



Minutes of
Botley & North Hinksey Parish Council
16th November 2023

Cllrs Present: Cllrs Bastin, Kay, Spooner, Rankin, Berrett (Chair), Johnson, Barnes, Dowie, Davies, Gholami-Babaahmady, Keily, Church, MacKeith and Jones

Others present: Emma Gordon – BNHPC Clerk, Members of the public (3)

On zoom: Alice Handscomb Retallack – RFO (logged in 19:45, logged out 21:35)

Meeting started at 19:31

23/095: Apologies for Absence

County Councillor Judy Roberts, District Cllr Emily Smith

23/096: Declarations of Interest

Cllr Dowie declared two interests:

1. A Non Registerable Interest (NRI) as an objector to the CPO and an allotment holder, with regards to the item on the Flood Alleviation Scheme.
 2. A Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) as an allotment holder, with regards to the item on allotments
- He requests dispensation for both of these.

Clerk ran through Localism Act 2011 Section 33 pertaining to granting dispensation.

Cllr Jones arrives 19:37

On allowing a dispensation for Cllr Dowie's NRI.

Vote: For (10) Against (1) Abstentions (2) - PASSED

On allowing dispensation for Cllr Dowie's DPI

Vote: For (4) Against (9) Abstentions (0) – NOT PASSED

Cllr MacKeith declared a DPI on item 23/109 and undertook to leave the meeting during the item.

23/097: Approval of Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th October 2023.

Clerk noted minor amendments as per Cllr Kay's suggestions. Cllr Dowie expressed displeasure at the way the minutes were being written. Clerk urged councillors to send feedback prior to meetings.

Proposal by Cllr Kay, seconded by Cllr Berrett: "To approve the minutes"

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: For (7) Bastin, Kay, MacKeith, Rankin, Berrett, Johnson & Church. Against (1) Dowie. Abstentions (2) Spooner and Davis. Councillors Keily, Gholami Babaahmady, Jones and Barnes did not vote as they were not present at the last meeting - PASSED

23/098: Matters raised by Members of the Public (Max 5 mins / question, 15 mins total)

Please refer to Appendix 1 (Page 8) for questions and answers on this item.

Chair of meeting brought forward item 23/108 Councillors Questions.

Please refer to Appendix 2 (Page 10) for questions and answers on this item.

23/099: Reports from County & District Councillors (10 minutes)

District Council Report reviewed

County Council Report reviewed

23/100: Review of Action Sheet (See Paper 1_Action Sheet Nov23) Noted

23/101: Clerk's Report (See Paper 2_Clerks Report Nov23)

Clerk added the success of the Remembrance Day Service and her involvement in the FCC bid, which had happened since the report was produced. Councillors thanked the Clerk for her work on organising the Remembrance Day.

23/102: Council Motions

Councillors to vote on the following motions:

1. BNHPCs position on the Flood Alleviation Scheme.

A member of the public has written to BNHPC asking them to request that the Vale of White Horse (VoWH) withdraw its support for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS). (See Paper 3_OFAS request)

Riki Therivel (member of the public), followed by Cllr Dowie, gave a brief outline and suggested why BNHPC should support this motion.

Motion 1

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Rankin: "That BNHPC submit a request to the VOWH to withdraw their support for the Flood Alleviation Scheme."

*Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **For (10)** Davis, Gholami-Babaahmady, Kay, Dowie, Rankin, Berrett, Barnes, Johnson, Keily and Jones. **Against (2)** Bastin & Mackeith. **Abstentions (2)** Church and Spooner. - PASSED*

Action Clerk: To draft a request from BNHPC to the VOWH and to get a second opinion from a councillor before sending. **Cllr Rankin offered his support. Action Clerk:** To send a copy to Riki Therivel.

Question from Clerk: Would the Council like to be provided with more information to discuss and agree an official position on the overall Flood Alleviation Scheme for the next Full Council Meeting?

