MINUTES OF THE LOCKERLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13TH MAY 2024 AT THE PARISH ROOMS, LOCKERLEY

Cllrs. Present: Cllr. Len Arthur, Cllr. Kevin Baker, Cllr. Peter Funnell, Cllr. Jane Waller (Chair), Cllr. Joanne Young

In attendance:
County Cllr. Nick Adams-King
Borough Cllr. Alison Johnston
Members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES
Cllr. Tim Coomer

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
None recorded.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS NOT ON THE AGENDA
None recorded

4. TO CONSIDER AND RESOLVE THE CO-OPTION OF A SERVING PARISH COUNCILLOR TO THE LOCKERLEY PARISH COUNCIL
The Parish Clerk advised members of an application received from Kevin Baker for consideration as a Parish Councillor. It was RESOLVED to co-opt Kevin Baker as a serving member of the Lockerley Parish Council with immediate effect. Cllr. Kevin Baker signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Proper Officer accordingly. The Parish Clerk will inform Test Valley Borough Council accordingly.

5. TO READ AND APPROVE THE FULL COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2024
The Chair reviewed the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 11 March 2024. Members unanimously RESOLVED to accept the Minutes of this meeting as a true and correct record. The Chair signed the Minutes accordingly.

In pursuance of Minute 12, Cllr. Joanne Young raised the matter of a Village Green policy that requires discussion and debate as an agenda item. Members agreed that this will be an agenda item at the July Parish Council meeting.

6. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED
The Parish Clerk advised members of all correspondence received to date, which were noted without further comment.

Cllr. Joanne Young provided a verbal update on the importance and significance of the recent Pan Parish River Pollution Forum that she attended. She stated that she found this most interesting and valuable and requested that Pan Parish River Pollution be an agenda item at the July Parish Council meeting for further discussion and debate.

The Chair advised members that she recently attended the Test Valley Resilience Forum meeting, the purpose of which was to share information and the progress that has been made in the Test Valley in developing their plans and their structure for community resilience at parish level. She stated that the Test Valley group developed from the Local Resilience Forum (LRF for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight).

The LRF was not considered to be local enough and did not support the needs of a rural community, such as Lockerley. The interconnectedness of urban communities needed to be replicated by rural parishes working together and sharing skills and resources.

Cllr. Kevin Baker felt that it would be helpful to have a list of potential grant sources available to which parish councils could apply to fund essential equipment to ensure that Lockerley Parish Council is prepared and resilient to support its rural community.

7. TO RESOLVE THE FINANCE SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURE FOR MAY 2024
The Parish Clerk advised members of the expenses of the Parish Council for May 2024, which amounted to £2,262.22 as scheduled below, together with the latest financial position of the Parish Council.

£557.00 – J. Humphry Associates Ltd – Invoice 17524 dated 25 April 2024 – Preparation of annual accounts and supporting schedules for year ended 31 March 2024

£188.26 – Direct Debit – SSE Energy Solutions – Invoice 00701920 dated 11 April 2024 – Electric use at Parish Rooms for the period 27 July 2023 to 28 February 2024

£27.96 – Cllr. Joanne Young – Refund for Cylinder Keys purchased personally – Receipt 20198 dated 24 April 2024

£2.00 – Kevin Glyn-Davies – Refund of HMRC PAYE paid personally to avoid late default charges

£180.00 – Kevin Glyn-Davies – Refund against Invoice 11047 dated 25 March 2024 Diocese of Winchester – Half-yearly Lockerley Glebe for the period 25 March 2024 to 28 September 2024

£778.00 – Kevin Glyn-Davies – March Salary of £650.00 plus HMRC Tax Refund of £128.00 as change in Tax Code - £650.00 + £128.00

£534.00 – Kevin Glyn-Davies – April Salary - £650.00 less Tax of £116.00 = £534.00

Members unanimously RESOLVED the expenditure of the parish council for May 2024 as prescribed totalling £2,262.22.

8. TO RESOLVE APPROVAL OF THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF THE LOCKERLEY PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 31 MARCH 2024, TO COMPLETE THE ANNUAL GOVRERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023/2024 AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2023/2024 AND ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT
The Parish Clerk advised members of the legal audit requirements in the completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/2024. He explained that as the income and expenditure for Lockerley Parish Council has now exceeded £25,000, it can no longer meet the qualifying criteria as set out in the Certificate of Exemption and able to declare themselves exempt from sending the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor for a limited assurance review.

Every smaller authority that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 must now complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The Parish Clerk explained that the Parish Council MUST approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement before approving Section 2 Accounting Statements and both documents must be approved and published on the Lockerley Parish Council Website before 1 July 2024.

It was reported that Lockerley Parish Council will determine the internal audit scope of work to be undertaken by the internal auditor. If no such programme of work is agreed by the Council, then the minimum reporting requirement for internal audit will be met by completing the annual internal audit report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The Internal auditor may also report in greater detail to the Council for example providing a written internal audit report. The Council may consider the following list of the key systems and processes they can ask internal audit to review from time to time as part of its work:

• proper and thorough book-keeping including the cash book;
• standing orders and financial regulations;
• payment controls;
• income controls;
• budgetary controls;
• payroll controls;
• asset control;
• bank reconciliations;
• year-end procedures; and
• risk management arrangements.

Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit

On an annual basis, Lockerley Parish Council will carry out a review of the effectiveness of the overall internal audit arrangements. As part of the review, this may include the appointment of an internal auditor. The review should balance the Councils internal audit needs and usage. It should provide sufficient assurance for the Council that standards are being met and that the work of internal audit is effective. The review is designed to assure Lotckerley Parish Council Internal Audit Policy

Reviewing the Effectiveness of Internal Audit

Members reviewed the annual internal audit process and RESOLVED that it has maintained the standards of an adequate and effective internal audit of its risk management, control and governance processes. The review included, as a minimum, making an assessment of each of the following:

• the scope of internal audit;
• independence;
• competence;
• relationships with the clerk and the authority; and
• audit planning and reporting.

The Parish Clerk advised members that there is an annual requirement for members to consider whether Lockerley Parish Council has any conflict of interests with BDO LLP (External Auditors) and there is a form on which to declare, which must be signed by the Chair and the Parish Clerk. Members RESOLVED that the Lockerley Parish Council has no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP and authorised the Chair and the Parish Clerk to sign the form accordingly declaring no conflicts of interest.

Members RESOLVED approval of the unaudited accounts of the Lockerley Parish Council as at 31 March 2024, which were previously circulated to all. Members carefully considered Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement and RESOLVED to complete this with 'Yes' statements accordingly. The Chair and the Parish Clerk signed this section as required. Members then considered Section 2 Accounting Statements and RESOLVED agreement for this to be signed by the Chair and the Parish Clerk as necessary.

9. TO RESOLVE APPROVAL OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR TO THE ACCOUNTS

The Parish clerk advised member that he has spoken to Paul Reynolds who is based in Eastleigh and he has agreed to carry out the internal audit of the Parish Council accounts. Members RESOLVED approval to appoint Paul Reynolds as the internal auditor to the accounts. Members further RESOLVED and confirmed that the internal auditor does not undertake tasks or give advice which may compromise or fetter their independence or invalidate the smaller authority's insurance. Members RESOLVED to accept the Internal audit scoping report proposal previously circulated and prepared to all members to be sent as part of the formal appointment to Paul Reynolds (Internal Auditor).

10. TO DISCUSS MEMORIAL TREE PLANTING ON THE VILLAGE GREENS

Members discussed the subject of memorial tree planting on the village greens in the parish, at some length. It is believed that a tree was planted by a family in 2016 to commemorate the passing of a loved one but the question of actual original permission having been formally granted at the time by the Lockerley Parish Council remains an issue. Members raised the matter of whether by virtue of planting a tree on Lockerley Parish Council land, the tree in question becomes the property and responsibility of the Parish Council.

The question of whether the location of the tree plant was actually agreed with the Parish Council and the bereaved family was raised. Members were acutely aware of the sensitivity of this matter and keen not to cause upset. At this stage it was agreed to make an attempt to locate family members, if possible and discuss matters tactfully. Cllr. Len Arthur stated he will try and locate family members if at all possible but this could prove to be difficult. Members agreed to defer this matter and include this within discussion on a Village Green policy agenda item at the July Parish Council meeting.

11. TO DISCUSS LOCKERLEY JUNIOR SCHOOL CAR PARKING ISSUES

The Chair advised members of a letter received from the Lockerley Junior Road Safety Officers at Lockerley Primary School. They state that the Lockerley school parking on the village green becomes very muddy and is extremely boggy and as a result, people are parking on the side of the pavement. This causes drivers to park unsafely, which is dangerous for pupils when coming to and from school.

The Lockerley Junior Road Safety Officers have asked the parish council to improve and address the parking bays on Butts Green, The Chair stated that she did acknowledge the letter and responded accordingly.

Cllr. Peter Funnell advised members of the draft Village Green Policy that he prepared in 2022, At the time, the parish council did initially seek the views of parishioners and the draft was read out and discussed at a Parish Council Meeting.

Like Brexit there was support for the Garage and objections to it. He stated that rather than try and introduce a policy in an attempt to deal with a parking problem on Butts Green, it would be better to consult with key players such as parishioners.

Members considered what potential immediate action the Parish Council could take in respect of Butts Green. What is clear to everyone is that the parking area on Butts Green is not fit for purpose and this has been pointed out to the parish council by young children.

It was considered that the parish council now needs to take immediate measures to try and mitigate any accidents and a first course of action may be to place simple safety fencing around the parking area on Butts Green to prevent cars from parking.

It was noted that the existing road markings are not clear and are not helpful and the matter of speeding does need to be considered most carefully. The Parish Council must legally abide with all existing Open Spaces and Village Green legislative requirements. Members agreed that there could be a possibility of introducing reduce speed, flashing indicator lights. The subject of a Speed Indicator Device (SID) was discussed and that a grant application could be made to both Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council to defray costs. The Parish Clerk was asked to obtain a quote from ElanCity for a solar powered SID. Cllr. Joanne Young suggested that a working group with key partner representation would also be a constructive way forward to discuss matters. Cllr. Kevin Baker commented that it is of concern that no police officers are in attendance at key school times to monitor the situation.

12. TO DETERMINE AND RESOLVE PLANNING APPLICATIONS
None received.

13. FOOTPATHS AND ROADS
None received.

14. BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS
None received.

15. MEMBER QUESTIONS
None recorded.

In the absence of any further business to transact, the Chair closed the meeting at 20.35 hours.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at the Parish Rooms, Lockerley on 8 July 2024 at 18.00 hours.