**Downham West Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Council Meeting held Monday, 14th March 2022 at 7.15pm in The Vestry, 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

Parish Clerk Mrs S Porter

Member(s) of Public 0

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Borough Cllr C Rose (Covid) and Borough Cllr V Spikings (Covid).

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 Fox Seconded – Cllr Daymond**

**That the minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, 24th January 2022 (Items 1-14) 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.

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

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

**Reports**

**County Councillor**

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

*14.02.2022 NCC Highways Communication with Engineer*

*25.02.2022 NCC Budget update & links with Norfolk ALC*

*10.03.2022 NCC Members’ Briefing*

*10.03.2022 Welney Wash Road BBC Radio Cambridgeshire broadcast*

*11.03.2022 NCC News ‘Communities to have their say on School Streets trial’*

Cllr Dawson further reported that the Parish Partnership Scheme would be re-appraised in the next financial year and scaled back over the coming three years. This would ensure that Councils, which had not previously applied, would receive priority over those Councils which had formerly benefited from the scheme.

At its Council meeting on Monday, 21st February 2022, Norfolk County Council set a £464.1m net budget for 2022/2023, this meaning A Band D Council Tax rise of £44.01 to £1,516.95. The budget would require the Council to make savings of £28.4M.

Cllr Dawson suggested that this Parish Council consider seeking funding for the bus shelter project under the BCKL&WN CIL allocations in July 2022, with part funding from the County Councillor’s Local Member Fund and the remaining 50% under the Parish Partnership Scheme in December 2022. This was noted by the Clerk.

**Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllr Rose was not present at the meeting but had submitted a written report as follows:

*The BCKL&WN Budget was signed off at the meeting on Wednesday, 23rd February 2022. Council Tax for a Band D property had increased by £4.50 leading to a charge of £139.37, of which £57.20 will go to the Internal Drainage Boards. Considering that in the overall area 300,000 properties are at risk, this is money well spent. The Leader of the BCKL&WN, Mr S Dark, was looking at other ways to fund such work to lessen the burden to Council ratepayers. The Council’s services are provided for just £82.17p per year; 23p per day covers a wide range of services including bin collections, tourism, helping people in a housing crisis, etc., in the largest local authority area in Norfolk and one of the largest in England.*

*There has been an increase in Council Tax relief and £78M in grants to support local businesses, which means that for every 4p of the Council Tax total in every £1.00, a host of services are provided with the increase generally below the current rate of inflation. The BCKL&WN collects Council Tax for Norfolk County Council, the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Parish/Town Councils.*

*There have been investments in litter picking and fly-tipping, commitment to the Town Deal projects across King’s Lynn and £250k per annum has been approved for the next 4 years to tackle climate change and to support communities. More than a quarter of tariffs have not been increased. This area has been identified to benefit from the Government’s levelling up scheme and the BCKL&WN is keen to engage, but details are awaited of what this could mean. When all are combined the average band D property charge is £2,014. Hopefully some kind of normality will resume, but with staff shortages and a huge backlog, some delays are anticipated.*

*The next Police Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel will take place on Wednesday, 13th April at 7.00pm. Three more meetings are anticipated this year. As police moral is very low, more attendance in support would be much appreciated. The last meeting to set local priorities was only about 25 minutes long.*

*I have £490.00 left in my annual Member fund if any community groups need some funding, unfortunately Parish and Town Councils are excluded.*

*The January 2022 CIL applications were hugely oversubscribed and the next round of funding will take place in July 2022.*

Borough Cllr Spikings was not present at the meeting and no prior written report had been received.

**Public Participation**

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, resumed the meeting at 7.22pm.

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

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliations, periods ending January 2022 and February 2022, current bank account statements and finance summary with the agenda. The bank balances were as follows:

**January 2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Reconciliation** | **Community Account (£)** | **Business Account (£)** |  | Reconciliation **Community Account (£)** | |  | Reconciliation **Business Account (£)** | |
| Bank Statement Start Balances | 849.93 | 4,072.12 |  | Bank Statement **01.01.2022** | 849.93 |  | Bank Statement **01.01.2022** | 4,072.12 |
| **Total Opening Bank Balances** |  | **4,922.05** |  | Receipts | 1,000.00 |  | Receipts | - |
|  |  |  |  | Payments Cleared | - 552.58 |  | Payments Cleared | - 1,000.00 |
| Unpresented Payments B/F | - | - |  | Bank Statement **31.01.2022** | 1,297.35 |  | Bank Statement **31.01.2022** | 3,072.12 |
| Unpresented Receipts B/F | - | - |  | Unpresented Payments |  |  | Unpresented Payments |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Opening Balances** | **849.93** | **4,072.12** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Opening Balances** |  | **4,922.05** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Receipts | 1,000.00 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments | - 552.58 | - 1,000.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bank Statement Close Balances | 1,297.35 | 3,072.12 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **4,369.47** |  |  | - |  |  | - |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unpresented Payments | - | - |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |
| Unpresented Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |
| **Council Closing Balances** | **1,297.35** | **3,072.12** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Closing Balances** |  | **4,369.47** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **1,297.35** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **3,072.12** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Council Total Closing Balances** | **4,369.47** |
|  | | |
| **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 | | 162.22 |
| S137 Grants (Poppy Wreath) | | 5.00 |
| CIL | | - |
|  | |  |  | Council Total Closing Balances | **4,369.47** |  | |  |
| **Total Earmarked Reserves** | | **2,667.22** |  | Council Total Earmarked Reserves | **2,667.22** | Council Remaining Available Precept | | **1,702.25** |

**February 2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Reconciliation** | **Community Account (£)** | **Business Account (£)** |  | Reconciliation **Community Account (£)** | |  | Reconciliation **Business Account (£)** | |
| Bank Statement Start Balances | 1,297.35 | 3,072.12 |  | Bank Statement **01.02.2022** | 1,297.35 |  | Bank Statement **01.02.2022** | 3,072.12 |
| **Total Opening Bank Balances** |  | **4,369.47** |  | Receipts | - |  | Receipts | - |
|  |  |  |  | Payments Cleared | - 38.10 |  | Payments Cleared | - |
| Unpresented Payments B/F | - | - |  | Bank Statement **28.02.2022** | 1,259.25 |  | Bank Statement **28.02.2022** | 3,072.12 |
| Unpresented Receipts B/F | - | - |  | Unpresented Payments |  |  | Unpresented Payments |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Opening Balances** | **1,297.35** | **3,072.12** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Opening Balances** |  | **4,369.47** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments | - 38.10 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bank Statement Close Balances | 1,259.25 | 3,072.12 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **4,331.37** |  |  | - |  |  | - |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unpresented Payments | - | - |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |
| Unpresented Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |
| **Council Closing Balances** | **1,259.25** | **3,072.12** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Closing Balances** |  | **4,331.37** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **1,259.25** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **3,072.12** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Council Total Closing Balances** | **4,331.37** |
|  | | |
| **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 | | 162.22 |
| S137 Grants (Poppy Wreath) | | 5.00 |
| CIL | | - |
|  | |  |  | Council Total Closing Balances | **4,331.37** |  | |  |
| **Total Earmarked Reserves** | | **2,667.22** |  | Council Total Earmarked Reserves | **2,667.22** | Council Remaining Available Precept | | **1,664.15** |

* 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 £** |
| 03.02.2022 | Npower | Street Lighting Supply Dec | DD | 24.23 | 1.21 | 25.44 | 0.00 |
| 07.02.2022 | Westcotec | Street Lighting January 2021 | DD | 10.55 | 2.11 | 12.66 | 0.00 |
| 07.03.2022 | Westcotec | Street Lighting February 2021 | DD | 10.55 | 2.11 | 12.66 | 0.00 |
| 07.03.2022 | Barclays Bank Plc | Bank Interest | BACS | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.09 |
| To be paid | DM&DW Joint Burial Board | Burial precept | BACS | 595.00 | 0.00 | 595.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Clerk | Salary Jan 2022 | BACS | 183.78 | 0.00 | 183.78 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | HMRC | Employer PAYE/NI Jan 2022 | BACS | 45.80 | 0.00 | 45.80 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Clerk | Salary Feb 2022 | BACS | 183.58 | 0.00 | 183.58 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | HMRC | Employer PAYE/NI Feb 2022 | BACS | 46.00 | 0.00 | 46.00 | 0.00 |
| **Totals this month** | | | | **1099.49** | **5.43** | **1104.92** | **0.09** |

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

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

**All in favour**

* 1. **Pre-approval to pay March invoices prior to next Council Meeting**

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the Council was in May 2022 and invoices received in March 2022 would need to be paid in this financial year. The Clerk confirmed that she would circulate a list to Councillors towards the end of March of all payments to be made in order that Councillors could approve them in principle.

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

**That the Clerk circulates a list of invoices received in March 2022 to Councillors and is given delegated powers to pay them in this financial year.**

**All in favour**

1. **General correspondence**

**19.1. For Action/Information**

There was no correspondence for action/information.

* 1. **Late correspondence**

There was no late correspondence for action/information.

1. **Planning**
   1. **Planning applications**
      1. **22/00357/FM – Grantham To Bexwell Pipline Scheme: Downham Market, Downham West, Wimbotsham, Stow Bardolph, Outwell, Emneth, Upwell – Hybrid Planning Application for the proposed Grantham to Bexwell Pipeline Scheme with full planning consent sought for 95 kilometres of pipline and 4 kilmotre spur, and outline consent for associated above ground infrastructure at Elton and Welby Heath with all matters reserved except for access – comments by TBA**

Councillors noted that this pipeline scheme only affected the very tip of this parish. It was agreed to submit the following:

Neutral – no comments to make.

* 1. **Planning decisions**
     1. **21/00252/F – Straw Hall Farm, Birchfield Road, Nordelph – Proposed general purpose grain store**

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)**

**20.4.1. 19/00231/UNAUTU – Field Adj Two Acres Nursey, Downham Road, Salters Lode**

The Planning Inspectorate Hearing for the Enforcement Notice Appeal by Mr Danny Carman had been held on Tuesday, 25th January 2022.

The enforcement notice issued by the BCKL&WN was for material change of use of the land to a mixed use of agricultural land and use for residential/domestic purposes without planning permission.

The Appeal had been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate (enforcement notice upheld and planning permission refused) on the grounds set out in section 174(2) (a) and (f) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. The requirements of the notice were:

(a) Permanently cease the use of the land for the stationing of caravans and associated paraphernalia for residential/domestic purposes.

(b) Permanently remove all caravans and associated paraphernalia used for residential/domestic purposes from the land.

(c) Restore the land to its former condition.

The period for compliance with the requirements was four months (deadline Wednesday, 25th May 2022).

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

Cllr Fox reported the following:

The representatives on the Downham Market and Downham West Joint Burial Board from this Parish Council are Cllr Daymond, Cllr Fox and Cllr Pegg.

The Board usually meets in March/April and September/October. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 5th April 2022.

The Board works with administrators from Mapus-Smith and Lemmon who take care of the day to day running of the Cemeteries including allocating grave spaces and cremated remains interment plots as required.

The board is responsible for looking after three cemeteries in Downham Market, namely King’s Walk, Churchside and Rouses Lane.

King’s Walk is a closed cemetery but contains three buildings. Two of these are former Chapels of Rest and the third is Cemetery House.

The North Chapel is currently vacant. The South Chapel is rented primarily as a storage facility.

The Cemetery House has not passed the required checks (Energy Performance Certificate regulations) to be suitable for letting. Quotations have been received for bringing it up to standard by damp-proofing and additional electrical work etc., but, as these are very high, a search is taking place for grant funding which is proving unsuccessful at the moment.

Churchside Cemetery is still used but very rarely. Basically, only for the use of family graves.

The current Cemetery is at Rouses Lane and is running out of burial ground. There is a piece of land to the south of the current Cemetery which is currently let to the Town Council for allotments. Five years notice was given to the Town Council in 2018 requiring the return of the land. I understand that at the moment there are still a very few allotment holders on site. The agreement with the Town Council was to return the land in a tidy condition.

DEFRA has declared that the size of a burial plot should be increased from 3 square metres/32 square feet (4 feet x 8 feet) to 5 square metres/54 square feet (6 feet x 9 feet). This is being challenged by NALC but I have not heard any update at the moment. If this is passed then we will obviously need more burial ground.

Cllr Fox reported that he had contacted the BCKL&WN CIL Officer, Mrs A Driver, to enquire whether the Burial Board could apply for funding for the Cemetery House to bring it back to a standard for private letting purposes. Mrs Driver had confirmed that CIL could only be used for community use. Cllr Fox had also contacted Cllr E Nockolds, a member of the CIL Spending Panel, an officer in Norwich and an officer at English Heritage who each confirmed the same.

Cllr Fox reported that Mapus-Smith & Lemmon would be contacting the BCKL&WN for advice regarding the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) regulations, following a recent email which had invited tenants and landlords of private dwellings to contact them.

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that the EPC of private dwellings currently needed to be rated E or above. By 2025, the EPC would need to be B or above.

* 1. **Hundred Acre Charity**

Cllr Daymond reported that the Hundred Acre Charity had met in November 2021 and payments, in the form of vouchers, had been made to worthy parishioners in Downham West.

1. **Ongoing matters**
   1. **Representative for an Environmental Agency Action Group**

Mrs S Ling of Stow Bardolph Parish Council had attended the January 2022 Council meeting to enquire whether a member of this Council wished to join their action group in support of concerns regarding the Environment Agency’s (EA) lack of action in regards to silt build up on the River Ouse.

A short discussion took place and it was noted that flood modelling would not be introduced for at least five years. In light of this, Councillors agreed not to join the action group, as it was felt this would be an ineffective resource of time. The Clerk would inform Mrs Ling accordingly.

* 1. **Council archives**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

* 1. **Bus Shelter upgrade**

The Clerk had submitted a CIL bid to the BCKL&WN for the bus shelter renovation. A decision had not yet been received from the BCKL&WN.

1. **Councillor’s issues**

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Swaine, and the Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that two 40mph signs required attention. One was lain on the footpath just before The Lane and opposite this, another was covered by trees.

The Clerk would report these to Norfolk County Council.

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

The next meeting of the Council would be the Annual Meeting taking place on Monday, 9th May 2022 at 7.00pm in Room 3, Methodist Church, Paradise Road.

County Cllr Dawson left the meeting at 8.01pm.

1. **Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 S1)**

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

**That under the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 Section 1, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in order to allow confidential items to be discussed.**

**All in favour**

* 1. **National Joint Council (NJC) pay scales 2021/2022**

See confidential report.

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, closed confidentiality and resumed the meeting at 8.03pm.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.04pm.