

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST AND COLBURY PARISH COUNCIL.**

**Held Online via Zoom on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.30pm.**

**Present;** Cllr Caroline Hubbard (Chair), Cllr Clive White (Vice Chair) Cllr Sue Robinson,  
Cllr Andy Austin, Cllr Adrian Eyre, Cllr Mike Thomas, Cllr Bobbie Torkington, Cllr Caroline Smith.  
**Clerk;** Helen Klaassen  
**HCC:** Cllr Keith Mans  
**NFDC:** Cllr Derek Tipp, Cllr Joe Reilly  
**Members of the Public;** 0

**19/169 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were noted from PCSO Williams and Mrs Oliver.

**19/170 Disclosure of Interest in an Agenda Item.**

None.

Cllr Hubbard then took a moment to draw members attention to the item regarding the resignation of the Clerk. Noting that the Clerk had been with the parish council for 6 years, supporting councillors and managing many different projects during that time. Cllr Hubbard spoke on behalf of the council, saying that they would be sad to see her go. District Councillors joined in thanking the Clerk – noting that they appreciated how easy it was to join the parish council zoom meetings because of the way the Clerk set the meetings up. Cllr Mans also joined in thanking the Clerk, noting that Ashurst's loss was Bransgore's gain.

**19/171 Public Participation**

None.

**19/172 Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Full Council Meeting as a Correct Record of Proceedings, and Matters Arising / Action Updates From those Minutes.**

The minutes were **AGREED** and the Clerk would provide the Chair with a copy for signing.

**Clerk**

Matters arising:

- Foxhills being part of the road closure pilot scheme had been approved. It was noted that HCC would consult with the PC and residents, not the school whose primary concern would be the safety and wellbeing of their children and not necessarily the impact of the scheme on the surrounding roads.
- Wildflowers. There had not been much uptake on suitable locations from residents. CH would speak to Go Botanical about asking for locations (and also the sensory area in the Recreation Ground).
- Unity Trust Banking application was underway.

**CH**

**19/173 Reports.** To receive reports and relevant information from;

**1. County and District Councillors**

**Cllr Mans:**

Thanked the parish council for raising the matter of the pilot traffic scheme. When the pilot schools were picked it was assumed parish councils would have been contacted, evidently this was not so, so it was good that the parish council had raised it.

Covid figures were decreasing and the vaccination programme going well. Vaccinations were at 44% across the forest and 37% in Hampshire. Encouraging others to have the vaccine was advised, despite the concerns regarding blood clots – though it seems those who haven't had the vaccine are more at risk of a blood clot than those who have.

It was noted that things were improving quickly and the lockdown release dates looked realistic.

At CC now focusing on how they, with DCs, are going to promote the recovery for businesses and high streets.

Students returning to schools had been successful and was virtually back to previous pre-covid levels of attendance.

Cllr Mans noted that this pandemic and lockdown may well change the way people work longer term, meaning more people elect to work from home and some pressure on public transport is relieved.

Out of the 2000 staff in Winchester only about 500 were working in the CC offices and in future they may continue to work from home or may use offices closer to home as well as wfh.

The government were coming up with new schemes for green transport and public transport.

**Cllr Reilly:**

Nothing to report.

**Cllr Tipp:**

Noted that he and Cllr Reilly had sent grants for the Wildflowers project and the plinth in the Recreation Ground. The issue the Clerk had asked for help with regarding the bunker near the station had been passed on to NFDC.

**2. Committee Chairs**

**Cllr Thomas:**

Reported that the Fete had been discussed at the last CE Meeting and it had been decided to revisit at the end of April. Also, that there was a group of residents who were keen to see an event planned and had sent the Clerk a list of ideas. The Clerk was reviewing the list to show what already existed and planned to send it onto to CH and CW for their comments.

**Clerk**

**Cllr Hubbard:**

Reported that the Planning and Development Committee were focusing on the Village Design Statement.

**3. Parish Councillors**

Cllr Austin reported that he has been doing litter picks as a New Forest Ambassador and had reported finding a large number of alcohol bottles to PCSO Williams.

Cllr Robinson reported that she had still not heard back regarding the Timebanking email and funding but that as the Clerk was leaving, she would hold off on chasing.

**4. Police / Neighbourhood Watch.**

None.

**19/174 Staffing Matters.** Following the Parish Clerk's resignation, to agree

1. To start the recruitment process to appoint a new Clerk

**It was RESOLVED to start the recruitment process.**

2. To consider and agree the advert, pay scale, job description and person specification (Appendix 1).

**Agreed:**

Hours at 19 per week to include Tuesday meetings (FC and PD)

Flexible hours by arrangement

Salary scale was agreed at SCP 14 (£12.00) to 28 (£16.75) depending on experience and qualifications.