It was thought that it would be useful to have an outline as a single point of reference. **Action Clerk:** To compile a short summary of BNHPCs position. **Cllr Dowie offered to support the Clerk** to produce this. A mention on the website with the summary plus some additional links could also be produced. **Action Clerk:** To consult with Cllr Church for input on additional links that may be relevant.

2. Skatepark finance and fundraising

Chair of meeting enacts a change of order to the agenda. Motions 2a and 2b are considered prior to Motion 2

Motion 2a

The Finance and General Purposes Committee met on Thursday 9th November. They would like to propose the following motions to full council:

Proposal by The Finance and General Purposes Committee: "That the Council authorise moving all remaining funds in the New Community Hall earmarked reserve into the skate park redevelopment earmarked reserve and close the New Community Hall earmarked reserve."

Proposal by Cllr Kay, seconded by Cllr Bastin: "To agree to the motion"

*Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **For (7)** Cllrs Bastin, Kay, Barnes, Keily, Church, MacKeith, Berrett, Rankin, Johnson and Jones) **Against (1)** Cllr Dowie. **Abstentions (3)** Cllrs Spooner, Gholami-Babaahmady and Davis - PASSED*

Motion 2b

Proposal by The Finance and General Purposes Committee: "That the Council commit the current CIL money earmarked reserve of £87,280.97 towards the estimated remainder of funds required to build the skatepark, should a £100,000 grant request to FCC prove successful and communicate this commitment to FCC as part of that grant application. "

Cllr MacKeith explained the context and relevance of the grant and the necessity for this commitment from the Council. It was noted during the ensuing discussion that £23k of this CIL money needs to be spent by October 2024.

Proposal by Cllr Kay, seconded by Cllr Berrett. To amend the motion to say: "That Council commits the usage of such proportion of the CIL Monies earmarked reserve (currently standing at £87,280.97) as is required to cover the shortfall in funds held in the Skatepark Redevelopment earmarked reserve versus the total funds required to build the skatepark should a £100,000 grant request be submitted to FCC and prove successful, and to communicate this commitment to FCC as part of such a grant application."

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **For (3)** Kay, Berrett and Rankin. **Against (8)** MacKeith, Bastin, Jones, Church, Keily, Barnes, Dowie and Johnson. **Abstentions (3)** Spooner, Gholami-Babaahmady and Davis. – **NOT PASSED**

Proposal by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Jones: "To amend the motion to remove the word estimated."

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **For (10)** Rankin, Kay, MacKeith, Bastin, Berrett, Jones, Johnson, Keily, Church, Barnes. **Against (0)** **Abstentions (4)** Spooner, Dowie, Gholami-Babaahmady and Davis - **PASSED**

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Bastin: To agree to the amended motion: "That the Council commit the current CIL money ear marked reserve of £87,280.97 towards the remainder of funds required to build the skatepark, should a £100,000 grant request to FCC prove successful and communicate this commitment to FCC as part of that grant application. "

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **For (10)** Rankin, Kay, MacKeith, Bastin, Berrett, Jones, Johnson, Keily, Church, Barnes **Against (1)** Dowie. **Abstentions (3)** Spooner, Gholami-Babaahmady and Davis. - **PASSED**

Motion 2

The Skatepark Fundraising Working Group have prepared an application to the FCC Community Action Fund for £100,000 grant towards building the Skatepark. (See Paper 2 – FCC application summary) This has been looked over by the RFO and Clerk of BNHPC and now come to the council for permission to submit. Deadline is 6th December.

Proposal by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Johnson: "For the Council to approve the Skatepark Fundraising Group to submit the grant to FCC, with the Clerk as the signatory to approve and authorise the application."

Proposed Amendment by Cllr Kay, Second by Cllr Bastin: To alter the wording of the motion to read: "Council to authorise the Clerk to submit a £100,000 grant request to FCC acting as the authorised signatory for the application, with such funds awarded to be added to the Skatepark Redevelopment earmarked reserve to be used subsequently to part cover construction costs of the new skatepark. In addition Council authorises the Clerk to pay the required Contributing Third Party Payment of £10,750 from the Skatepark Redevelopment earmarked reserve should the grant of £100,000 be awarded in full.

