS CASTLE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the FULL COUNCIL 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Monday 13 January 2025 at 7.00pm

The Meeting Place, The Church on Green, Rowlands Castle PO9 6AB  
*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, Cllr V Matthews and Cllr B Wilson.

G Whatley (Administrative Officer) was also present, as was C Newman (Facilities Officer) 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 declared her non-pecuniary interest in Item 12 as the Clerk to the Council.

### 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:

- Update on the possible installation of closable flood gates at the ford on Woodberry Lane;
- The combined devolution bid for Hampshire, IoW, Portsmouth and Southampton and potential ramifications thereon at district and parish level, including likely postponement of local elections by a year.

No report had been received from D Cllr Charlene Maines.

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

A resident posed 2 questions for Council's consideration: the first was about the future of The Fountain Inn, to which the Clerk replied that whilst she had heard various rumours, currently the Parish Office was not aware of any definite plans for the building; the second was about the bus connectivity of the village northwards to Horndean and Clanfield in light of recent additional funding given to HCC by central govt, to which the Chairman replied, referring to his report at Item 10 b) on the Hampshire Passenger Transport Forum on 4 December. It was noted that Council could encourage HCC to conduct a feasibility study for greater connectivity with Horndean and Clanfield, and also Stagecoach, which operates the No 27 service. It would also help if individuals were to do so as well, so as to add weight to the request. Commercial viability for any such service is likely to be key as HCC subsidies are being reduced. Members also noted that the No 27 bus service was not due to be cut at present but that such services were subject to re-tendering in time for changes to take effect from September 2025.

A representative from the Portsdown Gospel Hall Trust addressed the meeting, requesting an informal meeting with Council after the Trust's withdrawal of its 'Change of use' Application for previous year for a property in the Parish owned by Trust. The Chairman reiterated that the property needed to be actively and demonstrably marketed in its current capacity for 12 months prior to any Change of Use Application being considered and potentially granted by EHDC. One cllr noted that whilst a For Sale/Let sign had gone up on the property the nominated agent had not received detailed instructions when last approached. Another cllr stated they knew of 3 businesses that may be interested in the property as a business base. The Trust representative was encouraged to view EHDC's Supplementary Planning Document on Change of Use for more information. Members again noted the need for openness and transparency and to avoid situations which might lead to accusations of pre-determination and so declined

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an informal meeting with the Trust. In answer to the Trust representative's enquiry, members could not think of any suitable alternative properties in RC at the moment.

## 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.

51021/005 SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION, CONVERSION OF GARAGE TO HABITABLE  
For Note Only SPACE FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF CONSERVATORY  
Oakwood, Manor Lodge Road, Rowlands Castle, PO9 6BA

It was noted Cllr Edwards had reviewed the Application and, with the agreement of councillors, a response of NO OBJECTION had been submitted by the deadline of 23 December.

58293/001 Notification of Receipt of a Planning Appeal: Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/M1710/D/24/  
For Note 3355618 Against Refusal of a Householder Application  
Only 28 Bowes Hill Rowlands Castle PO9 6BP

The Appeal was noted though no further action was required at present.

SDNP/24/  
022356/LIS Listed Building Consent: A) REPLACEMENT OF HERITAGE DOUBLE-GLAZED SASH  
For Note Only TIMBER WINDOW AT FRONT RHS OF BUILDING WITH LIKE-FOR-LIKE  
REPLACEMENT (BUT WINDOW OPENS FROM BOTTOM INSTEAD OF TOP OF  
FRAME AS CURRENT VERSION). WHITE RAL 9003. REASON FOR  
REPLACEMENT - EXISTING SEALED UNITS HAVE FAILED AND 2 OF THE PANES  
ARE BROKEN; B) REPLACEMENT OF SINGLE-GLAZED FRONT DOOR WITH A  
DIFFERENT STYLE OF TIMBER FRONT DOOR WITH DOUBLE-GLAZED PANELS  
(THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES AND A SIMILAR  
GLAZING AND STYLE PERMITTED UNDER APPLICATION SDNP/18/00428/LIS)  
FOR GARDEN COTTAGE OPPOSITE. REASON FOR REPLACEMENT - HEAT LOSS  
FROM EXISTING (NON-ORIGINAL) DOOR CAUSING MOULD/DAMP IN WINTER  
AND NON-SAFETY GLAZING IN DOOR. PROPOSED DOOR COLOUR DARK  
GREEN, e.g. RAL 6451 BRUNSWICK GREEN.

Merlins Rise, Idsworth House, Treadwheel Road, Rowlands Castle, PO8 0AW

It was noted councillors had reviewed the Application and agreed a response of NO OBJECTION be submitted by the deadline of 31 December.

