



# Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

## Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at River Bourne Community Farm

### MINUTES

**Councillors present:** Baker (Chair), Jones (Deputy Chair), Lynn, McDonald, Schneider (until 8.40pm, Smith, Vanstone, Waller,

**In attendance:** Elder (Operations Officer), Prince (Responsible Financial Officer RFO and Clerk for this meeting)

Also in attendance were Wiltshire Councillor Oliver, PCSO Tablet and 7 members of the public. WCllr McLennan joined the meeting online.

PCSO Tablet updated councillors regarding a recent security threat at a local school for which an individual had been arrested, and an individual that had been sentenced for theft in Old Sarum. In response to a question from the Chair, PCSO Tablet confirmed there was a schedule for attendance at all schools in the area, with many experiencing similar problems with parking and traffic.

Representatives from River Bourne Community Farm reported on vandalism at the Farm which will be followed up.

Directors of River Bourne Community Farm reported their desire to introduce additional education provision at the Farm for some full time students excluded from main stream schooling. They also reported that, following difficulties in the Farms relationship with Devenish Bradshaw Trust, they had been notified they would not be able to host the Live at Farm event this year which has been a major fund raiser for the Farm in the past. The directors will provide information on the NVQ and AQA agriculture based education on offer and whether this can continue without access to the Devenish Bradshaw Trust Water Meadows. The directors are discussing future arrangements with Woodstock and will provide details of lease arrangements with the Café. The directors stated they had been unable to reach agreement with Two Birds for them to remain on the Farm. The directors did not wish to share their financial business plan with the council.

The Chair agreed to try and set up a meeting between the Farm and Devenish Bradshaw Trust, with input from the Parish Council if required.

The meeting commenced at 7.43pm.

#### **24.001 Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Barker. The Clerk had also sent apologies due to ill health and the meeting was clerked by the Deputy Clerk.

#### **24.002 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **24.003 Co-Option of Councillors**

Three individuals interested in joining the council attended. Two had submitted applications for co-option and previously met with the Chair and Cllr Vanstone. They answered questions from Councillors and were nominated for co-option by the Chair.

**Resolved:** to co-opt Estelle Williams to the Bishopdown Farm ward of Laverstock and Ford Parish Council

**Resolved:** to co-opt James Harris to the Bishopdown Farm ward of Laverstock and Ford Parish Council.

The Clerk will arrange for signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of office.

#### **24.004 Approval of Minutes**

**Resolved:** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**24.005 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**24.006 Approval of Budget 2024/25**

The RFO had circulated Report 24.006 in advance of the meeting, reporting that following a review of the contribution from reserves to support revenue expenditure and the capital asset replacement reserve contribution, the Budget and Precept figures for 2024/25 had been revised resulting in a Band D increase of 7.17%.

**Resolved:** to approve a revenue budget of £225,623 and a capital budget of £95,581 for the year 2024/25

**24.007 Approval of Precept 2024/25**

**Resolved:** to approve a precept requirement of £321,204 for the year 2024/25

**24.008 Longhedge Transfers**

The Clerk had circulated Report 24.008 in advance of the meeting regarding Areas C, I and L at Longhedge.

**Resolved:** that the council approves the signing of transfer deeds and any attached plans for the land at Longhedge designated as areas C, I and L by any two parish councillors in accordance with Standing Order 23.

**24.009 Planning**

The Planning Log had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

**Resolved:** to approve the following responses

PL/2023/09969 Proposed garden annexe 59 Church Road Laverstock NO COMMENT

PL/2023/09906 Single storey side extension and new front entrance porch 18 Norman Drive, Old Sarum NO COMMENT

**24.010 Tree Policy**

The Clerk had circulated Report 24.010 in advance of the meeting. The Operations Officer explained the two recent amendments regarding tree planting and solar panels.

**Resolved:** to adopt the Tree Policy as amended.

**24.011 Finance**

The RFO had circulated Report 24.011 in advance of the meeting Cllr McDonald confirmed that he had checked monthly finance in January and was happy to recommend acceptance.

Approval of additional payment December 2023

**Resolved:** to approve amended Debit Card and Direct Debit payments for December 2023 of £651.04

Adoption of Monthly Accounts for December 2023

The Financial Statements had previously been circulated in Report 24.011. The total funds held on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 were £1,841,005.42 of which £1,628,385.96 were earmarked or restricted reserves.

**Resolved:** To adopt the monthly accounts as a true record of the Council's finances.

Authorisation of Payments

The lists of payments had been circulated in Report 24.011. Total cheque and BACS payments in January 2024 amounted to £21,882.21. Debit card and direct debit payments in December 2023 amounted to £488.86.

**Resolved:** To approve the cheque, BACS, direct debit and debit card payments.

Review of Reserves and Treasury Deposit Report

Reserves and Treasury Deposit Reports had been presented in Report 24.011. Earmarked and Restricted Reserves at the end of December 2023 were £1,628,385.96. The balance on the 173 Days Term Account at the end of December 2023 was £390,000.00. The balance on the 32 Day Notice Account was £296,660.79 including interest of £14,777.38. The balance on the CCLAPSDF was £1,118,466.15 including dividends awarded of £52,522.15. There was a total of £1,805,126.94 on deposit at the end of December 2023.

**Resolved:** to note the reserve and treasury deposit reports

#### **24.012 Clerk's Report and Correspondence**

The Operations Officer reported that a meeting for Community Emergency Volunteer Co-Ordinators was being held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>, as part of developing a Community Resilience Plan for the Parish. Wiltshire Council Officers will also be attending and discussing training events for the volunteers. The Operations Officer will share the Teams invitation for councillors who wish to attend.

The Chair reminded councillors of the Parish Environment Group meeting due to be held at Boscombe Down Aviation Collection on the upcoming Saturday.

#### **24.013 Exempt Business – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved:** that in view of the commercial in confidence nature of the business about to be transacted, that the public and press be temporarily excluded from the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 s100.

The Chair reported on concerns expressed, by one of the user groups, about the relationship between some user groups and the committee at Laverstock Village Hall. The RFO reported that the Parish Council was a custodian trustee of the charity. Cllr Jones offered to discuss attendance at committee meetings with the Clerk. The Chair warned there may be a possibility that the hall could be offered for sale at some point. The RFO reported on imminent changes to legislation regarding Parish Council funding of religious organisations.

Councillors discussed the request from River Bourne Community Farm for lease amendments, permission to increase and extend the educational offering and the reducing agricultural focus at the Farm. The RFO reported that the initial establishment of the Devenish Bradshaw Trust and purchase of the water meadows land was wholly intended to support the Community Farm. The Chair reported that the Clerk was making investigations regarding the legal position of the current actions and requested changes. The Chair will attempt to set up a meeting between the Parish Council, River Bourne Community Farm and Devenish Bradshaw Trust to try and work through the current issues and a way forward.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

**NEXT MEETING.** The next Parish Council Meeting will be held at 7pm on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at Old Sarum and Longhedge Community Centre.