

TIDBURY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Friday 17th February 2023, 6.30pm, held at Tidbury Green Village Hall

Clerk: Mrs C L Kirby
Tidbury Green Parish Council
Tidbury Green Village Hall
Dickens Heath Road
(On Tidbury Green School Site)
Solihull, West Midlands B90 1QW

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Due to the large quantity of matters to be discussed and the anticipated time for a number of key agenda items, as agreed prior to the meeting, some agenda items below, were delayed until the next Parish Council Meeting. The agenda items that are highlighted in grey are those that were delayed.

1. Record of members present

1.1 **Tidbury Green Parish Councillors:** Cllr.M.Reohorn (Chair), Cllr A. Higgins (Vice Chair), Cllr.C.Farr, Cllr.C.Fergusson, Cllr.D.Edwards and Cllr.L.Waites.

Clerk: Mrs C. L. Kirby

Parishioners: One

2. Apologies and reasons for Absence

2.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Borough Cllr.K.Hawkins.

3. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

3.1 The Chair stated that any Declarations of Interest would be addressed at the appropriate agenda item.

3.2 There were no written requests for Dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

4. Open Forum

4.1 The parishioner in attendance, was welcomed. He advised that he had no specific points to raise, but had attended as he was interested in local issues. He also advised that he was involved in Neighbourhood Watch. It was agreed that Cllr.Reohorn would liaise with the parishioner on this matter, outside of the meeting.

5. To Approve the Minutes

5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2022 having previously been distributed, it was confirmed that Parish Councillors had reviewed the minutes. It was proposed by Cllr.Higgins, seconded by Cllr Reohorn that they be signed as a true record of that meeting. **This motion was carried by 4 in favour**, with 2 abstentions, due to the Councillors not being present at the meeting.

Minutes of Tidbury Green Parish Council Annual meeting held on Friday 17th February 2023

Signed Date.....

6. Financial Matters

- 6.1 Payment of the items listed in the February 2023 Agenda Appendix 1 were discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Reohorn seconded by Cllr.Edwards and **agreed unanimously** that payment of the items should be made.

Payments Received

- 6.2 Nil.

Income and Expenditure Budget Year to 31st December 2022 & 31st January 2023.

- 6.3 The Responsible Financial Officer talked through the Income and Expenditure report and the variance reports (up to 28 February 2023), which were submitted in advance of the meeting. There were no questions.

To discuss responding to “Council as a Managing Trustee” questions on Internal and External Audit and requirements.

- 6.4 Cllr.Reohorn advised and Councillors **agreed unanimously** that Tidbury Green Parish Council is not a Managing Trustee, and therefore a “No Response” should be submitted in the appropriate sections of the internal audit and the external audit.

Consider the proposal for decorative Christmas trees/lights on lampposts during the festive period, funding and any quotes available.

- 6.5 It was proposed by Cllr.Higgins, Seconded by Cllr.Edwards and **agreed unanimously** that a budget of £1,500 (including VAT) should be agreed and the quote received from Plantscape, should be accepted, for installation of 10 half lighted Christmas trees on lampposts, during the Christmas period. Councillors agreed that this is quite a niche product; the company has been used to provide the product successfully for several years to our neighbouring parish, and the cost falls below the threshold where 3 quotes are deemed essential as per the Parish Council Financial Regulations. It was therefore **agreed unanimously** that the single source supplier should be selected and trialled for Christmas 2023. Cllr.Higgins confirmed that the lighted Christmas trees for the lampposts will be paid for with CIL funds. **Action:** Cllr.Higgins to identify and advise which lampposts the trees should be installed upon and Cllr.Edwards to liaise with SMBC to obtain the required permissions.

7. 2023/24 Precept

- 7.1 As agreed at the November 2022 Parish Council meeting the Clerk submitted the 2023/24 signed Precept Notice (Previously circulated) for the value of £33k. As reported at the November 2022 meeting this results in a 2023/24 precept rate of approx. £37.00 per band D equivalent dwelling, compared to this financial year’s charge of £37.62. Which results in a decrease for Tidbury Green Parishioners of approx... 1.7%.

8 Calendar of Actions

Review and adopt Financial Regulations

- 8.1 Tidbury Green Parish Council Financial Regulations which had been circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting were discussed. One minor change was agreed to the Regulations. It was proposed by Cllr.Fergusson Seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the slightly revised Financial Regulations should be approved.

Carry out independent review of bank reconciliations

- 8.2 Cllr.C.Farr had completed the independent review of bank reconciliations. All Councillors **unanimously agreed** that they were content.

