

ROSEMARKET COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of E.G.M. held at 7pm on Wednesday 17th July 2024, at 6, The Beacon, Rosemarket, and online via the Zoom videoconferencing platform.

Present: C'lr James Milne, Gery Rostan, Stu Gray, Jackie Prest; Danny Young (County Councillor), Peter Horton (Clerk).

Apologies: None.

The meeting was chaired by C'lr Jackie Prest.

Opportunity for public representation on agenda item

A number of local residents were present at the meeting, some of whom wished to address the meeting regarding the items on the agenda for discussion. The points made regarding these items were as follows :

- there was support given for the proposal to consider additional litter bin provision at the Lower Beacon;
- there were comments questioning the need to discuss the future of the community council at all, on the basis that discussing this due to the resignation of one or more member(s) was not considered valid;
- there was comment about 'times past' in Rosemarket, when a regular 'In Touch' newsletter was published, and everyone knew what was going on in the village. The resident felt that this was no longer the case, and that the community council kept residents in the dark about its activities;
- a comment was made suggesting that the recently-resigned Chairman of the community council should not be allowed back onto the community council.

A number of comments and questions from local residents present had to be rejected, as they did not relate to matters on the agenda for discussion.

Request from local resident for financial assistance with planned event on The Beacon

As the resident in question was present in the meeting, it was agreed to discuss this item at this point on the agenda, rather than in 'Payments' below, as had been planned. The resident was asked what the funds would be used for, and responded that they would be used for equipment purchase. In response to questions about the risk assessment and insurance of the event, they responded that all attendees would be responsible for their own safety, and would be required to sign a disclaimer accepting this responsibility. They stated that there was no plan to arrange a risk assessment for the event, but did mention the possibility of obtaining a proforma risk assessment form online, so as to technically meet a requirement for this.

As members wished to discuss the request freely, without feeling undue pressure from members of the public who might have strong views on this matter, a resolution was passed to hold the remainder of the discussion on the request for financial assistance, as well as the subsequent item on the future of the community council (which was expected to include discussion of legal matters, employee rights, etc.), in private session (proposer C'lr James Milne, seconder C'lr Jackie Prest).

[NOTE - members of the public were asked to leave the meeting at this point].

Members were unwilling to agree to make a donation as requested. The prospect of potential liability falling on the community council for an event on community council-owned land, and which had been actively supported by the community council, was a concern. Concern over the lack of commitment to carrying out a proper risk assessment was also mentioned as a reason. In addition, members felt that there was too much uncertainty in the current climate in the community council to be making donations at the current time, given the current environment surrounding the community council. Clerk to pass on the decision accordingly.

Discussion of future of community council (including any necessary consequent discussions on practical arrangements, such as staff redundancy, outstanding obligations, etc.)

Members discussed their individual willingness to continue on the community council, given recent negative commentary on social media, and hostility from some residents towards the community council. C'llrs Jackie Prest, James Milne, and Gery Rostan, confirmed their willingness to continue as members, in order to serve the community interests. C'lr James Milne mentioned that it was his particular wish that open vacancies for the community council should be advertised as widely as possible, in order that all residents should be aware of the vacancies. C'lr Stu Gray stated his intention to resign at the conclusion of the meeting, due to ongoing hostility and negativity from some sectors of the community, and also work commitments. This meant that the community council would remain quorate.

Members agreed on the need to focus attention on the essentials of community council business, and consider shelving all unnecessary / optional activity for the present, to allow time for things to settle down. This being the case, and to minimise pressure on the remaining members, it was agreed for the time being to reduce the meeting frequency to bi-monthly, commencing in September (proposer C'lr James Milne, seconder C'lr Jackie Prest). Clerk to amend the standing orders accordingly, and bring these to the September meeting for formal approval of the amendment. Dog control issues to be placed on September agenda for discussion, and Clerk to complete the preparation of detailed report on the recent survey of local residents started by Caroline Haley in advance of the meeting.

Clerk to make arrangements to advertise vacancies on the community council as soon as possible. Clerk to prepare a flyer to provide information on the vacancies to all residents, and deliver these to C'lr James Milne's home for distribution by members.

Members were agreed that the community council Facebook page should not be re-opened.

In view of the decision to hold meetings every two months for the time being, members agreed to delegate powers to the Clerk to formally respond to Planning applications on their behalf, contingent on these responses being reflective of members' views obtained by email in advance, and to be used only in situations where consultation deadlines would fall between scheduled meetings (proposer C'lr James Milne, seconder C'lr Jackie Prest). Clerk to prepare a formal scheme of delegation to establish this, for approval at the September meeting.

Approval of payments requiring settlement

Infinity Play (SI-225, maintenance / repair works to play equipment)	:	£ 818-12
Infinity Play (SI-226, playground inspections for April '24 - March '25)	:	£ 780-00
Clerk salary July -Sept	:	As per contract
HMRC (PAYE tax)	:	As per contract
Clerk (expenses April - July 2024)	:	£ 143-97

The above payments were approved (proposer C'lr James Milne, seconder C'lr Gery Rostan).

Quarterly budget review. Members were content with the budget review prepared by the Clerk.

Bank signatories. C'lr James Milne agreed to be added as bank signatory. Clerk to make arrangements accordingly, and also to remove Jillian Gibson and Caroline Haley as signatories (proposer C'lr Jackie Prest, seconder C'lr Gery Rostan).

Discussion of requirement for litter bin provision at Lower Beacon

C'lr Jackie Prest stressed the need for this to be a proper dog waste bin. Clerk to contact P.C.C. with a request for this, and circulate their response to all members as soon as received. Agenda item to be tabled for discussion in September.

At the conclusion of the meeting, C'lr Stu Gray offered his resignation from the community council with regret, and offered best wishes to the community council for the future.

The meeting concluded at 8-30pm.