**Downham West Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting held Monday, 6th May 2021 at 7.00pm virtually via Zoom**

Present: Chairman Cllr R Pegg (re-elected)

Vice Chairman Cllr C Swaine (re-elected)

Councillors Cllr F Daymond

Cllr J Doyle

Cllr J Fox

Borough Councillor Cllr C Rose

Parish Clerk Mrs S Porter

Member(s) of Public 0

1. **Election of Chairman of the Council**

The outgoing Chairman asked for nominations for Chairman of the Council.

**Proposed – Cllr Doyle Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**That Cllr Pegg is elected Chairman of Downham West Parish Council for the ensuing year.**

**All in favour**

There being no other nominations, Cllr Pegg was duly elected. Cllr Pegg read, signed and dated his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Clerk would countersign it following the meeting.

1. **Election of Vice Chairman of the Council**

The Chairman asked for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Council.

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

**That Cllr Swaine is elected Vice Chairman of Downham West Parish Council for the ensuing year.**

**All in favour**

There being no other nominations, Cllr Swaine was duly elected. Cllr Swaine read, signed and dated his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Clerk would countersign it following the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence had been received.

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 – Cllr Daymond Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 19th April 2021 (Items 33-46) are approved and signed as a true and accurate record.**

**All in favour**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, would duly sign and date the minutes of the meeting at a future date.

1. **Update on Previous Minutes**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

1. **Review of Councillors’ Areas of Responsibilities, Outside Body Representation and Working Parties**
   1. **Outside Bodies’ Representation**

**53.1.1. Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board – Currently Cllrs Daymond and Pegg and Mrs D Stevens (non-voting rights)**

Cllrs Daymond and Pegg and Mrs D Stevens (non-voting rights) were duly reappointed as the representatives for the Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board. Cllr Fox, in his capacity as Chairman of the Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board, would continue to report to the Council meetings.

**53.1.2. Hundred Acre Common Charity – Currently Cllrs Daymond and Pegg**

Cllrs Daymond and Pegg were duly reappointed as the representatives for the Hundred Acre Common Charity.

1. **Review of Council policies and procedures (circulated with the agenda and available to view on the website)**

**54.1. Standing Orders**

The Standing Orders were reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.2. Financial Regulations**

The Financial Regulations were reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.3. Powers & Duties & S137 LGA Summary 1972**

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) agrees the appropriate sum for the purpose of Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972. The Clerk had amended the annual statutory limit for 2020/2021 to £8.41. The Powers and Duties were approved with no further amendments required.

**54.4. Compliments & Complaints**

The Compliments & Complaints policy was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.5. Equal Opportunities**

The Equal Opportunities policy was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.6. General Data Protection Rules (GDPR)**

The General Data Protection Rules policy was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.7. Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme**

The Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.8. Press/Social Media**

The Press/Social Media policy was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.9. Risk Assessment – Parish Council**

The Parish Council Risk Assessment policy was reviewed with the ‘meeting location’ requiring amendment from Downham Market Town Council office to Room 3, Methodist Church. The Clerk would correct this.

**54.10. S137 Grants & Donations**

The S137 Grants & Donations policy was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.11. Unreasonably Persistent and/or Vexatious Complaints**

The Unreasonably Persistent and/or Vexatious Complaints policy was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.12.** **Website Accessibility Statement**

The Website Accessibility Statement was reviewed with no amendments required.

**54.13. Asset Register**

The Asset Register had been reviewed by the Clerk and various disposals and additions had been made.

**54.14. Existing Contracts and Direct Debits**

The Existing Contracts and Direct Debits had been reviewed by the Clerk and various amendments had been made.

**54.15. Code of Conduct – reminder**

Councillors were reminded of their obligations in regards to the Code of Conduct.

**54.16. Councillors’ Registered Declarations of Interests**

The Clerk reminded Councillors to review their Registers of Declared Interests and update them if necessary as it was a statutory requirement to do so.

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

**That the policies and procedures as detailed above are approved.**

**All in favour**

1. **To approve and adopt the Recording at Meetings policy (circulated with agenda)**

The Clerk had prepared a draft Recording at Meetings policy and circulated it with the agenda.

**Proposed – Cllr Daymond Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**That the Recording at Meetings policy is adopted.**

**All in favour**

The Clerk would add this policy to the website.

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, adjourned the meeting at 7.10pm.

