

TIPTREE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

A meeting of the Full Council took place on Monday 22nd July 2019 at 7.26pm in The Meeting Room, Community Centre, Caxton Close

Present Cllrs:	R Mannion (Chairman)	M Maund (Vice Chairman)
	Mrs S Allen-Shepherd	C Bigg
	Mrs J Bunney	Mrs D Coe
	J Greenwood	N Mattinson
	R Smithson	Mrs D Webb
	Mrs B Wood	

Also in attendance – Three members of the public, Colchester Borough Councillor J Elliott, the Clerk of the Council and Deputy Clerk of the Council.

146/19 Apologies for Absence – There were no apologies as all members of the Council were present.

147/19 Chairman's Announcements

- Cllr R Mannion told the meeting that Fred Boot died last week. He was part of the Friends of Tiptree Heath and had been a member of the Parish Council. The Council expressed its sympathies to his family.
- Cllr R Mannion told the meeting that he and Cllr M Maund will be meeting with the Tiptree Medical Centre on 25th July 2019.
- Cllr R Mannion told the meeting that he had attended the Essex County Council Chairman's event on 19th July 2019 and had made contact with a lot of other local council representatives.

148/19 Declarations of interest – there were no declarations of interest.

149/19 Public Questions

Hanne Henriksen told the meeting that Essex County Council has published a revised library strategy, which said that no libraries will be closed over the next five years. The County Council wants volunteer led libraries, which would be given no support from qualified librarians. This will be voted on by the County Council on 23rd July 2019. She asked whether the Parish Council would hold a public consultation or a public meeting on the subject of the expression of interest. The Chairman said that this would be dealt with at the relevant agenda item.

150/19 Income and Expenditure

Accounts for Payment - To authorise and make additional payments for July 2019. The Accounts for Payment at expenditure of £9440.89 ex VAT were proposed for acceptance by Cllr M Maund and seconded by Cllr C Bigg and were agreed unanimously.

The following payments in excess of £250 were made:

Payment to	Amount
BKL – CC Fire Alarm and PAT Testing	£360.00
A&J Lighting Solutions Ltd – upgrade to LED lighting in Chapel Road and New Road	£8047.00

The Clerk was asked to find out what had caused the loss of power in the Community Centre.

151/19

Library

There was much discussion about the usage of the libraries and running a volunteer library. The Clerk outlined the current situation about the Expression of Interest. This had been submitted at the same time as the objections to the library closure and it had been confirmed with Essex County Council that the Expression of Interest did not commit the Parish Council in any way.

There was further discussion about the Expression of Interest and the difficulties of running of volunteer libraries.

It was proposed by Cllr R Mannion and seconded by Cllr C Bigg that

- a) the Expression of Interest should not be withdrawn at the current time
- b) the Council should wait for the further information from Essex County Council
- c) a Public Meeting will be organised at the appropriate time

A vote was taken and there were 10 votes for and 1 abstention. The proposal was carried.

152/19

Co-option

The Clerk reported that she had sought advice from Colchester Borough Council and had been told although there is nothing to say what happens about co-options that have to happen due to an insufficiency of candidates, the Borough Council indicated that they would expect that co-options should take place as soon as practicable after the elections. The Clerk had explained that Tiptree Parish Council is very busy at the moment, not least with the Neighbourhood Plan. The Electoral Office indicated that these matters notwithstanding, they would expect to see the Parish Council starting the co-option process and dealing with it as soon as possible.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs J Bunney and seconded by Cllr C Bigg that the Parish Council should agree to start the process now and advertise the co-options. This should be put in the newspaper. The matter will be dealt with at the early September Council meeting on 9th September 2019. This was agreed unanimously.

153/19

Internal Audit

The Internal Auditors report and a report from the Clerk had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs J Bunney and seconded by Cllr N Mattinson that the following actions will be carried out:

Reporting of Incidents/Damage - A proper system of logging matters for attention and recording action taken is needed. As indicated in the report, the introduction of written processes will hopefully emerge through the Health & Safety support that the Council has introduced

Salaries - The Clerk has sole responsibility for calculations of gross salary, including changes for back pay etc. This is an area where internal controls will be introduced and the appointment of the Deputy Clerk is a good opportunity to introduce division of duties as a control measure.

Banking - The Council has been made aware that the current account visa debit card is in the personal name of the Clerk. Also, because the Clerk banks at Barclays, her personal accounts are linked online to the accounts belonging to the Council, making an internal transfer between accounts a possibility. This should be logged in the risk register and assurances sought from Barclays regarding security of funds.

The current Clerk has indicated that because of the link with her personal accounts, she is not willing to hand over the card to the new Clerk and that a new card will have to be obtained, once the appointment is made. Investigations will be made about changing the bank account.

Community Centre Bookings - No work has been undertaken as a part of the internal audit on processes relating to the community centre bookings and invoicing system. The need for an internal audit on community centre processes was noted by councillors at their meeting 14 May 2018 (minute 084/18) but has not been followed up. Internal Audit procedures will be applied to the community centre bookings process.

Line Management - The Clerk/RFO is responsible for managing all staff but on occasions, operational direction is given by councillors which can create risks to the Council. This is noted and will be addressed during the year.

Asset Register - The Asset Register print out for this year does not tie up with the opening or closing figures used in the AGAR. Some of the individual items are low value and may not need to be capitalised, although they will need to be included in a stock take for insurance purposes. It may be advisable to create a policy about capitalisation of assets for the purposes of the asset register. The Asset Register needs to be overhauled and possibly re-stated in the 2019/2020 AGAR

Charity - The box 'not applicable' has been ticked for a number of years but it transpires that Tiptree Parish Council is named as Sole Trustee of Charity Number 301423 - Tiptree Memorial Field and Hall. As there are no transactions or funds held by the charity, it was agreed with the Clerk to leave the AGAR unchanged until this could be investigated further. This matter will be investigated to assess what the charity actually is. Some enquiries have been made already but further investigation is required.

154/19

Draft Data Processing Policy

Discussion took place on the draft policy. The matter of data inputting the paper responses was raised and the meeting was told that it will be easier to input these into the Survey Monkey format.

Cllr R Mannion asked if the office had been approached about data inputting and Cllr Mrs S Allen-Shepherd said that the Neighbourhood Plan Secretary had said that the office would do it. This will be checked as the Clerk has not been approached about undertaking this work.


Cllr R Mannion asked if the Working Group is aware of the draft document put forward by the Steering Group and it was confirmed that it is not. Cllr Mrs S Allen-Shepherd said that due to various issues, the Working Group had not been able to have many meetings in the last few months.

Cllr R Smithson said that he has access to software which would allow inputting and analysis of the data and would be happy to draw up some further proposals. He suggested a meeting with the Clerk and Cllr Mrs S Allen-Shepherd.

It was proposed by Cllr R Mannion and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Bunney that the matter should be deferred, so that a meeting can be held and following that meeting, allow Cllr R Smithson to draw up amended proposals. The matter is to be deferred to the Policy & Finance committee meeting on 5th August 2019.

A vote was taken and there were 10 votes for and 1 abstention. The proposal was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.35pm

Signed..........Dated..........