

DEOPHAM & HACKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Council meeting on Wednesday 2nd December 2020, 7.30pm via Zoom Video Conferencing

Cllrs present:

Jacky Phoenix – Chair (JP), Chris Coath (CC), Chris Biggs (CB), Martin Skidmore (MS)

Cllrs absent:

John Chilvers (JC)

Other:

Jordana Wheeler (Clerk), Cllr Margaret Dewsbury (MD), Cllr Yvonne Bendle (YB). There was 1 member of the public present.

This meeting took place via video conference due to the current Coronavirus pandemic and government guidelines to social distance.

1. Apologies for Absence
 - 1.1. John Chilvers (JC) was absent. All other Councilors were present.
2. To receive any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensation
 - 2.1. There were no declarations of interest in any items on the agenda.
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 4th November 2020
 - 3.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2020 were received and read by Councillors prior to the meeting. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes. The Clerk will liaise with JP to sign the minutes after the meeting.
4. To report on progress of matters arising from previous meetings and review the action log
 - 4.1. Due to the current pandemic it was suggested that updating the bank signatories be postponed until after Christmas. The Clerk will follow this up in the New Year.
 - 4.2. The Clerk suggested the new lease for the playing field should be completed ready for the start of the new financial year.
 - 4.3. The Councillor vacancies have been advertised.
 - 4.4. CC asked MD for clarification on the increase of the County Council budget. MD noted the Council had already agreed to increase the social care budget by 2%, however since then the government has agreed it can be raised by 3%. As Norfolk County Council had already consulted on their proposed budget they have agreed to leave it at a 2% increase. CC enquired if this meant there would be cuts in 2021-22, MD noted this was still being reviewed and that the budget must balance.

Draft minutes until approved at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 6th January 2021

Chairman Signature:

Date:

5. Finance - To receive the bank reconciliation for Oct/Nov 2020 and approve the following payments:

The Council reviewed the bank reconciliation. The Clerk noted the new figure for the dog bin emptying was £264.96, a new invoice had been issued after the Clerk noted the reduced rate for once a week emptying had not been applied to the original invoice. The Council queried what the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) fee was, the Clerk noted that the Council has to register with the ICO as it holds and manages data. All Parish Councils must be registered with the ICO. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the payments. The Clerk will arrange for JP and MS to sign the cheques outside of the meeting.

	Description	Cheque Number	Amount
5.1	South Norfolk Council – Dog Bin Emptying 2020-21	100597	£264.96
5.2	Information Commissioners Office annual registration fee	100598	£40.00
5.3	HMRC – PAYE Nov 2020	100599	£9.60

6. To approve setting up a direct debit for Information Commissioners Office annual registration
- 6.1. The Clerk explained that by paying the annual fee to the Information Commissioners Officer (ICO) by direct debit it will reduce the fee by £5. The Council **RESOLVED** to set up a direct debit for the annual ICO fee.
7. To consider an annual subscription to NPTS and NALC
- 7.1. The Council considered the services provided by both Norfolk Parish Training & Support (NPTS) and Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC). The Clerk noted the service received over the last year from NPTS has been very good. The Council **RESOLVED** to subscribe to NPTS for 2021-22.
- 7.2. MD noted she regularly attends NALC meetings and that NALC have recently become a co-operative.
ACTION – Clerk to provide further information to the Council on NALC becoming a cooperative.
8. To discuss future rent payments for the playing field
- 8.1. The Clerk noted options for bringing the payment of rent for the playing field earlier in the year and proposed moving it to April from October. It was believed that previous rent payments may have fallen into arrears during the transition from the previous committee to the Council running the field. The Council **RESOLVED** to pay the rent in 2 halves in 2021-22 in April and Oct, then pay in full each April from 2022.
ACTION – MS to arrange for the new lease to reflect the new payment schedule.
9. To consider the draft budget for 2021-22
- 9.1. The Clerk summarised the draft budget. General Reserves at the end of the year are estimated to be £4718, which is approximately 7 months of precept, the recommended figure is between 3-12 months. The Council is now in a more secure financial position. The annual income from rent of the playing field to the football team is not deducted from the precept request as this is not guaranteed income for the next financial year. Overall, the proposed precept request is £7800, a 5% increase on last year. This is based on an estimated tax base and therefore may change once the tax base has been confirmed. Previously the precept requests alternated yearly between no increase,

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followed by a large increase. The proposal is to now follow regular small increases where needed.

- 9.2. There were no significant changes in the budget from last year, most budget areas included small increases in line with inflation. Maintenance costs have remained the same and any remaining at the end of each year is allocated towards reserves for the future purchase of new play equipment.
- 9.3. The Council's preference was to keep increases to a minimum, however, an increase of 5% equates to an extra £1.62 across the whole year for a band D property which was considered reasonable. CC noted the budget seemed sensible.

ACTION – Clerk to amend budget when the tax base is confirmed. The final budget and precept request will be agreed at the January meeting.

10. To consider the option for whole Council training

- 10.1. The Clerk explained the option of whole Council training, with options to choose from a list of topics to be covered in the training so that it is tailored to the Councils requirements. It usually takes place over an evening and costs approx. £250. Costs could be shared by joining with another Council for the training. Training would be beneficial to Councillors whether they have been a Councillor for years or are new. The Council agreed to consider this again once the current Councillor vacancies have been filled.

11. To consider a response to the following planning applications:

- 11.1. Application 2020/2150 – Notification for Prior Approval for a proposed change of use and associated building works of an agricultural building to a dwelling house, High Elm Farm, Deopham
The Clerk noted this was the same application as a previous one (2020/1251) but that additional information had been submitted in response to and to explain some of the reasons the original application had been refused. YB noted that applications are able to be resubmitted but that previous comments will not be rolled over. The Council **RESOLVED** they had no objections to the application and were happy for the planning team to determine the best outcome of the application.

- 11.2. Application 2020/2194 – Two storey rear extension, White House Farm, Hackford
The Council noted the extension would be visible from the road but that there were no nearby neighbours who would be impacted directly. JP noted drainage in the area is a problem and the road often floods and was concerned about the impact. The Council **RESOLVED** they had no objections but wished to draw attention to any potential impact on surface water and drainage in the area.

12. Opportunity for public participation

- 12.1. A member of the public thanked the Clerk for her hard work. They also thanked the Council for their efforts in relation to the item 11.1.
- 12.2. YB noted South Norfolk Council (SNC) and Broadland District Council are still working on streamlining their joined systems. Staff from areas such as leisure centres have continued to be redeployed to work in other areas during the November lockdown. SNC are not proposing any major cuts to their budget for 2021-22.
- 12.3. MD noted Norfolk County Council had received £635,000 from the government to help reduce homelessness over the next 3-4 years. The Council are also promoting awareness of current scams as there has been an increase during the pandemic.

13. To confirm the date of the next meeting

13.1. The next Parish Council meeting will take place via video conference on Wednesday 6th January 2021, 7.30pm. The press and public are welcome to attend.

JP wished everyone a happy Christmas.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.