Proposal by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Berrett: "To move to a vote"

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: **For (11)** Bastin, Kay, MacKeith, Berrett, Rankin, Barnes, Johnson, Keily, Church, Jones and Spooner. **Against (1)** Dowie. **Abstentions (2)** Gholami-Babaahmady and Davis. **PASSED**

Vote: To adopt the amendment - **For (11)** **Against (0)** **Abstentions (3)** **PASSED**

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: To adopt the amended motion - **For (11)** Bastin, Kay, Spooner, MacKeith, Rankin, Berrett, Barnes, Johnson, Keily, Church and Jones. **Against (1)** Dowie. **Abstentions (2)** Gholami-Babaahmady and Davis. **PASSED**

3. All in One Room

Motion 3

Following the success of last December's "All in One Room" event for local volunteers we propose to run the event again on the afternoon of Sunday 10th December and invite local volunteers to join us for mulled wine / soft drinks and mince pies. We propose a budget of up to £500 to be allocated from the Events budget.

We will use the same invitation list as last year updated with any additional names and groups proposed by councillors. A risk assessment will be circulated once venue is confirmed. We are currently holding times at Seacourt Hall and WI Hall.

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Church "For the Council to agree to deliver this event as per the above details."

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: For (13) Rankin, Kay, Mackeith, Bastin, Berrett, Jones, Johnson, Keily, Church, Barnes, Spooner, Gholami-Babaahmady and Davis *Against (1)* Dowie - **PASSED**

Action Councillors: To let the Clerk or Chair know if they have any contacts who should be included.

4. Supporting Local Business.

Motion 4

This council notes:

- the difficult economic situation faced by many local businesses, which is being made worse by the cost of living crisis and road closures
- that many local businesses appear to be operating on a very marginal profitability basis
- that it is in everyone's interest to have a thriving local economy

Cllr Church gave background to the motion. Councillors discussed this in some detail, including issues of budget assignment, how it would be executed and the timeline.

Proposals by Cllr Church: Seconded by Cllr Bastin

- a. "To Promote a 'Buy it in Botley!' initiative. This could (subject to discussion) highlight to as wide an audience as possible that we have three supermarkets, two restaurants, two coffee bars, an excellent fish and chip shop and numerous other businesses and that most of peoples' day-to-day needs can be met locally."
- b. To set up a small working group to consult with local businesses and Savills with a view to producing and distributing a leaflet / posters / other materials as appropriate to promote this 'shop local' initiative.
- c. To commit to a budget of a maximum of £400 pounds at this time.

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: Unanimous – PASSED

Working Group members will include: Cllrs Church, Barnes, Keily and Gholami-Babaahmady. It was agreed that the motions would form the Terms of for the Working Group.

Action RFO: To include a discussion on the budget allocation at the next Finance & General Purposes Meeting.

5. A Charity Shop in Botley

This council notes:

- that there are various empty properties in the West Way shopping area
- that an earlier consultation revealed a strong desire for a local charity / second-hand goods shop
- that we want to see more people shopping in Botley

Cllr Church gave background for motion.

Proposals by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Kay

- a. To approach Savills / Mace to getting them to offer a short term / pop-up lease for a charity shop
- b. To consult with the various charities operating charity shops in Oxfordshire to discuss the feasibility of one of them operating a shop in Botley

There was discussion about how this would be delivered and the need for it in the community. It was felt that the above working group could also address this issue, working closely with the Clerk.

Cllr Church accepted the following amendments to his motions: To add "via the Clerk" after the word approach in Motion 5a and after the word consult in Motion 5b. Also to include the word "discounted" between pop up and lease in Motion 5a.

