

**MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 15th MAY 2023
IN RUNWELL VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00PM**

IN ATTENDANCE: - Messrs. Clark, Davis, Lansdale, Redway, Rogers, Sloane & Tarplett. Mesdames: Ellis, Evans, Gould, Hutson and Payne; 12 members of the public. Clerk Mrs J Pharez

The councillors all signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Rogers took the Chair for the purpose of appointing the new Chairman for the forthcoming year.

Minute 1 Mr Paul Clark was proposed, seconded and elected Chairman and signed his Acceptance of Office.

Minute 2 Cllr Rogers and Cllr Davis were proposed, seconded and elected as joint Vice Chairmen.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of Runwell Parish Council, the members present were all elected following an uncontested election this year.

Minute 3 Apologies: Essex County Councillor Ian Grundy.

Minute 4 Declarations of Interest – Cllr Ellis declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 13 Planning item 4 11 Browns Avenue – Erection of horse-riding arena.

Minute 5 The Minutes of Council Meeting 3rd April 2023; Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting held 11th April 2023; Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held 17th April 2023 and Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held 24th April 2023 were all approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Minute 6 Public Participation

Several members of the public were present to comment on *Agenda item 13 Planning item 1 Southlands Solar Farm*. The following comments and concerns were received: Visual Impact Assessment – more impact than implied due to the trees and hedgerows being deciduous; Harm to the greenbelt; Effect on the value of property; Health implications; Safety issues with the public right of way running through the middle of the proposal; loss of agricultural greenbelt land; *Spotlight Radiotherapy Charity Barn Dance* date confirmed as 28th October tickets £10; *Coronation* - thanks from resident for Commemorative Badge and Coin; *St. Luke's* – report of anti-social behaviour; parking issues near the school; meeting arranged with Landtrust re outstanding issues; Development work starting before 8am on Phase 5 – Chair will report to Planning Officer as this is not acceptable; Lorry wash process ineffective – mud and debris being left on the roads; Workman not using the new parking area and causing parking issues on the residential roads; *Runwell Community Primary School* – disgruntled resident blocked the main school entrance – consequences could be serious and should be reported to the police; Access path to the school field at the rear of 184 Church End Lane is overgrown and needs cutting back – Cllr Hutson to report; query on the future use of the field; *Hall* large pothole in the entrance; *Litter* – Wickford Wombles have tackled Brock Hill, Runwell Womble monitoring rubbish bin at the Brock Hill bus shelter; *Runwell Chase* – the road is in need of sweeping.

Minute 7 Co-option – One vacancy – No applications received – Agenda item for next meeting.

Minute 8 Election of Committees

(Chairman Mr P Clark and Vice Chairman Mr M Rogers/Mr S Davis are automatically members of every committee)

Hall Mrs A Ellis; Mrs C Evans; Mrs G Gould; Mrs D Hutson; Mr. B Lansdale; Mrs L Payne; Mr. G Redway; Mr. J Sloane.

Playing Field Mrs A Ellis; Mrs C Evans; Mrs G Gould; Mrs D Hutson; Mrs L Payne; Mr. G Redway; Mr. J Sloane; Mr. K Tarplett.

Standing Mrs A Ellis; Mrs C Evans; Mrs D Hutson; Mr. B Lansdale; Mrs L Payne; Mr. J Sloane.

Planning (Meetings 3rd Monday monthly if business not addressed at Full Council))
Mrs A Ellis; Mrs C Evans; Mrs G Gould; Mrs D Hutson; Mr. G Redway; Mr. K Tarplett

Human Resources (Staff) Chairman, Vice Chairs, Mrs C Evans and Mrs D Hutson.

Finance

(Bank Signatories 3 to sign) – Mr. P Clark; Mrs L Payne; Mr G Redway; Mr. M Rogers. Clerk Mrs J Pharez.
(Non-signing members) – Mrs A Ellis; Mrs G Gould; Mr. W B Lansdale.