- Review the Village Hall's insurance arrangements**
- 8.3 Cllr. L.Waites confirmed that a 12 month Village Hall insurance policy had been agreed and payment had been made.
- Arrange for internal audit to be carried out**
- 8.4 This has been arranged
- Attend AGM of Allotment Association and receive the annual accounts**
- 8.5 As agreed in previous years, the Parish Council are not required to attend the Allotment Association's AGM, however, the Allotment Association should provide their key standard documents; including details of insurance, AGM papers and Annual Accounts, to the Parish Council, via Cllr.Higgins. Cllr.Higgins, confirmed that she has not received the documentation. **Action:** Cllr.Higgins to obtain documentation and send it to the Parish Clerk.
- Prepare VAT refund claim**
- 8.6 The Clerk advised that she has completed and submitted, to HMRC, the 2022 Tidbury Green Parish Council VAT refund claim.
- Review Equality & Diversity Policy**
- 8.7 The policy document which had been circulated for review by Councillors in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Fergusson Seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the policy document should be approved. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the adopted policy document.
- Review Health & Safety Policy**
- 8.8 The policy document which had been circulated for review by Councillors in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Fergusson Seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the policy document should be approved. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the adopted policy document.
- Review Lone Working Policy**
- 8.9 The policy document which had been circulated for review by Councillors in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Fergusson Seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the policy document should be approved. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the adopted policy document.
- Review Working from Home Policy**
- 8.10 The policy document which had been circulated for review by Councillors in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Fergusson Seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the policy document should be approved. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the adopted policy document.
- Review Disaster Recovery Policy**
- Review TGPC Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure**
- 8.11 The procedure documents which had been circulated for review by Councillors in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Fergusson Seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the procedures should be approved.
- Review TGPC Complaints Procedure**
- 8.12 The procedure document which had been circulated for review by Councillors in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was Cllr.Fergusson Seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the procedure should be approved.
- Review training provided to Councillors and Clerk.**
- 8.14 Training undertaken during the year was discussed.
- Arrange Allotment Association Tree Survey**
- 8.15 The Clerk advised that due to other pressures that she has not yet had the time to arrange this.

9. GDPR

- 9.1 The updated Tidbury Green Parish Council GDPR Action Plan, which was circulated in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Reohorn seconded by Cllr.Farr and **agreed unanimously** that a minor amendment should be made to the delivery timescales. It was also **agreed unanimously** that the amended GDPR Action Plan should be adopted. However, it was recognised that there is still quite a bit of work to do to fully comply with all the GDPR requirements. It was also recognised that resource needs to be allocated to this task. Given Cllr.Reohorn's background and knowledge it was agreed that he will review requirements and undertake the necessary actions.
- 9.2 The Tidbury Green Parish Council GDPR Policy Document and associated appendixes, which were circulated in advance of the meeting were discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.Reohorn seconded by Cllr.Farr and **agreed unanimously** that these should be adopted. However, it was agreed that a full review and update needed to be completed. Again Cllr.M.Reohorn will take this work forward.

10. 2023 Parish Council Elections

- 10.1 Parish Council elections take place on the 4 May 2023. The Notice of Election will be publicised on the 22nd March 2023. The Clerk will be sharing relevant information via the website, noticeboards and via email, as it becomes available.

11. Parish Council Vacancy / Appointment of Additional Councillor

- 11.1 Following the resignation of Graham Thomas, on 20th October 2022, the Parish Council formally declared a vacancy for one Parish Councillor. The Notice of Vacancy, which informs parishioners of the vacancy and provides them with an opportunity to request that a Bye Election is held, was published in November 2022. After the statutory period allowed, Solihull MBC advised that a buy election had not been requested and therefore the Casual Vacancy could be filled via co-option. Given the close proximity to the Full Parish Council Elections, it was **agreed unanimously** that the vacancy should not be filled by co-option.

Private Section

(Closed agenda item – Given the confidential nature of these matters, the press and public are asked to leave the meeting when this agenda item is discussed)

12. Clerk & RFO Pay, Terms & Conditions, Issues & the Future

- 12.1 This item was delayed until the end of the agenda, when the parishioner at the meeting was thanked for his attendance and left the meeting.
- 12.2 As agreed at the November 2022 meeting, the Chairman M.Reohorn and Cllr.C.Farr met with the Clerk/RFO on the 16th January 2023, to discuss various employment matters. Consequently:-
- It was proposed by Cllr.Farr, seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that as per the agreed Local Government (NJC) pay offer, that the Clerks pay should increase by £1.00 per hour.
 - It was proposed by Cllr.Farr, seconded by Cllr.Reohorn and **agreed unanimously** that the wage increase would be back dated until 1st April 2022 but only for 80 hours maximum per month. (I.e. contracted hours, not actual hours worked)
- 12.3 At the meeting on the 16th January, it was agreed that the Clerk could reduce her working hours, as per her request. She will work 80 hours per month only for January, February and March 2023. From April 2023 onwards, she advised that she wanted to reduce her hours to 65 hours per month. However, following further consideration regarding annual leave allowance, management of tasks etc. she advised that she would like to be contracted to 70 hours per month.

