

## DALHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**Councillors present:** John Riddell (Chairman), Rachael Padman and Claire McDonagh.

**Also present:** one member of the public

**Open Forum**

**1. Acceptance of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from David Fitch, Isobel Aylott, Simon Bates and Jackie Bolton. The clerk, Joanne Kirk, also sent her apologies.

**2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests**

No councillors declared an interest in item on the agenda.

**3. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020.**

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

**4. County Councillor's Report**

A written report was received.

**5. District Councillor's Report**

A written report was received.

**6. Police issues**

No police issues were raised.

**7. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting**

There were three outstanding councillor actions.

**8. Finance**

**a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments**

There were no payments to approve.

**b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings**

No payments were authorised between meetings

**c) Approval of Receipts and Payments made since the last meeting**

Date	Minute	Description	Total
24/01/2020	164/8a	Clerk's expenses	£11.17
24/01/2020	164/8a	Donation	£50.00
30/01/2020	138/8e	Clerk's salary	
10/02/2020	138/8g	Pension payment	£15.00
28/02/2020	138/8e	Clerk's salary	

It was resolved that the receipts and payments made since the last meeting would be approved.

**d) Bank balances**

Current account	£175.63
Reserve account	£5,506.90
<b>Total in Banks</b>	<b>5,682.53</b>

Rachael Padman checked the Council's bank statements against the accounts.

**e) Signatory to complete the checklist of Internal Controls**

Rachael Padman signed the checklist of internal controls.

**e) Review of all regular payments including the clerk's salary and approval of payments relating to these services for 2020-21**

It was resolved the following regular payments would continue to be paid in 2020 - 21:

Payment	2019/20	2020/21	Notes
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<b>Community Action Suffolk - Insurance</b>	£234	£240	
<b>Subscriptions:</b>			
SALC	£136	£140	
Starboard Systems Ltd - Scribe accounting software	£47	£47	
<b>Risby Parish Council - phone costs</b>	£22	£22	
<b>CAS Ltd - website hosting fee</b>	£60	£60	
<b>HMRC - PAYE</b>			
<b>Clerk's salary</b>			
<b>Fidelity Funds Network - contribution to clerk's workplace pension (this will be replaced by a monthly payment to Risby PC from February 2019)</b>			
<b>Verge cutting</b>	£1,358	£1,440	Amount may vary depending on weather conditions and number of cuts
<b>ICO - data protection registration</b>	£35	£35	
<b>Village hall rental</b>	£200	£200	

g) **PAYE details and tax code for the clerk's salary**

Rachael Padman reviewed the clerk's Confidential Cashbook and confirmed that the PAYE details and tax code were correct.

h) **Review of the income and expenditure for 2019/20 against the budget and the level of reserves for general and earmarked expenditure**

Councillors reviewed the income and expenditure for 2019/20 against the budget. At year end, DPC had a budget deficit of £1,585. This was due to the purchase of the replacement village sign. The cost of the sign will be covered by the money allocated for a village project (£1,494) and the remaining money in the Parish Plan fund (£79). The Parish Council still hopes to obtain locality funding from Suffolk County Council to cover half the cost of the village sign as pledged by former County Councillor Robin Millar.

Estimated reserve as of 31/03/20: £5,430 which includes allocated funds of £1,189. The general reserve is within the guidelines of no more than one year's annual precept.

i) **Review the register of fixed assets and insurance values**

Councillors reviewed the assets register. Two new assets were added in 2019/20 – the replacement village sign and the new footpath map. It was resolved that the insurance value of the village sign would be amended to the cost of the replacement sign plus £2,000.

j) **Review of the Council's Risk Assessment**

It was resolved that no amendments were necessary. The Chairman then signed it.

k) **Liability insurance**

The levels of liability cover under the new Parish Protect Policy are as follows:

Cover Package	All Risks/	Public Liability	Officers Indemnity	Fidelity Guarantee (Dishonesty)	Business Interruption	Personal Accident	Employers' Liability
1A	£5k	£10m	£1m	£25k	£5k	£25k	£10m

l) **Appointment of an internal auditor to complete the Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19 and review of the effectiveness of the internal audit**

It was resolved that Cathy Whitaker, clerk to Exning Parish Council, would be appointed as internal auditor this year and that a fee of £65 would be paid. The Council reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit. It was resolved that the internal audit was effective and that audit regulations would be met for the following reasons:

- Does the internal audit sufficiently cover all aspects of the financial controls relevant to the council (for example risk management, detection of fraud, internal controls) and are terms of reference in place and approved? Yes. New Financial Regulations were adopted on 1st May 2014 to introduce procedures to detect fraud when using electronic banking. A checklist of internal controls is completed by a councillor at every meeting to verify payments on bank statements against actual payments as listed in the accounts to ensure that there are no discrepancies.
- Is the internal auditor independent (i.e. does not have any role within the Council)? Yes. The internal auditor does not have a role within the Council.
- Is the internal auditor competent to carry out their work ethically, with integrity and objectivity? Is there any evidence to suggest that this may not be the case? Yes, she is a parish council clerk and RFO for Newmarket Town Council. There is no evidence to suggest that she will not carry out the work ethically, with integrity and objectivity.
- Is the Responsible Officer consulted in the internal audit plan? Yes.
- Are the responsibilities of members of the Council understood and has the necessary training been undertaken? Yes
- Is there a plan in place for when the internal audit will be undertaken and does the plan properly take account of corporate risk? The internal audit will take place in April 2020 prior to the accounts being approved at the Annual Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020. The internal auditor's report will be presented to the Parish Council at this meeting and any issues raised by the internal auditor will be discussed at the meeting and an action plan produced.

**m) To review the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls**

The following internal controls are in place:

- At each meeting a councillor checks bank statements against the Parish Council's accounts to ensure that transactions correspond and that the bank reconciliation agrees with the bank statement
- Where possible payments are approved at meetings and a Schedule of Payments is prepared which is checked by two councillors. Corresponding invoices are checked and signed by two councillors at the same time.
- Regular payments are approved at the March meeting and the invoices paid when they are received. These invoices are checked and signed by two councillors at the next meeting after they have been paid.
- The chairman rules off and signs the Schedule of Payments so that no amendments can be made after the meeting.
- Cheques must be signed by two signatories along with the corresponding invoice.
- A record of online payments is kept and checked at each meeting.
- If a supplier changes their bank details, the supplier must supply a written hard copy notifying the change.

It was resolved that these controls are adequate and are working well.

**n) Appointment of a councillor to inspect the Council's property for damage or defects by 30th April 2020 and complete the inspection checklist.**

It was resolved that Isobel Aylott would inspect the Council's property.

**9. Planning**

There were no planning issues to discuss.

**10. Highways/Rights of Way/Tree Issues**

- a) Pedestrian safety in the village
- b) Cars parking too close to the bridge near the Affleck Arms

It was resolved that these items would be deferred until the next meeting.

**11. Village issues**

**a) Locality funding for the village sign**

It was resolved that the clerk would follow this up with the new County Councillor for Dalham, Andy Drummond.

**b) Ongoing checks of the defibrillator and email from East Anglia Ambulance Service about defibrillator checks and replacement batteries**

It was resolved that the clerk would be authorised to purchase replacement pads and batteries as and when required. It was also resolved that an advert would be put in the next newsletter and on the village email list asking if anyone would be willing to check the defibrillator once a month.

**c) PCC, parish and community audit**

It was resolved that this item would be deferred until the next meeting.

**12. Dates of meetings**

- Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020 - Annual Meeting of the Parish Council followed by the Annual Parish Meeting
- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020
- Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021
- Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**13. Correspondence****a) Email from Anglian Water about planning for new pipelines – for information only****14. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020 at 7pm or the Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm****a) Coronavirus**

The impact on the Parish Council of the current Coronavirus outbreak was discussed. The clerk already has a number of delegated powers. It was resolved that additional powers would be delegated to the clerk in conjunction with the Chairman, to include all financial affairs including all payments and the audit, as well as responding to planning applications and queries. It was also resolved that urgent decisions would be made by the clerk and Chairman.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20pm.**

Signed ..... (Chairman) Dated .....