



**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 17th May 2023
at the Pavilion, Fownhope**

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Number:

Present:

Cllrs Kevin Braybrook, Stuart Eames, Gareth Williams, Mike Simmons, Tim Jones, Frank Hemming, Lavinia Smith and Michael Short.

In attendance:

4 members of the public; Clerk Helen Tinson; Ward Cllr Graham Biggs

Before the meeting began, Cllr Mike Simmons presented the Fownhope Community Service Award to Sue Pope in recognition of her commitment to volunteering within the village.

The outgoing Chair, Cllr Kevin Braybrook, wished to thank Councillors, past and present, and the Clerk for their support during his tenure as Chair. He acknowledged the success of the community event held on the 8th May to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III, despite the weather, and thanked all parties involved with organising the event and the FRFA for donating the use of the field and Pavilion, and reported that approximately £2400 had been raised for St. Mary's School PTA.

Four members of the public left the meeting.

1) **Election of Chairman 2023/2024:**

Cllr Kevin Braybrook opened the meeting and requested nominations for the position of Chair for the forthcoming year. Cllr Stuart Eames was proposed by Cllr Kevin Braybrook, seconded by Cllr Mike Simmons.

It was RESOLVED: to elect Cllr Stuart Eames to the position of Chair. Cllr Eames signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and welcomed Cllr Michael Short to the Parish Council.

2) **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Will Morris.

3) **To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Written Requests for Dispensation:**

To receive any declarations of interest: Cllr Mike Simmons declared both a non-pecuniary and pecuniary interest in agenda item 13i, FRFA fees and Reimbursement of Expenses respectively; Cllr Michael Short declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 17, Dark Sky Deed of Covenant; and Cllr Kevin Braybrook declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 13i, Reimbursement of Expenses. The Declarations of Interest book was signed accordingly.
To consider any written requests for dispensations: there were none.

4) **Election of Vice-Chairman 2023/2024:**

Cllr Kevin Braybrook was proposed by Cllr Stuart Eames, seconded by Cllr Frank Hemming.

It was RESOLVED: to elect Cllr Kevin Braybrook to the position of Vice Chair.

5) **To confirm eligibility and adopt the General Powers of Competence**

Members considered and agreed that the Parish Council met the criteria for eligibility.

It was RESOLVED: to adopt the General Power of Competence.

6) **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Members considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 5th April 2023.

