



FULL PARISH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

18 April 2022 - 7.30pm

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors: Cllr. Ashton (Chair), Cllr. Hall (Vice Chair), Cllr. Murphy, Cllr. Westin, Cllr Ward

Clerk and RFO: Mr S Baxter **Members of the public (MOP):** 2 one in person and one by remote)

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

Meeting was held at the SALKO Offices, Main Street, Spaldington. Due to the location, only Parish Councillors were present with very few community persons at the location. All the community were invited to attend the meeting via the remote function.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

1. **Welcome to all Councillors.** The Chair will remind all that the meeting is recorded and the recordings are kept for a minimum of 12 months.

The Chair welcomed all Councillors and members of the public to the face to face Parish Meeting. He confirmed that while the Councillors and Clerk were present in person as well as some members of the public, the meeting was also to be streamed via Zoom for other members of the community and press.

2. **Members of the public participation** - Any questions will be at the discretion of the Chair.

There were no questions from the members of the public.

3. **Proposal to exclude members of public from participation** - but can observe

For the following agenda points members of the public can observe the meeting but cannot take part in any debate. Any persons not Councillors or the Clerk will be asked to remain silent and muted on Zoom

- *Motion to exclude any members of the public and press but they can view the meeting was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

4. **Apologies for absence from Councillors**

There were no apologies from Councillors. Cllr Westin arrived late but the reason caused due to unforeseen circumstances was accepted.



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5. **Declarations of interest** – for the Council to note including dispensations presented to the Clerk

The Clerk confirmed that there were no declarations of interest submitted to him previously.

Cllr Ashton wished it noted that he had been recently co-opted onto Howden Town Council.

Cllr Murphy wished to note that he has a personal connection to SALKO Ltd and thus wanted to exclude himself from the General Expenditure Agenda Point 11.

Cllrs Ward and Murphy also wanted it noted that they sit on the Spaldington Windfarm Fund.

6. **Minutes of the last Full Parish Council Meeting** (07 March 2022) – to formally agree that the minutes are an accurate record

The Chair confirmed that the Clerk had sent the DRAFT Minutes of the last Full Parish Council meeting on the 07 March 2022.

There was a discussion between the Councillors to confirm receipt and all stated they were happy it was a true and accurate record of the meeting.

- *Motion to agree the Minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting of the 07 March 2022 was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

7. **Financial update from the Clerk** (including bank reconciliations) - from the Clerk

The Clerk confirmed that he had sent the recent financial report to the Councillors for their perusal. He confirmed that the report covered March 2022 period - but was in effect the end of the financial year report as well. He stated that as at the end of the financial year of 2021 / 2022 there as approximately £9,355 in the bank (across three bank accounts). This was an increase of £2,624 at the start off the of the financial year

The main budget points on reflection of budget v actual was:

- Estimated financial surplus position at the start of the year was £373 - the actual was £2,624
- The Clerk cost budget was over budget by £496 (15.2%) - the increase has been caused by substantial extra time needed to deal with complaints, freedom of information requests, substantial issues raised by the community which required in depth work, coordination with ERYC and the management of the very successful projects the PC has been involved with.
- The final balance is estimated to be sufficient for the cost of the external audit investigation (net VAT) which while it means that the reserves are used - it will mean that the PC starts afresh for the new financial year.

The Council discussed the details and stated they felt the financial operations were properly managed and that they finally felt the Council was able to look forward, not back.

- *Motion to agree the financial report laid by the Clerk to the Council was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*



8. End of Year documents (AGAR, Variances, Asset Register, Financial report)

The Clerk confirmed that the various documents in regard to the End of Financial Year process had been sent to the Councillors previously. He confirmed that there had been some minor amendments following some guidance from the Internal Auditor but it did not change the overall balance of the bank account - it was more about some accountancy processes.

He confirmed that as the overall income for the Council was under the threshold of £25,000 the Council were able to self exempt themselves from External Auditor review, although all details would have to be published on the website before end of June 2022.

The Clerk confirmed that he had just received the full internal audit report that day and would be updating all Councillors with the detail and the formal recommended responses in the next week.

The Council discussed the overall detail provided by the Clerk and in connection with the end of year financial data were happy that everything was done as prescribed under the specific legislation. There was no queries raised and the Councillors were happy to agree.

- *Motion to agree the End of Year documents including the AGAR, Explanation of Financial Variances from 2020/21 to 2021/22, Asset Register and End of Year Financial report laid by the Clerk to the Council was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

9. Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and Annual Parish Council - dates for the meetings

The Chair confirmed that the Chair and himself had had some informal discussions on the most appropriate dates for both the Annual Parish Council Meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting. The APCM was a statutory need to elect officers and agree standing orders and policies and would have to be held in person but the APM could be held online as it was a statutory Council meeting.

The Chair confirmed that he had spoken to Howden Town Council about the hire of a room there for the APM and it would be in the region of £40-£50 with IT resource capabilities.

The Clerk made a recommendation that both the APCM and the APM could be held on the same night as long as there was a specific break between the both to show the APCM finishing and the APM starting.

The Council discussed the recommendation and agreed that having both the same night was a good idea which both was an efficient use of time and cost. There was a recommendation by the Chair of the 09 May 2022 which there was full agreement.

- *Motion to agree the dates of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and the Annual Parish meeting on the 09 May 2022 at the Howden Town Council offices recommended by the Clerk to the Council was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*



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10. Use of HSBC Bank account - recommendation by Clerk to close account

The Clerk stated that from the examination of the HSBC Bank Account statements it was noted that there had been a monthly charge of £8 from December 2021. This change in account costs was hidden in the small details in the terms and conditions. This had caused an expenditure of £32.

The Clerk stated that as the account was used in effect as a reserve account, and not as the operational account, it was a very costly reserve account and thus it was prudent to close both the HSBC accounts and create a second Unity Bank account which would act the as the reserve account.

The Councils discussed this issues raised by the Clerk and agreed it was not appropriate to spend £96 a year for no real benefit.

- *Motion to agree the closing the HSBC Bank accounts recommended by the Clerk to the Council was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

11. General expenditure for approval - to formally agree that the payments are acceptable:

PAYEE	EXPENDITURE REASON	AMOUNT
Clerk Salary and overtime	Contractual for April 2022	Withheld due to confidentiality
Clerk's office allowance	Contractual for April 2022	£26.00
Clerk's travel expenses	April PC Meetings	£24.30
Peninsula Insurance	Insurance - April 2022	£116.60 + VAT
ERNLLCA	Annual subscription	£118.81
SALCO Ltd	Cost of Trees (grant from ERYC)	£2,916 + VAT

The Council briefly discussed the payments and agreed they were acceptable. This included the need for the continued subscription to ERNLLCA.

Cllr Murphy excused himself from the vote to agree the payment to SALCO due to personal connection to SALCO Ltd.

- *Motion to agree the expenditure as detailed in the schedule of payments was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

12. ERYC Grant for pathway sign - update from Clerk

The Clerk confirmed that the grant of £500 that had been applied for the noticeboard type sign for the tree planting areas has been successful. This will allow not only for the walkway to be properly signposted but also to allow the types of trees to be shown.





13. **Planning Applications** – to discuss and agree the decision on each

The Clerk confirmed that there had been no new planning applications. He did also confirm that he had reported the issues raised at the last Council Meeting and had a confirmation from ERYC that had been in contact with the property owners to assess the issues. He confirmed that he had a response from previous issues raised and that the Planning Team Officers had been sent to the various properties to investigate. They confirmed that in some cases the owner had agreed to submit retrospective permissions and some had agreed to alter some aspects of the property.

14. **Spring/ Summer Fete for the village** – ideas and options

The Councillors discussed the option for a celebration of the Queen's Jubilee in the beginning of June. The issue that they wished to discuss was the funding of the event to which they was only a small amount budgeted in the main SPC budget for 2022/23.

They noted that another organisation had decided to run an event in the community during this bank holiday weekend and the Councillors felt it was unfortunate that there was no consultation with the Council to coordinate events.

The Councillors discussed a proposal to have a fete celebration at the end of summer to then more time to consider funding options but also then allow the community to have an additional celebration.

The Clerk was asked if he would look into funding options either through the Windfarm Fund or other sources.

15. **Windfarm Fund** – discussion on options

The Councillors discussed the opportunity for applying to the Windfarm Fund again following the unsuccessful applications last year. They noted the deadline was the 21 May for applications.

The Clerk was asked to review possibilities for projects and liaise with the Councillors on their thoughts of the possible projects before any possible submissions.

16. **Request for siting of bench** - to discuss and agree

The Clerk stated that he has received a request from a local community organisation to site a bench on the the Main Street in Spaldington. The request stated that they had permission from the property owner to site the bench in front of their property. The organisation has agreed to ensure the bench is properly maintained but have asked that the bench is covered under the PC's insurance.

In order for the Highways Team at ERYC to permit the siting they have stated that it needs the PC's support.



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The Council discussed the request in detail and considered that as long as the Highways managed the legal aspect of the siting of the bench near the road to ensure safety, and as long as the property owner did not object, they would not object to the siting.

The Clerk confirmed that he would write to the Highways Team at ERYC to confirm the legality of the siting and the safety aspect.

- *Motion to agree the request was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

17. Urgent or important correspondence – update from the Clerk

The Clerk confirmed that other than the correspondence received (but detailed in Agenda Point 18) there was no urgent correspondence that needed the Councillors' attention.

18. Investigation conclusion update from ERYC Standards Committee - update from the Clerk

The Clerk stated that he had received a full update from the ERYC Standards Committee who had received three complaints against the Chair from a member of the previous administration. The complaints were in connection with allegations about the conduct of the Chair and alleged actions. The Clerk stated that these allegations had been investigated and assessed by both the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee.

The complaints have been thrown out by both the M.O. and the Standards Committee and both have stated that no further action is needed or warranted, and consider the matter closed. This conclusion completely exonerates the Chair who had always denied the allegations and felt it was an attempt to besmirch his character.

The Chair also stated that these complaints, as with complaints against other Councillors and the Clerk had all been thrown out with no basis. It was all part of a concerted campaign by some persons to either damage the reputation of the Council or to affect the way it operates.

The Council discussed the formal response by the Standards Committee and agree that the complaints made various individuals had no evidence whatsoever and were simply part of an attempt by some persons in the community to damage the credibility of the Chair and other Councillors. The Council agreed that the Chair had been completely exonerated.

The Council also stated that while they do not wish to spend valuable resources on continual rebuttals to some persons or organisations who continue to attempt to dislodge the Clerk, they will not hesitate to respond should any unfounded or unwarranted allegations made against the Clerk as they had a duty of protection as employers. They also had no reason to believe any of the allegations made against him and felt it was due to him that things were being run properly.

The Clerk thanked the Councillors for their support.



19. Parishioner concerns relayed to Councillors - any update from Councillors from Parishioners

The Chair stated that he had received the following queries from the Community that had been raised with him:

- i) *A serious issue has been raised by the recent tractors and tankers that are working for the AD Plant - in that the vehicles are not only causing damage to the roadway and verges, but that they are driving at an unacceptable speed in the community which may be a safety issue.*

The Chair stated that there has been many incidents of these tractors and tankers causing damage to the verges on the community roads which if this continues would cause significant long term issues - this includes possible damage to gas and water pipes would run close to the road.

It was felt that the speed and driving style of the trucks could be an 'accident waiting to happen' and thus it was felt that a specific referral to the ERYC Highways and Police. The council also felt that this issue should be closely monitored.

The Clerk was asked if he would write to the AD Plant to make the Council concerns clear and ask that the tractor drivers take more care.

- ii) *It has been brought to the attention of the Chair of abusive graffiti on the 'Passing Place' signs on the C88 roadway*

The Chair confirmed that he has been made aware that some persons in the community had inscribed foul language on some stopping signs on the C88 road. This may or may not be linked to the issue of the concerns over the tractor driving.

The Clerk confirmed that this issue had already been brought to the attention of the Highways Team who are responsible for the upkeep.

- iii) *It has been brought the attention of the Chair that a local business 'Filstorage' has possibly changed it's business activities to a distribution centre - this may be contrary to planning permissions*

The Chair stated that he has been made aware that the a local business in the community, Filstorage, has changed their business to a distribution centre. While this may be within the terms of the trade under any planning rules, it warranted it to be checked especially as it may affect the level of traffic in the local roads.

The Clerk confirmed that the Council has a duty to review any issues brought to it's attention about planning queries and while the Council should not make judgement, it should ensure that the Enforcement Planning Team have the details referred to them for them to investigate.



iv) *An issue of a Adult Entertainment business in the community*

The Chair stated that he had been made aware that a property in the community has been running an adult entertainment business. The Chair wished to noted that it was the permissions of running such a business is the reason for the query.

The Councillor agreed that this query should be referred to ERYC to ensure that any permissions are in order.

20. **To agree the date and location of the Full Parish Council Meeting – 7.30pm Monday, 06 June 2022.**

- *Motion to agree the next Full Parish Council meeting to be held on the 06 June 2022 at 7.30pm at the SALKO Offices with members of the public joining as well as a the meeting being shared by a remote digital means was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

MEETING WAS CLOSED BY THE CHAIR AT 9.00PM.
