**Downham West Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Council Meeting held Monday, 21st November 2022 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

Parish Clerk Mrs S Porter

Member(s) of Public 0

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from County Cllr C Dawson (prior meeting) and Borough Cllr C Rose (prior meeting).

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 Council meeting**

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

**That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday, 24th October 2022 (Items 68-80) 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. **Updates regarding ongoing matters**

**84.1. Gate obstruction on Downham West Public Bridleway 4, Salters Lode**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, reported that he had been in touch with the Public Right of Way (PRoW) officer at Norfolk County Council to confirm to them that Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) was responsible for all associated costs in relocating the access gate on the Downham West Public Bridleway 4, Salters Lode. The matter was therefore currently in the hands of Norfolk County Council.

It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda until further communication had been received from Norfolk County Council.

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, adjourned the meeting at 7.09pm.

**Reports**

**County Councillor**

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

*25.10.2022 Complaint email to NCC from Cllr Dawson regarding road closures/diversions (Wilkins Road works, Emneth)*

*12.11.2022 County Cllr Dawson’s proposed Salters Lode TRO and traffic monitoring*

*14.11.2022 Financial assistance to churches*

**Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllr Rose was not present at the meeting but had submitted the following written report:

*I regret that I must again give my apologies for attendance; this meeting conflicts with the Three Holes Village Hall Trustees meeting, of which I am the Interim Chair. This was originally for three months from April 2022, but we cannot get a replacement and no one else feels confident to replace me.*

*May I also remind members that there is a meeting with the Norfolk Police Crime Commissioner (NPCC) and Chief Constable on Tuesday, 13th December 2022 from 6.00pm – 8.00pm at the Discover King's Lynn unit, Vancouver Quarter.*

*I attended the NPCC meeting at Downham Market Library where he was pleased to have support. It is an unfortunate sign of the times that antisocial behaviour has replaced speeding as the main local police priority issue.*

*As this is the last Downham West Parish Council meeting for this year, may I wish everyone a happy Christmas and New Year. Let’s hope the war in Ukraine gets finished and the financial prospects improve.*

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

**Public Participation**

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Swaine, reported that he would be assisting County Cllr Dawson in carrying out a traffic survey on the A1122 to study the speed of vehicles.

This was noted.

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

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

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliation, period ending October 2022, current bank account statements and finance summary with the agenda. The bank balances were as follows:

**October 2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank Reconciliation** | **Community Account (£)** | **Business Account (£)** |  | Reconciliation **Community Account (£)** | |  | Reconciliation **Business Account (£)** | |
| Bank Statement Start Balances | 1,043.83 | 6,174.85 |  | Bank Statement **01.10.2022** | 1,043.83 |  | Bank Statement **01.10.2022** | 6,174.85 |
| **Total Opening Bank Balances** |  | **7,218.68** |  | Receipts | 1,011.37 |  | Receipts | - |
|  |  |  |  | Payments Cleared | - 1,004.13 |  | Payments Cleared | - 1,000.00 |
| Unpresented Payments B/F | - | - |  | Bank Statement **31.10.2022** | 1,051.07 |  | Bank Statement **31.10.2022** | 5,174.85 |
| Unpresented Receipts B/F | - | - |  | Unpresented Payments |  |  | Unpresented Payments |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Opening Balances** | **1,043.83** | **6,174.85** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Opening Balances** |  | **7,218.68** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Receipts | 1,011.37 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments | - 1,004.13 | - 1,000.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bank Statement Close Balances | 1,051.07 | 5,174.85 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Closing Bank Balances** |  | **6,225.92** |  |  | - |  |  | - |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unpresented Payments | - | - |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |  | Unpresented Receipts |  |
| Unpresented Receipts | - | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | - |  |  | - |
| **Council Closing Balances** | **1,051.07** | **5,174.85** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Council Total Closing Balances** |  | **6,225.92** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **1,051.07** |  | **Council Closing Balance** | **5,174.85** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Council Total Closing Balances** | **6,225.92** |
|  | | |
| **Earmarked Funds** | | |
| Operating Costs (4 Months) | | 2,000.00 |
| Election Costs | | 800.00 |
| Speed Sign Maintenance | | 500.00 |
| Bus Shelter (match funding for CIL) | | 200.00 |
| Transparency Fund Grant | | 162.22 |
| S137 Grants | | 100.00 |
| CIL | | - |
|  | |  |
|  | |  |  | Council Total Closing Balances | **6,225.92** |  | |  |
| **Total Earmarked Reserves** | | **3,762.22** |  | Council Total Earmarked Reserves | **3,762.22** | Council Remaining Available Precept | | **2,463.70** |

* 1. **Norfolk ALC Autumn Conference**

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had requested permission to attend the Norfolk ALC Autumn Conference on Wednesday, 23rd November 2022 at a cost of £20.00, split between three Councils, and confirmed that travel costs would not be claimed as she had managed to obtain a lift from another attendee. However, due to limited numbers, the conference had been cancelled and would be rescheduled in 2023.

* 1. **Earmarked Reserves**

The Clerk reported that the balance as of today in the Business Account was £3,674.85 but the Council was holding £3,762.22 in earmarked reserves.  In view of this, the Clerk requested permission to reduce the earmarked reserves in Operational Costs from £2,000.00 to £1,000.00.  An item would be placed in the draft 2023/2024 budget to build this fund back up.

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

**That the Council reduces the earmarked reserves in Operational Costs to £1,000.00 and vires this amount to the remaining 2022/2023 precept balance.**

**All in favour**

* 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:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 25.10.2022 | E-On | Refund credit on closed account | 100051 | -10.83 | -0.54 | -11.37 | 0.00 |
| 31.10.2022 | Westcotec | Street Lighting October 2022 | DD | 10.55 | 2.11 | 12.66 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | N Power | Street Lighting Supply Oct 2022 | DD | 18.97 | 0.95 | 19.92 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Clerk | Salary October 2022 | BACS | 186.94 | 0.00 | 186.94 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | HMRC | Employer PAYE/NI October 2022 | BACS | 46.80 | 0.00 | 46.80 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Mrs S Porter (RBL) | Remembrance Wreath S137 | BACS | 25.00 | 0.00 | 25.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | DM Methodist Church | Room Hire 24.10.2022 | BACS | 14.00 | 0.00 | 14.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | S Porter (Metal Foundry) | Queen Commemorative Plaque | BACS | 58.29 | 11.66 | 69.95 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Thomas B Bonnett | Queen Plaque Stand | BACS | 79.17 | 15.83 | 95.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | DM & DW Burial Board | Burial precept 2022/2023 | BACS | 990.00 | 0.00 | 990.00 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Holly Landscapes | War Mem/Bus Shelter Clean Oct | BACS | 38.75 | 7.75 | 46.50 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | Clerk | Salary November 2022 | BACS | 298.06 | 0.00 | 298.06 | 0.00 |
| To be paid | HMRC | Employer PAYE/NI November | BACS | 74.40 | 0.00 | 74.40 | 0.00 |
| **Totals** | | | | **1,830.10** | **37.76** | **1,867.86** | **0.00** |

The Clerk had circulated the National Joint Council (NJC) Pay Scales 2022-2023 with the agenda. The Clerk’s Spinal Column Point (SCP) 19 rate had been increased from £13.48 per hour to £14.48, backdated to 1st April 2022.

Members noted and approved this.

**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. **2023 Meeting dates**

The meeting dates were agreed as follows:

January 23

February -

March 13 Annual Parish Meeting & Ordinary Council Meeting

April -

May 15 Annual Meeting (must be held within 14 days of elections)

June 19

July 24

August -

September 11

October 23

November 27 (Includes Budget Meeting)

December -

The Clerk reported that she had already sought prior confirmation from the Methodist Church that these dates were available. A copy of the meeting dates would be placed on the website.

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

No correspondence for action or information had been received.

* 1. **Late correspondence**

No late correspondence for action or information had been received.

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

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

* 1. **Planning decisions**

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

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

No planning late planning applications 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 nothing to report to the meeting.

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

There was nothing to report to the meeting.

* 1. **Hundred Acre Charity**

There was nothing to report to the meeting.

1. **Written reports (as listed on the agenda) regarding Councillor issues and village matters**
   1. **War Memorial Cleaning – Cllr Swaine to report**

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Swaine, reported that biological growth was starting to form on the lettering of the names on the Salters Lode War Memorial.

A short discussion took place and it was agreed that the War Memorial should be cleaned by a specialist company.

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Swaine, agreed to investigate the costs for this. The Clerk would forward him details of three reputable local stonemasons who each traded under H Brett & Son.

1. **Draft Budget 2023/2024**

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

The Clerk recommended that due to the financial pressures on Parish and Town Councils this year, which had not been predicted and budgeted this year, Councils were being encouraged to consider a precept rise of no less than 5%.

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.

The final draft budget and precept would be presented for formal approval at the January 2023 meeting.

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

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, 23rd January 2023 at 7.00pm in Room 3, Methodist Church, Paradise Road.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.21pm.