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	<p>It was RESOLVED: to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.</p> <p>7) Open Session:</p> <p>a) Report from Ward Councillor: Ward Cllr Graham Biggs gave his first report following his election on 4th May. He advised members that he will produce a regular newsletter, highlighting the most relevant items to the Chair and Clerk to share with members, and will be focusing on speeding and potholes as his first priorities. He acknowledged the B4224 Multi Parish Strategy Group and expressed a wish to attend the next meeting. He will be arranging an annual meeting for all clerk's in Backbury Ward and will invite representatives from HC and BBLP to attend. It was noted that the administration of Herefordshire Council must be formed on Friday 19th May but the exact composition is as yet unknown.</p> <p>b) Representation from the Public: There were none.</p> <p>8) To Appoint Representatives to Outside Bodies: It was RESOLVED: to appoint Councillors as follows:</p> <p>a. Fownhope New Memorial Hall: Cllr Mike Simmons b. Fownhope Field Recreation Association: Cllr Mike Simmons c. HALC Representative: Cllr Kevin Braybrook d. Common Hill Management Committee: Cllrs Kevin Braybrook and Tim Jones, with Parish Footpaths Officer and Tree Warden e. Fownhope Community Library: Cllr Frank Hemming f. Fownhope Community Land Trust (with voting rights): Cllr Frank Hemming</p> <p>9) To appoint members to serve on working and steering groups: It was RESOLVED: to appoint Councillors as follows, pending a review in September 2023:</p> <p>a. Highways: Cllrs Stuart Eames (Chair), Kevin Braybrook, Will Morris and Michael Short, with Tim Campbell b. Environment: Cllrs Gareth Williams (Chair), Kevin Braybrook, Mike Simmons, Frank Hemming and Parish Tree Warden; c. Planning: Cllrs Kevin Braybrook (Chair), Stuart Eames, Frank Hemming, Lavinia Smith and Tim Jones d. Footpaths: Cllrs Will Morris (Footpaths Officer) and Tim Jones, with support from Waywardens e. Finance: Cllrs Stuart Eames (Chair), Kevin Braybrook and Michael Short with Helen Tinson (RFO). Investment Advisory Group: Peter Davis (IAG Advisor), Cllrs Stuart Eames and Mike Simmons f. Strategy: All Councillors and Clerk as required. g. Employment: Cllrs Stuart Eames (Chair), Kevin Braybrook and Gareth Williams h. Volunteer Support: Cllr Lavinia Smith (Chair) and Helen Tinson (Clerk). The Volunteer Group to include Litter Pick Co-Ordinator i. Emergency Planning Working Group: Cllrs Stuart Eames (Chair) and Gareth Williams and Helen Tinson (Clerk) j. Forward Plan: Cllr Lavinia Smith and Helen Tinson (Clerk) with support from Cllr Gareth Williams as needed k. Playground Working Group: Cllrs Stuart Eames (Chair) and Lavinia Smith, with Volunteer Playground Inspector, and representatives from FRFA and St. Mary's School l. Cheque Signatories: Cllrs Kevin Braybrook, Mike Simmons, Stuart Eames and Lavinia Smith</p> <p>10) Review Policies and Procedures: Members reviewed the following policies and procedures:</p> <p>a) Code of Conduct: It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Local Government Association's Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020.</p>	
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b)	Financial Regulations and Investment Strategy: No changes were proposed. It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Financial Regulations and Investment Strategy.	HT
c)	Standing Orders: No changes were proposed. It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Standing Orders.	HT
d)	Risk Management Policy and Register: A minor amendment was proposed to the Risk Management Policy to add the following wording indicated in bold to the final bullet point “Check that the Council’s third-party liability insurance is current and up to date and that insurance follows current NALC guidance ” It was RESOLVED: to approve the amendment but to defer consideration of the Risk Register to the next meeting. The new Finance Working Group were asked to review the Risk Register.	HT FWG
e)	Reserves Policy: Members were informed that the list of reserves had been updated. It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Reserves Policy	HT
f)	Standard Operating Procedures: One minor amendment was proposed to reflect current practice (one annual internal audit, changed from two). It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Standard Operating Procedures.	HT
g)	Volunteer Policy: No changes were proposed, though members were referred to the need for volunteers to carry out risk assessments. It was RESOLVED: to adopt the Volunteer Policy.	HT
11)	Assets:	
a)	Members considered the annual Health and Safety Assessment of Assets report following an inspection on 12 th May 2023. It was proposed to progress a number of actions within the next twelve months but no urgent actions requiring immediate attention were identified. The anticipated lifespan of all assets was assessed and categorised as requiring replacement in under 1 year, 1-3 years or over 3 years. It was RESOLVED: to seek quotations for the maintenance or improvement work identified and allocate costs against the Parish Maintenance and Improvements Budget.	HT/SE
b)	Members considered dates for a second Village Walkaround. The Clerk was asked to create a set of guidelines for consideration. It was RESOLVED: to meet on Wednesday 2 nd August at 6.30pm. Members were asked to confirm their availability to the Clerk.	HT ALL
12)	To approve the dates and times of ordinary meetings for 2023/2024:	
a)	It was RESOLVED: to continue to meet at 7pm at the Pavilion on the first Wednesday of the month, excluding August and January.	HT
13)	Finance:	
a)	Members received a financial report attached to these minutes as Appendix A. Members considered a suggestion that meetings are moved to the FNMH. It was RESOLVED: to approve the report. It was RESOLVED: to maintain subscription to ZOOM and consider the Memorial Hall for a community event. Parish Council meetings to remain at the Pavilion.	
b)	IAG Report: Members received the annual report as attached to these minutes as Appendix B.	
c)	Internal Audit 2022/2023: Members were asked to consider reassigning the internal audit for the year ending 31.3.23 as the appointed auditor is currently unavailable. It was RESOLVED: to appoint HALC to carry out the Internal Audit for 2022/23 at a cost of £220.00 plus VAT.	HT
d)	Insurance Renewal: Members considered insurance renewal terms offered by BHIB noting this is the third year of a 3-year agreement.	274/05 /2223 3 of 6

	It was RESOLVED: to renew insurance with BHIB for 2023/2024 at a cost of £715.54.	HT
e)	Financial Support for Fownhope Community Land Trust: Members considered a request from FCLT for £175.00 in payment of their annual subscription to the Community Land Trust Network. It was RESOLVED: to approve the request and pay £175.00 to FCLT.	HT
f)	Damaged Barrier at Biggs Lane: Members considered quotations to repair the damaged barrier at the top of Biggs Lane outside the school pedestrian entrance. It was noted that a temporary repair had been actioned to make it safe but a replacement ‘like for like’ barrier was required. It was RESOLVED: to approve a quotation from School Furniture Direct at a cost of £245.00 plus VAT. Cllr Stuart Eames volunteered to install the replacement barrier.	SE
g)	Additional Kerb to the Recreation Field Tarmac Access Road: Members were informed that an additional cost had been incurred during the tarmac repair works to install additional kerbing to maintain the integrity of the road. It was noted that the error had occurred due to a miscommunication between tender and quote and whilst the authority to spend the funds is allowable under Financial Regulation 4.1, it was acknowledged that the correct procedure was not followed in this instance. It was RESOLVED: to approve the additional works at a cost of £500.00.	HT/SE
h)	Capacity of .Gov.UK Emails: Members were informed that the Clerk’s email storage is more than 50% full and 2GB will not be large enough to retain emails for 3 years as specified in the Documents Retentions and Disposals Policy. It was noted that it is not possible to increase just one mailbox. Options were considered to amend the policy or increase the storage capacity of all mailboxes to 5GB at an additional £99.99 plus VAT per year or 10GB at an additional £149.99 plus VAT per year. It was RESOLVED: to check whether the emails are stored on the computer when opened, but if not to upgrade all mailboxes to 10gb per mailbox at an additional £149.99 plus VAT per year.	HT
i)	It was RESOLVED: to approve the following payments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nick Maddy Coaches, Bus Service April, £90.00 • FRFA, Meeting Room Hire April, £60.00 • Connexus, Library Room Hire 23/24, £500.00 • Suzi Bruce, Lengthsman, £293.00 plus £8.60 VAT • Suzi Bruce, Lengthsman, £105.00 • Suzi Bruce, P3, £160.00 • Suzi Bruce, Lengthsman, £135.00 • PATA Payroll, Payroll Support 23/24, £103.20 • Helen Tinson, Salary April, £852.10 • Helen Tinson, Reimburse Expenses (Coronation Event) £7.88 • Mike Simmons, Reimburse Expenses (Community Service Awards) £20.79 plus £4.16 VAT • Kevin Braybrook, Reimburse Expenses (Coronation Event) £21.05 • PIP Printing, Coronation Booklet, £562.80 	HT
14)	To Comment on Planning Applications for Determination by Herefordshire Council:	
a)	231031: 2 Fownhope Court, Fownhope. Proposed solar panels in roof. It was RESOLVED: to SUPPORT the application. Proposals for solar panels support the environmental priorities of the village. Members deferred to Herefordshire Councils Listed Buildings Policy in terms of any restrictions imposed on the type of materials to be used.	HT
15)	To Note Planning Responses Submitted between Meetings under Devolved Powers:	
a)	230945, 1 New Inn Close, Fownhope, HR1 4PP. Works to Trees in a Conservation Area. It was noted that the Planning Group had submitted a response to support the application.	
16)	To Note Planning Report: Members received the Planning Report detailing decisions made by Herefordshire Council as attached to these minutes as Appendix C. The report was taken as read.	275/05 /2223 4 of 6

