

# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024 AT 7.30PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD.

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## Committee Members present:

Cllrs S Buck (Chair), M Cooper (arrived 19:45), S Hayes (Vice Chair), J Hyde, D Matthews, J Smith, B Saunders (arrived 19:46), J Talbot.

## Also present:

Cllr Headington  
E Payne - Town Clerk

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### **110/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **111/24 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA**

Cllrs Hyde and Hayes declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in item 115/24.2 as they are Trustees of the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field whose allotments are managed by the Town Council and item 115/24.1 regarding the grant for of St Mary's Church.

Cllr Talbot declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in item 115/24.2 as he is an allotment holder at the Common Road Allotments.

### **112/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

There were no members of the public present.

### **113/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Members received the Minutes of the Establishment Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024. There was one typographical error which had been amended by hand.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

*The minutes are a true record of the meeting.*

### **114/24 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDANCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION.**

Nothing to report.

### **115/24. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE**

#### **115/24.1 Grant Applications**

Members received grant applications. Members queried the grant application for Friends of Roecroft School and the amount of funding required for the project. Members felt that

if the grant was awarded, it should be held over until the remaining funds were in situ. It was **RESOLVED** to award the following grants:

- a) ***Stotfold Bowls Club - £1040 for a new cellar door***
- b) ***St Mary's C of E Academy - £1575.72 for SEND equipment***
- c) ***Friends of Roecroft School - £1500 towards installation of outdoor play area/stage which will be held over until the remaining funding is raised.***
- d) ***St Mary's Church - £1500 towards replacing the heating in the Church Hall.***

#### **115/24.2 Management Fee for Common Road Allotments**

Members received a report on the management fee currently levied by the Town Council to the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field for the management of the Common Road allotments.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) ***Maintain the management fee as its current level***
- b) ***Review the management fee at the end of the contract***

**19:45 – Cllr Cooper arrived**

**19:46 – Cllr Saunders arrived**

#### **115/24.3 Committee Structure and Calendar of Meetings 2024-25**

Members received a report regarding a change of committee structure with an accompanying proposed calendar of meetings. A comparison of the Town Council's frequency of meetings compared to other Town Councils was discussed, which were bigger authorities who met less frequently. Members considered that the workload of the new committee structure would be too onerous, even if they met less frequently. The Clerk was asked to consider a structure with four committees and full terms of reference for these committees for consideration at the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Consider the proposal for committee restructure to the next meeting.***

#### **115/24.4 Town Council Telephone System**

Members were advised that this item will be deferred to the next meeting as the Clerk is waiting for a further quotation.

#### **115/24.5 Business Continuity Plan**

Members received a proposed Business Continuity Plan. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that:

***Adopt the Business Continuity Plan***

#### **115/24.6 Review of Policies**

Members received the following policies for review:

- a) **Complaints Policy** – this policy was incomplete and will be considered at the next meeting.

- b) Filming at Council Meetings – Members considered the policy and the implications it had on Members of Staff who had no choice but to be filmed and this should be included in their Contract of Employment. The Town Clerk will take advice from the HR advisor.
- c) Public Participation Policy – Members considered removing the section relating to public participation only being allowed on items on the agenda. This would allow residents to attend meetings to discuss anything of concern or note to them.
- d) Press Policy – Members considered the policy and there were no amendments.

It was **RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the following amended policies are adopted:**

- a) ***Filming at Council Meetings***
- b) ***Public Participation Policy***
- c) ***Press Policy***

#### **115/24.7 Bank Reconciliation**

Members received the bank reconciliations for January and February. It was **RESOLVED** that:

***The Bank Reconciliations for January and February signed by the RFO and Cllr Buck.***

#### **115/24.8 Work Programme**

Members received the Work Programme for this committee, and it was **RESOLVED** to:

***Note the work programme.***

#### **116/24. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

Members resolved to exclude the Press and Public for the consideration of the following items under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

#### **116/24.1 Staff Resources**

Members received a verbal update on the implementation of the new staff structure. The preferred candidate for the Cemetery Officer's role had declined the position. Members were advised that the Admin Officer, who looks after the allotments had tendered their resignation. The Clerk was proposing that the role of Cemetery Officer would be amalgamated into a new role of Cemetery & Allotment Officer and would be a full-time position. Members were advised on the latest position regarding recruitment and noted that Sian van der Merwe had been appointed as the Democratic Services Manager and Sarah Hassock as the Community Engagement Officer. The next positions to be filled would be the Cemetery & Allotments Officer followed by Public Realm Manager.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Note the verbal report.***

**116.24/2 Staff Salary Incremental Increases**

Members received a confidential report on the contractual salary scale increase, and it was **RESOLVED** to:

*Note the report.*

**117/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

17<sup>th</sup> April 2024

The meeting closed at 20:55.

SIGNED BY CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_

MINUTES APPROVED (date): \_\_\_\_\_