**Downham West Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Council meeting held Monday, 23rd April 2018 at 7.05pm in the Downham Market Town Council Chamber, Paradise Road, Downham Market**

Present: Chairman Cllr R Pegg

Vice Chairman Cllr D Beesley

Councillors Cllr F Daymond

County Councillor Cllr H Humphrey

Parish Clerk Mrs S Porter

Member(s) of Public 0

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr P Rotman (family commitment), Cllr C Swaine (prior commitment), Borough Cllr D Pope (prior commitment) and Borough Cllr V Spikings (prior commitment).

The apologies were accepted.

1. **Declarations of interest and requests for dispensation**

There were no declarations of interest and no requests for dispensation.

1. **Approval of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting**

**Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Pegg Seconded – Vice Chairman, Cllr Beesley**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 12th March 2018 (items 969-983) are approved and signed as a true and accurate record.**

**All in favour**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, duly signed and dated the minutes of the meeting.

1. **Update on previous minutes (not listed elsewhere on the agenda and for information only)**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, adjourned the meeting at 7.06pm.

**Public Participation**

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

**Reports**

**County Councillor**

County Cllr Humphrey reported that the Council Tax for 2018/2019 had been increased by 5.99%; 2.99% for general Council Tax and 3% for Adult Social Care. Within the flexibilities currently offered by Central Government, Norfolk County Council chose to levy the precept as 2% in 2016/2017 and 3% in both 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. This means no increase in precept will be possible in 2019/2020 under the current arrangements.

Pot hole reports had quadrupled in the past year and Central Government was now taking action on this countrywide.

The Parish Partnership Scheme had been approved for 2018/2019 whereby Parish and Town Councils were invited to submit bids for highway improvement schemes and/or road speed activated signs, with Norfolk County Council funding 50% of the cost of successful bids.

Norfolk County Council had recently submitted a bid to the Government’s Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN), which was seeking to encourage faster deployment of full fibre broadband networks across the UK, and was successful in achieving a further £13M. 91% of properties in Norfolk were currently achieving fast broadband and it was anticipated that this would increase to 95% coverage by 2020. It was noted that properties which were not within 1km of a box were those falling within the 5%. The cost of a box was £28,000 and it was therefore not be feasible to place a box in an area where properties were remote. Any rural businesses not receiving faster broadband by 2020 would be required to pay for it.

Norfolk County Council was currently looking to combine mobile phone networks to boost coverage to 98%. Discussions were ongoing.

A campaign was underway calling on the Government to fund the dualling of the A47 in 2020-2025 from Acle Straight, Great Yarmouth, and Tilney to East Winch, King’s Lynn, with a further commitment from the Government to make funding available to dual the entire length of the A47 by 2030 which would help links to the Midlands.

Education in Norfolk was improving with current levels now reaching or exceeding National statistics.

Social children and adult care services in Norfolk was a costly provision with this forming an additional cost to ratepayers on Council Tax. However, it was vital that the authority provided these services.

## Central Government had announced its proposal for the Police and Crime Commissioner to become the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.  Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Cambridge Fire and Rescue Service would remain separate with its own budgets but the Norfolk’s Police and Crime Commissioner was proceeding with a business case for the county’s fire service to come under his control, despite Norfolk County Council’s opposition. In 2016/2017 the fire service had rescued over 700 people from 7,347 emergencies.

The Prince's Trust programme works with 16 to 25 year olds who are not in employment, education or training, enabling them to move forward to a more successful future. The Crucial Crew Project, a multi-agency safety education team, works to improve safety, aimed at 10 to 11 years olds. It involves the staging of theatrical sets for children to learn about safety by experiencing risk in a controlled environment.  The events were held in a temporary location, often in classrooms, where rooms hosted different safety topics.

Budget cuts of approximately £93M needed to be achieved in the next three years to meet the long-term saving targets.

**Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllrs Pope and Spikings were not present at the meeting and no prior written reports had been received.

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, resumed the meeting at 7.30pm.

1. **Finance**
   1. **Approval of finances and payments to be made**

The Clerk had circulated the payments and receipts since the last meeting:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Payee** | **Description** | **Transaction** | **Net £** | **VAT £** | **Gross £** | **Receipt £** |
| 05.03.2018 | Barclays Bank Plc | Bank Interest | BACS | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 3.20 |
| 19.03.2018 | Former Clerk | March salary repaid | BACS | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 141.56 |
| 12.04.2018 | BCKL&WN | Precept & Council Support Grant | BACS | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 5,540.00 |
| 12.04.2018 | E-On | Street Lighting Supply March 2018 | DD | 26.47 | 1.32 | 27.79 | 0.00 |
| 19.04.2018 | Former Clerk | Salary April (to be reclaimed) | SO | 141.56 | 0.00 | 141.56 | 0.00 |
| 23.04.2018 | Clerk | Salary March 2018 | 100533 | 168.87 | 0.00 | 168.87 | 0.00 |
| 23.04.2018 | HMRC | PAYE / NI Contributions Jan-Mar 2018 | 100534 | 119.40 | 0.00 | 119.40 | 0.00 |
| 23.04.2018 | Norfolk ALC | Annual Membership 2018 2019 | 100535 | 103.58 | 0.00 | 103.58 | 0.00 |
| 23.04.2018 | Mr P Akers | Bus Shelter x 6 cleaning | 100536 | 30.00 | 0.00 | 30.00 | 0.00 |
| **Totals this month** | | | | **589.88** | **1.32** | **591.20** | **5,684.76** |

**Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Pegg Seconded – Cllr Daymond**

**That the payment of bills are approved in accordance with the schedule.**

**All in favour**

* 1. **Bank Reconciliation(s)**

The Clerk reported that no VAT returns had been done over the past few years and that she would submit one for the past four (the maximum permitted was three but recent rules had changed and this may be achievable). It was anticipated that the Council was due £1,287.94 for the past four-year period.

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliation period ending March 2018 with the agenda. The year-end bank balances were as follows:

**March 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Reconciliation** | **Community Account (£)** | **Tracker Account (£)** |  | Reconciliation **Community Account (£)** | |  | Reconciliation **Tracker Account (£)** | |
| Bank Statement Start Balances | 3,223.04 | 6,425.77 |  | Bank Statement **01.03.2018** | 3,223.04 |  | Bank Statement **01.03.2018** | 6,425.77 |
| **Total Opening Bank Balances** |  | **9,648.81** |  | Receipts | 1,578.12 |  | Receipts | 3.20 |
|  |  |  |  | Payments Cleared | - 885.48 |  | Payments Cleared | - |
| Unpresented Cheques B/F | - | - |  | Bank Statement **31.03.2018** | 3,915.68 |  | Bank Statement **31.03.2018** | 6,428.97 |
| Unpresented Receipts B/F | - | - |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |
|  |  |  |  | 103529 | - 63.30 |  |  |  |
| **Council Opening Balances** | **3,223.04** | **6,425.77** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Opening Balances** |  | **9,648.81** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Receipts | 1,578.12 | 3.20 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments | - 885.48 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bank Statement Close Balances | 3,915.68 | 6,428.97 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **10,344.65** |  |  | **- 63.30** |  |  | **-** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unpresented Cheques | - 63.30 | - |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |
| Unpresented Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |
| **Council Closing Balances** | **3,852.38** | **6,428.97** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Closing Balances** |  | **10,281.35** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **3,852.38** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **6,428.97** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Council Total Closing Balances** | **10,281.35** |
| **Earmarked Funds** | | |  |  | | | | |
| Operating Costs (6 Months) | | 2,690.00 |  |
| Election Costs (4 Year to £1,000) Year 3 | | 750.00 |  |
| Parish Partnership 2018/2019 | | 2,500.00 |  |
| Speed Sign Maintenance | | 500.00 |  |
| Transparency Fund Grant | | 1,295.00 |  |
| S137 Grants (Poppy Wreath) | | - |  |
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|  | |  |  | Council Total Closing Balances | **10,281.35** |  | |  |
| **Total Earmarked Reserves** | | **7,735.00** |  | Council Total Earmarked Reserves | **7,735.00** | Council Remaining Available Precept | | **2,546.35** |

* 1. **Quotations for Laptop, MS Office, Antivirus, Laptop Bag (Transparency Fund Grant)**

The Clerk had circulated quotations with the agenda as follows:

Laptops:

* HP 15-bw067sa 15.6" Laptop - Gold 379.99
* HP 15-bw550sa 15.6" Laptop - Gold 329.99
* DELL Inspiron 15 5570 15.6" Laptop - Black 349.99
* HP 15-bw060sa 15.6" Laptop - Grey 379.99

Microsoft Office & Protection:

* MICROSOFT Office Home & Student - Lifetime for 1 user + MCAFEE LiveSafe Premium 2018 - 1 user / unlimited devices for 1 year (Bundle deal) 119.00
* MICROSOFT Office Home & Business (includes Outlook)- Lifetime for 1 user 229.99 +

MCAFEE Total Protection 2018 - 1 user / 7 devices for 1 year  17.99

Laptop Bag:

* HP Value 15.6" Laptop Case & Wireless Mouse Kit – Black 14.99

The Clerk reported that she had visited Currys PC World for advice on laptops and those stated above had been recommended for the purposes of this Council. The Clerk also reported that the Council could receive £25.00 for trading in the current laptop but as the former Clerk had expressed an interest in the laptop, the Clerk had enquired whether she would wish to purchase it for the same price and she had confirmed she would. Alternatively, the Council could consider giving the former Clerk the laptop as a small leaving gift.

Councillors agreed that the laptop should be given to the former Clerk as its value was minimal and this would be a nice gesture for services rendered. The Clerk would inform her accordingly.