<p>17) a)</p>	<p>Other Matters related to Planning: Dark Sky Deed of Covenant: Members received a report noting that the Deed of Covenant has been prepared and is under review. Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors have been engaged to act for the Parish Council and MF Freemans have agreed to meet their fees. The Covenant will only apply to homes that have not yet been sold.</p>	
<p>18) a) b)</p>	<p>Environment: Members received a report from the Environment Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next EG meeting is scheduled for 7pm on Monday 22nd May at the Green Man. • The next Fownhope Community Saturday event will be held on Saturday 24th June with a focus on Upcycling and Recycling. • Positive progress is being made on the transition of Fownhope Car Club from a satellite of MHCC to an independent entity. <p>Review of Declaration of Climate Emergency: It was proposed that the document is re-adopted but that the Environment Group review the section on carbon calculating within the next twelve months. It was RESOLVED: to renew the Declaration with a review to be carried out on the carbon calculating section within twelve months.</p> <p>Ward Cllr Biggs left the meeting.</p>	<p>GW/HT</p>
<p>c)</p>	<p>Annual Verge Cutting Programme: Members considered the Annual Verge Cutting proposal received from BBLP, to cut either once per year (late August) or twice per year (late May and late August). It was RESOLVED: to request one cut in late August.</p>	<p>HT</p>
<p>d)</p>	<p>Grass Cutting at Scotch Firs: Members were informed that the usual contractor no longer wishes to continue cutting the grass at Scotch Firs. Three local contractors have been approached to take on the work, one has declined due to quantity of existing work and two other responses are awaited. It was RESOLVED: to await the further two responses.</p>	<p>HT</p>
<p>19)</p>	<p>Highways: Members received a report from the Highways Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic Calming Scheme – BBLP have been contacted for a progress report, not yet received. • Locality Steward – a meeting took place with the new Locality Steward, Lee Fishwick, on 4th May. He advised that the pavements had been rejected for repair as the ‘pavement potholes’ are not deep enough to warrant a repair. He will monitor the reported sections on his monthly inspections. It was noted that residents should be asked to take care on uneven pavements. • Safety Posts on Common Hill Lane – concerns have been raised with the Locality Steward who will inspect and report. • Church Croft signs – the measurements for the replacement sign have been reported to BBLP. No response as yet. • Welsh Water: Cllr Eames is still chasing a response to a request for further payment to take into consideration the extra costs incurred due to the delay in finding the leak in the Recreation Field Road. Concerns are also being raised about large tankers damaging the verge just before the entrance to the water treatment works. 	<p>HT</p>
<p>20)</p>	<p>Footpaths: Members received a report from the Footpaths Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new (reclaimed) gate has been installed at Keepers Cottage. • A replacement gate is required near Pagets Wood. • The FiPLgrant application for £4742.46 towards the Coronation Walk is being reviewed this week but is looking positive. Funds will be used to install the kissing gates on the walk, production of waymarker signs and leaflet and poster printing costs. Clays Estate have 	<p>276/05 /2223 5 of 6</p>

	<p>advised that they are no longer able to install the 6 kissing gates on their land due to workload.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED: to approve the installation of a replacement gate by the Lengthsman at Pagets Wood</p> <p>A councillor reported a cracked Welsh Water manhole cover on the footpath between the Potato Barn Site and Ferry Lane. It has been reported to Welsh Water but there has been no action yet. The Chairman agreed to photograph it and follow up with Welsh Water along with the other concerns.</p> <p>21) FRFA: Members received a brief report from the FRFA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FRFA were proud to host the Coronation Celebratory Event on the 8th May. Following feedback received, the vacuum cleaner will be made available to future hall bookings. • A review of the FRFA’s Environmental Policy is being considered to agree the balance between areas regularly mowed and areas left to grow to encourage biodiversity. • The grant application to extend the patio area has been rejected - the FRFA were informed that the application did not meet the criteria. The Parish Council were asked whether the FRFA should apply for planning consent in anticipation of obtaining funding in the next three years. <p>It was RESOLVED: to defer discussion of the planning application to the June meeting.</p> <p>22) Training: Members considered the group training session booked with HALC, and the current training schedule. It was RESOLVED: to postpone the group training to September (or after) to allow time to fill the current vacancies.</p> <p>23) Clerk Report: Members received the Clerk’s report as noted in Appendix D.</p> <p>24) Next Meeting: 7pm, Wednesday 7th June 2023. Agenda items raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive and approve Annual Governance and Accounting Records 22/23 • To consider a new Planning Policy • To consider commenting on the published Coronation Booklet • To consider planning application for extended patio area at the Pavilion <p>Meeting closed.</p>	<p>HT</p> <p>SE</p> <p>HT</p> <p>HT</p>
	<p>Signed Dated</p> <p>Chairman</p>	<p>277/05 /2223 6 of 6</p>

