

**NOTTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
THURSDAY 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2014 AT 7.30pm  
AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL**

**CLERK'S REPORT**

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Sections 15(1) and (2) of the Local Government Act 1972 provide that the Chairman is elected annually and does not provide any limitation on the number of years that a person may serve as the Chairman; and Section 15(8) of the Local Government Act provides that a Council **may** appoint a Vice Chairman.

Members are asked to note from the Report for the last Annual Meeting of Council that no Resolution has ever been made by Council confirming or otherwise the previously established custom and practice of the Chairman only serving for two years; and that the Vice-Chairman was a 'Chairman in Waiting'. Further, that there is no reference to the custom and practice within the Council's Standing Orders.

Two nominations have been received to date – Councillors Rickett and Roger Wilton.

Members are asked to note that Councillor Rickett thanks those Councillors who nominated him for Chairman but, with regret, is unable to accept, due to his current work commitments

Further nominations may be tabled at the meeting and should be duly proposed and seconded.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That a Chairman to the Parish Council is elected**

**2. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

The newly elected Chairman is required, by virtue of S.83(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972, to sign a prescribed Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of a Councillor(s) and which is witnessed by the Parish Clerk. The appropriate form will be available at the meeting.

**3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Members' attention is drawn to the comments in the Report for the first agenda item.

Two nominations have been received to date – Councillors Knight and Rickett

Members are asked to note that Councillor Knight has indicated that he does not wish to accept the nomination.

Further nominations may be tabled at the meeting and should be duly proposed and seconded.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That a Vice-Chairman to the Parish Council is elected**

#### **4. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

It is not a legal requirement for the newly elected Vice-Chairman to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. It is, however, historical to the Council that this is done. The appropriate form will be available at the meeting.

#### **5. PUBLIC FORUM**

Members of the public are invited to put questions or draw relevant matters to the Council's attention, prior to the commencement of business. This is for a period of up to 15 minutes and shall be limited to 3 minutes per person

#### **8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are advised to consider the agenda for the meeting and determine in advance if they may have a Personal, Prejudicial or a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any of the agenda items. If a Member decides they do have a declarable interest, they are reminded that the interest and the nature of the interest must be declared at the commencement of the consideration of the agenda item; or when the interest becomes apparent to them. Details of the interest will be minuted.

Where you have a Prejudicial Interest (which is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest), Members are reminded that they must now withdraw from the meeting chamber after making representations or asking questions.

If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Members are reminded that they must take no part in the discussions of the item at all; or participate in any voting; and must withdraw from the meeting chamber; unless they have received a dispensation.

**11. ANNUAL MEETING OF ELECTORS OF THE PARISH**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Electors of the Parish held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2014, are available on the Council's website. These Minutes will be signed at the next Annual Meeting of Electors in 2015.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Members are asked to note this section of the Report**

**12. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

Members are advised that in the event of an 'over-subscription' to any of the Council's Committees there will be a vote by way of a paper ballot of the whole Council, as prescribed by Standing Order 12 –

“Where two or more persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote”.

**(a) Finance and Administration Committee**

The Council's Standing Orders (SO15.9-2) of 11.11.2010, last amended March 2013, provide that this Committee shall consist of **seven** Members, including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council.

Current membership of this Committee is as follows – Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council and Councillors Burgess, Butler, Torn, Porter and Mrs S. Wilton.

Following the invitation to Members to select their Committee choices and at the time of writing the Report, five Councillors have signified this Committee as their first or second choice (Councillors P. Burgess, Butler, Porter, Torn and Mrs Wilton); thus bringing the Committee to capacity..

Members are asked to note that the Committee will be invited to elect a Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the next Finance and Administration Committee meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

Members are also asked to note that, at that meeting also, appointments will be made to the Internal Controls Working Group, in accordance with SO15.9-6

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That appointments are made to the Finance and Administration Committee, as required**

**(b) Property Committee**

The Council's Standing Orders (SO15.9-3) of 11.11.2010, last amended March 2013, provide that this Committee shall consist of **eight** Members.

Current membership of the Committee is as follows – Councillors Brakes, Mrs Burgess, Knight, Mrs Rutherford, Searle, Senior, Torn and R. Wilton

Following the invitation to Members to select their Committee choices and at the time of writing the Report, eight Councillors have signified this Committee as their first or second choice (Councillors Mrs K. Burgess, Grant, Knight, Searle, Senior, Torn, Mrs Walters and R. Wilton), thus bringing the Committee to capacity.

Members are asked to note that the Committee will be invited to elect a Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the next Property Committee meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That appointments are made to the Property Committee, as required**

**(c) Planning, Environment and Transport Committee**

The Council's Standing Orders (SO15.9-4) of 11.11.2010, amended March 2013, provide that this Committee shall consist of a **maximum of twelve Members, three from each of the four Wards.**

Current Committee membership is as follows – Holbrook East – Councillors Mrs Ginn, Grant and Rickett; Holbrook West - Councillors Knight, Senior and Wassell; Roffey North – Councillors Brakes, Loates and Searle; and Roffey South – Councillors Turner, Mrs Walters and Mrs S. Wilton

Following the invitation to Members to select their Committee choices and at the time of writing the Report, twelve Councillors have signified this Committee as their first choice or second choice - three from Holbrook East (Councillors Mrs Ginn, Grant and Rickett); three from Holbrook West (Councillors Knight, Senior and Wassell); four from Roffey North (Councillors Brakes, Loates, Searle and Turner); and two from Roffey South (Councillors Mrs Walters and Mrs Wilton), thus bringing the Committee to capacity.

Members are asked to note that the 'distribution' of Members among the Roffey Wards is to be addressed by the Committee.

Members are asked to note that the Committee will be invited to elect a Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the next meeting of the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2014

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That appointments are made to the Planning, Environment and Transport Committee, as required**

**(d) Personnel Committee**

The Council's Standing Orders (SO15.9-5) of 11.11.2010, last amended March 2013, provide that this Committee shall consist of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee; and **two** other Members.

Current Committee membership is as follows - Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Finance and Administration Committee; and Councillors Loates and Knight.

Following the invitation to Members to select their Committee choices and at the time of writing the Report, two Councillors (Councillors Knight and Loates) have signified this Committee as their first choice, thus bringing the Committee to capacity.

Members are asked to note that the Committee will be invited to confirm that the Council Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman (SO15.9 at the next meeting of the Personnel Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That appointments are made to the Personnel Committee, as required**

**13. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

- (a) **Age UK – Horsham District**  
**Previous Council year** – Councillors Rutherford and Searle  
**Current nominations** – Councillor Brakes
  
- (b) **BIFFA Brookhurst Wood Landfill Site Liaison Group**  
**Previous Council year** – Councillors Searle and Senior  
**Current nominations** – Councillors Searle
  
- (c) **Horsham District Association of Local Councils**  
Two representatives – generally Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council
  
- (d) **Horsham District Burial Advisory Group**  
**Previous Council year** – Councillor Mrs Ginn and Searle  
**Current nominations** – Councillor Searle
  
- (e) **Sussex Association of Local Councils**  
**Note** – generally the Chairman of Council
  
- (f) **Horsham in Bloom**  
**Previous Council year** – Councillor Mrs Ginn  
**Current nomination** -

Further nominations in respect of any of the above will be taken at the meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That appointments and nominations are made, as required**

**14. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

At the time of writing the Report, there are no advance Reports

**15. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

At the time of writing the Report there are no Chairman's Announcements

**16. REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES**

**(a) Policy and Conditions of Hire in relation to Parish Council owned premises**

- (i) The following is a Recommendation from the Property Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014 regarding an amendment to Section 11 – Cancellation Policy.

The amendment is by way of the insertion of the section after the first sentence of the third paragraph to read –

All of the Community venues owned by the Parish Council are registered Polling Stations and as such, certain areas of North Heath Hall, Holbrook Tythe Barn and Roffey Millennium Hall will be closed on those days when European, Parliamentary and/or local elections are held.

The new final paragraph of the section will now commence ‘Notification of the cancellation .....

- (ii) Members are asked to consider an amendment to Section 30 – Services and Alterations. The purpose of the amendment is to define the word ‘attachment’ by adding the words ‘..... attachment by way of hooks, nails, screws or any non-removable substance e.g. glue .....

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Policy and Conditions of Hire in relation to Parish Council owned premises is amended in the manner described at (i) and (ii) above**

**(b) Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (Staff Handbook)**

Members are asked to note that advice has been received that the addition of bribery and corruption as defined by the Bribery Act 2011 should be made to the advised non-exhaustive list of gross misconduct or behavior likely to lead to dismissal without notice

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure is amended in the manner described above.**

**(c) Review of all other Council Policies**

Listed below are the current Council Policies, all of which are available to view on the Council’s website –

Grants Policy  
Open Spaces Policy  
Code of Practice for handling Complaints from Members of the Public  
Fire Safety Policy  
Health and Safety – General Statement of Policy  
Branding Guidelines  
Community Engagement Strategy  
Statement of Intent as to Training

At the current time, there are no suggested amendments to be made to any of the Policies listed above. Further, Members are invited to consider that these Policies continue to be relevant to the Council's business and none require to be made 'redundant'.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Members are asked to continue approval of the listed Council Policies without amendment**

The following Policies are all contained within the Staff Handbook, of which all members of staff have a copy and is available in the Parish Office for Members to view if they wish. The Staff Handbook is currently not on the Parish website –

General Information and Workplace Rules and Guidelines  
Terms and Conditions of Service (general information)  
Absence Management Policy  
Continued and Frequent Sickness Absence procedures  
Staff Performance and Development Policy  
Training Policy  
Use of the Internet, Email and IT Equipment Policy  
Secondary Employment, Volunteering and Political Work Policy  
Dignity at Work Policy  
Standards of Behaviour at Work Policy  
Grievance Policy and Procedure

Members are advised that, at the current time, there are no suggested amendments to be made to any of the Policies listed above. Further, Members are invited to consider that these Policies continue to be relevant to the Council's business and none require to be made 'redundant'.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Members are asked to continue approval of the listed Council Policies without amendment**

## 17. **STANDING ORDERS**

### (a) **SO 28.5 – Financial Matters**

Members are asked to approve an amendment to the monetary value in this section, to £172,514. This relates to limits set under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, where the values are changed every two years or so, the latest being from 1.1.2014.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Standing Order 28.5 is amended in the manner as described above**

### (b) **New Standing Order – Casual Vacancies**

Members are asked to note that the Council employs the following procedure, as detailed in the Council Minutes of 6.9.2012, when seeking to fill a Casual Vacancy that occurs within the Council –

#### **Co-Option Procedure**

The entire Co-Option process will be in open session.

The Council does not have to co-opt any or all of the applicants, if it chooses not to.

Applicants will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire about themselves and these will be available to Members.

Applicants will be invited to attend the Council meeting where the procedure to be employed is as follows –

- (a) each applicant will be invited to make a brief presentation about themselves and answer any questions that Members may have
- (b) Voting will be by way of a show of hands, where the successful candidate must receive an absolute majority vote of those present and voting (Para. 39, Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972).

If there are more candidates than vacancies, the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be excluded. If two candidates poll the same number of votes a separate vote to eliminate one of them will be held. Voting will continue with the lowest polling candidate being excluded until the number of candidates matches the number of vacancies.

- (c) the successful applicant will be required to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- (d) at the end of the meeting, arrangements will be made for the new Councillor to meet with the Clerk to deal with further administrative matters

It is not considered necessary to include in Standing Orders, the circumstances that may lead to the creation of a Casual Vacancy, the action to be taken when such a Vacancy is declared by the Council and at what stage the co-option procedure would be employed, as this is enshrined in Sections 86-90 of the Local Government Act 1972

If inclusion of the Co-Option procedure were to be included in Standing Orders, this would be at No. 32, with the subsequent section being re-numbered.

**RECOMMENDATION**  
**Members' views are sought**

- (c) **New Standing Order – review of Standing Orders**  
Members are asked to approve an additional Standing Order, now numbered 34 as follows –

34.1. The Council's Standing Orders shall be reviewed annually at the annual Meeting of Council, held in May

**RECOMMENDATION**  
**That a new Standing Order is approved in the manner as described above**

**18. YEAR END ACCOUNTS – 2013/2014**

Members are asked to note that the year end accounts were finalized on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2014, with the assistance, as in previous years, of RBS Software Solutions.

The final accounts will be seen by the Finance and Administration Committee, which next meets on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014, who will formulate a Recommendation to Council.

The statutory deadline for approval of the accounts is 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012, with the year-end documentation being required to be deposited with the external auditors, Littlejohn, on an amended date of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

This timetable will be able to be met, in view of the fact that Council next meets on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Members are asked to note this section of the Report**

**19. INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDITOR**

Regulation 6 of the Account and Audit Regulations 2006 require that the Council appoints an independent Internal Auditor. Council itself determined in May 2006, that the appointment be made every May thereafter.

The current Internal Auditor is Mulberry and Co. who completed the first year with the Council on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2012. The service offered is in two parts – the first on the systems and procedures in place, in the autumn; and the financial processes in the spring. The next visit, to deal with the 2013/2014 year end is to be arranged.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the appointment of Mulberry and Co. is confirmed, as the Council's internal auditor, for the year 2014/2015.**

**20. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**(a) Approval of Accounts**

The schedule of accounts for payment will be tabled at the meeting

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the schedule payment of accounts is approved and signed by the Chairman**

**(b) Direct Debits and Standing Orders**

Members are advised that new draft Financial require that Councils approve annually all payees to whom payment is made by way of Direct Debit or Standing Order. These are as follows –

BNP Paribas	Photocopier Rental
British Gas	Gas and Electricity
Horsham District Council	National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) Trade Refuse Collections Dog Bin Emptying
Information Commissioner	Data Protection Registration
Principal	Photocopies made
Public Works Loan Board	Loan Repayment (Roffey Millennium Hall)
Southern Water	Water

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the payees listed above are approved**

**(c) Financial Regulations**

Members are advised that new draft Financial Regulations have been formulated, which have already been inspected by the Internal Controls Working Group. The new Regulations will be looked at by the Finance and Administration Committee at the next Committee meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014; and it is anticipated that the Regulations will be available for approval by Council at the June meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Members are asked to note this section of the Report**

**21. DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Sue Kemp – Parish Clerk  
9<sup>th</sup> May 2014