

# NEWTON POPPLEFORD AND HARPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2024 at The Pavilion, Back Lane, Newton Poppleford commencing at 7.00pm.**

**Committee Members present:** Cllrs. Walker (Chair), Lipczynski, Tillotson and Tribble  
**In attendance:** Jacqui Baldwin, Clerk and RFO  
 Cllr. Compton

Chair outlined the fire regulations and evacuation procedure. As there were no members of the public present no Public Forum was held.

Prior to commencement of the meeting Cllr. Compton declared a personal interest in agenda item FC23/87B.

		<b>Action:</b>
<b>FC23/84</b>	<b>To consider apologies for absence and approve if accepted:</b> Apologies received from Cllr. Carpenter were accepted and approved. It was noted that Cllr. Dalton had resigned as a member of this committee.	
<b>FC23/85</b>	<b>Declarations of interest from members / Dispensations afforded</b> Cllr. Tillotson was afforded a dispensation to discuss and vote upon matters pertaining to Parish allotments at the Annual Meeting held on 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2023. This dispensation applies until May 2027 (unless rescinded prior to that date) and is afforded in respect of her personal and disclosable pecuniary interests as Allotment Manager and an allotment tenant.	
<b>FC23/86</b>	<b>To consider and, if thought fit, approve the Minutes of the Finance Committee of the Council held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024:</b> <b>Chair proposed that the revised draft Minutes be approved. Seconded by Cllr. Tribble and resolved unanimously.</b> To consider Matters Arising from those Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda: a) DAA Night Landing Site Clerk advised that Devon Air Ambulance would not be able to provide any grant funding towards the repair of the lighting pole. It was agreed that consideration would be given to laying a new cable to the lighting pole when the MUGA floodlights are installed. b) Electricity supply – Greenbank Clerk advised that the current electricity supply contract expires in September 2024. The supplier has confirmed that it would not be possible to “suspend” the supply to reduce costs.	
<b>FC23/87</b>	<b>BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED:</b>	
A	<b>To consider and, if thought fit, accept a quotation received for the annual maintenance of the Multi-Use Games Area:</b> After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would seek the advice and recommendations of the MUGA Project Manager regarding maintenance. It was noted that weed suppression could be managed by the Grounds Maintenance Contractor at a lower cost than that quoted.	<b>Clerk</b>

	B	<p><b>To consider a quotation received for professional legal advice on matters pertaining to the former Surgery building:</b>  Cllr. Compton, having previously declared a personal interest in this item, left the room.</p> <p><b>Chair proposed that this committee should recommend to Full Council that the services of a specialist property barrister should be retained to provide advice on this matter at a cost of £2,250 plus VAT. Seconded by Cllr. Tillotson and unanimously resolved.</b></p> <p><b>Clerk to place this matter on the agenda of the April Council meeting for ratification by Full Council.</b></p> <p>Cllr. Compton returned to the room.</p>	Clerk
	C	<p><b>To note the outcome of the annual RoSPA inspection of the Playground and Playground Equipment:</b>  Clerk advised that the Parish Maintenance Contractor is reviewing the report and will confirm which of the repairs he can undertake. Quotations will be obtained to carry out the remaining specialist repairs.</p>	
	D	<p><b>To consider and, if thought fit, approve payment for the hire of a skip for the Allotment Gardens:</b></p> <p><b>Chair proposed that funds be made available for this purpose. Seconded by Cllr. Tribble and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Cllr. Tillotson to advise the Clerk when the skip is required on site.</b></p>	MT/Clerk
	E	<p><b>To carry out a review of Allotment rental charges for the financial year 2025-26:</b>  Cllr. Tillotson advised that current rent for each of the 108 quarter plots is £10 per annum with an additional £3 per annum to cover water and maintenance costs. Maintenance costs include petrol and annual service costs for Council's mower and strimmer, consumables for the toilet facilities and parts for the water pumping system. Skip hire has become an annual requirement to enable tenants to keep the site clear and tidy. <b>Cllr. Tillotson proposed that the annual rent should remain at £10 for the next financial year but that the water/maintenance fee be increased to £6 per annum. Seconded by Cllr. Tribble and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Decision to be ratified by Full Council. If ratified Clerk to notify tenants accordingly.</b></p>	Clerk
FC23/88	A	<p><b>To review and, if thought fit, approve payments for April 2024:</b></p> <p><b>Chair proposed that invoices totalling £9,194.68 be approved for payment. Seconded by Cllr. Lipczynski and resolved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Clerk to place on the agenda for ratification by Full Council on 29<sup>th</sup> April.</b></p>	Clerk
	B	<p><b>To receive and review Financial Year 2023/24 reports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i) Cashbook Summary</b></li> <li><b>ii) Cashbook Analysis</b></li> <li><b>iii) Budget Monitor</b></li> </ul> <p>Chair thanked the Clerk for these reports and accompanying notes on the Budget Variances.</p>	
	C	<p><b>Questions to RFO on the financial reports:</b>  None received.</p>	
	D	<p><b>To action requirements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i) To carry out a review of Council's Internal Financial Controls</b></li> </ul>	

		<b>Chair proposed that the revisions to this document be approved and the document recommended to Full Council for ratification. Seconded by Cllr. Tribble and resolved unanimously.</b> <b>Clerk to note and action.</b>	<b>Clerk</b>
	E	<b>To review Council's Reserve Funds for the 2024/25 Financial Year:</b> <b>Chair proposed that the following revisions be made to Council's reserves for the current financial year:</b> <b>General Reserves increased to £24,000 to provide an adequate financial safety net.</b> <b>Night Landing Site to be increased by £500 to cover potential cost of reestablishing power to the lighting pole.</b> <b>Amenity Repairs Fund to be increased to £3,000.</b> <b>Proposal seconded by Cllr Lipczynski and resolved unanimously.</b> <b>Clerk to note and action.</b>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>FC23/89</b>		<b>Matters considered as urgent by presiding Chair for discussion only:</b> None so considered.	
<b>FC23/90</b>		<b>To agree date, time and venue of next meeting</b> Monday, 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 at The Pavilion, Newton Poppleford.	
<b>FC23/91</b>		It is proposed that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. Proposal not made.	

With no further business to consider the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.12pm.

**Approved as a true reflection of the business carried out:**

**Signed .....** Chair

**Date .....**