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

### a) Recreation Ground:

▪ **Review of Quarterly Operational Inspection of Play & Other Equipment** – Members noted the Facilities Officer's Review (circulated previously). It was unanimously RESOLVED to:

- i) Purchase a 5-year package from Sovereign Design Play Systems Ltd at a total cost of £395.00 to include 2 operational inspections of the Equipment per year;
- ii) In the interests of thoroughness, purchase an additional inspection per year from The Play Inspection Company at a cost £225.00.

Members noted the contractor for the required annual inspection would be reviewed around May 2025.

**Action: Facilities Officer to commission contractors and arrange inspections thereon**

▪ **Provision for Strategy for the Ground** – Members noted the Facilities Officer's Briefing (circulated previously) and approved her plan to develop the Strategy, in part to inform and support any future funding applications. Cllrs Donald and Haggard agreed to form a Working Group with the Officer to progress matters. **Action: Facilities Officer to liaise with specified cllrs and develop draft Strategy thereon**

▪ **Review of Access Restricting Measures for the Ground** – Members noted the Facilities Officer's Review (circulated previously) following an incident during the 2024 RCA Fireworks Display, whilst recognising the continuing need to prevent unauthorised vehicle access onto the Ground from the carpark.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to:

- i) Remove the 4 low wooden bollards between the Pavilion and Teen Shelter;
- ii) Install a taller (waist-high) bollard between the Pavilion and nearest metal bike rack;

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- iii) Remove both drop-posts around the outside of the Pavilion and replace the one nearer the carpark with a taller one, though not necessarily as a drop post;
- iv) Raise the level of the chain on the Chainlink Accessway and paint it white for added visibility.

It was also AGREED to undertake a further review of the arrangements for the remainder of the area for consideration at a future Council Mtg.

**Action: Facilities Officer to obtain quotes for works detailed above**

- b) Response to Southern Water’s Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Scheme Gate 3 Draft Decision Consultation Process** – Members noted and thanked Cllr Stanley for his draft Response (circulated previously) and AGREED to it being finalised and submitted by the deadline of 17 January. Cllr Stanley expressed his thanks to Tracey Viney for her expert contribution to the text of the draft.

**Action: Cllr Stanley and Parish Office to liaise to finalise and submit Response by deadline**

- c) Draft Retention and Disposal Policy** – Members noted the Admin Officer’s draft Policy (circulated previously) and unanimously RESOLVED to finalise and adopt the Policy with immediate effect.

**Action: Parish Office to finalise and publish Policy**

- d) Quote for Recommended Works to Tree, following Tree Condition Survey in September 2024** – Further to discussion at Council’s Mtg on 7 October 2024, it was noted no trees in the Survey had been identified as requiring works of high priority, only one of moderate and others of low priority. Members noted the quote from Council’s regular contractor for the felling of the poplar tree in Kingfisher Close, deemed moderate priority. It was noted unanimously RESOLVED to commission the recommended works at the quoted price of £1,250.00 + £250 contingency excl VAT, pending the successful application for works within a Tree Preservation Area.

**Action: Clerk to inform contractor and submit application for recommended works**

- e) Potential for Flood Barrier Gates at Ford on Woodberry Lane** – Members noted the quote obtained by EHDC for the potential installation of gates, dependant on the approval of both Hampshire and West Sussex Highways Depts. It was AGREED to support the installation of the gates if the Highways authorities considered there was a legal liability to install them, given temporary Road Closure measures were invariably flouted during periods of flooding.

**Action: Clerk to inform EHDC of Council’s support, subject to caveats**

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

- a) December 2024 Schedule of Payments, for authorisation** – Cllr Donald stated he 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.

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

Method	Amount £	Payee	Reason
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	24.36	Managed Print Partners Ltd	MFD charges incl supplies, maintenance etc
IBT	200.00	David Somma t/a Microsomma	Cloud back-up + anti-virus software renewals
IBT	150.00	Voxit Ltd	Annual website hosting + domain renewal
IBT	140.00	Macaulay Plumbing	Repairs to water system in Pavilion
IBT	288.00	WJPS Software t/a Active Council	Registration and set up of .gov.uk emails
IBT	1,260.00	Southern Ground Care Ltd	Further pitch improvement works
IBT	300.00	Society of Local Council Clerks	Renewal of Clerk’s annual membership
IBT	66.60	Rowlands Castle Parish Hall	Hire of Hall for Council Mtgs
IBT	664.00	Exterior Living Rooms Ltd	Grass cutting, Handyman, Lengthsman servs
IBT	23.40	Cllr C Stanley	Travel expenses
IBT	52.39	Cllr S Donald	Part Cllr Allowance + Travel expenses
IBT	23.09	L Walker, Clerk	Reimbursements
IBTs	8,323.18	Staff salaries including HMRC, PAYE and NICs	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,660.27</b>		

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**

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

Method	Amount £	Payer	Reason
IBT	476.44	Cambridge & Counties Bank	Interest from 6-month Fixed Rate Bond
IBT	10,000.00	CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund	Transfer to cover general payments

**b) Report on Council's Bank Accounts as at 31 December 2024, for acceptance** – Members noted and ACCEPTED the Report (circulated at the Meeting).

