

DALHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22nd March 2018

Councillors present: Isobel Aylott (Chairman), Rachael Padman, David Fitch, John Riddell, Jackie Bolton and Simon Bates

Also present: Joanne Kirk (Clerk), District Councillor Roger Dicker, County Councillor Robin Millar and one member of the public

1. County Councillor's Report

Robin Millar spoke about the following:

- Suffolk County Council has just appointed a new Chief Executive, Nicola Beech.
- Suffolk County Council has commissioned a report on what would be the best structure for local government in Suffolk.
- The proposed new ward boundaries once Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council amalgamate. Dalham will be in the Chedburgh and Chevington Ward with Ousden, Lidgate, Hargrave and Depden.
- Highways has been restructured with a reduction in the number of contractors used.
- The junction with Ashley and Gazeley with the B1085. A Highways engineer has looked at the drawing sent by Dalham PC. Robin Millar agreed to email the response from Highways. The clerk was asked to email a list of outstanding Highways issues and queries, including why the cost of white gates, which were quoted as £4,550 by Highways, is so high, the possibility of changing the speed limit along the Street to the bridge near the Affleck Arms to 20mph and moving the 30mph sign on Stores Hill further out.

2. District Councillor's Report

Roger Dicker spoke about the following:

- The proposed new ward boundaries once Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council amalgamate.

3. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from John McDonagh.

4. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda.

5. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18th January 2018

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

6. Police issues

There were no issues to report.

7. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting

There were two outstanding councillor actions.

8. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- J P Kirk - expenses – LGA 1972, s111 – **£24.64**

John Riddell and Rachael Padman checked and signed the schedule of payments. Rachael Padman countersigned it.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings

No payments were authorised between meetings.

c) To receive a statement of receipts and payments (including online payments) made since the last meeting

Receipts			Details		Amount
Payments		Minute reference	Details	Method	Amount
19/01/2018	038	115/7a	J P Kirk - expenses	Online	£10.03
19/01/2018	039	115/7a	Dalham VH Charity - rental for defibrillator training	Online	£15.00
19/01/2018	040	115/7g	Transfer to deposit account	Online	£6,000.00
30/01/2018	041	100/9g & h	J P Kirk - salary	S/O	£217.78
28/02/2018	042	100/9g & h	J P Kirk - salary	S/O	£217.78

d) To receive a statement of receipts for the financial year 2017/18

Date	Details of receipts - current account	Amount
28/04/17	Forest Heath District Council	£3,018.00
03/05/17	HMRC - VAT refund 2016/17	£653.80
01/07/17	Forest Heath District Council	£3,019.00
05/07/17	SALC - transparency fund grant	£597.36
01/09/17	FHDC - locality funding for VAS	£1,000.00
	Total received	£8,288.16
Date	Details of transfers from current account to reserve account	Amount
17/11/07	Transfer from current account	£1.00
19/01/18	Transfer from current account	£6,000.00
	Total amount transferred	£6,001.00

e) **Checklist of Internal Controls**

John Riddell completed the checklist of internal controls.

g) **Review of all regular payments including the clerk's salary and approval of payments relating to these services for 2018-19**

It was resolved the following regular payments would continue to be paid in 2018 - 19:

Payment	2017/18	2018/19	Notes
Community Action Suffolk - Insurance	£351	£351	
Subscriptions:			
SALC	£133	£133	
Risby Parish Council - phone costs	£27	£27	
CAS Ltd - website hosting fee	£60	£60	
HMRC - PAYE	£110	£10	Amount may vary slightly
Clerk's salary	£2,613	£2,613	Monthly payment, amount may vary slightly if PAYE paid.
Fidelity Funds Network - contribution to clerk's workplace pension	£180	£180	
Verge cutting	£1,440	£1,440	Amount may vary depending on weather conditions and number of cuts
ICO - data protection registration	£35	£55	
Village hall rental	£0	£200	

h) **Review of the Council's verge cutting contract**

It was resolved that the Council would ask K Hutchinson to cut the verges again this year

i) **Review of the clerk's salary for 2018/19 and approve the payment by standing order**

The clerk's hourly rate remains the same at £12.56 in line with the NALC national salary award for 2017/18. It was resolved that payments would continue to be made by standing order.

j) **To check the PAYE details and tax code for the clerk's salary**

John Riddell reviewed the clerk's Confidential Cashbook and signed it as correct.

k) **Review of the income and expenditure for 2017/18 against the budget and the level of reserves for general and earmarked expenditure**

Councillors reviewed the income and expenditure for 2017/18 against the budget. Dalham Parish Council has a budget surplus of approximately £470.00. The estimated reserve as of 31/03/18 is £7,484 which includes allocated funds of £3,962. The general reserve is within the recommended guidelines of no more than one year's annual precept.

i) **Review the register of fixed assets and insurance values**

Councillors reviewed the assets register. Six new assets were added in 2017/18 - the vehicle activated sign and five brackets.

j) **Review of the Council's Risk Assessment**

It was resolved that no amendments were necessary. The Chairman then signed it.

k) **Liability insurance**

The Council has the following levels of liability cover:

- Public liability cover: £10,000,000
- Personal accident: £25,000

- Employee dishonesty: £25,000
- Employer's liability (clerk only) £10,000,000

l) Review of the Council's Financial Regulations to ensure that they are being complied with

It was resolved that the Council's Financial Regulations were being complied with. The Chairman then signed them

m) Appointment of an internal auditor to check the Council's system of internal controls and review of the effectiveness of the internal audit. The internal auditor must be independent from the Parish Council.

A resident has offered to act as internal auditor. It was resolved that Isobel Aylott would check that she has experience of parish council accounts, if not Cathy Whitaker, clerk to Exning Parish Council, would be appointed as internal auditor this year and that a fee of £65 would be paid. The Council reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit. It was resolved that the internal audit was effective and that audit regulations would be met for the following reasons:

- Does the internal audit sufficiently cover all aspects of the financial controls relevant to the council (for example risk management, detection of fraud, internal controls) and are terms of reference in place and approved? Yes, New Financial Regulations were approved on 19th March 2015 to introduce procedures to detect fraud once electronic banking is introduced. A checklist of internal controls is completed by an account signatory at every meeting to verify payments on bank statements against actual payments as listed in the accounts to ensure that there are no discrepancies.
- Is the internal auditor independent (i.e. does not have any role within the Council)? Yes. The internal auditor does not have a role within the Council.
- Is the internal auditor competent to carry out their work ethically, with integrity and objectivity? Is there any evidence to suggest that this may not be the case? Yes, she is a parish council clerk and RFO for Newmarket Town Council. There is no evidence to suggest that she will not carry out the work ethically, with integrity and objectivity.
- Is the Responsible Officer consulted in the internal audit plan? Yes.
- Are the responsibilities of members of the Council understood and has the necessary training been undertaken? Yes
- Is there a plan in place for when the internal audit will be undertaken and does the plan properly take account of corporate risk? The internal audit will take place in April 2018 prior to the accounts being approved at the Annual Meeting on 17th May 2018. The internal auditor's report will be presented to the Parish Council at this meeting and any issues raised by the internal auditor will be discussed at the meeting and an action plan produced.

n) To review the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls

The following internal controls are in place:

- At each meeting a councillor checks bank statements against the Parish Council's accounts to ensure that transactions correspond and that the bank reconciliation agrees with the bank statement
- Where possible payments are approved at meetings and a Schedule of Payments is prepared which is checked by two councillors. Corresponding invoices are checked and signed by two councillors at the same time.
- Regular payments are approved at the March meeting and the invoices paid when they are received. These invoices are checked and signed by two councillors at the next meeting after they have been paid.
- The chairman rules off and signs the Schedule of Payments so that no amendments can be made after the meeting.
- Cheques must be signed by two signatories along with the corresponding invoice.
- A record of online payments is kept and checked at each meeting.
- If a supplier changes their bank details, the supplier must supply a written hard copy notifying the change.

It was resolved that these controls are adequate and are working well.

o) Appointment of a councillor to inspect the Council's property for damage or defects by 30th April 2018 and complete the inspection checklist.

