

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NEWBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Held on 2nd March 2015

Present: Peter Waller (Chair), Michael Frost, Jan Carlton, Sue Pollard, Lionel Scott, Peter Smyth, Jim Wicks

In attendance: Cllr Veronica Falconer, Cllr Patricia O'Brien, Cllr Susan Harvey, Colin Moore (Clerk), 1 member of the public

Public question time. No questions or issues raised.

The Chair formally opened the meeting at 19.30. The Clerk informed the meeting that he would be standing down at the end of March 2015 and the Chair advised that he would be dealing with the issues arising as a matter personal to a member of staff. It was **agreed** that under standing orders 3(d), 11 and 19 members of the public would be excluded and a confidential minute of the matters discussed would be produced by the Chair.

1. **Apologies for absence:**, None
2. **Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest:** None
3. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 2nd February 2015.** The minutes were **approved** without amendment and signed by the Chair.

To facilitate the member of the public the Chair brought forward the item:

15 Election 2015 – Nomination forms and process update.

Having attended a SALC briefing earlier in the day the Chair and Clerk provided a brief outline of the process for the benefit of councillors and public. The Clerk had advised his preparedness to submit nomination and acceptance papers to the District Council if they were completed and given to him before the due dates (23rd March to 9th April). Posters will be displayed in the village and announcements made through the web site as appropriate.

4. **Suffolk Police update.** The February 2015 police report had been received and circulated. The report was **noted**.
5. **County and District councillor's reports.** Cllr O'Brien advised that she would be standing down from her District Councillor post but would be retaining her County Councillor role. Cllr Falconer advised that she would be standing down as a District Councillor at the election. She introduced Susan Harvey who would be re-standing for the Kirton Ward, which will now include Newbourne. Both Cllr O'Brien and Cllr Falconer confirmed that there were no increases in County or District precepts for 2015/16 and provided local background information on library services, recycling and the business community awards. Concern was expressed in relation to the loss of the police helicopter facility locally and the councillors were requested to express Newbourne's concerns.
6. **Action points.** None outstanding
7. **Planning**
 - a) **DC/14/4249/OUT** – erection of a dwelling. Land at Mill Road. (Between #18 and #19). The Clerk reported that it was anticipated that the application would be dealt with by the planning

officers and would not go to committee. It was likely to be refused although the formal outcome was still awaited. **Noted.**

- b) **DC/15/0189/FUL** – Alter curtilage line and erection of a single storey 2 bay cart lodge extension to the side of the existing house. Approved by District Planning - **noted.**

8. Finance

- a) Clearance of cheques for payment. Payment of all pending expenditure transactions (list attached to these minutes) agreed and cheques signed.
- b) Budget update and confirmation of 2015/16 budget and earmarked reserves. The clerk produced the final draft of the 2015/16 budget and earmarked reserve listing (attached to these minutes) and answered queries. The budget and allocation of earmarked reserves (Play space £4000; Election contingency £1000) for 2015/16 was formally **agreed**. The operational reserve, (£4000) established when the precept was agreed in January was also confirmed.
- c) Audit 2014/15, agreement to engage SALC for internal audit. It was **agreed** that SALC be engaged, as last year, as internal auditors. The Clerk advised that the end of year reconciliation and review of internal controls were required and the Vice Chair **agreed** to do this and report back to the next meeting.
- d) Draft accounts 2014/15. The Clerk produced a draft summary account for 2014/15 and explained the component elements. The account was **noted** for approval at the April meeting.
- e) Approval for cheque signing between meetings. The Clerk sought approval to arrange for the signing of cheques, where necessary, between this and the next meeting. Thus avoiding any expenditure incurred in March being carried forward into the next financial year. Approval was **agreed**.

9. Clerks report and correspondence

- a) **Councillor Travel Expenses.** SALC had advised that draft regulations are being made to introduce an exemption from income tax for certain travel expenses paid to councillors. Further information would be provided once the scheme was enacted. **Noted**
- b) **Electronic summons.** The Clerk outlined the recent resolution of the situation where councils could not serve meeting summons electronically. However parish councillors who wished to continue receiving hard copy could continue to do so. He confirmed which of the councillors now required all communications electronically.
- c) **Standing Orders review.** A number of changes in procedure and underlying regulations had occurred over the past few months including transparency, audit and banking procedures. Accordingly the standing orders required further review and possible amendment. The Chair proposed that the task be laid to the incoming council. This proposal was **agreed**.

10. Transparency Code implications for the parish council. The Chair explained that the new regulations, as applied to small councils, would place extra work on the web administrator. The original purpose in greater transparency was designed to obviate the need for a full audit. However it now appeared that for the next two or three years both were required with the unwelcome outcome of further overhead costs in parish council administration. Peter Smyth considered that much was already in place and that as system administrator he did not see any particular problems. **Noted.**

- 11. Revelry update.** The seat to the zip wire had failed and Peter Smyth reported his dealings with Playdale, the manufacturers. They had offered to replace the seat without cost although councillors expressed the view that Playdale should also defray the cost of refitting the seat as it appeared to have failed as a result of a design fault. Peter Smyth **agreed** to go back to Playdale. It was **agreed** that SCL be requested to refit the seat. The view was expressed that it may not have been necessary to remove the full seat transport to make the ride temporarily safe. This was **noted** together with the Chair's immediate action to place safety work in hand once the problem had been reported.
- 12. Web Site update.** Peter Smyth continues to update the site and work with other village organisations to make the site a 'portal' to village activities and businesses. **Noted.**
- 13. Village Hall report.** Sue Pollard confirmed receipt of two £500 grants for the village hall from the District and County councils and confirmed that work to renovate the toilets was being put in hand.
- 14. SALC Training feedback.** The Chair and Clerk had attended SALC training seminars on both the election process and end of year audit. They felt that it had been effective and of assistance to them both. **Noted**
- 15. See above.**

The Clerk and member of the public then left the meeting which went into a closed session under Standing Orders 3(d), 11 and 19

Chair, 13th April 2015