

MEETING OF PARHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Tuesday 14th March 2017 at 7.15 pm

DRAFT MINUTES

- 1. Chair's welcome**
- 2. Present**

Andy Nicholson
Lydia Kirk (Clerk)

Michael Gray

Emma Cochrane

Claire Moore

To receive apologies for absence

Council received and accepted James Rogers' apologies.

- 3. Declarations of interests & applications for dispensations**

N/A

- 4. Revised minutes of meeting on 11th October 2016 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

- 5. Minutes of meeting on 13th January 2017 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

- 6. Matters arising**

CM has reported the potholes near the pound to the local authority and the road has been marked up in preparation for the works to be carried out.

Suggested modifications to the Woodrose on the proposed village sign have been completed and the new version of the sign has been circulated to councillors.

Re item 3 on the minutes of 13th January, dispensations regarding discussions on the precept are no longer required after an amendment to legislation.

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

A printed generic report from the local Police was provided.

- 8. Chairman's report**

The Chair had nothing to report other than to thank Clerk for her work to date. The Clerk is to complete the financial year end paperwork and accounts and then the Council will consider whether they are in a suitable position to ask the previous clerk to delete all council documents from his PC.

- 9. Clerk's report**

The precept request form was sent on 15.01.2017 and SCDC acknowledged safe receipt.

The Notices re the two vacancies on the Council have been displayed on the noticeboards and the parish magazine and an election has not been called within the specified time so the vacancies can now be filled as casual vacancies.

LK has now completed several training sessions with SALC which have been very beneficial and she feels more confident in the role as a result.

The modifications to the village sign have been accepted by councillors and the sign has been ordered. LK will advise of any updates. The sign company is very busy but are aware the Council are hoping to unveil the new sign when the warmer weather comes.

We are still awaiting a decision on our Transparency Code Fund application for the laptop, Office Software, website training, Webmaster fees and hosting fees.

- 10. Responsible Financial Officer's report**

a) The following payments were authorised and cheques signed by MG & CM, with the exception of CM's cheque which was signed by MG & AN:

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details	Cheque Number	Power
20 16-17	£108.00	L. Kirk	Clerk's mileage to end of March 2017	101012	LGA 1972 s111(1)
21 16-17	£312.00	SALC	Clerk & councillor training sessions	101013	LGA 1972 s111(1)
20 16-17	£606.20	L. Kirk	Reimbursement for HP laptop, Microsoft Office, archiving boxes and stationery supplies, set of printer inks and postage stamps.	101012	LGA 1972 s111(1)
21 16-17	£42.00	BDO	Fee for requiring additional information for External Audit 2015-2016	101014	LGA 1972 s111(1)
22 16-17	£500.00	Parham Village Hall	Grant in respect of roof repairs	101015	LGA 1972 S133
23 16-17	£32.40	C. Moore	Mileage to councillor courses	101016	LGA 1972 s111(1)

Invoices with full details of these items were on display at the meeting and were checked by MG as a member of the finance committee.

c) The following payment received since the last meeting was noted:

Date	Amount	Company	Details	Notes
17.01.17	£ 988.00	Rural Payments Agency	ELS Funding Higher Entry Level Stewardship payment	

d) Update re new bank account signatories.

The bank has still not changed the signatories despite LK chasing and resubmitting the original forms and certified copies of ID documents. She is continuing to chase and has been assured it is now being dealt with as a priority. Once the signatories have been changed the above payments can be sent. The change of clerk paperwork has been approved, but no statements have been received by the new clerk to date. As and when available she will provide a full RFO report.

e) The bank provided the clerk with the following figures on 10th March 2017:

Current Account	£ 9,751.93
Deposit Account	£ 6,709.77
Total	£16,461.70

- 11. The External Auditors report for the year ending 31st March 2016 was reviewed and their recommendations were noted.**
- 12. The Council resolved to switch website provider to 'Suffolk Cloud' as an alternative website provider for Parish website** for clear layout, ease of maintenance and training provision. If the switch is requested before 31.03.2017 there will be no costs for transferring the website content.
- 13. Council agreed to pay half of the calibration costs for the community speed gun with Hacheston Parish Council (spending power- Highways Act 1980 S.301).** The total quotation is £175 plus £20 to collect it and £18 to return it. VAT will be added to all these costs. The clerk is to settle the invoice for £255.60 [E24 16-17 cheque number 101017] upon receipt of the half share funds from Hacheston Parish Council.