Minutes of Tidbury Green Parish Council Annual meeting held on Friday 17th February 2023

Signed **Date.....**

This was agreed. It was also agreed that the Clerk will take all her holiday entitlement in year. No annual leave will be carried over. This represents a considerable reduction (Approx. 30- 35 hrs per month). As agreed at the January meeting, the Clerk had produced and circulated in advance of the meeting a list of tasks, including those to meet compliance requirements. The document detailed tasks that the Clerk would continue to complete and those which she will not, due to her reduced hours. The Clerk advised that the tasks which she would no longer be able to complete will need to be passed on to Councillors or an additional part time resource. The Clerk also advised that the Parish Council would require a mechanism for her to report any tasks that she was unable to complete, due to annual leave, or any other time constraints. The Parish Council failed to reach a solution at the meeting and advised the Clerk to do what she can and leave anything that she is unable to complete, within her contracted hours. They advised that they would review the situation. The Clerk stated that she does not like leaving important tasks incomplete. However, she accepted that this would be the case on the basis that the Parish Council had agreed to accept the associated risks. The clerk will keep the Parish Council informed via email, of any high priority tasks that are allocated to her as per the task list that she is unable to undertake, so that these can be managed by Councillors. Other tasks with no resource allocated will be left to Parish Councillors to decide what they wish to do.

12.4 Councillors did express their concerns about how much work has to be undertaken and time spent in terms of compliance and statutory requirements. Whilst not all Councillors explicitly stated these views, they appeared to be the general consensus and no Councillor disputed these views.

The Clerk explained that Parish councils are local government that are tax payer funded (Precept), and consequently accountability, transparency and compliance with statutory requirements is key. As such, the scrutiny of public bodies, such as Parish Councils and the level of governance and compliance may appear greater than that for private industry. The Parish Councils view is that delivery of tangible outputs are key for its Parishioners and that more time should be applied to this, rather than on governance and accountability. Whilst the Clerk understood the frustrations she does have the following concerns:-

- Suggestions that the Clerk / RFO spends less time on governance, financial and compliance tasks and accepts that these may not always be able to be completed. The Clerk sees governance, financial and statutory requirements as key elements of her role, and explained that with the suggested approach that she does not feel comfortable and that the Parish Council, may fail on its statutory requirements. The Parish Council stated that they were prepared to take this risk. The Clerk explained that these risks would not be accepted by her.
- The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions of a council's Proper Officer, as per her contract. As often documented, the Clerk is required to give clear guidance to Councillors, including the Chair, before decisions are reached, even when that guidance may be unpalatable. The Clerk has a key role in advising the Council, and Councillors, on governance, ethical and procedural matters. The Clerk was concerned that due to the Parish Councils preferred approach that she may be in a position where she is not able to fulfil her role and meet statutory obligations. The Parish Council reassured the Clerk that they would accept this risk.
- The Clerk briefly explained some of the governance requirements and documentation etc. required to meet the internal and external audit requirements, which is a time consuming task. Councillor Higgins explained that in a previous role it had taken approx. 30 minutes (to pull out 4 to 5 documents) to satisfy the requirements of auditors. The Clerk felt this was nowhere near representative of Local Government Audit requirements, but was concerned about the Parish Councillors understanding and expectations.

- The Clerk explained that throughout the year, as per agenda item 8, the Clerk reviews and updates policy and procedure documents, including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations based on statutory updates and national guidance. These are circulated to Parish Councillors for review and if appropriate approval at full council. Cllr.Ferguson had reviewed the documents and provided feedback on the 9 policy documents circulated prior to the meeting (Agenda item 8) No other feedback was received. The Clerk pointed out that Parish Councillors should be reviewing these documents in advance of approving them, as they become accountable for the policies once approved.
- 12.4 The Clerks contract, which was circulated in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr.M.Reohorn, seconded by Cllr.C.Farr and **agreed unanimously** that the Clerks contract should be updated to include the changes agreed in relation to pay and hours.

13. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding

- 13.1 Cllr Higgins advised that she is liaising with Bellway to try and expedite the project of installing a duck house on the lake at Tidbury Heights.
- 13.2 Cllr Edwards advised that 3 of the 4 litter / Dog waste bins should be installed imminently. However, this is reliant on the Solihull MBC contractor's availability and priorities.

14. To consider the following planning matters

New Planning Applications

- 14.1 PL/2023/00172/MINFHO – Pinewood – 62 Shutt Lane - **No Response Submitted.**
- 14.2 PL/2022/02432/PPFL - Fulford Hall Farm Cottage Fulford Hall Road - **No Response Submitted.**
- 14.3 PL/2023/00078/PPFL - Land Off Wood Lane - **No Response Submitted.**
- 14.4 PL/2022/02621/PPFL - 448 Norton Lane Earlswood - **No Response Submitted.**
- 14.5 PL/2022/02545/PPFL - 172 - 174 Tilehouse Lane -**No Response Submitted**
- 14.6 PL/2022/02520/MINFOT – 66 Shutt Lane -**No Response Submitted**
- 14.7 PL/2022/02481/VAR - Bowyer Farm Lady Lane Earlswood Solihull -**No Response Submitted**

Planning Decisions by Solihull Borough Council

- 14.8 PL/2022/02392/MINFHO – 162 Tilehouse Lane - **No Response Submitted – Approved.**
- 14.9 PL/2022/02302/PPFL – 95 Lowbrook Lane - **No Representation - via delegated authority – Approved.**
- 14.10 PL/2022/00568/PPFL - Fulford Hall Farm Cottage - **No Representation - via delegated authority – Approved.**
- 14.11 PL/2022/00310/MINFHO 72 Lowbrook Lane - **No Representation Submitted - Approved**
- 14.12 Appeal (APP/Q4625/D/22/3297617) - PL/2021/01164/MINFHO – 259 Rumbush Lane – **Appeal Allowed**
- 14.14 PL/2021/02561/PNCUDW – Bowyer Farm - **No Representation** (However, conditions to Approval requested) -via delegated authority – **Prior approval Refused – Appeal Lodged - Refused**
- 14.15 PL/2021/03057/PNCUDW– Bowyer Farm – **Relevant Points raised and decision left to SMBC – Prior Approval Refused – Appeal Lodged (APP/Q4625/W/22/3296281). Appeal Refused**

Ongoing matters

- 14.16 PL/2022/02094/MINFHO – Serendipity Wood Lane - **No Response Submitted**
- 14.17 PL/ 2022/02298/MINFHO - 52 Fulford Hall Road - **No Representation - via delegated authority**
- 14.18 PL/2022/01898/PPFL – 60 Lowbrook Lane - **Objection Submitted**
- 14.19 PL/2022/01540/MINFHO – Tudor Croft – Tanners Green Lane - **No Response Submitted**
- 14.20 PL/2022/00790/PPFL – Tidbury Green Farm (Brunnig & Price) – Fulford Hall Road – **Supported - via delegated authority**
- 14.21 PL/2022/00791/LBC – Tidbury Green Farm (Brunnig & Price) – Fulford Hall Road **Supported - via delegated authority**
- 14.21 PL/2021/02477/PPOL – Land Encompassing 146 and 150 Tilehouse Lane. **No Response Submitted.**
- 14.22 PL/2021/00046/PPTREE – Open Space off Cherry Tree Drive - **Objection Submitted via delegated authority. Objection due to the absence of any evidence of damage/disease to tree.**

15. Solihull Local Plan Review

- 15.1 A considerable amount of information, has been circulated, with some being quite technical and complex. Cllr.Reohorn will continue to liaise with Jean Walters, who is representing Tidbury Green Parish Council in relation to the Solihull Local Plan, to ascertain the key facts that the Parish Council need to be aware of.
- 15.2 Cllr.Reohorn advised that he was attending a session at Dickens Heath library where the 3 Solihull Borough Councillors will be in attendance. Cllr.Reohorn will raise any concerns and questions as required.

16. Tidbury Green Neighbourhood Plan

- 16.1 The application for the designation of a Tidbury Green Neighbourhood Area has been approved by Solihull Council. Cllr.Fergusson will now explore available funding options.

17. Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy - Consultation

- 17.1 Cllr. Reohorn had circulated the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy Consultation document in advance of the meeting. Councillors confirmed that due to the size of the document that they had not had time to go through it and also they were not clear about what the objective of doing so is.
- 17.2 Cllr.Reohorn advised that he will be attending a session at Dickens Heath library where the 3 Solihull Borough Councillors will be in attendance. Cllr.Reohorn will raise any concerns and questions as required.

