

Hooe Parish Council

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Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of 10th February 2023

Attendees: Cllr A. Loyd (AL), Cllr Steve Crawhurst (SC), Cllr Gayle Kirk (GK), Cllr Dick Carey (DC) & Cllr Ross Clifton (RC)
Cllr G Kirk (GK)

3 members of the public present. Meeting opened at 7pm

Business Transacted

1. The chairman welcomed members of the public
2. **To receive apologies and reasons for absence** in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 S85 (3)

Apologies received from Paul Frostick and Jack Rist

3. **Disclosure of Interests**

Interests in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council code of conduct.
To receive councillors' declarations of interest regarding matters on the agenda and consider any written requests or dispensation as a result. Any changes to register of interests should be notified to the clerk.

None

Matters for Consideration and Resolution

4. **To consider the repeated and repetitive correspondence received by the parish council from two members of the community and agree any actions required.**

I have called this extra ordinary meeting to discuss the repeated, repetitive correspondence received from members of the community.

I would like to confirm that all councillors have been emailed copies of the correspondence and where responses have been drafted and sent, they have been agreed under the delegated powers in accordance with the scheme of delegation.

Correspondence received for the most part, repeatedly asked the same questions despite responses given by the parish council. The Parish Council conducts its business at council and committee meetings which are open to the public to attend. Agenda and minutes are available on the Hooe Parish Website.

Several points raised in the correspondence include criticisms directed at the clerk in the management of the council's business. The Parish Council is responsible for the management of the clerk and follows guidance and protocols in accordance with employment law. The information relating to the management of an employee is confidential.

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to state that the clerk has their full support and recognise that she is doing a great job within the laws and the powers that a Parish Council has work within. The internal auditor commended the clerk for her commitment, dedication in addressing the shortfalls identified in previous internal reports in his latest report on the Parish Council's governance on the 19th January 2023.

The parish clerk is the engine of an effective parish council. He or she is its principal executive and adviser and, for the majority of smaller parish councils, is the officer responsible for the administration and its financial affairs".

The clerk has a duty to make recommendations on any matter put before the parish council and for the clerk to provide advice to the parish council. The parish council does not have to accept the advice of the clerk, and it is the Parish Council that makes the decisions, the Parish Clerk reports those decisions through the minutes of the council meetings.

The Parish Council has adopted the National Association of Local Councils Dignity at Work Policy and intends to operate within the standards and expectations of this policy for all Councillors, the Clerk, members of the public and those people to which the parish council works alongside.

Proposed by PY and seconded by SC. Five councillors agreed and DC abstained.

Resolved that the parish council shall not respond to any repetitive questions raised in correspondence by members of the community and if any future correspondence is deemed to be unreasonable, persistent or vexatious, that an independent professional person is appointed to deal with such matters and provide the parish council with a course of action to follow in conjunction with the parish council's adopted policies and that a Vexatious Complaints Policy' is drawn up to include dealing with unreasonable, repetitive complaints, statements or questions.

The parish council meeting finished at 7.12pm

In accordance with The Data Protection Act 2018 all attendees of the meeting are hereby notified that the meeting will be recorded as an aide memoire for the clerk when compiling the minutes. The recordings are held securely and are deleted after the resolution that the minutes are a true and correct record. Members of the public should be aware that being present at a meeting of the Council or one of its committees or sub-committees will be deemed as the person having given consent to being recorded (photograph, film or audio recording) at the meeting, by any person present. A person or persons recording the parish meeting are reminded that the "Public Session" period may not be part of the formal meeting and that they should take legal advice for themselves as to their rights to make any recording during that period.