

# NASH MILLS PARISH COUNCIL

1488

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday **10th April 2017** at Nash Mills Village Hall, Lower Road, Nash Mills.

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Those Present:

Chair: Councillor Lisa Bayley

Vice Chair: Councillor Jan Maddern

Committee Members: Councillor Dave Jackson

Councillor Rosie Moubray

Councillor Peter Lardi

Also present: Dave Drew, Parish Warden

Members of the public

Ian Martin and Gemma Ball Hertfordshire Police

## **1. WELCOME/START TIME**

LB welcomed everybody at the meeting started at 8.02pm. She invited Jan Maddern to speak; JM announced that it was with great sadness that she found herself in the position of having to resign from the Conservative Party. She said that she would need to stand as an Independent in order to represent her community in the best possible way.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

HG had sent her apologies, which were duly noted and kept on file. LG and TC also sent their apologies. There were no new declarations of interest.

## **3. HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE REPORT (IF PRESENT)**

LB invited Ian Martin and Gemma Ball, representing Hertfordshire Police advised that there had been six incidents in the previous month. IM said that one incident involving the 'keying' of a vehicle, was at this stage still under investigation. He had been viewing CCTV which was sited at The Denes, and had not at this point seen evidence of any criminal damage. Other incidents included in the crime report were; damage to a bin and a moped taken without consent. IM informed Cllrs that the offender had been subsequently arrested and charged. JM asked where this incident took place but IM declined to expand on any further information. A local cash point had also been compromised and IM warned that customers should be vigilant and should with draw cash out of the ATM inside the foyer of a bank rather than use 'the hole in the wall'.

There were no further questions and LB thanked IM and GB for attending and they both left the building.

**4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION\* GUEST SPEAKER (IF AVAILABLE)**

There were no questions or comments made by the public.

**5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The full parish council minutes for February were agreed as a true record. The Chair signed the minutes. The Clerk will publish the approved minutes on the parish council's website. **LS**

**6. REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROLS**

It had been previously agreed that Councillors would review the internal controls themselves then agree any amendments at the next meeting. However, with the cancellation of the full parish council meeting the approval of the review had been deferred to April's full council meeting. The Clerk had circulated all the documents that make up the Parish Council's Internal Controls to Councillors in March and had also advised Councillors where they could be located on the parish council's website.

Each Councillor was asked to read through all the controls before the March meeting and email any additional amendments to the Clerk. A thorough and robust examination of the controls is carried out annually; however, with the recent addition of the online banking procedure it was felt that the Financial Regulations and Risk Assessment should be revised. In February Councillors agreed that the additional information of the authorisation hierarchy along with adding a comprehensive note explaining the system of preapproval of payments procedure at a full council meeting would strengthen the internal controls. These additional suggestions had been added to the Financial Regulations and the Risk Assessment procedures during March and circulated to all. As the March meeting had been cancelled due to extenuating circumstances Councillors agreed that the review of the internal controls via email had sufficed.

The full council then took the time to review the effectiveness of the internal auditor and concluded that the company Clubfinance Ltd and its representatives were suitable for the Parish Council to continue to engage as Internal Auditors. The Chair signed the supporting document.

The Clerk advised that she would update and revise the procedures, noting a minute reference and would circulate to all. She advised that in the interests of transparency all the procedures would be added and uploaded on to the parish council website.

The Clerk had advised previously that once the new Chair was voted in she would hand deliver information regarding the user and password details of the current laptop and the recently acquired think pad. **LS**

**7. FUNDING REQUEST (FRIENDS OF BUNKERS PARK)**

A request for funding had been received from FOBP.

The request was for funding for new signage throughout Bunkers Park. After a long discussion, it was agreed by Cllrs present that the parish council would donate an amount of £750.00.

Both JM and DJ suggested that if 'Friends of Bunkers Park' were expecting more than the amount agreed by Cllrs then they could arrange for Geoff Doole to hold a presentation at a forthcoming full council meeting. The Clerk will contact him. **LS**

**8. APPROVAL OF CHESS ICT (LTA)**

The Clerk explained that the new agreement would continue at the same price as the last long term agreement and would provide the same support package which include back-ups and a remote support service.

Councillors present agreed to continue using Chess ICT as a service provider. The Clerk will contact Chess ICT. **LS**

**9. PARISH MAGAZINE PRICE INCREASE/SPONSORSHIP**

DJ explained that there had been no price increase for the magazine in the last nine years and that a small increase should be acceptable.

JM said that the magazine was unlike some more expensively produced parish magazines or directories so prices could only be raised to a certain level. DJ suggested that the amounts be raised to £25.00 for a small advert and £55.00 for a larger advert excluding VAT.

It was also agreed unanimously that any sponsorships for adverts would cease at this time. LS will advise the current advertisers. **LS**

**10. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL RETURN YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2017**

LB read through the Annual Return and read out the governance statement and Cllrs agreed with each statement. The Clerk advised the Cllrs that they would have to fully approve the Annual Return at the May meeting once the internal audit had been carried out and their report had been circulated. The Clerk explained that Clubfinance had been booked to carry out the internal audit on the 13th April. LB would sign and date the Annual Return at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

**11. PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHP SCHEME (P3)**

DJ advised that it appeared that the deadline for submissions had passed, with this in mind, he suggested that the Clerk contact Groundworks to see whether the date could be extended. LB advised that in the meantime Cllrs could inspect their own designated areas and send their suggestions to the Clerk who would then collate the information and submit to Stephen Windmill, Groundworks. **LS**

**12. STAFF SALARY ANNUAL REVIEW**

B advised that LG, Chair of the Personnel Committee would arrange a personnel meeting in the near future. **LG**

**13. ACTION LIST (Update)**

JM advised that she was continuing to monitor the ongoing issue of estate agents leaving their sale and letting boards for long periods of time and had made calls to them querying their validity. She said she would continue to notify Philip Stanley, Enforcement Officer. **JM**

PL said that at the end of Silverthorn Drive at the junction of Chambersbury Lane a set of steps could be cut into the embankment for ease of access. LB suggested that this item should be added to the P3 scheme. **LS**

LB asked RM if there had been further updates on the future of Nash House. RM said that change of use may have been applied for by the new owner. She said that as it stands the top floor would become one flat and the second floor would have two. PL suggested that Mike Stanyon be invited to talk at a parish council meeting.

LB suggested that the Clerk contact Philip Stanley and check the progress of the unkempt gardens reported earlier in the year. **LS**

PL reported that there was a garden in Longdean Park in a similar state.

JM advised that traffic wardens periodically patrol Nash Mills and at The Denes Car Park. She said that tickets had been issued to vehicles parking in the disabled bays without just cause. JM said that parking outside the cottages was still an issue. RM commented that the implementation of the yellow lines had improved the area massively; however, one side of Red Lion Lane was still being used for parking.

PL said that he thought that the car park in the woodland on Red Lion Lane was an eyesore. JM said that you would have to have some sympathy for the residents living in Mill Close and Nash Green. LB suggested that IM patrol the area and issue polite notices. JM said that vehicles are parking on the pavements and that the police were aware.

Councillors discussed other previously resolved actions. LB said that as next month's meeting would be the annual meeting of the parish a revised action list would be sent out before the finance and full parish council meetings in June. **LS**

**14. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

DJ reported that the parish council had spent £37,600k on running the parish council throughout 2016/17. Costs incurred included staff salaries, hire of hall, council garage, service providers and the dog bag scheme. He said that out of the reserves some monies had been spent on donations, the Queen's Birthday Celebrations and the ongoing Residents' Association Initiative. DJ advised that monies coming into the Parish Council comprised of the precept, concurrent services and revenue

from adverts and VAT refunds and amounted to approximately £34k. He suggested that the treasury amount be reinvested so that it receives a better return and that this should be addressed in the near future.

PL reported that he had met recently with Nigel Gibbs, DBC at the site of a planning application in Meadow Road. He said that his suggestions on the type of covering of the driveway helped finalise the amendments to the application and drawing it to a satisfactory conclusion. He said that there were planning applications to be considered after the meeting and that all were welcome to attend.

LG was not present so there was no personnel update.

RM gave her apologies and left the meeting.

**15. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMMES**

a) Issues Raised by Warden’s Reports – DD wasn’t available for the meeting and no issues were raised.

b) Matters raised by Councillors - JM said that she had been canvassing in Kingfisher Drive recently and was asked whether permit parking was an option. She said that she had explained that it would mean each householder would have to agree to the option. JM reported that she had contacted Renato Mapembe, HCC for more information. DJ said that it would be a pointless task.

c) The Denes Car park – JM said that talks with DBC were still ongoing regarding parking meters.

PL asked whether Keith Gower, NMVHA could be contacted and asked whether they would be interested in installing an acoustics system in the hall. He said that the sound in the hall was not conducive to meetings. JM said that as a member of the village hall association she would speak to the committee. It was mooted that such an installation could cost approximately £7 - £10k.

**16. TIME MEETING CLOSED/DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

LB thanked everybody for attending and closed the meeting at 9.42pm.

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**Chair**

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**12th June 2017**