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: To accept the amendments - Unanimous – PASSED

Named vote requested by Cllr Dowie: On the amended proposal - Unanimous – PASSED

23/103: Finance

a) Virements adopted by the F&GP Committee for Council approval (See Paper 4_Virements)

- i. Virement not adopted by F&GP
- ii. £600 virement within Highways - From Signs, Noticeboards, Notices to Benches & Bus shelters
- iii. £250 virement from General Admin > Remembrance Day to Highways > Benches & Bus shelters
- iv. £2,077 virement within Playing Fields – From Hedges & Tree cutting to Benches (including repair)
- v. £220 virement within Playgrounds – From Equipment into Fencing
- vi. £75 virement within Computer costs – From Emails to Website.

Cllr Kay raised a number of questions, which were answered by the Chair and the RFO and members of the F&GP Committee.

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Rankin: To agree to the proposed virements.

Vote: Unanimous – PASSED

b) Councillors to agree 24/25 Budget. (See 20231110 Draft budget)

- i. Councillors to discuss the General Reserves and Precept amount. (See GR & Precept Paper)
RFO explained context for this and expanded on figures for individual households.
- ii. Councillors are invited to approve the 24-25 Budget, subject to decisions on the above item.

Chair noted that it was not possible for us to approve the budget at this time, as the precept figure was still outstanding.

RFO invited feedback on the budget. There was a discussion around raising the rent for Matthew Arnold School to cover the costs of the maintenance.

Action Clerk: To request the Pupil census from Matthew Arnold, as this has a bearing on the rent figures charged. Cllr Kay had a number of questions and recommendations to the RFO for item lines that could be reduced.

c) Councillors to approve the Orders of Payment

Approval of BNHPC's Receipts and Payments since the last Full Council Meeting. (See 20231110 Orders of payment)

Orders Of Payment reviewed

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Kay: To approve the Orders of Payment.

Vote: Unanimous – PASSED

- d) **Clerk request:** For the council to approve the setting up of an Equals account so that the staff can have a pre paid card to make expense purchases rather than use their own personal funds. There is no fee for a not-for-profit and only a £10 charge per card. The RFO and Clerk would each have a card.

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Mackeith: "For the Council to agree to allow the Clerk and RFO to open an equals account."

Vote: Unanimous – PASSED

Chair of Council moved the meeting onto item 23/106d Grants to the community.

- e) **Clerk Request:** For BNHPC to pay for her membership to SLCC. This can be done under The Local Government Act 1972 s 143 (1) (b) and will cost the council in the region of £237 per year. According to SLCC "97% of members' councils pay for their clerks' subscription."

Not addressed in the meeting

23/104: Working Groups. Recommended after 23/106d

Verbal report from working groups

Skatepark Working Group gave minor update on alternative fundraising activities.

Environment Working Group gave minor update on meeting dates and invitees. Next meeting date 27th Nov 6:45

23/105: Building Projects

Pavilion Project

a. Judicial Review request by parishioner – Update

Appeal has been lodged and courts communicate a date for the hearing within 8 weeks.

b. Pavilion Trust – Update. None

c. Memorandum of Understanding – Update.

Clerk has reviewed and updated the MOU, but still needs to refer to the Matthew Arnold Lease Agreement to see if it can be applied to pitch and MUGA use for Pavilion Trust.

23/106: General

Cllr Dowie left the meeting

a) Allotments

Clerk to report back on progress. (See Paper 5_Allotment Report Nov23)

Clerk went through her proposed timeline. It was agreed to postpone cutting the hedge until Jan/Feb to allow birds to feed on berries in the winter. Also to look into strimming works for overgrown plots to help them become more manageable.

Cllr Dowie re-joined the meeting

b) Communications

- i. Cut off date for using old email addresses is the 30th November. No new emails from the Clerk will be sent to the old email addresses from that date one. **Noted**
- ii. The website is now live. A redirect is in place from the old one. **Noted**

c) Policies

Update from Clerk on the progress of the EDI and Safeguarding Policies. **Slow progress**

d) Grants to the community

- i. Ferry Hinksey Trust Grant Application (See Grant Application FHT)

Member of Ferry Hinksey Trust, Chris Sugden outlined the request for a grant of £2000 and confirmed that they have now raised £58k as opposed to the lower figure mentioned in the report. He outlined how this could be a loan or a grant depending on the outcome of the legal case.

