

## BLACKWELL PARISH COUNCIL – Minutes

Minutes of the Blackwell Parish Council Finance & HR Committee Meeting held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025, 4.30pm at Hilcote Community Centre.

### PRESENT

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

### ALSO PRESENT

K Poynter (Clerk)

Members of Public: 0

**FHR/009/25 To Receive Apologies for Absence**  
None.

**FHR/010/25 Variation of Order of Business (if required)**  
To be implements as needed as the meeting goes.

**FHR/011/25 Declaration of Members Interests**  
To be declared when items arise on the agenda.

**FHR/012/25 Public Speaking**  
No members of public were present.

**FHR/013/25 To confirm the minutes of the Finance & HR Committee meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**  
**RESOLVED:** to approve the above minutes  
Mover: Cllr Newham Agreed by Cllr Poulter  
Cllr Stocks abstained as she wasn't present at the meeting.

**FHR/014/25 Finance**

- a. It was noted that the internal audit is currently underway and is being done remotely.
- b. It was noted that the external audit papers had come through and are in the process of being prepared. It was agreed that a copy of the AGAR statements that the council has to approve should be sent out to Councillors well in advance of the next meeting to be read.
- c. It was noted that £152,705 was technically in the reserves at the end of March 2025 (according to the Income and Expenditure report)
- d. **RESOLVED:** to approve the end of year bank balances being recorded as:  
CCLA - £7,100.29 CO-OP: £127,158.43  
And that the bank balances for today stand at:  
CCLA - £7,127.41 CO-OP: £262,864.94  
Mover: Cllr Newham Seconded: Cllr Stocks Agreed by All
- e. **RESOLVED:** to recommend that the grants given to the three charities to complete 2023/24 and 2024/25 to set the balance at zero for the start of 2025/26 be as follows:  
Hilcote Miners Welfare & Community Centre: £20,228.53  
Newton War Memorial Playing Fields: £ 17,464.79  
Westhouses Memorial Playing Field: £4,252.46  
Mover: Cllr Stocks Seconded: Cllr Newham Agreed by All
- f. **RESOLVED:** that the community centres are unlikely to ever break even, but that it would be worth pushing the commercial side of Hilcote Community Centre to try and raise more money and that the Clerk should write up a draft agreement between the council and the individual charities to formalise what the council would pay towards for each charity.  
Mover: Cllr Newham Seconded: Cllr Stocks Agreed by All
- g. **RESOLVED:** to recommend the new Procurement Policy with a couple of amendments  
Mover: Cllr Newham Seconded: Cllr Stocks Agreed by All  
**RESOLVED:** to recommend the Financial Regulations  
Mover: Cllr Newham Seconded: Cllr Stocks Agreed by All  
**RESOLVED:** to recommend the updated Standing Orders with a couple of amendments  
Mover: Cllr Newham Seconded: Cllr Stocks Agreed by All

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

## BLACKWELL PARISH COUNCIL – Minutes

**RESOLVED:** to recommend the Risk Management Policy

Mover: Cllr Newham                      Second: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All

**RESOLVED:** to recommend the Risk Management Risk Assessment

Mover: Cllr Newham                      Second: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All

**RESOLVED:** to recommend the Scheme of Delegation

Mover: Cllr Stocks                      Second: Cllr Newham                      Agreed by All

- h. **RESOLVED:** to recommend the purchase of the current parish van when the lease ends, but if it's not due for its MOT before then, to get it checked over by a local garage for a nominal amount first to make sure that it is in good working order. The current estimated price is £13,350  
Mover: Cllr Newham                      Second: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All
- i. It was noted that there were no updates on the accounts for Hilcote Community Centre
- j. **RESOLVED:** to defer to an appropriate time checking with HELP Group that they were still interested in helping with the manpower to replace the fence along Hilcote Recreation Ground if council pays for the materials, and to ask for an estimate on price for the materials.  
Mover: Cllr Newham                      Second: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All

**FHR/015/25**

### Staffing

- a. **RESOLVED:** to recommend a request from a member of staff, but that conditions be attached.  
Mover: Cllr Stocks                      Second: Cllr Newham                      Agreed by All
- b. **RESOLVED:** to recommend that the new contract for the Clerk reflect a notice period of three months.  
Mover: Cllr Stocks                      Second: Cllr Newham                      Agreed by All
- c. **RESOLVED:** to recommend that blinds for the office (due to the light affecting computer screen) and an extendable hedge trimmer (so a ladder isn't needed to cut hedges) be purchased  
Mover: Cllr Newham                      Second: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All
- d. **RESOLVED:** to recommend that: Councillors have to make an appointment to see a member of staff; that specific queries are put in writing via e-mail with several days notice so that staff have time to prepare any answers; that two members of staff be present at pre-arranged office visits and if it transpires that only one member of staff is going to be present, then the meeting can be cancelled; and that if a staff member is working alone, they do not have to answer the door to anyone and should continue the policy of working from home where possible if lone working is inevitable.  
Mover: Cllr Newham                      Second: Cllr Stocks                      Agreed by All
- e. It was noted that following a traumatic incident outside of the council, staff had been offered counselling and that it would still be open to them in the future if they decide not to take it up now. It was agreed that funding should be sought for first aid courses for staff, councillors and any community leaders who might be interested and that some investigation into the defibrillators should be undertaken.  
It was noted that a member of staff had reported a health issue that was being dealt with, but was just making the committee aware in case anything further came of it or help was needed.

**FHR/016/25**

### Date and Time of Next Meeting

Annual Parish Council Meeting – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025, 7pm at Blackwell Community Centre  
It was agreed that dates should be put together for future Finance & HR Meetings to take place on a Thursday at 5pm.

The meeting closed at 6.12pm

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