

Holme Valley Parish Council

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL MONDAY 26 JUNE 2023

PRESENT:

Cllr Mary Blacka (in the Chair)
Cllr Pat Colling (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Isaac Barnett
Cllr Lawrence Baylin
Cllr Donna Bellamy
Cllr Damian Brook
Cllr Tom Dixon
Cllr Andrew Fenwick
Cllr Donald Firth
Cllr Charles Greaves
Cllr Chris Green
Cllr Jenny Holmes
Cllr Adrian James
Cllr Jo Liles
Cllr Alison Mogan
Cllr Steve Ransby
Cllr Jane Rylah
Cllr Tricia Stewart
Cllr Sarah Whitelaw
Cllr Andy Wilson

APPROVED APOLOGIES:

Cllr Kath Fernandes
Cllr Glenn Kirkby
Cllr Martin Rostron

OTHER ABSENCES: NONE

TAKING MINUTES: Jen McIntosh (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: Rich McGill (Deputy Clerk/RFO); Gemma Sharp (Assistant Clerk)

DRAFT MINUTES

There were no members of the public present for public question time.

The Chair welcomed councillors to the meeting at Honley Library.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2324 30 Recording of public meeting

The meeting was recorded for public broadcast via the HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL Youtube channel. There were no other requests to make a recording of the meeting.

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2324 31 Items to be heard in private session

No items were to be heard in private session.

2324 32 Apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies and reasons were circulated prior to the meeting starting. It was reported that Cllr Rylah had sent apologies for running late due to work commitments.

APPROVED: apologies and reasons for absence from Cllr Fernandes, Cllr Kirkby and Cllr Rostron.

2324 33 Receipt of written Declaration of Pecuniary and Other Interests

Any new written declarations of pecuniary and other interests (DPIs) of councillors received prior to the meeting were distributed by email for consideration.

NOTED: written declarations of pecuniary and other interests (DPIs) received from Cllr Blacka, Cllr Barnett, Cllr Bellamy, Cllr Fenwick, Cllr Fernandes, Cllr Greaves, Cllr Green, Cllr James, Cllr Liles, Cllr Ransby, Cllr Rylah, Cllr Whitelaw and Cllr Stewart.

The Clerk reported that further DPIs had been received from Cllr Dixon, Cllr James, Cllr Rylah and Cllr Whitelaw that were yet to be signed/processed. These would be distributed in due course.

The Clerk further reported on proposed arrangements regarding the receipt of written declarations of pecuniary and other interests (DPIs) of officers. Councillors considered a proforma produced for this purpose.

NOTED: that officers would submit declarations of pecuniary and other interests (DPIs) for noting by the STAFFING COMMITTEE in due course.

These would be shared with all councillors but would not be published.

RESOLVED: to amend Standing Orders for 2024-25 to adopt the practice that all written DPIs be updated annually.

2324 34 Declaration of interests in agenda items

Where a declaration of interest is made the Council should consider steps necessary in light of the declaration ie whether or not the member should abstain from discussion and/or voting.

There were no declarations of interests of councillors in agenda items.

There were no declarations of interests of officers in agenda items.

TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS

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2324 35 Minutes of Council meetings

APPROVED: the Minutes of the ANNUAL COUNCIL Meeting held on 16 May 2022, numbered 2324 01 to 2324 30.

THE COMMITTEE MINUTES UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

2324 36 Minutes of Standing Committee meetings

APPROVED: the Minutes of the PLANNING COMMITTEE Meeting held on 22 May 2023, numbered 2324 18 to 2324 36.

APPROVED: the Minutes of the FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE Meeting held on 12 June 2023 numbered 2324 16 to 2324 35.

The Clerk apologised that the minutes of the SERVICE PROVISION COMMITTEE meeting held on 5 June 2023 were not yet ready for distribution. These would follow in due course. Some resolutions from the meeting would nevertheless feature in later agenda items.

MATTERS RESERVED FOR FULL COUNCIL

2324 37 Civility and Respect Project (NALC)

The Clerk reported that in Autumn 2022 Holme Valley Parish Council had received by email information regarding the ongoing Civility and Respect Project run by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC). This referred to a model councillor-officer protocol for consideration and a request for councils to pass a resolution to sign up to a civility and respect pledge.

HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL first adopted the Kirklees Council Councillor-Officer Protocol on 16-12-2019. This was included in the Policy List presented for approval at the meeting on 22-05-2023.

The Chair spoke in support of the project.

A working group of Cllr Blacka, Cllr Colling and Cllr Dixon was established to make recommendations first to the FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE meeting on 21 August 2023 and thence to FULL COUNCIL on 9 October 2023 on an amended councillor-officer protocol for adoption.

RESOLVED: that HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL sign up to and adopt the Civility and Respect pledge as set out below:

Definition of Civility and Respect

Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word.

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Examples of ways in which you can show respect are by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

Signing up to the civility and respect pledge demonstrated that HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL was committed to treating councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their role.

Clerk to register HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL as having signed up for the pledge.

2324 38 Code of Conduct – Internal Audit Recommendation

The Clerk reported that a recommendation from Internal Audit was that each councillor annually signs to acknowledge that they have received, understood and would abide by the HVPC Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED: that Standing Orders for 2024-25 be amended to incorporate the annual individual signing of Councillors to acknowledge receipt, understanding of and agreement to the HVPC Code of Conduct.

2324 39 Referrals to the Kirklees Monitoring Officer

The Kirklees Monitoring Officer had reported to the Clerk that they are currently considering 6 referrals concerning two councillors and an ex-councillor. The referral regarding the ex-councillor relates to the time when they were a serving councillor.

The Clerk reported that whilst referrals were being considered by the Kirklees Monitoring Officer no details in respect of any referral could be broadcast apart from the reporting to FULL COUNCIL that a referral has been received.

NOTED: that 6 referrals in relation to alleged breaches of the code of conduct concerning two councillors and an ex-councillor were under consideration by the Kirklees Monitoring Officer.

2324 40 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022-23

Cllr Rylah arrived at 7.35pm during discussion of the item.

Deputy Clerk/RFO reported all the systems in place were there to check that the HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL's financial affairs were in order.

One check was the internal controls check carried out at the behest of the FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE by a member of that committee. Cllr Liles had been appointed by the FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE to carry out the internal control checks of HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL's internal financial records for this council year, with the first check scheduled for July.

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Another check was the work of the internal auditor, appointed by HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL but independent from it, who visited twice a year and submitted an annual final report with recommendations.

The third check was the Annual Governance and Audit Return. The internal audit completed for this – a one page checklist completed by the Deputy Clerk/RFO - had highlighted that regulations now required councils to publish the last 5 years of Annual Governance and Audit Returns rather than 4 years ie the 2017/18 AGAR needed to be added. A list of payments exceeding £500 was also required and had been missed. Both these issues had been rectified.

These checks all ensured that HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL's financial affairs were transparent and complete.

The Deputy Clerk/RFO explained the contents of all the supporting documentation submitted.

APPROVED:

1. The Annual Governance Statement.
2. The Accounting Statements 2022-23.
3. All supporting documentation.

The 30 day period when members of the public could come and scrutinise records in person would now commence and be publicised.

The Deputy Clerk/RFO was thanked by the Chair for the considerable body of work that had gone into the preparation of the Annual Governance and Audit Report and for all his work as Responsible Financial Officer which meant that the HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL's financial records were in good shape.

2324 41 Year-End Internal Audit Report

The Deputy Clerk/RFO reported that the Internal Auditor had issued the Year-End Internal Audit Report for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 and this was received at the meeting.

There were 5 recommendations for HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL to work on in response to the report.

- i. Update the asset register with precise addresses/land registry references;
- ii. Councillors to check on the condition of assets such as benches and war memorials;
- iii. To bring down General Reserves to recommended levels – achieve this by moving general reserves unallocated towards the end of a financial year into appropriate Earmarked Reserves;
- iv. Keep a list of all payments of £500 or more (now in place);
- v. Update the Model Publications Scheme.

The Deputy Clerk/RFO reported his view that this was a good report – some elements to work on but demonstrating that progress has been made.