Appendix A: Finance Report

Fownhope Parish Council

Serving the community



REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 17th May 2023

REPORT BY: Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

AGENDA ITEM: 13a: Financial Report

Bank Balances:

Lloyds Current: £16,108.98 (includes first precept, excludes payments to be approved 17/5/23)
Lloyds Reserve: £23,458.49 (reflects use of reserve for access road repair)
Hargreaves Lansdown: £24,815.96 (at 17.5.23)
Total funds held across all banks and investments at 17.5.23 = £64,383.43

Year End Accounts:

Statement of Accounts and Net Position reports attached.

In summary:

Administration and Salary are the two main budget headings that were over budget. In addition, Footpaths was overbudget but Lengthsman labour was under, and grass cutting slightly over which presumably reflects the growing season last year and additional cuts required.

Administration:

Subscriptions - an error in budget meant that the Scribe accounting software was not included. HALC fees were higher than anticipated and PATA Payroll annual fees have been allocated to subscriptions – previously admin support.

Mileage and general expenses - reflect additional work reflected in increase in hours September 2023.

Meeting room hire – now includes ZOOM, previously accounted in admin expenses. Do we still need it?

Website and computer costs reflect Cloud Next fees for the .gov.uk domain and emails, and transition support provided by Will Dereham.

Salary:

Overbudget due to an increase in hours (Sept 2022) and pay increase awarded July 2022 backdated to April 2021 (NJC scale increase and increase in SCP) – paid May 2022, and February 2023 (NJC scale increase approved December 2022, backdated to April 2022)

AGAR to be presented to the June meeting.

Finance Working Group Meeting:

The FWG met on 1st May and reviewed the 22/23-year end accounts at 31.3.23, considered the AGAR Reports for the External Audit, the Asset Register, Risk Register, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. As two members of the FWG were due to stand down at the Local Council Elections, it was agreed to defer consideration of the Risk Register until new members have been elected.

Compliance with Financial Regulations 5.1 (banking arrangements reviewed for safety and efficiency), 6.17 (annual check of standing data for suppliers) and 8.3-8.7 (short- and long-term investments) were reviewed and considered compliant.

Appendix B: IAG Annual Report

IAG REPORT 6 MAY 2023

Preamble.

The Investment Advisory Group was set up in April 2014 to administer the investment of £27620 – the proceeds from the sale of a Treasury bond with the twin objectives of at least generating the income provided by the bond (£1127 p.a.) while preserving the level of the capital employed.
Investment Strategy.

The Strategy, which may be found on the Parish Council's website as Financial Regulations Appendix 1.0, was reissued during the 2021/22 financial year and reflected the increased flexibility to the Group particularly when considering the sale of investments as well as taking into account environmental and ethical considerations. No further changes are recommended at this time.

Valuation.

As at noon on 10th May 2023 the portfolio was valued at £25151 against £28991 in May 2022.

Dividends received and anticipated.

For the year ended 31st March 2023 these totalled £1623 against an estimate of £1432 which was projected this time last year. The amount expected in this financial year is £1966 which, if achieved, will be a record, be a return of 7% on capital employed and some 74% over the £1127 which the original Government bond provided.

Changes to the portfolio made in the last year.

GSK was sold before its demerger of Haleon and Phoenix, the life insurer, was purchased on 1st August at 646p- some 51p greater than the price at which I had recommended on 18th July. Put that down to the inflexibility that arises when purchases cannot be executed without Council approval. Likewise, SWEF was sold and Next Energy Solar Fund bought at some time after the recommendation. Since then NESF has fallen because of the Government's Windfall tax.