Councillors posed some questions and checked that there were sufficient funds in the Major Grants budget line.

Vote: For (11) Against (1) Abstentions (0) - PASSED

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, seconded by Cllr Rankin: "To suspend standing orders, as the meeting has exceeded 2 hours. And to increase the meeting time by no more than 30 minutes."

Vote: For (12) Against (2) - PASSED

5min break 21:33-21:38

- ii. Citizens Advice Grant Application (See Grant Application CA)

Proposal by Cllr Church, seconded by Cllr Kay: To agree to the grant request for £1200.

Vote: Unanimous – PASSED

e) Events

Remembrance Day – Update from Chair of Committee

Chair of Remembrance Day Committee thanked all the councillors who volunteered on the day and the Clerk, He informed that a follow up meeting will be arranged on site with Revd Claire Sykes, Caroline Can and BNHPC to discuss improvements for next year. Cllr Berrett would also like to attend.

Action Clerk: To arrange the wash-up meeting at the Botley Cemetery.

f) Local Issues

- i. Agree next steps for progressing Motion 23/088 Climate and Ecology Bill.
Suggested that this is **passed onto the Environment Working Group**.
- ii. Agree next steps for progressing Motion 23/085 Asking relevant organisations to install temporary bus shelter. **Cllr Church will work with Clerk** to move this forward
Cllr MacKeith announced that the Botley Traffic Advisory Group (BTAG) will be having a meeting in the next few weeks which could also help address this issue.
- iii. Update on progress of MUGA basketball hoops.
Cllr Spooner informed that the R&A will get three quotes and will bring back to Full Council for a recommendation .

23/107: Other Documents & Letters Received:

E01-23 Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2023

The Council is hereby notified that an agreement on rates of pay has now been agreed with SLCC and ALCC.
“Employers are encouraged to implement this pay award as swiftly as possible.” The RFO will be implementing this award in the November payroll. (See Paper 6_E01-23 Pay Agreement)

Noted

23/108: Questions raised by Councillors: (Max 5 mins / question, 15 mins total)

23/109: Confidential Section

The Council is required to pass the resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Section1, extended by the Local Government Act 1972, Section 100, as the following items are considered confidential.

Clerk and Cllr MacKeith left the room.

Probationary review of the Clerk.

Update on procedure and progress of probationary review. (See Confidential 1_Probation Review)

The approval of the Probationary Review process by members of the Personnel Committee:

Vote: For (3) Against (1) Abstentions (0) - **PASSED**

Proposal by Cllr Berrett, Seconded by Cllr Church: “To adopt the review panel’s recommendation to approve the Clerk’s rating as satisfactory and confirm in writing that her probationary period has been completed with her role now that of a permanent employee, and her pay to be raised to Salary Point 25 with back pay to be awarded from the date 3 months after her commencement of employment.

Named vote: For (12) Barnes, Bastin, Berrett, Church, Davis, Gholami-Babaahmady, Johnson, Jones, Kay, Keily, Rankin, Spooner. **Against (0) Abstentions (1)** Dowie – **PASSED**

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 14th December 2023 at 7.30pm

Meeting finished at 21:57

Appendix 1& 2 on following (pages 8-10)

Appendix 1:

Questions from the public: November 2023

Questions from Dr Andrew Pritchard (AP):

1. Why is the full application to the FCC Community Action Fund not included in Paper 2 (Item 2), so that Councillors can make a decision on Motion 2 on the basis of fully informed evidence, which is also available to the general public - the summary does not provide this?

Answer from the Chair: A summary document has been provided along with the 13 page guidance notes while the full application is being finalised. The Clerk and RFO will ensure the application is completed fully and accurately. The motion is asking the Council to agree to submit a grant application to the FCC Community Action Fund, to agree that we want to apply for this grant in the current window of application. We believe all the relevant information to make this decision has been provided and the Skatepark Working Group members can provide further details and take questions when the motion is discussed.