There ensued a discussion on how to address monies in General Reserves and how best to accomplish a sustainable financial position where these were at the recommended level.

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Committees were asked to ensure, when budgeting for projects, that delivery plans were in place so that monies allocated would be spent.

The Chair shared her commitment for this COUNCIL to develop a cohesive plan that brought together prioritised objectives linked to actions and costs to underpin the work of the COUNCIL for its duration.

NOTED: The Year-End Internal Audit Report as presented.

2324 42 Progress regarding miscellaneous legal matters

The Clerk reported on the current status regarding the Civic Underlease, the Gartside Retail Unit lease and the work to ascertain the legal boundaries of the Civic property. All were in progress but not yet at a point where they could be considered by the COUNCIL.

NOTED: the Clerk's verbal update regarding the Civic Underlease, the Gartside Retail Unit lease and the work to ascertain the legal boundaries of the Civic property.

2324 43 Change of Nomenclature in Standing Orders etc

The Clerk reported that for May 2023 NALC had revised model standing orders etc to refer to the *Chair* presiding at meetings rather than using the term *Chairman*. Chairman is the title used in law and has previously been the advised term from YLCA. Wherever possible, HVPC adopts model orders.

Therefore, the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation adopted at the Annual Council meeting used the nomenclature 'Chair'. The Clerk apologised for omitting to make reference to this at the Annual Council meeting.

The Clerk stated that as policies were reviewed it would be the Clerk's intention to revise the nomenclature to bring it in line with Standing Orders.

NOTED: the change of nomenclature in Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation for 2023-24 to Chair from Chairman and the intention to bring about this change within all written particulars of the Council over time.

2324 44 Communicating with Holme Valley Parish Council Officers outside of office hours

The Clerk had circulated by email to councillors a document setting out in general terms the core hours worked by each officer across the week. This was given as a general guide for councillors on which members of the clerking team might be available when and where.

NOTED: the core hours generally worked by the three officers as presented at the meeting.

2324 45 Remembrance Day Parades

The Clerk reported that in 2021 a request had been made for HVPC to be the nominated organising body for the Remembrance Sunday Parades taking place in the Holme Valley. This involved contacting HVPC insurers to arrange coverage and being the named body on applications for road

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closures etc. the same request was received for 2022 and planning had commenced for 2023 Parades with the same request has been received.

The cost regarding insurance was thought to be less than £200.

RESOLVED: that HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL would be the named organiser in respect of Remembrance Sunday Parades including matters of insurance and applications for road closures for 2023 through to 2027.

2324 46 Joint Project with Kirklees Council – Sands Recreation Ground

The Clerk reported that the ANNUAL PARISH with FULL COUNCIL meeting on 27 March 2023 had **RESOLVED** in principle to work with Kirklees on a joint project regarding the further development of Sands Recreation Ground. It was further minuted that this would be a matter for the new COUNCIL elected in May 2023 and that a working group would need to be set up to facilitate the project.

It was believed that the design work for the project was now completed and therefore a working group consisting of Kirklees councillors and officers and HVPC councillors ought to be established to take this matter forward. It was anticipated that one or more meetings of the working group may need to be convened.

RESOLVED: to set up a HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL working group to work with Kirklees councillors and officers regarding the Sands Recreation Ground project.

The working group would consist of: Cllr Liles, Cllr Baylin, Cllr Dixon and Cllr Rylah.

One objective of the working group would be to seek clarity as to how any additional funds provided by HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL would be used to enhance plans already at an advanced stage.

2324 47 Chair's Expenses Policy - update

The Clerk reported that it had not been possible to present a revised Chair's Expenses policy for consideration at the FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE meeting on 12-06-2023. A revised policy would be considered at the FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE meeting on 21-08-2023 and brought from thence to FULL COUNCIL on 9-10-2023.

OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

2324 48 Council Budget 2023-24 Year-To-Date including Earmarked Reserves

The Deputy Clerk/RFO reported on the Council Budget 2023-24 YTD including Earmarked Reserves.