Comments and outlook.

I wrote last year that the one sure thing that can be relied on is that the markets over the next year will continue to be extremely volatile. Quite so. To add to the myriad woes of last year we now have a banking crisis which to date has been more costly in assets lost than the financial crisis of 2008/9. Although greatly impacted by all this the portfolio is a conservative one and has borne up fairly well against other model portfolios because of its defensive nature. From an income perspective it has done remarkably well. Looking individually at the investments, HSBC has improved despite the headwinds- banks generally do better when interest rates rise and, despite current events, it is still wise to have a stake in the Far East because that is really where future growth lies. There are continuing calls for the Bank's Asia interests to be split off and listed separately but the Board is reluctant to concede to this and has just won a vote at its AGM to reject it.. It has just reported triple earnings for the first quarter and restored its quarterly dividend. It also estimates that it made a cool \$1.5 billion from its £1 purchase of the UK division of SVB. Some going! CAML has recently been disappointing as it reflects lower copper prices but is maintaining its output and dividend and the longer-term outlook for copper continues to be promising. Regional REIT remains in the doldrums but still provides a good income, its price is far below the value of its assets and it will eventually improve when interest rates ease. Phoenix and NESF are two steady defensive stocks.. I recommend no further changes at this time.

Peter Davis

For the Investment Advisory Group

May 2023

Appendix C: Planning Report

Fownhope Parish Council

Serving the community



REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 17th May 2023

REPORT BY: Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

AGENDA ITEM: 16: Planning Report

Decisions made by Herefordshire Council:

222338/O

Land at Old Potato Store, Fownhope. Application for variation of condition 4 of planning permission 203345. Minor amendments to list of approved plans to reflect the addition of PV panels, minor elevational changes, plot 2 house type substitution and changes to garage of plot 9. Approved with conditions.

230945

1 New Inn Close, Fownhope. Works to Trees in a Conservation Area. Works can proceed.

222861

Development at Millfield, Fownhope. Variation of condition 1 of 211522. Application for variation of condition 1 of 211522 (Application for variation of a condition 2 of planning permission 163707 (Proposed residential development of 10 family homes and 5 affordable homes), to amend drawings with regards to layout and house types). To allow changes to the three bungalows at the northern end of the site (plots 4, 5 and 6) and minor changes to landscaping. Approved with conditions.

230182

Land opposite Mill House Farm, Fownhope. Approval of details reserved by condition 9 of planning permission 211522. Approved

230558

Caplor Farm, Fownhope. Proposed variation of condition 1 of planning permission 181412 (Variation of a condition 1 S121805/F) - retention of 3 no. portacabins) - to allow retention of offices. Approved (until 2028)

Appendix D: Clerk Report

Fownhope Parish Council

Serving the community



REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 17th May 2023

REPORT BY: Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

AGENDA ITEM: 23: Clerk Report

FRFA Fees:

Are increasing in January 2024 to £11 per hour for the Pavilion only, £13 per hour for Pavilion and Field.

Local Council Award Scheme:

Feedback has been extremely positive. We were asked to make three minor amendments:

- 1) To attach the minute reference for any changes in hours or pay scale to my original contract of employment – done.
- 2) To reflect the rationale for insurance provision on documents – added to Risk Management Policy
- 3) To add an ‘estimated life’ to all assets – assessed by SE and HT at the annual H&S assessment and recorded on Asset Register.

All documents ready to submit pending approval (on 2 and 3) tonight.

Tarmac Access Repair: Stuart is still chasing Welsh Water for a response to our request for further funding.

Caplor at 100: Reminder that Councillors are invited to a tour of the stewardship work / renewable techs / general activity, 5pm-6.30pm on Wednesday 7th June just before the PC meeting, which will start at 7pm at the Pavilion.

Annual Leave:

I would like to request the following annual leave:

- Monday 29th May – Friday 2nd June (1 week)
- Monday 31st July – Friday 11th August (2 weeks)

Plus 2 days in lieu of BH Monday 1st May and BH Monday 8th May as I worked full hours during these weeks.