

ELWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Annual Meeting held at 2.05pm on Thursday 25th June 2020 at Elwick WI Hall

Present: Cllrs. H. Thompson, (Chairman), E. Hurst, P. Hutchinson (from 2.12pm), B. Irving, R. Musgrave, R. Thompson

In Attendance: M. Ireland, Clerk.

The outgoing Chairman, Cllr H. Thompson welcomed everyone to this first physical meeting since the start of the Covid-19 crisis in March and took the chair for the first item.

1. **Election of Chairman:** Cllr Musgrave nominated Cllr H. Thompson, seconded by Cllr. Irving; Cllr H. Thompson, being willing to accept nomination, was **unanimously elected** and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of office.
2. **Election of Vice-Chairman:** Cllr Hurst was nominated by Cllr R. Thompson, seconded by Cllr. Irving and, being willing to accept nomination, was **unanimously elected**. Cllr Hurst signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
3. **Casual Vacancy:** The Chairman noted that the notice of a casual vacancy, due to the resignation of Cllr Atkins in March, had been posted on both PC notice boards. No request for an election having been received, the HBC Democratic Services officer had written to confirm that the PC should now co-opt. Cllr Hurst noted that the vacancy had also been published in the Wynyard newsletter. The Chairman asked if it was the wish of Council to co-opt; the affirmative response being unanimous it was **resolved** to co-opt. A brief discussion followed on the need for further representation from Wynyard. Councillors agreed that those expressing an interest should all be interviewed, ideally before the next meeting. It was **resolved** to invite applicants to interview in the week prior to the next meeting – such interviews to take place, in accordance with social-distancing guidelines, either in the garden at Holmlea or the WI Hall depending on the weather. The Clerk was requested to arrange this. **Action:** Clerk to arrange interviews for those interested in co-option to the Parish Council.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
5. **Apologies for Absence:** None. (For the record – Ward Councillors were excluded from attending due to the limited numbers allowed at the meeting under Covid-19 regulations).
6. **Election of Sub-Committees:**
 - (a) **Social Activities Committee:** Chairman - Cllr R. Thompson, nominated by Cllr Irving, seconded by Cllr Hurst and unanimously agreed. Cllrs Irving and Musgrave to join him. **Agreed.**
 - (b) **Village Maintenance Committee:** Chairman – Cllr Irving, nominated by Cllr Musgrave, seconded by Cllr H. Thompson and unanimously agreed. Cllr Musgrave to join her. **Agreed.** (NB: Several residents are also co-opted to serve on this committee).
 - (c) **Personnel Committee:** Chairman – it being required under the Terms of Reference of this Committee, Cllr Hurst, as Vice-Chairman of the full Council, was automatically appointed as Chairman. She will be joined by Cllrs Hutchinson and R. Thompson. **Agreed.**

NB: Chairman and Vice-Chairman may attend meetings of any sub-committee, ex-officio.
7. **Banking Arrangements:** There being no major concerns it was **resolved** to remain with the Unity Trust Bank and retain all elected Councillors as the signatories. (NB: The Clerk has refused to be a signatory). The Clerk expressed concern about the increasing charges made by the bank and was asked to investigate alternatives. It was further **resolved** that, at their own request, Cllrs H and R Thompson should not both sign a cheque, but another signatory be asked to countersign any cheque signed by either one of them.

8. **Assets Register:** The list of Assets as at 31st March was **noted**. The Clerk was commended for the thoroughness of the list.
9. **Risk Register:** The Risk Register was presented. The Clerk was commended for the new format, which clearly identified levels of risk and the actions taken to mitigate these. Cllr Musgrave asked that the level of public liability be checked – this should be a minimum of £10M (it is) and the Chairman asked that another control be added to the handling of Petty Cash, viz – a receipt be issued to anyone handing in cash, such as at an event. The Risk Register was **approved** subject to these amendments. **Action:** Clerk to amend as above.
10. **Insurance cover:** The Clerk reminded Councillors that because there were no meetings held from February, and the insurance renewal falling due on 1st June, she had sought and circulated three quotes for the annual insurance cover for the Parish Council. All companies quoting had been sent a copy of the Asset Register. An emailed response had been received from 4 Councillors, agreeing that the BHIB quote should be accepted. Councillors were asked to ratify this decision today. It was duly **resolved** that BHIB be appointed as insurance providers to the Parish Council for the period 2020-2021, at a premium of £560.56.
11. **Annual Governance and Accountability Return:** The draft document had been circulated in advance of the meeting, with the Accounting Statements and Internal Auditor's Report Sections completed and signed by the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and Internal Auditor, as required, together with a copy of the Receipts & Payments Account and Bank Reconciliation.
- (a) **Annual Governance Statement:** Councillors **resolved** that all boxes should be completed in the affirmative. This was done and the Chairman signed and dated the Statement as required.
 - (b) It was **resolved** to accept the **Receipts & Payments Account 2019-2020 and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2020**.
 - (c) It was **resolved** to accept the Internal Auditor's report.
 - (d) The Accounting Statements were **agreed**. The Chairman signed the Statement.
 - (e) It was **agreed** that the Clerk remain the RFO for the period 2020-2021.
12. **Appointment of Internal Auditor:** Cllr Musgrave proposed, with Cllr R. Thompson seconding, that Peter Olsen be reappointed as Internal Auditor. All being in agreement, it was **resolved** to appoint Mr. Olsen as Internal Auditor for the 2020/2021 period, at the same remuneration as at present.

This last item concluding the business of the Annual Meeting, at 2.25pm, the Chairman then moved onto ordinary business of the Parish Council, separately minuted.