2324 49 Schedule of Payments

Deputy Clerk/RFO reported on the Schedule of Payments June 2023 which had been included in the document pack. Most payments are regular, pre-approved payments. This month's schedule of payments included an unanticipated payment regarding the Holme Moss topograph project. This

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would make the relevant budget line £263.57 over-budget and so the Deputy Clerk/RFO was requesting authorisation.

APPROVED: the Schedule of Payments for June 2023 as presented.

REFERRALS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

SERVICE PROVISION COMMITTEE

2324 50 Honley Library

At a meeting of the SERVICE PROVISION COMMITTEE on 05-06-2023 the Committee approved a programme of up to £10,000 worth of energy-saving works to be funded from EMR 335 Honley Library Energy. Only FULL COUNCIL can authorise payment from an Earmarked Reserve and so this was being presented as a recommendation from SERVICE PROVISION COMMITTEE .

APPROVED: release of £10,000 from EMR 335 Honley Library Energy to Friends of Honley Library for a programme of energy-saving works as approved by the SERVICE PROVISION COMMITTEE.

2324 51 The Civic

The Clerk reported that at a meeting of the SERVICE PROVISION COMMITTEE on 05-06-2023 the COMMITTEE approved a grant application for £7,800 from Holmfirth Civic Hall Community Trust (HCHCT) for a full condition survey and the development of a building maintenance and management plan and associated works. Only FULL COUNCIL can authorise payment from an Earmarked Reserve.

The COMMITTEE had also been informed of the additional cost of £9,517.39 for the installation of the fire escape to the 3rd Floor Exhibition Room and had resolved to make recommendations to FULL COUNCIL regarding this.

APPROVED: the commitment of expenditure of up to £500 from General Reserves for a valuation for the Civic as requested from HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL's insurers.

APPROVED: a payment of £7,800 from EMR 329 Holmfirth Civic Hall - capital projects (£10,000 available) to cover the grant application from HCHCT for a full condition survey and the development of a building maintenance and management plan and associated works.

APPROVED: a payment of £2,200 from EMR 329 Holmfirth Civic Hall - capital projects and £7,317.39 from General Reserves to cover the additional cost to HCHCT for the installation of a fire escape to the Exhibition Room.

CORRESPONDENCE

2324 52 Place Standards

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Correspondence had been received regarding Place Standards and future planned meetings. Cllr Andy Wilson had attended meetings convened across the Spring as HVPC representative in line with an earlier resolution.

As these meetings were to continue the Clerk advised that HVPC representation on this group be formalised further and that the HVPC Representation list be amended/added to include Place Standards.

There had also been correspondence regarding the Holmfirth Blueprint, due to be adopted imminently by Kirklees Council. Councillors should have received an email inviting them to a meeting to be briefed on the Holmfirth Blueprint – the meeting to take place at the Tech on Thursday 29 June at 6pm.

Cllr Greaves explained that there were several Kirklees work programmes in motion including playable spaces, town centres plan and place standards.

The community in New Mill, Scholes and Hade Edge would perhaps benefit from a place standards engagement, beginning with an 'Ask...' consultation taking place, as has happened in Holmfirth, Honley and also Meltham. A limiting factor was that Kirklees would make available a maximum of £50,000 to be bid for each year to support initiatives arising from place standards engagement work.

Cllr Greaves gave examples of how funding had been used to support the place standards initiatives in Meltham (zebra crossing) and Honley (Honley Library). Brockholes might submit a bid for equipment/measures to be taken to support traffic calming.

APPROVED: the appointment of Cllr Andy Wilson to the Place Standards group for 2023-24.

The Clerk to seek clarification from the relevant Kirklees officer on how parish councillors can engage with the place standards process on behalf of their individual ward.

2324 53 Chair's Report

The Chair gave a verbal report on her activities on behalf of HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL which included:

- Attending a South Pennine Branch meeting of the YLCA which included a presentation regarding the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission;
- Attending the Civic Service for the new Kirklees Mayor, Cahal Burke;
- Attending an event at New Mill Community Garden .

2324 54 Items for Publicity

This was a standing item to put forward potential items for publicity arising from the meeting. The project at Sands Recreation Ground was suggested.

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The meeting closed at 8.40pm having concluded the business.