Closing date: 19/4

Interviews: w/c 26/4.

Contact either Chair or Clerk.

3. To agree and appoint a Staffing Committee to manage the process going forward

It was **RESOLVED** to form a working party consisting of Cllrs Hubbard, White, Thomas and Robinson to manage the recruitment process, to include: reviewing application forms, creating a short list, interviewing and choosing a suitable applicant and setting pay rates, terms and conditions and agreeing employment contract.

4. To agree the appointment of a locum clerk for the interim period.

It was **Agreed** to appoint a Locum Clerk, Lorraine Wheeler, for the interim period. Mrs Wheeler would be able to work approximately 5 hours a week and her rate would be £21 per hour. The current Clerk was in contact with her and would arrange a handover, including handing over the laptop and mobile and keys to the storage unit.

**19/175 Risk Assessment.** To review and agree the Council's Risk Assessment.

**RESOLVED:** To accept the risk assessment as presented.

Clerk to inquire from the internal auditor what the Executive Checklist should comprise.

**Clerk**

**19/176 Grant Requests.** To review grant requests and approve funding if so desired.

The grant request from New Forest Disability Information Service was reviewed and it was **Resolved** to give them a donation of £100, which would be taken from the Parish Councils reserves.

**Clerk**

**19/177 Online Banking Matters.**

**1. Revision of Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.**

**RESOLVED** to accept the Clerk's revisions (Appendix 2).

**Clerk**

**2. New Bank Signatories.**

**RESOLVED** to add Cllr Robinson and Cllr Smith as bank signatories to the new Unity Trust account after the transfer had taken place.

**Clerk**

**19/178 Accounts and Clerk's Update. To:**

1. Receive and approve the Monthly Schedule of Payments – **APPROVED (Appendix 3).**
2. Receive any relevant information from the Clerk, including any decisions taken under delegated powers.

The Clerk reported that;

- The Lock and Store unit was set up and she had started transferring items from the office.
- She had met with a play equipment supplier and some of the mums in the recreation ground to talk about new equipment.

3. Correspondence

- **Letter regarding the Greening campaign (Appendix 4)**

It was agreed that the Greening Campaign should be considered as part of a focus on wider environmental schemes at the June meeting.

**Clerk**

**19/179 Items for Discussion at the Next Meeting.**

- APM/APCM (Lift SOs)

**Meeting concluded at 10pm.**

Signed:

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Date:

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## Job Description - Clerk to the Council

### Overall Responsibilities

The Clerk to the Council will be the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law of a local authority's Proper Officer.

The Clerk will be totally responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Authority are carried out.

The Clerk is expected to advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of the Authority's activities and in particular to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions.

The person appointed will be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and will report to them as and when required.

The Clerk will be the Responsible Financial Officer and responsible for all financial records of the Council and the careful administration of its finances.

### Specific Responsibilities

1. To ensure that statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed.
2. To monitor and balance the Council's accounts and prepare records for audit purposes and VAT.
3. To ensure that the Council's obligations for Risk Assessment are properly met.
4. To prepare, in consultation with appropriate members, agendas for meetings of the Council and Committees. To attend such meetings and prepare minutes for approval.
5. To attend all meetings of the Council and all meetings of its committees and sub-committees.
6. To receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and to deal with the correspondence or documents or bring such items to the attention of the Council.  
To issue correspondence as a result of instructions of, or the known policy of the Council.
7. To receive and report on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council and to ensure such accounts are met.  
To issue invoices on behalf of the Council for goods and services and to ensure payment is received.
8. To study reports and other data on activities of the Council and on matters that have bearing on those activities. Where appropriate, to discuss such matters with administrators and specialists in particular fields and to produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.
9. To draw up both on their own initiative and as a result of suggestions by Councillors proposals for consideration by the Council and to advise on practicability and likely effects of specific courses of action.
10. To supervise any other members of staff (Parish Lengthsman) as their line manager in keeping with the policies of the Council and to undertake all necessary activities in connection with the management of salaries, conditions of employment and work of other staff.
11. To monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and where appropriate suggest modifications.
12. To act as the representative of the Council as required.
13. To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for the Parish Meeting; to attend the assemblies of the Parish Meeting and to implement the decisions made at the assemblies that are agreed by the Council.
14. To prepare, in consultation with the Chairman, press releases about the activities of, or decisions of, the Council.
15. To attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk as required by the Council.
16. To work towards the achievement of the status of Qualified Clerk as a minimum requirement for effectiveness in the position of Clerk to the Council.
17. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council: Suggested is membership of your professional body The Society of Local Council Clerks.
18. To attend the Conference of the National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks, and other relevant bodies, as a representative of the Council as required.

## Advert

### Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council – Vacancy for a Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

Parish Council are seeking to recruit a Parish Clerk/RFO to work **18 19** hours per week from home.

The parish of Ashurst and Colbury is situated on the eastern edge of the New Forest National Park. Ashurst is the 'gateway' village to the NFNP, it has a population of approx. 2100 and a precept of £44,100.

The Clerk/RFO is responsible for managing all areas of council business including advising Parish Councillors in all aspects of local governance and council finances. Experience in local council administration and accounts management is **essential** preferred. The candidate should be well organised with good communication and IT skills, be motivated and confident with minute taking, dealing with correspondence and preparing a budget, and most importantly have integrity, discretion, objectivity and impartiality.

Full Council and Planning and Development Committee meetings are held every third Tuesday evening, with other committee meetings by arrangement.

The salary is negotiable (**NJC Scales- SCP 14 £12.00 to SCP 28 £16.75**) depending on qualifications and experience.

Applications will be welcomed from Clerks already in post at another council who may wish to take on a dual role.

This is an interesting and diverse role giving the applicant the opportunity to make new contacts and to work alongside other agencies in the surrounding area.

#### Closing date details:

The closing date for applications is 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Interviews will be held w/c 26<sup>th</sup> April

#### Contact person:

To register interest in this vacancy or for an informal discussion, please contact either the Clerk to Council, Helen Klaassen (email; [parishclerk@ashurstandcolbury-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@ashurstandcolbury-pc.gov.uk) tel: 07510 371440), or

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Caroline Hubbard ([c.hubbard@ashurstandcolbury-pc.gov.uk](mailto:c.hubbard@ashurstandcolbury-pc.gov.uk), tel: 02380 293369 or download the Application Form, Job Description and Person Specification from [www.ashurstandcolbury-pc.gov.uk](http://www.ashurstandcolbury-pc.gov.uk).

## Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Education, Qualifications and Achievements</b>		
Good general standard of education, including English & Maths	✓	
<b>Essential Knowledge and Experience</b>		
Experience in an administrative role, preferably within local government	✓	
Experience of committee processes/procedures and/or an understanding of local government law/practice	✓	
Experience of working with budgets and managing finances	✓	
Experience of partnership working (in statutory/voluntary/private sector)		✓
Experience of project management and grant funding applications		✓
Experience of a customer service role		✓
Knowledge of the local area and its issues		✓
<b>Skills and Abilities</b>		
Excellent communication skills (able to write and speak clearly, concisely and understandably)	✓	
IT skills (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook etc.)	✓	
Experience of updating websites (WordPress) and managing social media, or a willingness to train to do these	✓	
<b>Personal Qualities and Attributes</b>		
Proven organisational and interpersonal skills	✓	
Good team player, able to build rapport with a wide range of people	✓	
Ability to work calmly to deadlines or while under pressure	✓	
Assertive, tactful and diplomatic	✓	
Enthusiastic for the delivery of quality services for the community	✓	
Willing to work one or two evenings per month	✓	
Hold Full Driving Licence and own car		✓

## Appendix 2.

### Currently:

#### 4. Banking Arrangements and Cheques

1. Each month the RFO shall present to the Council a schedule of all payments for the immediately preceding month for authorisation by a resolution.
- .2 All cheques/counterfoils and accompanying paperwork shall be signed/initialled by two Councillors and the RFO. Councillors should not sign cheques where they are the payee/recipient thereof. Invoices relating to these payments will be available for inspection and initialling by signatories.
- .3 As detailed in clause 7.2 of the Standing Orders, the Chair of each Committee/up to five (5) Councillors will have a bank mandate signature.

### Suggested revision

#### 4. Banking Arrangements

- .1 Each month the RFO shall present to the Council a schedule of payments for authorisation by a resolution.
- .2 All accompanying paperwork/invoices shall be signed/initialled by two Councillors and the RFO. This can be done via electronic signature.
- .3 The Clerk/RFO shall set up the payments using the online banking facility provided by Unity Trust.
- .4 The same two Councillors as in 4.2<sup>1</sup>, will be required to authorise those payments via online banking, following the payments being agreed at full council as per 4.1.
- .5 Up to five (5) Councillors will be bank signatories, changes to the Bank Signatories shall be agreed by full council<sup>2</sup>.
- .6 Councillors should not sign paperwork or authorise payments where they are the payee/recipient thereof.

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<sup>1</sup> It seems sensible that it ought to be the same councillors who viewed and signed the paperwork.

<sup>2</sup> The requirement for only chairs of committees to be bank sigs is unnecessary and restrictive. Suggest it be removed and this more flexible arrangement be implemented.

## Appendix 2

### Correspondence

Hello Helen,

It was good to speak to you yesterday so thank you for phoning back. Hope the information below helps explain – all on the website too

#### **The Greening Campaign**

With so much in the news and media about the dangers of climate change and with COP26 at the end of the year, many people in the UK unfortunately may feel unclear what they can do. There are mixed messages and no visibility of actions being taken in communities.

A structured route to follow and contribute to a reduction in CO2 emissions is what is needed for communities. They also need to see their how much CO2 has been saved by their efforts, not matter how small. The Greening Campaign provides a method which will enable them to measure this against their targets - this will be encouraging. When it becomes a community doing things that can be measured, it really can make a difference.

The Greening Campaign provides solutions so people feel included and know what *simple actions they can take to help*.

The next on-line talk (see the website) <http://www.greening-campaign.org/> is on the 16<sup>th</sup> March for 20 mins.

#### **Four Phases of the Campaign are:**

**Phase 1 – Engaging the community – Challenge card - choose challenges from cards delivered to all households – display in front gardens or windows – possibly an event – The amount of CO2 not used is measured from percentage taking action. (23% of the community= 64 tonnes of CO2) • Creation of a committee in each community (I would like to run a sub-committee on the Council with hopefully some or one Parish Cllr taking par).**

**Phase 2 – Address Sustainable living as a community. ... projects**

**Phase 3 – Adaptation Develop climate change solutions specific to the community**

**Phase 4 – New Start. The community will adopt a new mind set for living more sustainable lives. Ongoing review and development of climate change solutions – networking with other communities.**

**– supported all the way with the Greening Campaign.**

Funding will be needed for Phase 1 which is £50 and also money to print the cards, for the number of houses in the Ashurst community a rough price guide will be given. (perhaps these cards can be delivered by hand with the magazine which hopefully will continue with house to house deliveries soon as we ease out of lockdown). Possibly an event in the summer too might now be able to take place, being outside.

There is a way forward for tackling Climate Change that is being followed by other Parish Councils and is supported by Hampshire County Council as a reputable way forward. It also links with what the CC are doing so everything is joined up. This create a patchwork of communities across the country all making a difference.

#### **Community Demand for the Campaign**

##### **Hampshire**

District Councils – East Hants, Winchester, Eastleigh, (Test Valley, Rushmoor, Basingstoke and Dean, Fareham, Gosport) Alton, Medstead, Colden Common, Bishopstoke, Fair Oak, Horton Heath, Oliver’s Battery, Alresford, Liss, Buriton, Fulflood, Headley, Bentley, Binstead, Grayshott, Fareham and Gosport, Broughton, South Wonston, Whitehill and Bordon, Boldre. (Sherfield, Horndean, Rowlands Castle, Upton Grey) Petersfield, East Meon, Clanfield, Alton

##### **West Sussex**

District Councils – Horsham, Chichester, Arun, Adur and Worthing.

South Harting, Lancing, Angmering, Arundel, Clymping, E.Preston, Kingston, Littlehampton, Rustington, Ferring, Bognor Regis, Slindon, Fishbourne, Westbourne, Bury, Petworth, Oving, Parklands, Midhurst, Fernhurst, Stedham, Iping, Donnington, Billingshurst, Southwater, Thakeham, Henfield, Ashurst Wood, Horsham, East Grinstead, Burgess Hill, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, Horsham.

##### **Rest SE**

Portsmouth – Paulsgrove and Southsea with council funding

Southampton – Finalising areas to concentrate on.

East Sussex – Forest Row, 5 District Councils meeting to take it forward with funding

Kent – Lower Halstow, Council meeting to take forward with funding

Oxfordshire – Thame, Wallingford

West Berkshire – Lambourne, Thatcham, Chaddleworth, Cold Ash, Hermitage.

Surrey – Guildford DC, Cranleigh, Bagshot Lea, Aldbury, The Horsleys, Friary and St Nicolas, Stoughton, Stoke.

Others – Sunningdale, Ledbury