It was resolved that Isobel Aylott would inspect the Council's property.

p) Review the Council's Standing Orders

The Council's Standing Orders were reviewed. No changes were made.

8. Planning

a) DC/18/0344/HH - 2 Brookside, Dalham - (i) Conversion of existing garage to a store room including removing up and over garage door and infill of opening to match existing (ii) insertion of new window to store room

It was resolved that no objections would be made to this application.

9. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues:

a) VAS data and possible speed reduction measures in Lidgate Road

The Council is awaiting an analysis of the latest VAS data before it can decide what speed reduction measures would be appropriate.

b) Update on the B1085 crossroads

It was resolved that the Council would request a safety audit once it received the response from Highways to the query about the junction with Ashley and Gazeley on the B1085. The Council agreed to submit a reply saying that they are not satisfied with the response from Highways and would like to request a safety audit and for the white lines at this junction and at the junction with Gazeley to be repainted as the lines are worn away.

c) Suffolk County Council's Speed Limit Policy Criteria and the possibility of reducing the speed limit from the village hall to the bridge near the Affleck Arms

See above

10. Update on preparations for GDPR

a) Risk assessment

Councillors reviewed the new GDPR risk assessment and agreed that systems are being put in place to protect personal data. It was resolved that the risk assessment would be adopted.

b) Security of data and measures we need to take to protect data

It was resolved that the following measures would be taken to protect personal data:

- Hard copy documents will be kept at the clerk's home. It was resolved that the Council would purchase a new lock for the clerk's home office with the cost split between the clerk's six councils.
- Sensitive documents such as the electoral roll are stored in a fireproof safe or in the clerk's home office.
- The clerk has installed CLAM XAV anti-virus software for Mac on her laptop as part of a free trial. It was resolved that the Council would pay the one-off subscription of £19.99 with the cost split between the clerk's six councils.
- Emails are already protected on the server as the Yahoo server is already encrypted. Copies on the clerk's laptop are password protected.
- Documents on the clerk's laptop are password protected

c) GDPR checklist for councillors

It is a requirement of GDPR that councillors are made aware of their own individual responsibilities to protect personal data. Each councillor read and signed a checklist explaining the measures they would need to take to ensure that they comply with GDPR. It was resolved that where possible all correspondence would be directed through the clerk.

d) Insurance cover if there is a data breach

The Council's existing insurance policy already provides cover in respect of claims relating to the Data Protection Act. The insurer will cover the Council or any employee in respect of legal costs and expenses incurred in the defence of any prosecution brought against the council for a data breach (subject to a number of conditions), but it will not cover the cost of any fines. The clerk is still awaiting clarification about whether this cover will extend to GDPR.

e) Appointment of a Data Protection Officer

It was resolved that the clerk would be appointed as Data Protection Officer.

11. Village issues

a) Update on the progress of the footpath map

This item is ongoing.

b) Repairs to village sign

The wood on the main piece of the sign and on the section underneath is rotten. It was resolved that the clerk would contact the company whose details are on the sign to obtain a quote to repair the sign.

12. Correspondence

a) Consultation on the proposed ward boundaries following the merger of Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council

The proposed new ward boundaries once Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council amalgamate will reduce from 72 to 64. Dalham will be in the Chedburgh and Chevington Ward along with Ousden, Lidgate, Hargrave, and Depden. Councillors agreed that they are happy with the proposed boundaries.

b) Email from Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association requesting a one-off donation of £50 to help them run the scheme now that they have taken over responsibility for the scheme from Suffolk Police and asking if Dalham would be interested in joining the scheme.

It was resolved that an article would be included in the newsletter to see if any residents would be willing to volunteer to help run a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in Dalham. The decision to make a donation would be made if a scheme is set up.

c) Email from Community Payback asking if there are any village projects they can help with

Councillors could not think of any projects at present though one possibility would be to ask for help cutting back some of the footpaths in the summer. Isobel Aylott also agreed to pass on details of the scheme to the PCC.

- d) Email from Team Big Things about a TV show which will be funding numerous public art projects around the country and asking if Dalham residents would like to nominate their own village to win the chance of creating a new landmark for their community**

It was resolved that no action would be taken as the Parish Council is focusing on other projects at the moment.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated