

GROVE PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON TUESDAY 7 MAY 2024**

Present: Cllr J M Stock (Chairman Item 1 only) Cllr K Jones
Cllr S K Dexter (Vice Chairman) Cllr J Leggott
Cllr W R Ackers Cllr C T McCarthy (Chairman from Item 2)
Cllr R Batstone Cllr D Rolfe
Cllr M Charlton Cllr K Rowland
Cllr L M Foster-Hill Cllr G Smeddle
Cllr A P Harker Cllr P Ware

In attendance: Julie Maberley (Wantage and Grove Campaign Group manager)

Clerk: Mr G M Mundy

1 Election of the Council Chairman for the municipal year 2024-2025

The Chairman asked if there were any nominations for Chairman, Cllr McCarthy said that he was willing to stand. The Chairman indicated that she was also willing to stand again.

It was **MOVED** Cllr Ware and **SECONDED** Cllr Rowland “that Cllr McCarthy is elected as Chairman for the 2024/25 municipal year”

It was also **MOVED** Cllr Ackers and **SECONDED** Cllr Jones “that Cllr Stock is re-elected as Chairman for the 2024/25 municipal year”

Cllr Ware asked if both candidates were prepared to give a brief summary as to why they should be Chairman of the Council. Both nominees agreed and gave their speeches whilst the other absented themselves from the room.

The Vice Chairman then took over the meeting for this item only and asked that a vote in favour of Cllr McCarthy. There were 6 in favour, 4 against and 4 abstentions.

The Vice Chairman then asked for a vote for Cllr Stock. There were 4 in favour, 6 against and 4 abstentions.

The Vice Chairman declared that “**Cllr McCarthy was elected as Council Chairman for the 2024/25 municipal year**”

2 Receive Council Chairman’s Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Before the Chairman signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office he thanked Councillor Mrs Stock for her previous 10 years-service as Chairman of the Parish Council.

The Chairman duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was witnessed by Mr G M Mundy, Proper Officer of the Council.

3 Election of Council Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2024-2025

It was **MOVED** Cllr McCarthy **SECONDED** Cllr Stock that Cllr Dexter is re-elected Vice-Chairman for the 2024-2025 municipal year.

There being no other nominations, Cllr Dexter was elected Council Vice-Chairman.

4 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Parish Cllr F D Parnell. Belated apologies had been received from County and District Cllr J Hannaby.

5 Declaration of Personal or Pecuniary Interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting

Both Cllr McCarthy and Cllr Dexter declared an interest in item 18 as they are both members of Grove Rugby Football Club. The Chairman said that any further declarations may be given during the meeting as and when they arise.

6 Sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 9 April 2024

It was **MOVED** the Chairman and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the minutes be signed as a true record of the meeting”

7 Clerk’s summary report from the previous meetings

(a) Minute 160(a) – New GRFC lease. The Clerk informed the Council that this matter will be further discussed under item 18 on the agenda for this meeting.

Clerk

(b) Minute 160(b) – Leisure Strategy follow up meeting. The Clerk informed the Council that the following up meeting with the District Council will be held on 23 May 2024 on Microsoft Teams.

(c) Minute 164 – Request from GRFC to install a ‘patio’ area in front of their clubhouse on the Recreation Ground. The Clerk informed the Council that the patio area is now complete.

Clerk

(d) Minute 165 – Cane Lane road barrier. The Clerk informed the Council that the consultation letters have gone out to all residents living in Ashdown Way, Cane Lane, Sharland Close and the Westfield and Willows Park Homes. The Clerk added that end of the consultation is 14 June 2024, and the results of the consultation will be discussed at the Full Council meeting on 18 June 2024.

Clerk

(e) Minute 167 – Training pitch floodlight tops. The Clerk informed the Council that he has paid a 50% deposit for the floodlight works which are expected to be completed before the end of August 2024.

Clerk

(f) Minute 169 – ‘.gov.uk’ email domain and changing website provider to Parish On-line. The Clerk informed the Council that this matter will be further discussed at the Full Council meeting on 18 June 2024.

(g) Minute 173 – Accounts for payment – closure of the Zoom account. The Clerk informed the Council that the Zoom account will be closed with effect 14 May 2024.

(h) Minute 175(a – f) – Planning applications. The Clerk informed the Council that he has submitted the Council’s responses to the applications considered.

8 Questions from the public

Ms Maberley referred to the Accounts for Payments sheet from the meeting held on 9 April 2024 where it stated at that the Council had over £213,000 in an Instant Deposit A/c and reminded members of the banking crash where local councils lost thousands of pounds.

Dexter/
Clerk Cllr Dexter said that he and the Clerk would be drafting a new Treasury Management Policy which will cover this matter and Council Reserves, he said he hoped this would be ready for the Full Council meeting on 18 June 2024.

9 Membership of the following

- (a) The Finance and General Purposes committee. Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Dexter **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the list of members on the said committee (as amended) as prepared by the Clerk is agreed”

- (b) The Staffing Sub-committee. Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Ware **SECONDED** Cllr Rowland and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the list of members on the said Sub-committee (as amended) as prepared by the Clerk is agreed”

10 Representatives on outside bodies

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the list as prepared by the Clerk is circulated to all members and further discussed at the next Full Council meeting.

11 Review of appointed cheque signatories for Grove Parish Council for 2024/2025

It was **MOVED** Cllr McCarthy **SECONDED** Cllr Stock and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“that the list of appointed cheque signatories (with the addition of Cllr McCarthy) is approved”**

12 Review of appointed dual authorisation signatories for electronic banking for Grove Parish Council for 2024/2025

It was **MOVED** Cllr McCarthy **SECONDED** Cllr Smeddle and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“that the list of dual authorisation signatories (with the addition of Cllr McCarthy) for electronic banking are appointed”**

13 Review of direct debits and standing orders

It was **MOVED** Cllr McCarthy **SECONDED** Cllr Ackers and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the list of current direct debits and standing orders is approved”

14 Review of the Financial Risk Assessment for 2023/2024

Cllr Dexter said that both he and the Clerk will be reviewing the Financial Risk Assessment during the course of the coming months. Following a discussion, it was agreed to set up a Working Group consisting of Cllr Dexter, Cllr Jones, Cllr Ware and the Clerk to look into the financial risk assessment.

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It was **MOVED** Cllr Stock **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“that the financial risk assessment (as amended) for 2024/2025 is approved”**

15 Review of following Parish Council Core policies

The Clerk confirmed that the following Core documents had not been amended during the year 2023/24:

- Council Standing Orders
- Code of Conduct
- Scheme of Delegation
- Financial Regulations
- Treasury Management Policy

Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Jones **SECONDED** Cllr Ware and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that upon amendments to any of the core documents listed above, all Councillors must sign to say they have received and understood the amendments”

Following a further discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Stock **SECONDED** Cllr Leggott and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the core documents listed above have all been reviewed and approved”

16 Review of other Council policies and procedures for 2024/25

Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Rowland **SECONDED** Cllr Ware and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the following other policies and procedures have been reviewed and approved

Health and Safety Policy	Freedom of Information Policy
Social Media Policy	Communication Policy
Trees Policy	Audio Recording Policy
Booking Open Space Land Policy”	

17 Review of the Council’s General Insurance Policy 2024/25

Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Dexter **SECONDED** Cllr Batstone and **RESOLVED** unanimously

“that the Council has considered and reviewed the Council’s General Insurance Policy cover for 2024/25”

18 Approve the wording and length of new lease for Grove Rugby Club

Cllr McCarthy and Cllr Dexter did not vote on this item because of the previously declared interest (see item 5 above).

The Clerk explained that in order for the Rugby Club to secure funding grants from the RFU etc it requires a considerable length of time in security of tenure. Therefore, it had been previously suggested that the length of the new lease for the Rugby Club is 75 years. The Clerk added that the form of words has come from the Council’s solicitor.

Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Foster-Hill **SECONDED** Cllr Rolfe and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk

“that the s127 notice is approved”

19 Consideration of using Cintra HR Services (formerly Peopletime HR and Payroll) for Payroll and HR services

Cllr Foster-Hill said that in his professional capacity, the quote that Cintra HR Services had proposed is very competitive.

Following a discussion, it was **MOVED** Cllr Rolfe **SECONDED** Cllr Foster-Hill and **RESOLVED** unanimously

Clerk **“to accept the quote from Cintra HR Services to the value of £4,884.00 per annum”**

20 Wantage and Grove Street Pastors report for February and March 2024

The report was noted.

21 Council Chairman’s communications

No reports had been received.

22 Confidential matters

It was **MOVED** the Chairman and **AGREED** in accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972

“that the press and public be excluded from the meeting to permit the Council to consider the confidential items”

Meeting closed: 8.36pm

Confirmed: 11 June 2024

(Original signed)

Chairman