

DEOPHAM & HACKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 1st June 2022, 7.30pm at Gralix Hall

Cllrs present:

Jacky Phoenix – Chair (JP), Chris Biggs (CB) – Vice Chair, Catherine Grand (CG), Chris Coath (CC), Chris Chorley (CCh),

Absent:

Martin Skidmore (MS),

Others present:

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

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence
 - 1.1. MS was absent.
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.
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting on 4th May 2022
 - 3.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2022 were received and read by Councillors prior to the meeting. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting.
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting on 4th May 2022
 - 4.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2022 were received and read by Councillors prior to the meeting. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes.
5. To report on progress of matters arising from previous meetings and review the action log
 - 5.1. There was nothing to report as all matters were on the agenda for discussion.
6. To consider making a donation to High Oak PCC for churchyard maintenance 2021-22 and 2022-23
 - 6.1. The Clerk noted that over recent years the donations had become out of sink and the budgeted donation for 2021-22 had not been made. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the donation of £150 for 2021-22 and £150 for 2022-23. The 2021-22 donation will be made from the general reserves. The 2022-23 donation will be made from the current year's budget.

Draft minutes until approved at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 6th July 2022

Chairman Signature:

Date:

7. Finance - To receive the bank reconciliation for May 2022 and approve the following payments:

The Council reviewed the bank reconciliation, there were no queries. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the payments.

	Description	Cheque Number	Amount
8. To consider matters in relation to the annual audit for financial year 2021-22			
7.1	Playing Field Rent 2022	100636	£400.00
7.2	Donation to High Oak PCC – Churchyard maintenance 2021-22 and 2022-23	100637	£300.00
7.3	Jacqueline Phoenix – Reimbursement for maintenance (Re-issue for lost cheque 100621)	100638	£33.96
7.4	Ms Sandra Lain – Internal Audit 2021-22	100639	£50.00
7.5	BHIB Insurance Ltd – Insurance 2022-23	100640	£410.59
7.6	Norfolk Parish Training & Support – Invoice for Councillor Training	100641	£44.00
7.7	Norfolk Parish Training & Support – Subscription fee 2022-23	100642	£78.75
7.8	Jordana Wheeler – Salary & Expenses May 2022	100643	£183.86

- 8.1. To consider the Internal Auditors report for the financial year ending 31 March 2022 and consider recommendations

8.1.1. The Clerk summarised the purpose of the internal audit, noting the new auditor had done a very thorough job. The Council considered each of the assertions on the report noting any follow up actions.

8.1.2. An overpayment to an invoice has been corrected via the Clerk's May salary payment.

8.1.3. The annual play area inspection is usually considered by the Council in July. Due to a change to meeting dates in 2021-22 this was done via email and not minuted. Future inspections will be discussed and noted in a meeting.

8.1.4. The Council felt it was for the peace of mind of the Clerk to confirm her insurance cover was adequate for working from home. The Clerks insurance renews in July, this will be checked and confirmed to the Council via email. The Council **RESOLVED** they did not require to see evidence of this each year.

8.1.5. The Clerk noted that due to the pandemic she had not received an appraisal. The Council **RESOLVED** to hold an appraisal following the September Council meeting.

8.1.6. Recommendations relating to the insurance are being considered under item 9.

8.1.7. The Clerk confirmed an Information Audit will be prepared.

8.1.8. The Website Accessibility Statement will be updated in the next few months. CC queried if this could be reviewed every 3 years rather than every year. The Clerk will investigate if this is feasible.

8.1.9. The Council are reviewing their current banking arrangements and the use of online banking is being considered.

- 8.2. To agree the accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2022

8.2.1. The Clerk summarised expenditure against budget for the year. Income was £8401 and expenditure was £6544, this was 84% of the precept. Income was less than anticipated due to the loss of rent when the football team left. Under spent precept is moved to the General Reserves.

Draft minutes until approved at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 6th July 2022

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- 8.2.2. The Clerk noted areas of over or underspend. Hall hire was under due to virtual meetings for part of the year. The donation for churchyard maintenance was not made. The invoice for emptying the dog bins was received late so will be paid in 2022-23. Rent for the playing field was double due to paying arrears in rent. Rent payments are now up to date. £496 of unspent money from Equipment Purchase has been moved to the reserve fund for new play equipment.
- 8.2.3. The Council had no queries and **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for 2021-22.
- 8.3. To consider the assertions on, and complete, the Annual Governance Statement 2021-22 and to authorise the Clerk and Chairman to sign
- 8.3.1. The Council considered the Annual Governance Statement and suggested answers. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement. The Clerk and Chairman signed the form.
- 8.4. To consider and approve the Accounting Statements 2021-22 and to authorise the Chairman to sign
- 8.4.1. The Clerk summarised the Accounting statement and noted why the figures are different to the budget comparison considered, noting the requirement to record figures under different groupings for the Statement. CC queried why the assets had increased. The Clerk noted this was due to their original values being restated when the Asset Register was updated, as well as the addition of some new assets this financial year. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statement. The Chairman signed the form.
- 8.5. To consider whether to exempt the Council from an external audit and if so to authorise the Clerk and Chairman to sign the form
- 8.5.1. The Clerk noted the annual income and expenditure where both less than £25,000 making the Council eligible to declare themselves exempt from external audit. The Clerk noted if the Council is successful in applying for grants for the new play equipment next year they may not be exempt for that year. The Council **RESOLVED** to declare themselves exempt from external audit. The Clerk and Chairman signed the form.
9. To agree insurance cover for 2022-23
- 9.1. Recommendations from the auditor were to consider enhancing the insurance cover to include Business Continuity and Cyber Liability. After speaking to the insurance company the Clerk recommended the Council did not require Business Continuity. The cover offers protection against loss of income. The only income the Council currently receives is the precept. To make a claim this would have to be in relation to lost income from football rent which is currently not received. The Council agreed to reconsider Business Continuity cover if and when they rent out the football pitch in the future.
- 9.2. The Clerk provided details of the type of data the Council holds and where/how it is stored. As the Council does not hold data such as burial records or allotment rental agreements the risk to the Council of data loss is minimal. The Council agreed that this cover was not currently required but would keep this under review. The cost quoted for the additional cover by one insurer was approx 75% the value of the current policy and would be a significant extra cost.
- 9.3. The Council **RESOLVED** to appoint Aviva (via BHIB Ltd) as the insurer for 2022-23 and to sign up to a 3 year agreement. This provided a further discount.
ACTION – Clerk to confirm if the Council laptop is covered during transition to and from meetings.

Draft minutes until approved at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 6th July 2022

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10. To agree the purchase of a replacement computer and printer
- 10.1. The Clerk reported the laptop was running slow and significant amounts of time had been lost recently due to technical issues. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the Clerk to purchase a replacement computer and printer up to a max value of £500 (exc VAT). It was also noted that suitable software would be needed. The Clerks preference is Office 365 which has an annual subscription fee.
11. To consider a complaint in relation to the new dog bin on Church Road
- 11.1. The Clerk read out the complaint, which included a request for the new dog bin to be removed and relocated away from residential properties, due to it being unsightly. The Council noted from most angles the bin is fairly inconspicuous. The bin must be installed at a certain height to meet health and safety regulations for emptying. A response was drafted in the meeting. The Clerk will send a response. The bin will remain in its current location as it needs to be safely accessible by pedestrians, the site was approved by the District Council and the bin is unlikely to be used if sited away from residential properties.
12. To consider repairs on the dog bin on the junction of Church Lane and Park Lane
- 12.1. The bin is currently leaning at an angle and not secured safely to a post. A new bin could be purchased or the bin secured to a new post.
ACTION – JP will source a new post and the bin will be repaired.
13. To consider maintenance works to the village sign
- 13.1. A resident has feedback via social media that the village sign is looking tired and in need of maintenance. A resident has also very kindly planted some spring flowers around the base of the sign. Repairs were discussed but there were concerns that it needs to be done properly to avoid damaging the sign. JP and CG will inspect the sign to make a further assessment.
ACTION – Clerk to investigate options for specialist repairs.
14. To consider matters in relation to the replacement play equipment and new car park
- 14.1. To receive an update on the planning application for the new entrance and agree any actions
- 14.1.1. The planning officer has requested further information on the new surface of the car park. The Clerk will submit a reply and a decision is expected next week
- 14.2. To consider quotes and agree a supplier for the new play equipment
- 14.2.1. The advert for the play equipment contract has now closed. The Council considered the quotes. Quotes were received for metal, wood and recycled plastic equipment. The Council **RESOLVED** to install recycled plastic equipment. Play Quest was selected. The total price for the new equipment is £43743.00 (including installation).
- 14.2.2. The Council considered quotes for the installation of the new car park. The Council **RESOLVED** to use CH Mini Digger Hire Ltd.
- 14.2.3. The Council considered quotes for the installation of new fencing around the car park and play area. The Council **RESOLVED** to use The Fencing Workshop.
- 14.3. To agree a grant application submission to the Community Action Fund
- 14.3.1. YB provided details of the deadline for applications, along with a list of information required to make a submission. If the application is successful the

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Council would receive the money in July. The application must be for a stand-alone item which would be within the £15,000 available to apply for. The Council selected the 3 tower activity center to fit the criteria.

ACTION – Clerk to work with YB to complete and submit application to the Community Action Fund for a £15000 grant for the new play equipment.

15. To agree the appointment of trustees to the Hackford Fuel Allotment charity.

- 15.1. The Clerk noted she had spoken to all current trustees who were happy to continue in the role. The Council **RESOLVED** to appoint Martin Skidmore, John Perry, Matthew Chilvers and Keith Bennett as trustees of Hackford Fuel Allotment. The appointment is for 4 years from June 2022 – May 2026.

16. Correspondance

- 16.1. A11 Spooner Row to Tuttlles Interchange Reconstruction Scheme – Contraflow Bulletin

16.1.1. The Clerk shared the bulletin, and drew attention to the map showing slip road closures onto and off the A11. There has been an increase in complaints about speeding traffic in the village and it was felt the roadworks on the A11 were a large contributing factor.

16.1.2. Councillors enquired whether additional signage could be put up asking drivers to slow down through the village. It was noted 2 cats had recently been killed as well as verges and ditches getting eroded.

ACTION – Clerk to write to National Highways and Norfolk County Council to raise concerns about speeding.

ACTION – Add ways to address speeding to the next agenda.

- 16.2. Consultation for a Public Space Protection Order in relation to dog fouling/restrictions

16.2.1. This is a District Council Policy which has to be revised every few years. Details are available on the Council website.

17. Opportunity for public participation

- 17.1. A resident complained about damage to the verge by their property from speeding traffic and passing traffic using the verges to get past each other on the narrow road. The verge has been eroded up to 3 feet.

ACTION – JP will follow the complaint up with the Highways Engineer and request an inspection.

- 17.2. JP noted £188 had been raised via the Beetle Drive. Additional funds had been raised via the 'Deopham Through the Ages' event (exact amount to be confirmed). Both amounts will be donated to the Parish Council towards the new play equipment.

- 17.3. JP thanked all those who help to organize and run the event. It was well attended.

18. To confirm the date of the next meeting

- 18.1. The next Council meeting will take place at Gralix Hall on Wednesday 6th July 2022, 7.30pm. The press and public are welcome to attend.
The public meeting closed at 9.20pm