09/2024

**UPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on**

**Tuesday 2nd April 2024 at 19.00 at the Millennium Hall, Upton Bishop**

**Present**

Councillors: Mark Rusby (in the Chair), Andy Parr, Keith Cornwall, Michael Wallace and Guy Cooper

**In attendance**

Clerk Helen Tinson – on behalf of HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils); and 13 members of the public plus the new Clerk/RFO.

1. **To consider a resolution to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to consider a confidential employment matter.**

**It was RESOLVED**: to pass the resolution. No members of the public were present for the following discussion item.

1. **To consider the employment of a new Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer:**
   1. **Verbal Report from Interview Panel:** Members received a summary of the interview process and considered their recommendation to appoint Andree Mitchell to the post of Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer. It was noted that HALC have supplied a NALC contract of employment, which commences with a six-month probationary period.

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:** to approve the recommendation and appoint Andree Mitchell as Clerk/RFO on the terms of the 2024 NALC contract of employment and on the understanding that UBPC will pay her CiLCA training fees. Costs will be shared with any other local council employer should Andree take on further Clerk/RFO positions.

* + 1. **To consider start date:**

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:** that employment starts immediately, 2nd April 2024.

* + 1. **To consider hours per week:**

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:** that the post is for 7 hours per week.

* + 1. **To consider salary scale point:**

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:** to appoint on Spinal Column Point (SCP) 24 within the LC2 Scale as set out in the National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Clerks in England and Wales, to be increased up to a maximum of four points for success in obtaining The Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

* 1. **To appoint a Payroll Provider:**

Members were advised to appoint an independent, professional payroll provider to support the employment of the new Clerk/RFO. HALC recommend Autela Payroll Services and the HALC Clerk outlined the costs for their services: Payroll Processing £18.95/month, Pension £8.95 per month, End of Year Submission £19.95, Pension Regulator Submission every 3 years £18.95. A 15% discount is applied to invoices settled within 30 days. It was noted that automatic enrolment into a pension scheme is not mandatory at this current time.

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:** to appoint Autela Payroll Services for payroll processing and the End of Year submission, and for pension support if required.

**It was unanimously RESOLVED:** to pay the salary payment as calculated by Autela on a monthly basis by online bank payment.

13 members of the public and the new Clerk/RFO entered the room. The new Clerk/RFO was invited to join members at the council table.

10/2024

1. **Consideration to access HALC Clerk Cover for the meeting:**

**It was RESOLVED:** to access HALC’s CiLCA qualified Clerk Cover for the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Mike Tyers and Cllr Paul Newman.
2. **Declarations of interest & written dispensation requests:** There were none.
3. **Co-option of new Councillor:**

Members were informed that the casual vacancy arising from the resignation of Mark Shuttlewood can now be co-opted. Three applications had been received. One applicant could not be present but had submitted a short introduction which was read by the Chairman. One applicant withdrew his application. The Chairman invited the third applicant to address the meeting, but it was acknowledged that he had presented an introduction at the previous meeting and he did not feel he needed to do so again. Members proceeded to vote by a show of hands in accordance with Standing Orders.

**It was RESOLVED:** to co-opt Vicky Eldridge onto the Parish Council, by majority vote.

1. **Minutes:**
   1. **Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 5th March 2024:**

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true and proper record of the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chair. Cllrs Guy Cooper and Michael Wallace abstained from voting as they were not present at the meeting.

1. **Public Participation Open Session:**
   1. **Ward Councillor Report:** The Ward Councillor was not present at the meeting and there was no written report.
   2. **Representation from Members of the Public:** There were no representations from members of the public.
2. **Finance:**
   1. **Bank Balances at 31.3.24:** Current account £10,115.82 and Reserve Account £10,940.21. Total available funds £21,056.03. It was noted that the first precept payment for 2024/25 is due in April.
   2. **To notify Lloyds Bank of the appointment of the new Clerk/RFO:** Members were informed that responsibility for the financial running of the council will be passed to the new Clerk/RFO and accordingly she would be added to the bank mandate for the Lloyds account to access bank statements and set up approved payments. It was confirmed that the Clerk/RFO is not a bank signatory and that the mandated signatories remain Cllrs Mark Rusby, Michael Wallace, Andy Parr and Paul Newman.

**It was RESOLVED:** to ratify the notification.

* 1. **Income v Expenditure:** Annual income at 31.03.24 was £25,773.43 which includes the precept, a VAT refund and Lengthsman grant payment. Expenditure was £33,052.39, which was noted to be above normal expenditure due to the legal matter defended during the year.
  2. **Internal Auditor 2023/24:**

Members considered appointing an internal auditor for the 23/24 accounts ending 31.3.24

**It was RESOLVED:** to appoint HALC Internal Audit Service. 4 in favour, 1 against.

11/2024

1. **Planning:**

Members considered responding to the following planning applications for determination by Herefordshire Council:

* 1. **240582: Phocle Fruit Farm, Phocle Green, Ross on Wye, HR9 7XU:** Proposed removal of 10m of lane-side hedge and 15m of track side hedge and the subsequent planting of 18m of new hedge.

Members considered the application noting the intention was to improve access for large farm vehicles. It was also noted that no local objections have been lodged. No concerns were raised.

**It was RESOLVED:** to SUPPORT the application noting that the intention to replant new hedging rather than replace with hard fencing was appreciated.

1. **Highways:**

Members received an update on the Traffic Calming Project. It was reported that most of the works were completed during March but the installation of the village gateways, SID bases and signage remain outstanding pending delivery of stock. Cllr Parr will try and obtain a more definitive update from BBLP for the next meeting.

1. **Lengthsman:**
   1. **To consider extending the current Lengthsman Contract:** Members were informed that the lengthsman contract is due for renewal and it was proposed that this is synchronised in line with the financial year. It was also noted that it is good practice to advertise the Lengthsman position annually.

**It was RESOLVED:** to extend the contract for the current Lengthsman to allow time to advertise the position.

* 1. **To consider advertising the Lengthsman Contract for 2024/25:** Members considered advertising the position in line with best practice.

**It was RESOLVED:** to advertise the position during April via the noticeboard and website and to consider tenders at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May.

1. **Footpaths:**

Members were informed that a new step has been installed at Wobage Bank. There was nothing further to report.

1. **Website:**

Members received a report noting publicity around activities in the village during February and March including the Easter celebrations, vandalism at the village phonebox library and the traffic calming scheme. There have also been regular updates about market to your door, indoor bowls, Doreen’s social afternoons, church events, the village defibrillator, phonebox library and the need to pick up after your dog and take your litter home. Forthcoming events include a chance to see the new village eco map on May 4th and the start of the new village lego club. As it has been relatively quiet, the volunteer website co-ordinator has been updating out of date information and will now proceed to handover Parish Council related postings to the new Clerk.

1. **Items for next Agenda:** There were none raised.
2. **Chairmans Closing Remarks:** The Chairman wished to thank the HALC Clerk for her support.
3. **Date of the Next Meeting:** Tuesday 7th May 2024, 7pm, Millennium Hall, Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

12/2024

SIGNED ……***M R Rusby***………………………….. DATE ……***7 May 24***…………………….