**Downham West Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Council Meeting held Monday, 15th November 2021 at 7.00pm in Room 3, Methodist Church, Paradise Road**

Present: Chairman Cllr R Pegg

Vice Chairman Cllr C Swaine

Councillors Cllr F Daymond

Cllr J Doyle

Cllr J Fox

County Councillor Cllr C Dawson

Borough Councillors Cllr C Rose

Cllr V Spikings

Parish Clerk Mrs S Porter

Member(s) of Public 0

1. **Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

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**

Cllr Fox reported that Item 84.1 of the previous minutes had been reported incorrectly in that Downham Market Town Council had appointed three Councillors as representatives to the Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board, not the Clerk.

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

**That the minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, 27th September 2021 (Items 78-89) are approved and signed as a true and accurate record, with the above modification being noted.**

**All in favour**

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

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

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

**Reports**

**County Councillor**

County Cllr Dawson had reported items to the Council by email since the last Parish Council meeting as follows:

*27.09.2021 NCC Road Safety Community Fund – £1m Road Safety Community Fund*

*27.09.2021 Wisbech Incinerator proposal – Cllr Dawson abstained from the voting prior to planning application being received*

*29.09.2021 NCC Road Safety Community Fund launched – applications closing date 30.11.2021*

*04.10.2021 NCC £70,000 online crowd funding scheme launched – to support environmental and community projects*

*08.10.2021 Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Government guidance on organising a street party*

*10.10.2021 Wash Road, Welney – proposals update*

*13.10.2021 NCC – A47 Just Dual It Campaign asking for support via Facebook & Twitter*

*14.10.2021 Elizabeth Truss MP – Wash Road, Welney press release in support to stop road closures*

*22.10.2021 Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance (NSFA) has formally adopted an overall Strategy – Cllr Dawson will pursue in regards to Wash Road, Welney*

*09.11.2021 NCC Budget – Cabinet attempting to maintain a 3% rise*

*12.11.2021 NCC Empowering Communities Fund – local organisations can apply for grants up to £10,000 to help build their resilience and become more sustainable*

Cllr Dawson further reported that a resuméof his past six months in post would be circulated in December 2021 with a request for Clerks and Councillors to submit any items that they would wish for him to pursue for the next six months.

**Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllr Spikings reported that two new rounds of CIL funding would be available in 2022/2023; the first round for applications would be January 2022 and the second would be July 2022.

Every Borough Cllr had been allocated a Local Member Fund of £1,000 to support Parish/Town Council projects. Cllr Spikings would personally be limiting her allocation to £150.00 per parish. It was anticipated that this fund would also be available next year.

Borough Cllr Rose reported that proposals to tackle fly tipping, reduce littering, and improve the environment had been approved by Cabinet to address fly-tipping across West Norfolk.

The Stow Bridge hump in Bardolph had not been dredged by the Environment Agency (EA) because the consultants had stated that the silt was too fine and could not be transported. The Internal Drainage Board would be investigating other options by getting flood depth measuring points properly calibrated.

The 2022/2023 budget had not yet been finalised; considerations were ongoing to reduce the £193M shortfall.

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 reconciliations, periods ending September 2021 and October 2021, current bank account statements and finance summary with the agenda. The bank balances were as follows:

**September 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Reconciliation** | **Community Account (£)** | **Business Account (£)** |  | Reconciliation **Community Account (£)** | |  | Reconciliation **Business Account (£)** | |
| Bank Statement Start Balances | 716.36 | 5,471.86 |  | Bank Statement **01.09.2021** | 716.36 |  | Bank Statement **01.09.2021** | 5,471.86 |
| **Total Opening Bank Balances** |  | **6,188.22** |  | Receipts | 400.00 |  | Receipts | 0.14 |
|  |  |  |  | Payments Cleared | - 580.64 |  | Payments Cleared | - 400.00 |
| Unpresented Cheques B/F | - | - |  | Bank Statement **30.09.2021** | 535.72 |  | Bank Statement **30.09.2021** | 5,072.00 |
| Unpresented Receipts B/F | - | - |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Opening Balances** | **716.36** | **5,471.86** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Opening Balances** |  | **6,188.22** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Receipts | 400.00 | 0.14 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments | - 580.64 | - 400.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bank Statement Close Balances | 535.72 | 5,072.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **5,607.72** |  |  | - |  |  | - |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unpresented Cheques | - | - |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |
| Unpresented Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |
| **Council Closing Balances** | **535.72** | **5,072.00** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Closing Balances** |  | **5,607.72** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **535.72** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **5,072.00** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Council Total Closing Balances** | **5,607.72** |
|  | | |
| **Earmarked Funds** | | |
| Operating Costs (2 Months) | | 1,000.00 |
| Election Costs | | 250.00 |
| Street Lights LED Conversion | | - |
| 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 | **5,607.72** |  | |  |
| **Total Earmarked Reserves** | | **2,010.07** |  | Council Total Earmarked Reserves | **2,010.07** | Council Remaining Available Precept | | **3,597.65** |

**October 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Reconciliation** | **Community Account (£)** | **Business Account (£)** |  | Reconciliation **Community Account (£)** | |  | Reconciliation **Business Account (£)** | |
| Bank Statement Start Balances | 535.72 | 5,072.00 |  | Bank Statement **01.10.2021** | 535.72 |  | Bank Statement **01.10.2021** | 5,072.00 |
| **Total Opening Bank Balances** |  | **5,607.72** |  | Receipts | - |  | Receipts | - |
|  |  |  |  | Payments Cleared | - 30.75 |  | Payments Cleared | - |
| Unpresented Cheques B/F | - | - |  | Bank Statement **31.10.2021** | 504.97 |  | Bank Statement **31.10.2021** | 5,072.00 |
| Unpresented Receipts B/F | - | - |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |  | Unpresented Cheques |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Opening Balances** | **535.72** | **5,072.00** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Opening Balances** |  | **5,607.72** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments | - 30.75 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bank Statement Close Balances | 504.97 | 5,072.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **5,576.97** |  |  | - |  |  | - |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unpresented Cheques | - | - |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |
| Unpresented Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |
| **Council Closing Balances** | **504.97** | **5,072.00** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Closing Balances** |  | **5,576.97** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **504.97** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **5,072.00** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Council Total Closing Balances** | **5,576.97** |
|  | | |
| **Earmarked Funds** | | |
| Operating Costs (2 Months) | | 1,000.00 |
| Election Costs | | 1000.00 |
| Street Lights LED Conversion | | - |
| 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 | **5,576.97** |  | |  |
| **Total Earmarked Reserves** | | **2,760.07** |  | Council Total Earmarked Reserves | **2,760.07** | Council Remaining Available Precept | | **2,816.90** |

* 1. **Grants and donations (Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972) Royal British Legion Wreath**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that a wreath had been purchased for Remembrance Day and the invoice had been for £17.00.

A short discussion took place and Councillors agreed that as £30.00 had been budgeted for in this year’s precept, that a further £8.00 donation could be given to this cause.

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

**That the Council approves the purchase of a poppy wreath for £17.00 from the Downham Market & District Branch Royal British Legion and awards a further £8.00 to this cause under S137(1) LGA 1972.**

**All in favour**

* 1. **E-On Contract renewal**

The Clerk had circulated with the agenda details of E-On’s energy price rises in December 2021. The Vice Chairman, Cllr Swaine, felt that due to the recent collapse of many energy providers, the Council would be best advised to remain with E-On on the current contract and not fix a contract at this time.

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

**That the Council maintains the contract with E-On for the street lighting supply.**

**All in favour**

County Cllr Dawson left the meeting at 7.27pm.

* 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 £** |
| 29.09.2021 | Bauer Consumer Med | Transaction Under Investigation | DD | 2.20 | 0.00 | 2.20 | 0.00 |
| 12.10.2021 | E-On | Street Lighting Supply Sep 2021 | DD | 15.13 | 0.76 | 15.89 | 0.00 |
| 29.10.2021 | Bauer Consumer Med | Transaction Under Investigation | DD | 2.20 | 0.00 | 2.20 | 0.00 |
| 02.11.2021 | Bauer Consumer Med | Transactions refunded | DD | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 4.40 |
| 12.11.2021 | E-On | Street Lighting Supply Oct 2021 | DD | 15.63 | 0.78 | 16.41 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Holly Landscapes | War Mem, Bus Shelter Clean Sep | BACS | 38.75 | 7.75 | 46.50 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Clerk | Salary Sep 2021 | BACS | 183.58 | 0.00 | 183.58 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | HMRC | Employer PAYE/NI Sep 2021 | BACS | 46.00 | 0.00 | 46.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Royal British Legion | S137 Poppy Appeal Wreath | BACS | 17.00 | 0.00 | 17.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Royal British Legion | S137 Poppy Appeal Donation | BACS | 8.00 | 0.00 | 8.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | DM Methodist Church | Room Hire 27.09.2021 | DD | 12.00 | 0.00 | 12.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Clerk | Salary Oct 2021 | BACS | 183.58 | 0.00 | 183.58 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | HMRC | Employer PAYE/NI Oct 2021 | BACS | 46.00 | 0.00 | 46.00 | 0.00 |
| **Late Bills / Receipts (Received after Agenda advertised)** | | | | | | | |
| To be paid | Holly Landscapes | War Mem, Bus Shelter Clean Oct | BACS | 38.75 | 7.75 | 46.50 | 0.00 |
| **Totals this month** | | | | **608.82** | **17.04** | **625.86** | **4.40** |

The Clerk reported that she had spent many hours on the phone with Barclays to cancel the unauthorised direct debit with Bauer Consumer Med and to recall the funds. Barclays had confirmed that they had no control in unauthorised direct debits being set up.

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

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

**All in favour**

The Clerk reported that she had today discovered that HMRC was now charging interest on a daily rate for outstanding payments of the PAYE/NI contributions. As these payments were typically paid on a two monthly basis, the Clerk enquired whether the Council would approve the payment of the HMRC bills on a monthly basis to avoid any further charges being applied (which currently stood at 8p). The Clerk confirmed that the charges applied would be paid at the end of November 2021 with the next HMRC payment.

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

**That HMRC payments are settled on a monthly basis and that the outstanding interest is paid with the November PAYE/NI contributions.**

**All in favour**

**94. General correspondence**

* 1. **For Action/Information**
     1. **Road Safety Community Fund applications for funding (deadline date 30.11.2021)**

Prior to the agenda the Clerk had circulated details of the Road Safety Community Fund applications for funding. The Clerk reported that applications could be submitted for projects, based on similar criteria to that under the Parish Partnership Scheme.

Various suggestions were made by Councillors but it was agreed that there were no schemes for consideration.

* 1. **Late correspondence**

There was no late correspondence for action/information.

1. **2022 Meeting Dates**

The 2022 meeting dates were agreed as follows:

January 24

February -

March 14 **Annual Parish Meeting** and Ordinary Council meeting

April -

May 09 **Annual Meeting** (must be held within 14 days of elections) and Ordinary Council meeting

June 13

July 18

August -

September 19

October 24

November 21 Includes budget meeting

December -

The Clerk would contact the Methodist Church to confirm the dates and update the website.

1. **Planning**
   1. **Planning applications**
      1. **21/01578/F – Fendale, Downham Road, Salters Lode – Single storey side extension and internal alterations – comments by 10th November 2021**

No objections.

* 1. **Planning decisions**

No planning decisions had been received from the BCKL&WN.

* 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)**

There was no update on the appeal for Field Adj Two Acres Nursery, Downham Road, Salters Lode.

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 held a meeting on Wednesday, 27th October 2021. The meeting started at Rouses Lane Cemetery.

The Cemetery was inspected, as well as the current condition of the allotment area. The cemetery was found to be very tidy and it was agreed that the Grounds Contractor (Holly Landscapes) be asked to map out the remaining area of the Church of England section to ensure the alignment of graves were maintained. Defra had recently consulted with burial authorities regarding grave sizes; the current size was 3²m and their advice was to increase this to 5²m with a metre being required from the surface to the coffin and a further metre to the coffin of a double-depth grave. If these measurements were introduced, not only would the mapping of the cemetery have to incorporate these new dimensions, a great deal of burial ground would be lost and filled much sooner than anticipated.

A number of allotments were still in use, with the lease due to end in two years’ time, but this would bide further time for an additional site to be sought for purchase.

An application had been made to Norfolk County Council for free trees, but a response had not been received.

The remainder of the meeting was held at the Administrator’s office. When the meeting convened, the Board remembered Mr Royden J R Baker who had passed away recently.

It was noted that the wall repairs around the King’s Walk Cemetery had been completed and the roof tiles on the North Chapel were being replaced. The Cemetery House remained empty; there had been an enquiry regarding the sale of Cemetery House but the Board agreed that, at this time, it was not for sale.

The Burial fees for the coming year were agreed at 75% of the Borough Council’s fees. The 2020/2021 accounts were approved but the precepts had not yet been set due to a query regarding the population of Downham Market.

The officers for the coming year had been elected: Mr J Fox – Chairman and Mr S Nunn – Vice Chairman.

* + 1. **Nomination of representatives for this Council**

A long discussion took place and it was noted that Mrs D Stevens was currently a representative for this Council and it was felt that this was no longer appropriate.

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

**That the representatives of this Council for the Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board are Cllr Daymond, Cllr Fox and Cllr Pegg.**

**All in favour**

The Clerk would write to Mrs Stevens thanking her for the commitment she had made on behalf of the parish of Downham West and confirm that new representatives had now been appointed.

* 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. The next meeting was being held Wednesday, 17th November 2021.

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

The Clerk reported that she had made the Facebook live although there were currently very few members.

Borough Cllr Spikings left the meeting at 8.05pm.

* 1. **Bus Shelter upgrade**

The Clerk reported that County Cllr had earmarked £750.00 for this project. The Clerk would apply for CIL funding in January 2022 for this scheme.

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

The Clerk had circulated confirmation of the works prior to the agenda. The trod construction would be commencing in December 2021 with completion due in January 2022.

* 1. **Parish Partnership Scheme 2022/2023 – bids to be submitted by 10th December 2021**

A short discussion took place and Councillors agreed not to apply for a project under this scheme for the coming year.

1. **Draft Budget 2022/2023**

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the budget with the agenda and the items were considered.

The Clerk reported that the Tax Base had not yet been reported by the BCKL&WN and once this had been received, the Clerk would then circulate the draft precept and budget to Councillors in preparation for the January 2022 meeting.

Councillors agreed that due to the large Parish Partnership Scheme carried out this year the Council would not be in a position to finance another scheme in the 2022/2023 accounting year. It was noted that the precept had not been increased for many years and an increase would be required this year. It was agreed to maintain a precept increase to around 3%.

The final draft budget and precept would be presented for formal approval at the January 2022 meeting.

Cllr Fox thanked the Clerk for the work she had carried out on the budget preparations.

1. **Councillor’s issues**

There were no Councillors’ issues raised.

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, 24th January 2022 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 9.03pm.