**Reports**

**County Councillor**

County Council Elections were taking place this evening and no County Cllr was currently in post.

**Borough Councillor**

Borough Cllr Rose reported that urgent roof repairs were required at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, with 93 props currently holding the roof up in various locations throughout the building. The entire structure was in urgent need of an upgrade and meetings to discuss this were currently being held.

Dredging had recently taken place on the River Ouse.

BCKL&WN Council meetings would be resuming face to face with effect from Friday, 7th May 2021.

SNAP meetings would shortly be resuming. Cllr Pegg agreed to represent this Council at the future virtual meetings. Cllr Rose would inform the Clerk when the next meeting was due to be held.

It was noted that residents had a duty of care for ditches and hedges protruding from their property boundaries onto the highway (pavements and roads). Cases of neglect had assisted the recent flooding problems in West Norfolk.

Cllr Rose was standing as an Independent candidate in the County Council Elections.

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, resumed the meeting at 7.16pm.

**Public Participation**

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

1. **Finance**
   1. **Bank Reconciliation**

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliation, period ending April 2021, current bank account statements and finance summary, following the agenda (month-end had not taken place when the agenda was published). The bank balances were as follows:

**April 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Reconciliation** | **Community Account (£)** | **Business Account (£)** |  | Reconciliation **Community Account (£)** | |  | Reconciliation **Business Account (£)** | |
| Bank Statement Start Balances | 429.42 | 10,971.65 |  | Bank Statement **01.04.2021** | 429.42 |  | Bank Statement **01.04.2021** | 10,971.65 |
| **Total Opening Bank Balances** |  | **11,401.07** |  | Receipts | 10,560.00 |  | Receipts | - |
|  |  |  |  | Payments Cleared | - 8,390.58 |  | Payments Cleared | - 4,500.00 |
| Unpresented Cheques B/F | - | - |  | Bank Statement **30.04.2021** | 2,598.84 |  | Bank Statement **30.04.2021** | 6,471.65 |
| Unpresented Receipts B/F | - | - |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Opening Balances** | **429.42** | **10,971.65** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Opening Balances** |  | **11,401.07** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Receipts | 10,560.00 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments | - 8,390.58 | - 4,500.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bank Statement Close Balances | 2,598.84 | 6,471.65 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **9,070.49** |  |  | - |  |  | - |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unpresented Cheques | - | - |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |
| Unpresented Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |
| **Council Closing Balances** | **2,598.84** | **6,471.65** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Closing Balances** |  | **9,070.49** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **2,598.84** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **6,471.65** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Council Total Closing Balances** | **9,070.49** |
|  | | |
| **Earmarked Funds** | | |
| Operating Costs (2 Months) | | 1,000.00 |
| Election Costs | | 250.00 |
| Street Lights LED Conversion | | 1,500.00 |
| Speed Sign Maintenance | | 500.00 |
| Bus Shelter (fund building for new structure) | | - |
| Transparency Fund Grant | | 230.07 |
| S137 Grants (Poppy Wreath) | | 30.00 |
| CIL | | - |
|  | |  |  | Council Total Closing Balances | **9,070.49** |  | |  |
| **Total Earmarked Reserves** | | **3,510.07** |  | Council Total Earmarked Reserves | **3,510.07** | Council Remaining Available Precept | | **5,560.42** |

* 1. **Annual Insurance**

The Clerk had circulated quotations for the Council’s insurance with the agenda. The quotations had been obtained from BHIB, Came & Company and Zurich, all providing 1-year and 3-year Long Term Agreement (LTA) costs. The press and public were welcome to view these by submitting a request to the Clerk.

It was noted that BHIB Insurance would also be offering a free subscription for Parish Online mapping if a LTA was accepted.

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

**That the Council contracts BHIB Insurance to provide a three-year Long-Term Agreement at an annual cost of £466.73, subject to inflation per annum, with effect from 1st June 2021.**

**All in favour**

The Clerk would confirm the contract with BHIB Insurance and inform the unsuccessful companies.

* 1. **BCKL&WN CIL Funding Applications – Groups and organisations, looking to deliver infrastructure to benefit its residents and businesses, are being invited to bid for CIL funding start date Monday, 25th January 2021 closing on Friday, 30th April 2021**

The Clerk reported that the bus shelter application approved by this Council had not been submitted to the BCKL&WN as the Council unfortunately did not qualify for the CIL funding, due to it not being able to part support or match fund the scheme financially.

The Clerk reported that her husband had completed most of the quotation for future reference. The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that he would continue to seek builders willing to undertake this scheme.

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

The Clerk had circulated the payments and receipts made since the last meeting and presented the late bills to the meeting:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Payee** | **Description** | **Transaction** | **Net £** | **VAT £** | **Gross £** | **Receipt £** |
| To be paid | Clerk | Salary Apr 2021 | BACS | 183.78 | 0.00 | 183.78 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | HMRC | Employer PAYE/NI Apr 2021 | BACS | 45.80 | 0.00 | 45.80 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Mr J Cross | Internal Audit | BACS | 35.00 | 0.00 | 35.00 | 0.00 |
| **Late Bills / Receipts (Received after Agenda advertised)** | | | | | | | |
| 06.05.2021 | HMRC | VAT Return 2020/2021 | BACS | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 158.29 |
| To be paid | Westotec | Street Lighting LED Conversion | BACS | 1,505.00 | 301.00 | 1,806.00 | 0.00 |
| **Totals this month** | | | | **1,769.58** | **301.00** | **2,070.58** | **158.29** |

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

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

**All in favour**

1. **Annual Governance for the Accounts 2020/2021**

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the bank statements, budget account, cashbook and bank reconciliation for the financial year 2020/2021 with the agenda. The year-end accounts, period ending 31st March 2021, were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Balances at 31.03.2021** | **Community A/C** | **Business A/C** | Reconciliation **Community A/C** | | Reconciliation **Business A/C** | |
| **Closing Bank Statement Balances** | **429.42** | **10,971.65** | Bank Statement 31.03.2021 | 429.42 | Bank Statement 31.03.2021 | 10,971.65 |
| Unpresented Cheques | - | - | *Unpresented Cheques:* | | *Unpresented Cheques:* | |
| Unbanked Receipts | - | - |  | - |  |  |
| **Closing Council Balances** | **429.42** | **10,971.65** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **11,401.07** |  |  |  |  |
| **Cash Book** | **Community A/C** | **Business A/C** |  |  |  |  |
| **Opening Bank Statement Balances 01.04.2020** | **1,095.28** | **8,466.12** |  | - |  | - |
| Receipts 01.04.2020-31.03.2021 | 10,324.97 | 5,505.53 | *Unbanked Receipts (Banked Mar uncleared):* | | *Unbanked Receipts (Banked Mar uncleared):* | |
| Payments 01.04.2020-31.03.2021 | - 10,990.83 | - 3,000.00 |  |  |  |  |
| **Closing Bank Statement Balances** | **429.42** | **10,971.65** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **11,401.07** |  | - |  | - |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **11,401.07** |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Council Balances** |  | **11,401.07** | **Council Closing Balance** | **429.42** | **Council Closing Balance** | **10,971.65** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Statement Balances C/F at 01.04.2021** | | **11,401.07** |
| **Council Balances C/F at 01.04.2021** | | **11,401.07** |
| Earmarked Reserves: |  |  |
| Operating Costs (6 Months) | 3,000.00 |  |
| Election Costs (4 Year to £1,000) Year 4 | 1,000.00 |  |
| Street Lights LED Conversion | 2,270.00 |  |
| Speed Sign Maintenance | 500.00 |  |
| Bus Shelter (fund building for new structure) | 1,500.00 |  |
| Transparency Fund Grant | 230.07 |  |
| S137 Grants (Poppy Wreath) | - |  |
| CIL | 1,374.29 |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| ***Total*** | ***9,874.36*** |  |
| **Council Balances C/F at 01.04.2021** | | **11,401.07** |
| **Total Debtors** | | **- 9,874.36** |
| **Total Creditors** | | **-** |
| **Council Balances C/F 01.04.2021** | | **1,526.71** |

* 1. **Internal Audit Report 2020/2021**

The Clerk had circulated the Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/2021, prepared by Mr John Cross, with the agenda. The Internal Audit had been carried out on Thursday, 15th April 2021. All accounts, records, supporting documents and safeguards were found to be efficiently maintained and in place.

