

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF PARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Held on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 at 8.10pm
after the Annual Parish Meeting**

1. **To appoint a Chair**
Cllr. Gray proposed Cllr. Block as Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Adams and carried unanimously.
 2. **To appoint a Vice Chair**
Cllr. Block proposed Cllr. Wood as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Cllr. Gray and carried unanimously.
 3. **Other Councillors then signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office.**
 4. **There were no apologies for absence.**
- Councillors in attendance**
 Michael Gray Michael Block Jason Wood Claire Adams
 Jonathan Cottrell James Rogers Charlotte Stanley
- Present**
 District Councillor Owen Grey Lydia Kirk (Clerk)
5. **There were no declarations of interest.**
 6. **The Minutes of the meeting of 7th March 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**
 7. **There were no matters arising.**
 8. **Appointment of Officers and Council Representatives**

		Prop.	Sec.
Responsible Financial Officer	Lydia Kirk	MG	JC
Examining Councillor	Jason Wood	MB	JC
Risk Assessment & Compliance	Claire Adams, Lydia Kirk	MG	MB
Village Hall Parish Council Representative	Michael Block	CA	JW
SALC Representative	Charlotte Stanley	MB	JW
Parish Tree Scheme	M. Gray & A. Paul	MB	JC
Footpath Officer	James Rogers	CA	CS
Village Recorder	John Adams	MG	JC
Wildlife Group	MG, JR, JW	CS	JC
Webmaster	Lydia Kirk	JW	MG

Public Forum

The County Councillor's annual report has been shared with Councillors and published on the village website.

9. Responsible Financial Officer's report

a) The following payments were approved:

Reference	Amount	Payee	Details
P01 23-24	£160.00	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit
P02 23-24	£158.78	SALC	Annual Subscription
P04 23-24	£40.00	G. Whiting	Grass cut on 12/04/23
P05 23-24	£7.30	L. Kirk	Refreshments for Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed not to approve the donation of £500 to the Village Hall (P03) at this meeting, and to contact the Committee reminding them that an Annual Report is still required for the parish

records. It was also noted that the Parish Council had not been advised how last year's donation had been spent.

b) Funds received since the last meeting were noted:

Date	Amount	Company	Details
01.04.2023	£6,300.00	East Suffolk Council	Precept
12.04.2023	£440.39	East Suffolk Council	CIL funds

c) **The bank balances and reserved fund balances were noted.** As at 28th April, there was £9,618.25 in the community account and £18,801.63 in the premium account. Councillors authorised the clerk to transfer £5,000 to the premium account.

d) The bank reconciliation to 31st March 2023 was noted and approved.

The Examining Officer signed the bank statements and reconciliation.

10. **The Internal Auditor's Report on 2022-2023 annual paperwork was reviewed and the Council's affairs were all considered in order.** Councillors were pleased to note that no queries were raised in the report and thanked the clerk for her work over the year.

11. **Procedural**

a) The Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023 were accepted.

b) **Section One** (Annual Governance Statement) and **Section Two** (Accounting Statements) of the Local Councils' Annual Return for year ending 31st March 2023 were read out by the Chair, approved by the Council and signed by the Chair and clerk.

c) Council resolved to opt out of an External Audit as an exempt council. The Certificate of Exemption was completed and signed by the Chair and the RFO.

ACTION Clerk to submit this to the external auditor.

d) The clerk went through the Statement of Significant Variances and this was accepted.

e) The 2012 Suffolk Model Code of Conduct was re-adopted.

f) The clerk's rate of pay was discussed and compared to that of clerks from comparable local parish councils. It was agreed that the current scales needed revision. Cllr. Block proposed increasing the bracket to LC2(24-28) with a starting scale point of 24, to be backdated from 1st April 2023. This was seconded by Cllr. Cottrell and carried unanimously.

g) Councillors re-confirmed their agreement to be summoned to meetings by electronic means.

h) Councillors completed their election expenses forms. **ACTION** Clerk to return these to East Suffolk Council

12. **The following policies were reviewed:**

a) Standing Orders *Councillors agreed a minor amendment to the financial tender figures as recommended by NALC.*

b) Assets Register *No changes were required.*

c) Financial Regulations *Councillors agreed a minor amendment to the financial tender figures at footnote 11 as recommended by NALC.*

d) Statement of Internal Control *This was considered fit for purpose and effective as supported by the internal auditor's report.*

e) Physical Assets Risk Assessment *The clerk will check the references to the ponds on the green, and check the notice on the noticeboards.*

f) Financial Risk Assessment *There were no changes required.*

g) Data Protection Policy *There were no changes required.*

h) The insurance policy was still considered fit for the Council's needs.

13. **Cllr. Block proposed appointing Trevor Brown as the internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2024.** This was seconded by Cllr. Gray and carried unanimously. The clerk wished for her thanks to the auditor for his assistance and diligence to be minuted.

14. **There was lengthy discussion about the split of the community funding that will be received if the approved solar farm at Parham Airfield is constructed.** Councillors Block, Wood, Cottrell and Rogers will set out the agreed proposals for circulation to the Council. This can then be discussed with Great Glemham and Marlesford Parish Council representatives.
15. **Correspondence received since the date of last meeting was considered.**
A letter from the East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA) was considered and it was agreed that the Parish Council would like to affiliate with the group.
A request for additional funding from the Village Hall Committee was noted, but Councillors were not minded to give a donation at this point. For two years running the Village Hall Committee has not provided a report for, or attended, the Annual Parish Meeting and the Parish Council has not been made aware of how last year's donation was used.
It was noted that the request stated that the works would be completed by the end of May 2023. Councillors would like an updated timescale for completion of the works and to know details of funding from other sources.
A promotion from Elan City for dual direction solar-powered Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) will be considered further at the next meeting.
16. **Councillor reports**
Cllr. Gray has received complaints that the bus shelter looks untidy.
ACTION The clerk will sort this and report back.
Cllr. Block asked if the Council is receiving updates on Stage 2 of the Orwell Housing development. The clerk confirmed that we aren't and will contact them in this regard.
17. **Matters to be raised at the next meeting**
Discuss progress regarding division of solar farm community funding.
18. **The next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 12th July at 7.15pm.**
There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.50pm.

Signed: *M. Block.*
Chair

Date *11th July 2023*