Account	Balance
Lloyds Current Account	£9,496.41 ( <i>Reconciled balance of £9,297.39 accounting for payments not yet made/direct debits not yet take/cheques not yet presented</i> )
Public Sector Deposit Fund	£83,178.88
12-month Fixed Rate Bond	£15,491.33, matures 11/06/25
12-month Fixed Rate Bond	£20,000.00, matures 16/12/25

**c) Quarterly Review of Budget and Actual Payments & Receipts to 31 December 2024** – Members noted and ACCEPTED the Clerk's Review (circulated previously).

**Action: Clerk to publish Review on website**

**d) Quarterly Review of Asset Register to 31 December 2024** – Members noted the following since the last review in October: No acquisitions and one disposal, the Speed Limit Reminder device.

**Action: Clerk to ensure specified changes are recorded**

**e) Finance Working Group's Recommendation re Budget for 2025/26** – Members noted the Group's detailed Proposed Expenditure recommendations, taking into account identified major priorities for the year, inflationary pressures, the significant increase in Employer's National Insurance Contributions proposed in the last Budget, provision to increase the Clerk's role to full-time because of the workload and the forecast of a very slight increase in the Council Tax Base (all circulated previously). After careful discussions and contributions from some members of the public present, it was unanimously RESOLVED to ACCEPT provisionally a proposed Expenditure Budget of £168,445.00 (including non-Precept funded expenditure) for 2025/26, subject to confirmation at the next Council Mtg

**Action: Clerk to include confirmation of Budget is included on Agenda for next Mtg**

*Cllr Matthews left the Meeting at 9.05pm, during discussions under Item 8 e) and did not vote*

**f) Setting of Provisional Precept for 2025/26** – Further to discussions under Item 8 e) above, it was unanimously RESOLVED to AGREE a provisional Precept of £159,945.00, subject to confirmation at the next Council Mtg. Members acknowledged this would represent a moderate increase on the previous year (£5.66 for the year for a Band D property) whilst noting the factors detailed in 8 e) and that there was no guarantee that external funds (eg grants, developers' contributions) would be available for planned projects.

**Action: Clerk to include confirmation of resultant Precept is included on Agenda for next Mtg**

### 9. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

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

**b) Attendance at SDNPA's Briefing on Partnership Management Plan and Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Consultation on 29 January 2024** – It was AGREED Cllrs Edwards, Haggard, Stanley and Wilson would attend.

**Action: Clerk to inform SDNPA**

### 10. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION:

**a) Schedule of EHDC's and SDNPA's Planning Decisions up to 10 January 2025** – Members noted the Admin Officer's Schedule (circulated at the Mtg), a copy of which will be kept with these Minutes.

**b) Report on Hampshire Passenger Transport Forum on 4 December** – Members noted Cllr Stanley's report (circulated previously), a copy of which is available upon request. Also See Item 5.

**c) Hampshire Mineral & Waste Plan: Partial Update** – Members noted the Update (circulated previously) though no further action was deemed necessary at this stage.

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**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 the Resignation of the Clerk, and Agree Action thereon**

Members noted the formal resignation (circulated previously) of the Clerk wef 31 March 2025 and expressed their grateful thanks for her 13+ years of meritorious service to the Council.

They also noted her Briefing on the recruitment of a successor, a draft Job Description and draft Advert of the Vacancy (all circulated previously). It was unanimously RESOLVED to:

- i) Form a Working Group including Cllrs Ball, Haggard, Matthews (if in agreement) and Stanley to progress recruitment of a new Clerk;
- ii) Subscribe to HALC's HR service, Local Council People and Development (LCPD), at a cost of £180 for the year to support the recruitment process.

**Action 1: Working Group to liaise to arrange Mtg**  
**Action 2: Clerk to liaise with HALC to engage LCPD in process**

**13. To Receive Notification of Solicitor's Correspondence re Incident at Recreation Ground during Fireworks Display on 2 November 2024**

Notification was received, the correspondence had already been passed to Council's insurers and no further action was required at present.

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 3 February 2025 in The Parish Hall, Rowlands Castle

*The Meeting ended at 9.50pm*

During the course of the Meeting (both part and whole) there were 6 members of the public present and no members of the Press in attendance.