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

**That the Council approves the Internal Audit for the financial year 2020/2021.**

**All in favour**

* 1. **Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021 (Section 1 Annual Return)**

The Annual Governance Statement was a means to inform ratepayers how the public accountability framework operated and to ensure there was a sound system of internal control taking place. The Clerk confirmed that the Council was expected to make representations and assertions, to the best of their knowledge and belief, in nine statements of assurance detailed in Section 1 of the Annual Return. The Clerk read the statements in Section 1 and requested that Councillors answer yes or no to the following declarations:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Declaration** | **Yes** | **No** | **Yes means that the Council:** |
| 1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. | **Yes** |  | prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations. |
| 1. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness. | **Yes** |  | made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge. |
| 1. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances. | **Yes** |  | has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so. |
| 1. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. | **Yes** |  | during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority’s accounts. |
| 1. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. | **Yes** |  | considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly. |
| 1. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. | **Yes** |  | arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority. |
| 1. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. | **Yes** |  | responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. |
| 1. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements. | **Yes** |  | disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant. |
| 1. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. |  | **N/A** | has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts. |

**Proposed – Cllr Fox Seconded – Cllr Daymond**

**That this Council approves the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 Annual Return) for the financial year 2020/2021 as detailed.**

**All in favour**

The Clerk and the Chairman, Cllr Pegg, would duly sign Section 1 of the Annual Return 2020/2021 at a future date. The Clerk would record the Minute References upon completion of the minutes of this meeting.

* 1. **Accounting Statements 2020/2021 (Section 2 Annual Return)**

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the Accounting Statements for the financial year 2020/2021 with the agenda. The Accounting Statements were a means of presenting the financial position of this Council and properly presenting its receipts and payments. The accounting statements were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section 2** | **2019/20 £** | **2020/21 £** | **Variance (+/1) £** | **Detailed explanation of variance (for each reason noted monetary values to nearest £10 are included)** |
| **1** Balances Brought Forward | 11,690 | 9,561 | 2,129 (- 18.21%) | PPS 2019/2020 3,150. Bank Interest lower by 184. Training costs 81. Election costs 48. Staff costs 99 higher in 2019/2020. |
| **2** (+) Precept or Rates and Levies | 5,749 | 5,810 | 61 (+ 1.06%) | Actual Band D Precept increase was 0.01%. |
| **3** (+) Total Other Receipts | 434 | 1,520 | 1,086 (+ 250.23%) | CIL payment received 1,374. |
| **4** (-) Staff Costs | 2,854 | 2,755 | 99 (- 3.46%) | Minimal change (HMRC Tax Code). |
| **5** (-) Loan Interest/Capital Repayments | 0 | 0 | N/A | N/A |
| **6** (-) All Other Payments | 5,458 | 2,735 | 2,723 (- 49.89%) | No PPS in 2020/2021 (2019/2020 was 3,150). |
| **7** (=) Balances Carried Forward | 9,561 | 11,401 | 1,840 (+ 19.24%) | Earmarked Reserves held 9,874 with small remaining precept balance |
| **8** Total Value of Cash & Short Term Investments | 9,561 | 11,401 | 1,840 (+ 19.24%) | Earmarked Reserves held 9,874 with small remaining precept balance |
| **9** Total Fixed Assets Plus Long Terms Investments & Assets | 33,557 | 33,686 | 129 (+ 0.38%) | Operation London Bridge items added to Asset Register |
| **10** Total Borrowings | 0 | 0 | N/A | N/A |
| **11** (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust Funds (including charitable) | | | N/A | The Council acts as sole Trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. |

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

**That this Council approves the Accounting Statements (Section 2 Annual Return) for the financial year 2020/2021 as detailed.**

**All in favour**

The Clerk and the Chairman, Cllr Pegg, would duly sign Section 2 of the Annual Return 2020/2021 at a future date. The Clerk would record the Minute References upon completion of the minutes of this meeting.

* 1. **Certificate of Exemption 2020/2021**

The Clerk confirmed that the higher of the authority’s gross income or gross annual expenditure for 2020/2021 did not exceed £25,000. If the Council wished to certify itself exempt, no External Audit fees would be applicable. The exact figures were as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Annual gross income 2020/2021 | **£7,330** |
| Annual gross expenditure 2020/2021 | **£5,490** |

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

**That this Council certifies itself as exempt from the limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.**

**All in favour**

The Clerk and the Chairman, Cllr Pegg, would duly sign the Certificate of Exemption of the Annual Return 2020/2021 at a future date. The Clerk would record the Minute References upon completion of the minutes of this meeting.

* 1. **Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors’ Rights**

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors’ Rights for the financial year 2020/2021 with the agenda. The Clerk reported that the Council had a duty to inform the electorate of a 30 working day period during which electors’ rights may be exercised. The inspection period must include the first 10 working days of July 2021. The dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights would be as follows:

Commencing on **Monday, 14th June 2021**

And ending on **Friday, 23rd July 2021**

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

**That this Council approves the Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors’ Rights for the financial year 2020/2021 as detailed.**

**All in favour**

1. **General correspondence**
   1. **For Action/Information**

No correspondence for action/information had been received.

* 1. **Late correspondence**

No late correspondence for action/information had been received.

1. **Planning**
   1. **Planning applications**
      1. **21/00788/F – 4 Farthing Road – Side Extension to dwelling – comments by 19th May 2021**

No objections.

* 1. **Planning decisions**
     1. **21/00281/F – 5 Chapel Row, Downham Road, Salters Lode – Single storey extension to dwelling**

Application permitted (Delegated Decision).

* 1. **Late planning applications and notices of decision**

No late planning applications and/or notices of decision had been received from the BCKL&WN.

* 1. **Planning enforcements, appeals and other notifications (for information only and not for discussion during the public open meeting)**

No planning enforcements, appeals or other notifications had been received from the BCKL&WN.

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that the 'Field Adj Two Acres Nursery Downham Road Salters Lode Norfolk', which had two appeals in progress, now had a third caravan on site. This was noted.

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Swaine, raised concern that there was a house which was structurally unsound and completely covered by trees (the house is situated just past the barns on the left hand side, down a dip, travelling from Salter’s Lode towards Downham Market) and vegetation clearance appeared to have been undertaken recently.

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that this property was believed to be owned by Barclays Bank Plc, and the BCKL&WN had taken over the maintenance of this property. There had been squatters’ rights there some time ago, raves held there and drug taking activities.

Borough Cllr Rose agreed to investigate the address of this property and confirm the actions being taken by the BCKL&WN.

1. **Reports from Outside Bodies**
   1. **Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board**

Cllr Fox reported that the Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board had met on Wednesday, 28th April 2021 outside adhering to safe distancing. The meeting began at Rouses Lane Cemetery. The Church of England side was now mostly occupied or pre-purchased and it was time to have the remainder of the area mapped out. The Non-Conformist/Roman Catholic side was also becoming quite full, indicating that the area currently used for allotments was reclaimed as soon as possible. A question was raised about setting aside an area for Muslim burials. So far, the need has not arisen, but does require consideration. The Board was still actively enquiring about a further plot of land to be used for burial grounds.

The meeting then moved to the King’s Walk Cemetery. The hole in the wall between this Cemetery and the Howdale is still in need of repair. A response was still awaited from the BCKL&WN with regard to their contribution towards this repair. The other walls around the Cemetery would be repaired shortly; this was a regular task for the contractors as they are all very old carrstone walls. Repairs were also in hand for the roof of the North Chapel. The former Lions Club had almost completed their clearing of the North Chapel.

Cemetery House was currently vacant but required considerable work to bring it back to the required standard for domestic letting. Two quotations for redecorating had been received which were quite high and a third is to be requested. There will also be a need for some electrical work. It seems that these figures are going to be high, compared with the rate of expected return. Possibilities for alternative uses would be investigated.

In the Churchside Cemetery, a bench seat was stolen last year and the Board has been monitoring prices for a man-made timber bench, but these have not been as inviting as in previous years. An old bench in the North Chapel may be suitable for refurbishment which can then be securely fitted in the Churchside Cemetery.

The Cemeteries are, as usual, very tidy and well-kept thanks to the grounds maintenance contractor.

* 1. **Hundred Acre Charity**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

1. **Ongoing matters**
   1. **Council archives**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

* 1. **Armed Forces Covenant**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

* 1. **Downham West Community Facebook page**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

1. **Parish Partnership Scheme 2021/2022 (Lady Drove to Downham Bridge trod)**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

1. **Councillor’s issues**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that 95 signatures had been placed in the book of condolence for the late HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The book would be brought to the next Council meeting for Councillors and the Clerk to sign prior to it being archived.

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

The next meeting of the Council would be taking place on Monday, 12th July 2021 at 7.00pm in Room 3, Methodist Church, Paradise Road.

1. **Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 S1)**
   1. **Clerk – matters for discussion**

There were no confidential matters to consider at this meeting.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.00pm.