- 12. Revisions to the following policies were approved:-**
- **Standing Orders**
New standard orders were adopted as the old ones were outdated and did not contain all the current legislation and obligations. The new set of Standing Orders are based on a SALC model set which will help us when new legislation and numbered sub-clauses are brought in.
 - **Assets Register**
The dog bins and laptop have been added to the Assets Register. LK has contacted the insurance brokers re new Laptop and Office software but we are already covered for up to £5,000 of office equipment so there is no extra premium to pay.
The Council noted that the sum covered for fidelity insurance is significantly higher than it needs to be according to our maximum bank balances but this is a standard level of insurance that is provided with the policy and does not cost us any extra.
 - **New Financial Regulations**, which were based on a more standard set, were approved and adopted.
- 13. The following policies were approved and adopted:**
- Internal Control Statement
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Lone Worker Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Grievance Procedure
 - Disciplinary Procedure
 - Freedom of Information Policy
 - Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and charges
- 14. The Risk Assessment policy was reviewed.** LK is to seek further advice re signage near ponds and liability. The Risk Assessment will then be reviewed again for suitability and possible action re such signs.
- 15. The Consent to Electronic Summons for Meetings forms were completed and filed, save for Councillor Rogers who was absent.**
- 16. Council resolved to pay the clerk a Home Working Allowance, under S.5 of Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act, 1963 at current HMRC approved rate of £18/month.** This payment helps to offset some of the costs of having the Parish Council's registered address in the Clerk's home and provides a contribution towards telephone calls, extra electricity, heating, lighting, internet usage etc. to carry out the job. The Council resolved to backdate this payment to 1st January 2017.
- 17. Council resolved to register under Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) regarding the information we hold as a council at a cost of £35/year to help fulfil data protection obligations.**
- 18. Council resolved to hold the annual litter pick over weekend of 8th & 9th April.** Clerk to contact SCDC re litter pick equipment and rubbish collection. Also to write piece for parish magazine and to draft a risk assessment to go on noticeboard and website.
- 19. The Clerk has spent considerable time making the website Transparency Code compliant and updating old policies and working on new ones.** She has also been updating the website with village events and news to make it more fit for purpose and a more useful village resource. Council resolved to pay Clerk £15/hour as Webmaster for 4 hours a month from January- June 2017 for her substantial website work. This work should only need doing once to make the website more Transparency Code compliant before the internal audit is completed. Council resolved to then pay webmaster for 1 hour a month thereafter for updating the website and uploading council documents. The Council has applied to redeem some webmaster costs under the Transparency Code funding. A maximum of 4 hours a month @£15 an hour for the financial year end 31.03.2017 can be applied for. The Council will pay the balance from reserved funds. This situation will then be reviewed when setting next year's budget.
- 20. Conduct review of internal auditor & appoint new auditor.**
For the last few years the Council have used a Councillor as their internal auditor. It has come to light that the internal auditor cannot be a Councillor or cheque signatory and our auditor was both when he completed the audits. It is up to the clerk to inform the council of such rules

and regulations and Councillors were not aware they were in breach of any auditing regulations.

Had an official internal auditor checked our affairs last year several issues may have been raised. The External Auditor, who is simply sent the completed audit form and accounts, did not pick up the issues. This year we will need to appoint an approved internal auditor who is likely to pick up on several items, which we as a council have not done correctly. The new clerk has reviewed several policies that have been approved at this meeting and will try to get as much on our website as she can, but she is still very much still learning the role and may not do everything that is required.

The Council resolved to appoint Heelis & Lodge as their new internal auditors and was aware that there may be issues that are picked up by the auditors. The Council felt that it was moving forwards positively and would work together to resolve any issues. The Council accepted Heelis & Lodge's Terms of Reference and the Clerk will contact them.

21. Correspondence received since date of last meeting was received and considered.

See attached sheet.

22. The following planning application was considered and the Council had no objections.

Ref	Location	Application
DC/17/0573/FUL	Botany Farmhouse, Silverlace Green, Parham, IP13 9AD	Conversion of outbuilding to residential annex and/or holiday let accommodation.

23. To receive Councillors' reports

The Chair thanked CM for her detailed emailed report from her training sessions. The Council will try to move forward using ideas contained therein for general Parish Council administration and when we look to make an action plan in the near future.

24. MG reported that he has looked at the village sign plinth and he and JR will try to remove the post that has been concreted in without damaging the brick base.

25. Website Content Council resolved for Councillors who are interested in the website project to meet once the website domain has been transferred over and make amendments to its content together.

26. RESOLVED for Clerk to submit backdated VAT applications for the last 2 years.

27. RESOLVED to fund one year's membership of 'The Society of Local Council Clerks' at a cost of £38/year. The usefulness of this service will then be reviewed next year before deciding whether to continue with the membership.

28. RESOLVED to fund 'Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA)' course at a cost of £99+ VAT to help the Clerk in her new role and give Council confidence that she will have a recognised qualification in clerking.

29. It was resolved not to resurrect the Emergency Plan at this stage. Instead Parishioners to be informed of 2 Councillors' details who would help in a village emergency and these details to be advertised on noticeboards, parish magazine and website.

30. Matters to be raised at the next meeting

AN is seeking a quotation regarding servicing and securing the two village noticeboards.

31. Date of next meeting: Annual Meeting of the Parish & Parish Council AGM

Tuesday 9th May at 7.15pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Lydia Kirk

Honorary Clerk

Parham Parish Council

Hard Copy Correspondence Received Between 10th January 2017 & 6th March 2017

1. Letter dated 9th January 2017 from Community Action Suffolk regarding direct debit payment of website hosting fees of £50+ VAT per year.
2. Letter from LBDO dated 25th January including report for Annual Return ending 31/03/16, Notice of Conclusion of Audit and invoice for additional documentation required.
3. Clerks & Councils Letter re trial membership and newsletter.
4. Leaflet from Glasdon received 24/01/17 advertising street furniture and bins.
5. Remittance advice dated 13th January 2017 from Rural Payments agency re ELS payment of £988.
6. Notice dated 23rd January 2017 from Department for Environmental Food & Rural Affairs re Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations.
7. Letter from SCDC (emailed) dated 1st February 2017
Asking for information about anti-social behavior in public spaces within our parish. Responses required by 17th March 2017.
8. Letter from SCDC (emailed) dated 2nd February 2017
Regarding dissolution of the two existing councils to make one single District Council for the combined area.
9. Letter from SCDC re 2 x Casual Vacancies on Parham Parish Council and 2 Declarations of Acceptance of Office & registration information for new councilors.
10. Email dated 15th February 2017 from James Tanner regarding proposed planning on land opposite Willoughby Close. This was sent around to Councillors upon receipt and the clerk responded with councillors comments on 20.02.17.
11. Letter from SCDC dated 22nd February 2017 re Planning Application DC/17/0573/FUL re Botany Farmhouse annex for the Parish Council's observations.
12. March newsletter from Clerks & Councils direct.