

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 26th MAY 2009 AT
THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN
WHICH COMMENCED AT 7.45PM**

PRESENT: Councillor J Blackburn (Chairman) and Councillors, M Benson, S Butler, C Hukin, R McKay, L McLusky, P Neville, H Ober and I Skidmore.

IN ATTENDANCE: A S Pack (Acting Clerk to the Council)

APOLOGIES: Councillor I Colpitts

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Three members of the public attended the meeting.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Chairman welcomed all present and opened the meeting.

2009/073 DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

There was no Declaration of Interests made.

2009/074 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 12th MAY 2009.

Minute No 2009/062 To Create and appoint members to serve on the Council's Working Parties - Delete

Minute No 2009/063 Change to 2009/062 to read as follows:

Welwyn Hatfield Association of Local Councils

All Councillors

The next meeting is to be hosted by Welwyn Parish Council and is to be held on the 8th June 2009 in the Civic Centre

Welwyn Hatfield District, Parish and Town Council's Forum

The Chairman and the Clerk

RESOLVED: that the amended Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 12th May 2009 be approved and signed.

Unanimously agreed.

2009/075 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 31ST MARCH 2009

2009/076 COUNCIL VACANCY

An application for Co-option onto the Council was circulated with the Agenda as **Appendix 1**

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor McLusky, seconded by Councillor Skidmore and

RESOLVED” that Mr Ashley Blackett be co-opted to serve as a Councillor on Welwyn Parish Council”.

Unanimously agreed

Mr Blackett to be invited to the Full Council meeting being held on the 29th June to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office

2009/077 WELWYN AND HATFIELD ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL’S MEETING 8TH JUNE 2009 – Agenda Items

The Chairman advised that as to date no Agenda items had been received, he proposed postponing the meeting for three months.

This would also give sufficient time to enable a representative from WHBC to attend the meeting to discuss the ramification for Parish Councils of the quashed East of England Plan

2009/078 LAND NEAR THE CEMETERY FULLING MILL LANE

Paperwork detailing a proposed development was circulated with the Agenda as **Appendix 2**.

Plans of the proposed development were on display in the Council Chamber.

Following discussion it was agreed that the Planning Committee should consider this proposal and make a recommendation to Full Council. This was unanimously agreed.

2009/079 FINANCE REPORT

Councillor Skidmore presented the Report, a copy of which was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix3, and added it was not possible to add any further detail at the moment, however the accounts should be ready for public inspection by the 29th June 2009.

The Acting Clerk advised that the Accounting Package presently used by the Council is no longer supportable as the company; Impact Council Accounts have ceased trading.

An accounting package widely used by other Town and Parish Councils is RBS Software Solutions. This package is also recommended by National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

RBS Solutions have some knowledge of Impact Council Accounts and envisaged it would take one/two days in the Council Offices to complete the 2008/09 year end accounts ready for Audit. Their charges would be £ 375 per day plus travel expenses of 30p per mile.

Following discussion RBS advised that their Omega Accounting Package would be suitable for the Council's requirements as detailed below:-

To purchase the Omega package	£ 595
Onsite visit to sort out coding, opening balance etc	£ 225
One days training on site	£ 399
Total	£ 1,219
Yearly support to include upgrades and daily help desk	£ 210
Expenditure 2009/10	£ 1,429
Annual expenditure in future years	£ 210

Following discussion it was agreed to take the proposal in two parts.

Part I - Preparation of year End Accounts for 2008/09

It was proposed by Councillor Skidmore, seconded by Councillor McLusky and

RESOLVED that RBS Solutions be employed to prepare the year end accounts for the 2008/09 year at a cost of £ 375 per day plus 30p per mile travel costs".

Unanimously agreed.

Part 2 – Purchasing a replacement Accounting Package, plus training and help desk support.

It was proposed by Councillor Skidmore and seconded by Councillor Benson and

RESOLVED that the RBS Solutions Omega Accounting package, on site set up cost and training, to include yearly support help desk as detailed above be purchased at a total cost of £ 1,429 in the 2009/10 year. The annual expenditure in future years to be £210".

Unanimously agreed

It was agreed that the training should include the Administrative Assistant and the Finance Committee Chairman as well as the Clerk.

EXEMPT BUSINESS

Under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item on the Agenda, the Chairman at this point excluded the public and accredited representatives of newspapers on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

2009/080 **RESOLVED** “that a formal letter of complaint be sent to SLCC regarding this matter, registering a breach of confidence on behalf of the retiring Clerk”.

RESOLVED” that subject to satisfactory references, Beststart HR Company be employed to give full support to the Council with HR related issues at a cost of £ 585”.

2009/082 CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked all present and declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

Dated 29th June 2009

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF

WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON TUESDAY 26TH MAY 2009 AT

THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN

PRESENT: Councillor J Blackburn (Chairman) and Councillors, M Benson, S Butler, C Hukin, R McKay, L McLusky, P Neville, H Ober and I Skidmore.

IN ATTENDANCE: A S Pack (Acting Clerk to the Council)

APOLOGIES: Councillor I Colpitts

EXEMPT BUSINESS

Under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item on the Agenda, the Chairman at this point excluded the public and accredited representatives of newspapers on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

2009/080 RECRUITMENT WORKING PARTY MEETING REPORT

The Chairman advised that the post of Clerk/ Responsible Finance Officer to the Council had been advertised on the Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Council's (HAPTC) web site and in their newsletter. The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) had originally agreed to advertise the post in their literature, however had then emailed the Chairman to decline to advertise the post as they believed the Council were in dispute with the retiring Parish Clerk. The Chairman emailed a reply advising SLCC that the Council were unaware of any dispute with the retiring Parish Clerk and requested the advertisement be placed in their literature as originally requested. To date no response to this email had been received. Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr Benson, seconded by Cllr Hukin and

RESOLVED "that a formal letter of complaint be sent to SLCC regarding this matter, registering a breach of confidence on behalf of the retiring Clerk".

Vote: For: 9

Against: 0

Abstention: 1

The proposal was carried

The Chairman advised he placed the advertising in the Welwyn Times which also appeared in the five newspapers produced by the Archant Herts and Cambs. Group. The retiring Clerk has sent in a sick note for the month of May and is due to take annual leave for the first three weeks of June. The three month notice period expires at the end of June 2009.

On the 13th May 2009 a letter was received from the retiring Clerk's solicitor. The Chairman advised that as part of the Grievance procedure, the retiring Clerk would be invited to a meeting with the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The retiring Clerk would be able to bring with her either a work colleague or a trade union representative. If the Clerk is not satisfied with the decision of the Grievance Committee, following this meeting, she would be able to lodge an Appeal.

As the Council will require professional advice regarding this matter, the Chairman and the Vice Chairman interviewed Human Resource (HR) Companies recommended by HAPTC.

The Chairman outlined the services each company could offer and recommended Beststart HR Company be employed. Literature attached as **APPENDIX 1**

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Neville, seconded by Councillors Skidmore and

RESOLVED that subject to satisfactory reference, Beststart HR Company be employed to give full support to the Council with HR related issues at a cost of £ 585.

Unanimously agreed.

2009/081 APPEALS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Appeals for the 2009/2010 year, in compliance with the Grievance Procedure Guidelines, is as follows

Cllr Hukin Cllr McLusky Cllr P Neville Cllr H Ober

2009/082 CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked all present and declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed.....Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

Dated 29TH June 2009