Clarification question by AP – “You are suggesting that it is acceptable to provide little more than 24 hours to councillors to read a 61 page document which is involving a sum of money that is equivalent to the annual parish precept, whilst parishioners had no opportunity to read the full documents.

Answer from Chair: No I am actually suggesting that you do not need to read the 61 page in order to agree that we want to make a grant application. That is what I am suggesting.

2. Any application to the FCC Community Action Fund has to commit to paying 10.75% of any sum awarded as a contributing third party payment. Since Working Groups do not have the powers to approve expenditure, why is it proposed that the Skatepark Fundraising Group submits the request for a grant and not the Parish Council?

Answer from the Chair: Yes you are correct. The working group/advisory committee cannot carry out the function of grant application. This motion is badly worded and cannot proceed as is, therefore there will be an amendment to this motion in the meeting to make it clear that the motion is for Council to request the Clerk to submit the funding application.

3. What correspondence has the Parish Clerk received from local businesses (and when) for assistance from the Parish Council for a "Buy it in Botley" campaign, when recent fliers from the restaurant at 20-22 West Way Square and a very large board at the eastern entrance to the shopping mall urging people to shop locally show that local businesses and organisations are well able to do this themselves? Why is a budget of £400 being proposed and without any detail of what the money will be spent on?

Answer from Cllr Church:

The point about promoting local businesses is in part about creating a thriving local economy. At the moment we are in a position that can be summed up in 5 words: *Use it or lose it*. We have already seen two restaurants in this area go out of business since the new shopping centre was built and anecdotal verbal evidence (there has been no correspondence I'm aware of) suggests that other businesses in the area are suffering. This is a time when Botley should be thriving, because people who would normally want to go and eat in the city centre are not going there, because it involves walking through the tunnel and then 10-15 minutes to their chosen restaurant. Therefore ours should be doing well. They are not doing as well as they should because a lot of people don't know that they are here. This motion is not about spending £400, that is an outline budget. It is about exploring the possibility of developing a Buy It in Botley promotion. And it is not just about boards in a shopping centre because there is little point promoting shopping locally to people who are already shopping locally. We may want to look a little further.

Possibly using social media or whatever media the various businesses in the area think is appropriate. The motion merely suggests that we consult with people about an integrated programme.

Clarification question from AP: I haven't had any response from the Clerk as far as this matter is concerned. Has the Clerk receive correspondence from the public on this matter

Clerk response: I have not.

4. Why is the Parish Council proposing to spend £500 of Parishioners' money on a wine and mince pie party for a select few when there are many in the parish who are finding it difficult to survive financially?

Answer from the Chair: We ran this event for the first time in December 2022 and it was very much appreciated by over 100 volunteers who attended. Invitees were volunteers and organisers who give up their free time all year round to contribute to our community in various roles – from baby and youth groups to pensioners lunch clubs, from sports groups to food banks, and various other groups including those supporting, maintaining and promoting our local natural habitat. Recognising their contributions as a thank you from the council on behalf of the community was not only a nice thing to do, it was very useful. A number of connections and conversations took place that might not have happened otherwise. New trustees were found for some organisations, and the solving of common problems was discussed. It also served as an opportunity to promote the Parish Council's grant funds and we've been pleased to have fulfilled grant applications from a number of these groups over the past year. The budget of £500 was underspent last year and we expect that to be the case again this year, if the motion is passed.

Question From Martin Dowie (MD)

1. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 September 2023 include the following information under item 23/077 General : *(d) Allotments Update: "c) Allotments Update (Paper 11) Paper reviewed. A formal inspection took place in August, with 13 plots deemed to need to be given notice. There was general agreement that untended plots are bad for everyone. It was thought that plot holders inspection as needing to be "given notice" meant they should be engaged in a dialogue to find out why they are struggling, before any notice is formally given, to give people a chance to improve.*

Proposal by Cllr Kay: "For Clerk to contact the 13 plot holders to state our concerns regarding the condition of their plot and to invite them to explain whether they intend to continue to cultivate their plot. Also to state that if we do not see any improvement by the end of the financial year, the plot will be reallocated to someone on the waiting list." Seconded by Cllr Berrett.

Vote: In favour (Unanimous) - PASSED

It was also expressed that we require a more formalised process for how allotments are reviewed with specifically dates."

However, the Parish Clerk contacted more than 13 plot holders (i.e. more than 13 tenants), did not fully state the Parish Council's concerns regarding their condition of their plot (i.e. did not provide full results of the allotment inspection or of the actions required to meet the standards set by the inspection criteria), did not invite tenants to explain whether they continue to cultivate their plot, and did not engage in dialogue to find out why tenants are struggling before any notice was formally given but did threaten termination of their tenancy after 02 February 2024 on the basis if no "real improvement" is seen but without giving any indication of what would qualify as "real improvement".

Given that the Parish Clerk has disregarded the Parish Council decision, will the Parish Clerk now withdraw the letters issued and comply with the Parish Council resolution by writing a new letter to the tenants of the 13 plots deemed to be "given notice"?

Response from the Clerk:

With reference to the "inspection letter to plot holders_2023." I am satisfied that my actions and wording adequately reflect my interpretation of the proposal voted for in the previous council meeting. I very much feel that different people have different interpretations, and I am confident that I interpreted that motion appropriately.

Clarification question: Do you think that the 2nd of February is the same date as the 31st of March? I can't ask questions on all those different points - But I don't think that the Parish Clerk has met the Parish Council's instruction. So is the 31st of March the same date as the 2nd of February?

Chair response: The 2nd of February is the next inspection date and this is a facetious question.

Clerk response: I think we have a difference of opinion. That is all I am saying.

Appendix 2:

Councillor Questions: Nov 2023 full council meeting**From Cllr Dowie**

1. My understanding is that there is a Parish Council Skatepark Working Group which reports to the R&A Committee, and Working Groups are not empowered to establish new Working Groups. Please would the Clerk or the RFO explain what sort of group the "Skatepark Fundraising" / "Skatepark Fundraising Group" is?

Answer from Chair: This is a mistake in wording. This should refer to the Skatepark Working Group. We will correct the reference in the minutes and be sure to refer to it correctly in future.

2. Please would the Chair of the Skatepark Working Group or the Parish Clerk explain why information on the FCC Community Action Fund has not been shared with all members of the Skatepark Working Group? Please note this question was sent on the 11th November.

Answer from Chair: The Chair of the Working Group emailed all Working Group members on September 19th, stating that now the planning application had been granted, the group would be shifting focus from design and consultation to fundraising. She set out different types of fundraising and asked members to tell her which areas they were interested in. The work was subsequently taken forward by those members who expressed an interest. Members who did not respond were assumed not to be interested in contributing to the fundraising efforts. The grant details have now been shared with all members of the Working Group, Councillors and the public as a paper ahead of tonight's meeting.

Clarification question: That happened after this question?

Answer by chair: Yes, but I have explained why it was shared when it was.

3. The proposal *by Cllr MacKeith, seconded by Cllr Johnson:* "For the Council to approve the Skatepark Fundraising Group to submit the grant to the FCC Community Action Fund, with the Clerk as the signatory to approve and authorise the application" is not permitted by the Parish Council as "Advisory Committees are not able to set Council Policy, or to make decisions that impact on NHPC operations. Additionally they are not able to carry out functions on behalf of NHPC" (B&NHPC Terms of Reference for Committees). Please would the Parish Clerk explain why the proposed FCC Community Action Fund grant application is not following proper procedure with the application being made available to parish councillors to review, amend and vote on an appropriately worded motion?

Answer: Apologies, you are correct that a working party/advisory committee cannot carry out the function of grant application. This motion is badly worded and cannot proceed as is therefore there will be an amendment to this motion in the meeting to make it clear that the motion is for Council to request the Clerk to submit the funding application.