A discussion took place and each of the laptop specifications were considered in detail. It was suggested that the Clerk also investigate the cost of all-in-one printers. It was noted that compatible ink cartridges were extremely good value at Choice Stationery Supplies. It was also noted that Emneth Design Computer Repairs could be called upon if the laptop ever required any attention in the future.

It was agreed for the Clerk to price up the full package and report back at the next meeting.

1. **Meeting Dates**

Cllr Daymond would investigate whether the Downham Market Town Council Chamber room was free on 14th or 21st May 2018 and report back to the Clerk. It was noted that the Annual Meeting was statutory and would need to be held in May. A date for the August meeting was not agreed and dates for September would be considered as an alternative.

1. **Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other Council related Policies**

The Clerk reported that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations would need to be approved prior to the Internal Audit being carried out. The Clerk and Councillors went through each of the documents and revisions were made at the meeting.

**Proposed – Cllr Daymond Seconded – Vice Chairman, Cllr Beesley**

**That the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are adopted as amended.**

**All in favour**

The Clerk would circulate the final documents to all Councillors.

1. **Planning**
   1. **Planning applications**

**991.1.1. 18/00675/F – Riverbank, Bridge Road – Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 17/00739/F: To amend previously approved drawings**

Councillors felt that this was an overdevelopment of site and not in keeping with the area. It was agreed for the Clerk to look up the previous comments of the Council and submit these accordingly.

* 1. **Planning decisions**

**991.2.1. 18/00323/F – 10 Farthing Road – Proposed 2 storey side extension, single storey rear extension and single storey replacement outbuilding to form new office/studio**

Application permitted (delegated decision).

* 1. **Planning enforcements, appeals and other notifications**

No planning enforcements, appeals or other notifications had been received.

* 1. **Late planning applications**

**991.4.1. 18/00662/A – The Hythe Bridge Road – Retention of 2 no. externally illuminated free standing signs – comments by 10th May 2018**

Objections for the following reasons:

The proposed advertisement board is far too large. Advertisement needs to be sympathetic in size and appearance on the site which it is displayed, not unduly prominent or detract from the character of the surrounding area. The erection and display of an illuminated free standing advertisement board of this size would by virtue of its siting appear unduly obtrusive and incongruous within the rural locality to the detriment of the visual amenities of the locality.

1. **General correspondence**
   1. **For Action**

Norfolk ALC had submitted proposed costs of £25.00 per annum for a dedicated officer for the new General Data Protection Regulation. Councillors agreed this in principle.

* 1. **Late correspondence**

No late correspondence had been received.

1. **BCKL&WN and Norfolk County Council correspondence**
   1. **For Action**

No correspondence for action had been received.

* 1. **Late correspondence**

No late correspondence had been received.

1. **Village matters and improvements**
   1. **Speed signs**

The Clerk reported that the Highways Engineer, Mr A Wallace, had agreed to meet the Chairman, Cllr Pegg, to consider the best locations for the signs. The Clerk would coordinate a meeting.

* 1. **Bus stop**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that a Licence had been obtained in January 2016 to relocate the bus stop within the lay-by. At that time, the Highways Engineer, Mr A Wallace, had advised not to put restriction lines by the bus stop to stop vehicles parking in it but in view of this, local residents were parking in it regularly. When the bus stop was moved, the signs had been left in their original location.

When the Chairman, Cllr Pegg, met with the Highways Engineer, Mr Wallace to consider the speed sign locations, he would investigate whether the Parish Council needed to pay to have the bus stop signs relocated.

* 1. **Village Gateways**

The Clerk reported that Nordelph Parish Council had responded to advise that they no longer wished to place a ‘Welcome to Nordelph’ sign on the village gateway. The Clerk had since contacted the Highways Engineer, Mr A Wallace, twice to enquire how the gates could be relocated to the boundary but no response had yet been received. It was felt that the Parish Council would need to contract someone to extend the legs on the gateway and have it reinstalled at the boundary.

The Clerk would contact the Highways Engineer, Mr M Edmunds, to investigate how the Council should proceed with this. County Cllr Humphrey invited the Clerk to copy him into any future correspondence regarding the Village Gateways.

* 1. **Village Tidy Up**
     1. **Salters Lode Lock Dredging**

The Clerk reported that Cllr Swaine had successfully coordinated with Middle Level the cleaning up of the roads and verges following the Salters Lode lock dredging. A vote of thanks was given.

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Beesley, reported that the lay-by going into Salters Lode was full of rubbish. The Vice Chairman, Cllr Beesley, agreed to clear the rubbish himself and he was thanked in advance for offering to do this.

1. **Matters to report to the Clerk**

It was noted that the Village Gateways needed cleaning. The Clerk would report this to the Highway Rangers on their next scheduled visit.

1. **Items for the next agenda**

There were no raised items for the next agenda.

1. **To record the date and time of the next Full Council meeting**

The next meeting of the Parish Council (Annual Meeting) would be held in May (date to be advised) at 7.00pm in the Downham Market Town Council Office.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.40pm.