Minute 9 Elections of Proper Officers and Representatives

The following officers were all appointed and agreed to take the positions:

- (i) **Proper Officer** - Mrs J Pharez
- (ii) **Responsible Financial Officer** – Mrs J Pharez
- (iii) **Council Internal Auditor** – Mrs L Payne
- (iv) **Independent Internal Auditor**– Mrs J Stobart
- (v) **Allotments Representative** - Mrs L Payne
- (vi) **Highways & Transport Representative** – Mr Paul Clark & Mr G Redway
- (vii) **Police Liaison** – Mr. P Clark & Mr S Davis
- (viii) **School Liaison/Governors** – Mrs D Hutson – Runwell Community Primary School
Mr P Clark – St. Luke's Park
- (ix) **Footpaths/P.R.o.W's** – Mr D De'ath
- (x) **Health & Safety** – Mrs A Ellis
- (xi) **Runwell Roundabout Editor** – Mrs S Pollard
- (xii) **Website** – Mr P Clark & Mrs A Ellis (To be allocated to Assistant Clerk upon appointment)
- (xiii) **Social Media** – Mrs A Ellis

Minute 10 Clerks Report – See Appendix 1

Minute 11 Finance

(i)	Payments for authorisation – Lloyds Bank		
FPO	J Pharez	Salary	
FPO	JC Rogers	Salary 5 weeks plus locking etc	
Debit Card	Co-op	M/Phone batteries & APM Refreshments	£17.50
FPO	L Vallis	Groundsman Runwell Park 5 weeks @ £232.50	£1162.50
FPO	Essex Pension Fund	Staff Pensions	
FPO	JCR Garden Serv	Hall Garden - Monthly	£60.00
FPO	BF Ground Maint.	Park – April cuts x2	£516.00
D/debit	Veolia	Hall Refuse March due on 30 th Apr	£206.66
FPO	A-Z Supplies	Hall Supplies	£118.74
FPO	NSALG	Allotment Society M/Ship	£66.00
D/debit	Adobe	Acrobat Pro	£15.17
FPO	WeGlaze Windows	2 nd Tranche for Hall Windows - Materials	£16685.15
FPO	Viking Direct	Printer Ink	£70.24
FPO	Flag Consultancy	Hall – Flagpole repair	£210.00
FPO	BHIB	Annual Council Insurance	£3008.58
FPO	Essex Playing Fields	Annual M/Ship	£30.00
FPO	EALC/NALC	Annual M/Ship	£805.41
FPO	M Williams	Returned Hall deposit	£30.00
FPO	Z Gutteridge	ditto	£30.00
FPO	J Lunn	ditto	£50.00
Total			£26202.33

Sufficient funds are held in the Lloyds Current Account to cover these payments.

Payments for authorisation Barclays Bank

<u>Petty Cash</u>	Hall – window Cleaning £85.00	Park – Mower/Strimmer Parts £67/00	
	Park – Petrol 22/23 Mower £77.63		Total £229.63

Payments

D/debit	British Gas Business	Monthly Bill February 23	£2080.05
D/debit	E.on Next	Electricity used at Hall monthly	£285.96
D/debit	BT	Monthly Invoice Office & Park Broadband	£241.86
D/debit	E.on Next	Park Electricity Jan – March 2023	£839.63

Total £3677.13

Sufficient funds held in the Barclays Current Account to cover these payments.

- (ii) Receipts and Payments including the Bank Reconciliation 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 - The Council reviewed and approved the End of Year 2022/23 figures.
- (iii) Final Draft of Grant Policy for review and approval – Defer to next meeting – 5th June 2023
- (iv) Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 Part 3 - Review Section 1 Annual Governance Statement. The Chairman read out each item. The Annual Governance Statement was approved.

Minute 12 Correspondence No correspondence to report.

Minute 13 Planning

Applications received:

1. 23/00532/FUL – Land South of Southlands Cottages, Runwell Road – Installation of a solar farm with battery storage and associated infrastructure. **RPC comment:** RPC have a policy to object to inappropriate development of the greenbelt. Residents and Councillors raised the following comments: 1. Glare and glint effects on livestock in adjoining fields; 2. Issues with the Public Right of Way which crosses through the proposal – safety of the walkers using the path (consider a safer diversion); 3. Re-instatement of surfaces following completion of the installations; 4. Drainage – ways of improving natural drainage; 5. Concerns about chemical release when washing the solar panels; 6. Devaluation of material assets (homes) of neighbouring properties; 7. Untested health implications to those living in close proximity to the solar farm and loss/impairment of Health & Well-being due to the visual amenity being lost (majority of native trees and hedges are deciduous and do not obscure the view all year round); 8 loss of agricultural land (sheep have never been grazed on this land previously uncertainty of suitability); 9 upon review of similar renewable energy project applications it is noted that under very special circumstances similar projects have been approved as there is a benefit for local residents.
2. 23/00481/FUL 37 Carlton Road - One bedroom annexe with ensuite, a store cupboard, open plan living dining area with and small kitchen. Masonry walls with render to match existing property, flat roof. **RPC comment:** No objection.
3. 23/00629/FUL 5 Waverley Crescent - Part demolition of existing garage/store. Removal of existing rear extension and construction of new single storey rear extension. Hip to gable roof and associated internal works. **RPC comment:** Supported.
4. 23/00465/FUL 11 Browns Avenue - Erection of a horse-riding arena. **RPC comment:** Runwell Parish Council object to this application. Full details of the current licence for the business was not supplied with the application. The application did not state whether the arena would be in use after dark and whether lighting would be needed. The effects of floodlighting on neighbours would be unacceptable. The arena would attract increased activity at the site leading to more traffic dropping off for training/lessons. There is no allocated parking for this purpose.
5. 23/05079/TPO Brockfield House Kemble Way - Reduce , cut back & crown lift all vegetation overhanging the boundary fence to 2m above fence height. The area of the boundary fence that will be worked on is the entirety of the Southern boundary, the Western boundary and a section of the North East boundary. G4(T3 on map) Large multi-stem Ash -Located on Southern boundary Ash dieback symptoms present and presenting an unacceptable security risk to the perimeter fence. **RPC comment:** Supported.

Minute 14 Runwell Park – Request from Chelmsford City Council to relinquish a narrow parcel of land on the boundary with Meadow Lane (included in the terms of the current lease agreement)

The Chairman reported on the meeting held earlier today (15th May 2023 2pm) between Chelmsford City Council (CCC) Officers Keith Nicholson – Director of Public Spaces; Paul Van Damme – Park & Green Spaces Manager; Joe Reidy – Corporate Property Services Manager and RPC representatives Cllr Clark, Cllr Rogers and Clerk Jo Pharez. The reason for giving up the parcel of land was to enable CCC to sell this on to a resident of Meadow Lane. **The Council resolved not to relinquish the parcel of land along the Meadow Lane Boundary** - Clerk to inform CCC of this decision.

Other issues discussed at the CCC meeting: 1. Anti-social behaviour mainly illegal use of the park for exercising “trotters” – pony and trap at speed – a danger to legitimate park users, top football pitch ruined; access by quad bikes; vandalism – burning of park benches. Illegal grazing has also occurred. 2. Fly-tipping. 3. Damage to security fence, loss of the kissing gate and movement of the security blocks all free up access to the park from Meadow Lane. The fence is the main issue to be addressed to resolve the problems. It was agreed that RPC should obtain quotations for the fence, copies to CCC. The Meadow Lane access at the junction with Footpath 7 to be secured as a matter of urgency for the safety of the legitimate users of the park; accept offer from PVD to assist with placement and securing the blocks and the specification of the fence. Allowances needed for the height difference between Meadow Lane levels and the lower levels on the Park side of the fence to stop the fly-tipping. Clerk to request technical and financial assistance from CCC.

Minute 15 Reports

1. **Hall** – Windows to be installed week commencing 24th July 2023, hall to be closed for approximately 2 weeks. Work party will be needed to take down curtains which will require vacuuming and possibly dry cleaning. Cllr Rogers requested to copy of the heating control instructions.
2. **Park** – No further report.
3. **Allotments** – 2 thefts reported – a spark plug from a rotavator and an asparagus crop from one of the plots. A request had been received for a further water tank; this was not considered necessary.
4. **Runwell Roundabout** – Articles for the Summer Edition needed by the end of June.
5. **CCC** – Congratulations to Paul Clark & Steve Davis for becoming the Chelmsford City Council Independent representatives for Rettendon & Runwell. There are 33 Liberal Democrat seats, 21 Conservative seats and 3 Independent seats.
6. **PRoW** – DD stated he would object to a diversion of Footpath 2 to Battlesbridge through the proposed Southlands Solar Farm.
7. **School** – RCPS Cllr Hutson reported the school would be holding a fete on Saturday 24th June 2023 12noon – 3pm; the children were currently doing SATS and agreed the reading SATS had been very difficult; Ofsted inspection due shortly. St. Luke's Park Cllr Clark reported the school now had a lockdown protocol in the event of an emergency situation, Safari nursery is separate from the school the provision of places/hours has been a concern.

Minute 16 Notices of Motions and Future Business

Meetings of Finance Committee; Playing Field and Hall Committees arranged for Monday 19th June 2023 also Planning Committee Meeting (if business dictates)

Agenda items for the next meeting of Runwell Parish Council on 5th June 2023.

Please note no decision can lawfully be made under this item. LGA 1972 section 12 10(2)(b) states that business must be specified.

Items to include:

1. Co-option
2. S137 Grant Policy
3. Emergency Planning and Community Resilience
4. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 Form 3 Accounting Statement.
5. Review Standing Orders
6. Financial Regulations
7. Parish Council email addresses

The meeting closed at 9.30pm