



**Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
held 24th January 2023, 18:00 at Winthrop Gardens**

Members: Cllrs: J Barber, P Beighton, S Ellis, A Bates, M Biggin, E Boswell, N Judah, M Godfrey, C Grimes, B McNeely, K Phillips, J Robinson, P Thirlwall, M Scott, P Whitworth and M Woodhead

Present: Cllrs: J Barber, P Beighton, S Ellis, A Bates, N Judah, M Godfrey, C Grimes, B McNeely, J Robinson, P Thirlwall, M Scott, P Whitworth and M Woodhead

In attendance: Anna Chester, Winthrop Organiser (minutes)

6376 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Kim Phillips, Cllr Mark Biggin and Cllr Emma Boswell.

6377 To note any declarations of interest on items to be discussed at this meeting

No interests were declared.

6378 To resolve if members of the press and public are to be excluded from any agenda items of the meeting due to the nature of the business being transacted, Under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, S1 (2)

RESOLVED: Due to the nature of the business and the confidentiality of the staffing matters to be discussed, that the press and public be excluded from agenda items 4 and 5 (To brief Councillors on the absence of the Parish Clerk & To consider the interim staffing arrangements during the period of the Clerk's absence).

NOTE: Cllr Thirlwall sought the permission of the Chair to indicate his intention to resign from the Parish Council at the conclusion of the meeting.

6379 To brief Councillors on the absence of the Parish Clerk

Cllr Barber advised members that the Parish Clerk is currently on sick leave, and provided an explanation of the background issues.

Cllr Barber responded to a range of questions and comments from Councillors.

6380 To consider the interim staffing arrangements during the period of the Clerk's absence

Cllr Barber identified the key issues on which he wished Councillors to focus:

- addressing the cover and management issues during the Clerk's sickness absence.
- managing the Human Resources related issues.

6380.1 Cover and management arrangements

Cllr Barber proposed as follows:

- Appoint the Assistant Clerk (Admin & Finance) as Interim Clerk at the appropriate enhanced rate of pay.
- Allocate an additional 6 hours per week to the Assistant Clerk (Support).
- Seek to recruit a locum/temporary Assistant Clerk to support the Interim Clerk and provide support to the Recreation Committee.
- Put the above arrangements in place until 31/03/23 and review the arrangements at the Parish Council meeting on 20th March 2023.

The above proposal was seconded by Cllr McNeely and **RESOLVED** unanimously.

6380.2 Managing the Human Resources related issues

In discussion members had acknowledged that the Parish Council has no automatic access to HR advice and support. A range of possible options are available.

Cllr Barber sought authority to access appropriate specialist advice.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Grimes and **RESOLVED** unanimously.

Cllr Barber informed members of the necessary arrangements as required by the Grievance procedure, should this be required, and proposed that a recommendation to appoint Cllr Woodhead to the position of Interim Chair of the HR Committee until the Annual Meeting in May be made to the February Parish Council meeting. In the meantime, Cllr Woodhead would take the lead role in terms of the management of the HR aspects of this situation, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Grimes and **RESOLVED** unanimously.

6380.3 Financial issues

Cllr Barber advised on provisional estimates of the staffing costs of the above arrangements, although this would depend on success in recruiting interim clerical support, and the scale of the costs of HR consultancy and support required in the short term.

Concerns were expressed as to whether there were sufficient funds in the 2022/23 budget to cover the estimate and that should the expenditure need to be sustained beyond March 2023, that there was only a predicted £30,000 unallocated in the financial management reserves of the 2023/24 budget.

6380.4 Minutes of Parish Council meetings held in week commencing 16th January 2023

Cllr Barber was asked if the Clerk had produced minutes of the Parish Council (Budget) meeting held on 16th January 2023 and he confirmed that these had been produced.

It was believed that minutes had not been produced of the Human Resources Committee Meeting held on 18th January 2023 – it was agreed that members would work together to compile an agreed list of decisions made in order to expedite these decisions, particularly given those relating to planning for 2023/24.

Post-meeting note added by A Naylor (Assistant Clerk): It has since been identified that draft minutes of the HR Committee meeting are available and these will be reviewed and if necessary updated or completed by HR committee members.

6381 Resignation of Cllr Thirlwall

Cllr Barber expressed regret at the resignation of Cllr Thirlwall, and indicated his intention to discuss, at the Parish Council meeting in February, the marking of Cllr Thirlwall's resignation from the Council.

It was agreed that Cllr Thirlwall's resignation would not take effect until at least after the Winthrop Committee meeting on 8th February to enable him to attend and report on relevant HR decisions taken on 18th January 2023.

Post-meeting note added by A Naylor (Assistant Clerk): The above statement regarding attendance at the Winthrop Committee meeting has been further discussed with the Winthrop Organiser, as it is goes against section 84 of the Local Government Act 1972, which states:

***(1) A person elected to any office under this Actmay at any time resign his office by written notice delivered....
(c) in the case of a parish or community councillor, to the chairman of the parish or community council.
and his resignation shall take effect upon receipt of the notice by the person or body to whom it is required to be delivered.***

Former Cllr Thirlwall can therefore only attend the meeting as a member of the public, and not in the capacity of a Councillor and committee member.

Cllr Grimes placed on record her thanks and appreciation for the 21 years of Cllr Thirlwall's service to the Parish Council.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

Signed  (Chairman) Dated 20-2-23