18. Regency Fields Development

- 18.1 There were no updates to report.

19. Tidbury Heights Development

- 19.1 There were no updates to report.

20. Dog Kennel Lane – Taylor Wimpey Housing Development Proposal

20.1 There were no updates to report.

21. Fulford Green: A new zero carbon community for Solihull

21.1 There were no updates to report.

22. Brunning & Price – Tidbury Green farm – Pub

22.1 Application(s) approved

23. Village Hall

23.1 Cllr.Waites provided the Clerk with a signed copy of the 2022 Approved Village Hall Year End Accounts, for Filing.

23.2 There were no updates to report.

24. Gov.Uk Email Addresses & secure Email System

- To receive an update on works completed and required for the Parish Council and its Councillors to obtain Gov.UK email addresses, supported by a secure email system.
- To consider any information and quotes received.

25. Technical projects & Support

- To discuss and agree specific details of the package of support that is required by the Parish Council and as agreed at the September 2022, needs to be provided to RL Business Supplies for a quote.
- Discuss and agree additional website enhancement works that needs to be undertaken and agree resource to take the relevant workstreams forward.

26. Partnership Working

- Consider how the Parish Council can enhance Partnership Working opportunities.
- To review the Tidbury Green Parish Council, Draft Partnership Working Plan and any other relevant documents.

27. 20's Plenty For Warwickshire

- Update from Cllr.Reohorn from session he attended regarding reducing speed limits in Villages.

28. Flooding

- To receive any relevant updates relating to flooding risks in Tidbury Green or ongoing flooding issues.

29. Litter Picking in Tidbury Green

- To receive an update regarding the Local Litter Picking Initiative.
- Discuss and agree any further action to be taken

30. Crimes/ Anti-Social Behaviour in Tidbury Green

- Discuss and consider any recent crimes reported in the area.
- Consider options for reducing crime in the area.

31. Neighbourhood Watch / Street Watch

- To receive any relevant updates.
- Discuss and agree any further action to be taken.

32. Update from Parish Clerk

32.1 The Clerk advised that she had 3 – 4 hours left to work during the remainder of the month and that she would have to focus on Internal Audit requirements.

33. Correspondence

33.1 There was no correspondence that required discussion.

Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 15th March 2023

Councillors are reminded of their legal duty to consider all aspects of equal opportunities, crime prevention, unlawful discrimination and other best practices when making decisions at the meeting.

THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:20pm.

TIDBURY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

February 2023 Agenda Appendix 1

Invoices Received

Invoice & Cheque No.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Clerk's Pay – November 2022 (C Kirby) - £903.95
Standard Contracted Hours
(Excluding SO) - £667.20
Additional hours worked/pay November 2022 £236.75
<i>Paid in Advance of the Meeting</i> | Invoice No: 2022/18
Cheque No: 100669 |
| 2. SLCC – Annual Membership - £186.00
<i>Paid in Advance of the Meeting</i> | Invoice No: MEM241175-1
Cheque No: 100670 |
| 3. Clerk's Pay – December (C Kirby) - £610.18
Standard Contracted Hours
(Includes Sick pay and 4 hrs owing January 2023)
<i>Paid in Advance of the Meeting</i> | Invoice No: 2022/19
Cheque No: 100671 |
| 4. Clerk's Expenses (C Kirby)
– December /January- £209.07
Phone, Stamps, ink, paper, envelopes & dividers

HMRC - £ 679.76 (£379.92- Employee Tax & NI -
Deducted from Clerk's pay - £299.84 Employers NI)
<i>Paid in Advance of the Meeting</i> | Invoice No: 2022/19
Cheque No: 100675

Invoice No: Quarter 3 2022/3
Cheque No: 100672 |
| 5. Chairman Mark Rehorn - £25.00
– Fund for Residents/Councillors gift of flowers | Invoice No: 2022/20
Cheque No:100674 |
| 6. WALC - £36.00
– Planning for Elections Training | Invoice No: 108
Cheque No: 100678 |
| 7. Clerk's Pay – January (C Kirby) - £587.98
Standard Contracted Hours – Standing Order | Invoice No: 2023/01
Cheque No: 100673 |
| 8. Bell Computers - £25.00
Auto Renewal of McAfee Total Protection to 13/01/24 | Invoice No: J20534
Cheque No 100677 |

Cheque 100676 Cancelled, Due To Error Payments received

Cheque & Bank Credit No.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Payments Received – £NIL – | Cheque No:
Payment Ref: |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|

February 2023 Appendix 1 invoices and payments approved as correct:-

Signed..... Date.....

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Signed Date.....