

LONGHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE LATCHEN ROOM, LONGHOPE ON 5th September 2023 AT 19:00

PRESENT

Cllrs Barker, Brobyn and East
Mr Crighton (Locum Clerk). Approximately 31 members of the public.

1 CHAIRMAN

It was resolved to appoint Cllr Barker as Chairman for this meeting up to and including minute 6.

2 APOLOGIES

Cllr Moverley

3 PUBLIC COMMENTS

- 3.1 What has happened to the previous Chairman? Answer: he had resigned from the council
- 3.2 Have there been any other resignations? Answer: no
- 3.3 When would the vacancies be filled? Answer: it was hoped to co-opt one new member at the next meeting. Remaining vacancies to be advertised.
- 3.4 Cllr Nicholas, speaking as a member of the public, advised that he had resigned from the council along with Cllr Haines and that Cllr Nicholas had also resigned as Clerk. The resignation letters had been sent to GAPTC rather than to the Council as was proper practice, thus those resignations were not effective; however, it was felt unlikely that the proper procedure would be undertaken, and thus there was a fait-accompli. **(Please see 'After Event' at the end of these minutes).**

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None

5 DISPENSATION REQUESTS None

6 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Barker was elected unopposed and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

7 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was reported that the draft minutes of the two previous meetings, held on 17 July and 7 August had not been circulated to members and could therefore not be approved (in contravention of Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para 41(1)). These would have to be approved and signed at the next meeting

8 PARISH COUNCILLOR ALSO ACTING AS CLERK

The meeting was advised that although there was no legal bar to a member acting as Clerk, they could not be paid for the work. It was also considered an unsatisfactory position from the point of view of producing unbiased minutes and the likely lack of professional qualifications necessary to undertake the role efficiently.

9 EMPLOYMENT OF A LOCUM CLERK

It was considered essential that a locum Clerk be sought pending the appointment of someone to the position permanently. GAPTC could offer assistance.

10 RECRUITMENT OF A CLERK

It was agreed that recruitment for a Clerk to a permanent position was urgent. Local knowledge may identify candidates; adverts should be placed on the GAPTC website and possibly an advertisement placed in the local press. The Locum Clerk offered to provide Job and Person Descriptions; an interview panel should be set up and consideration given to identifying the correct salary band for a successful applicant.

11 OTHER MATTERS

The meeting was advised that the previous Clerk had deposited the laptop, mobile phone, various keys and all files (both those relating to the Parish Council and the Recreation Ground Trust) with GAPTC – these would be recovered at the earliest possible opportunity. Concern was expressed that unauthorised delivery of these items to a third party probably contained personal data and there was potentially a breach of UKGDPR.

It was felt essential that the retiring members and previous Clerk should have all authority relating to the bank accounts, website and social media removed urgently.

12 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Full Council meeting – Tuesday 18 September @ 1900.

13 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Sept – co-option, Clerk appointment

The meeting closed at 19:25

AFTER EVENT

All documents and items deposited with GAPTC by Mr Nicholls were collected and delivered to the Chairman around 11:00 on 6/9/23. Among the papers was a letter from Mr Nicholls addressed to GAPTC resigning as Clerk and a copy email from Cllr Haines addressed to FODDC Democratic Service resigning as a member of the Parish Council.

FODDC Democratic Services has confirmed receipt of resignation notices from Cllrs Gough, Nicholas and Haines, thus Casual Vacancy Notices for each must now be completed.

SIGNED:

DATE: