

## BLACKWELL PARISH COUNCIL – Minutes

Minutes of the Blackwell Parish Council Finance & HR Committee Meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 5pm at Hilcote Community Centre.

### PRESENT

Cllrs: Poulter (Chair), Newham (Vice-Chair), and Stocks

### ALSO PRESENT

K Poynter (Clerk)

Members of Public: 0

#### FHR/034/25 To Receive Apologies for Absence

None.

#### FHR/035/25 Variation of Order of Business (if required)

To be decided during the meeting.

#### FHR/036/25 Declaration of Members Interests

To be declared when items arise on the agenda.

#### FHR/037/25 Public Speaking

No members of public were present.

#### FHR/038/25 Finance and Governance

##### a. *Internal and External Audits*

It was noted that staff were going to start work on the internal audit tomorrow.

There was a discussion about Assertion 10 and how staff and council are working to fulfil it – including a new domain name – [www.blackwell-pc.gov.uk](http://www.blackwell-pc.gov.uk) – new .gov.uk e-mail address for all staff members and Councillors, that when sending out instructions on how to access the new e-mail accounts, staff would also include essential information on GDPR and data protection, and the dos and don't of using the new e-mail addresses and that it has already adopted an IT policy to go inline with the mobile device policy.

**RESOLVED:** to recommend getting the whole council training in GDPR and data protection so that everyone fully understands what it means.

Mover: Cllr Newham

Seconder: Cllr Stocks

Agreed by All

##### b. *Rialtas End of Year*

It was noted that Rialtas had been informed of the staffing situation and have moved the end of year date back to 12<sup>th</sup> May. There is a deadline of 13<sup>th</sup> March to get information in up to the end of February, but will have to monitor whether that is able to happen.

##### c. *Current budget and variances in expenditure*

**RESOLVED:** after reviewing and asking questions about the budget, to recommend the following:

- That the budget is in a reasonable place
- To use the insurance underspend towards the cost of the floor at Blackwell Community Centre
- That the water rebate which has reduced the water bill also be used for BCC floor
- The clerk is to double check the loan repayment situation
- The van purchase and elections were unexpected purchases that were originally agreed to come out of reserves and are currently reflected in the budget
- The grounds maintenance for the year was more than anticipated.
- All items of over and underspend could be accounted for.
- It was acknowledged that there are lots of expenses due in which may take some areas of the budget over what had originally been anticipated – for example, the floor at Blackwell Community Centre, the issues currently at Scanderlands Pavilion, and the initial quote for emergency lighting and fire alarm repair works has indicated further big spend.

Mover: Cllr Newham

Seconder: Cllr Stocks

Agreed by All

##### d. *Reserves*

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A copy of the annual return to date suggests the reserves to the end of December 2025 stand at around £152,705

**RESOLVED:** to recommend that with expected spend over the next three months, this should stay within reasonable parameters.

Mover: Cllr Newham

Seconder: Cllr Stocks

Agreed by All

e. *Policies*

**RESOLVED:** to recommend the approval of the Media and AI policies

Agreed by All

f. *Payments during Clerk leave*

**RESOLVED:** to recommend that Cllr Newham and Cllr Poulter pop into the office on a regular basis to make sure that if anything needs doing it can be done – including emergency payments and noting receipts so that the Admin Assistant can keep track of hire income. Once the signatory information has come through for Cllr Poulter (it has been applied for), that dual signatory status is set up by either councillor.

Mover: Cllr Stocks

Seconder: Cllr Newham

Agreed by All

g. *Payroll during Clerk leave*

**RESOLVED:** to recommend that in the rare instance that there are changes to payroll, that the Admin Assistant let the district council know of any alterations – after running them past the Finance & HR Chair first.

Mover: Cllr Stocks

Seconder: Cllr Newham

Agreed by All

h. *Hilcote Charity Accounts*

**RESOLVED:** that the Clerk contact Rumsbys again and ask about the brackets around the final figure. If it still hasn't been resolved by the time she is on leave, then Cllr Poulter has offered to call about the revisions.

Mover: Cllr Stocks

Seconder: Cllr Newham

Agreed by All

i. *Other Finance & Governance updates*

**RESOLVED:** To recommend that the insurance certificates from user groups are chased again because of their importance.

Mover: Cllr Stocks

Seconder: Cllr Newham

Agreed by All

**RESOLVED:** to recommend an additional £25 per year for Parish Online to manage the mailboxes

Mover: Cllr Newham

Seconder: Cllr Stocks

Agreed by All

**RESOLVED:** to double check that there are CCTV posters on all of the doors of the parish buildings, in addition to the ones on the walls at each building

Mover: Cllr Stocks

Seconder: Cllr Newham

Agreed by All

### FHR/039/25 Staffing

a. *Service Level Agreement Designated Premises Supervisor*

**RESOLVED:** to recommend deferring this item to the next meeting

Mover: Cllr Stocks

Seconder: Cllr Newham

Agreed by All

b. *Items raised by staff*

**RESOLVED:** to note or recommend the following:

- That there is provision in the Risk Management Risk Assessment for the Clerk not being able to come into work, and that 'calling an emergency meeting' should be added
- To help with procurement for larger projects, in an emergency, call in the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council and the Finance & HR Committee Chair to make an initial assessment, and if there is a specialist that can be called out within the Clerk's £500 discretion fee, that the specialist gets called in as soon as possible.
- That new clothing is being priced up for the Parish Ranger
- That a summary sheet for policies could be drawn up for circumstances where people need to be reminded of the basics
- That the guidance for lone working still applies
- That if there is an FOI request, that staff could ask DALC or the Monitoring Officer for guidance

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- That Cllr Stocks be a secondary point of contact for community groups to support the Admin Assistant

Mover: Cllr Stocks                      Seconded: Cllr Newham                      Agreed by All

c. *Managing extended leave*

**RESOLVED:** to recommend that sick notes should all be sent to the office in all cases. In terms of needs of the staff member, that they be considered on a case by case basis by the council.

Mover: Cllr Stocks                      Seconded: Cllr Newham                      Agreed by All

d. *Staff pay*

**RESOLVED:** to recommend the review pay scales annually.

Mover: Cllr Newham                      Seconded: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All

e. *Other staff updates*

**RESOLVED:** to recommend going ahead with cleans for the four bookings being honoured at pre-change prices.

Mover: Cllr Newham                      Seconded: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All

**RESOLVED:** to approve all scheduled holidays.

Mover: Cllr Stocks                      Seconded: Cllr Newham                      Agreed by All

### FHR/040/25      **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Full Council – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November

**RESOLVED:** to recommend that the Finance & HR Meeting be moved to 5pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Mover: Cllr Newham                      Seconded: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All

The meeting closed at 6.11pm

Chairman's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_