



## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

05 May 2021 - 8.00pm

### MINUTES

**Present:** Cllr. Ashton (Chair of the Parish Council) and Mr S Baxter (Clerk and RFO of the Parish Council)

**Members of the public (MOP):** Eight

**Meeting commenced at 8.00pm**

### AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. **Welcome to all Councillors and any members of the public sitting in observation.** The Chair of the Parish Council will make people aware that the meeting is recorded and the recordings are kept for a minimum of 12 months

The Chair welcomed all persons present to the Annual Meeting of the Parish. He did remind attendees that the meeting was recorded for 12 months as was the practice undertaken by the Parish Council.

2. **Minutes from Annual Parish Meeting in 2020** – confirmation that as no meeting was held due to Covid-19 restrictions as thus there are no minutes

The Clerk stated that there was no Annual Meeting of the Parish in May 2020 due to the pandemic and government advice.

3. **Minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting on the 07 May 2019** – vote to agree that minutes are accurate

The Chair of the Parish Council stated as far as he was aware only one of the Councillors present at the meeting were at the meeting two years ago and thus it may not possibly be appropriate to formally the agree the minutes as accurate as no-one can be sure.

The Clerk of the Parish Council suggested that rather than agreeing as accurate, the attendees may consider a motion that accepts the minutes in their present form but with a note that they have not been agreed as accurate or inaccurate.

- ***Motion to agree the motion that the minutes of the last Annual Meeting of the Parish on the 07 May 2019 was neither received as accurate nor inaccurate but that they are accepted as the version taken by the previous Clerk, was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.***



#### 4. **Chair of the Council's report** – detail on what the Parish Council have achieved in the last year

The Chair opened by stating that it had been a difficult 12 months and a lot of things had happened which have had to have careful management. But that the Council is in a far better place now than it when the financial year started. The main points he wanted to state was:

- He had been elected as Chair in the previous year
- During the year three Councillors had to have their Councillorship positions vacated due to the previous administration not ensuring the correct forms were completed – one of the Councillors had been co-opted back on the Council (Cllr Ward) and was a great asset
- The Council had employed a new Clerk and RFO who has quickly been a valuable member of the Parish Council team and had brought a sense of professionalism to the operations
- The Council now were very settled and through the teamwork are achieving great things for the community including:
  - A new defibrillator for the community; the old one was allowed to sit without any maintenance or reviews by the previous administration
  - The phone box is being renovated and repaired and will be sited as a pride of place in the village
  - Precept has come down significantly from previous years – down 61%
  - Christmas display was improving every year and a pride of the community
  - Council is looking at several grant funded projects
  - Council is looking to organise a 'coming out of Covid party' in the summer to rebuild community spirit and interaction
- The level of attendance at the meeting was increasing which was great as it showed a greater interest in the Council operations

He concluded by wanting to thank the Councillors of the Parish Council for their commitment (as support to him), the Clerk as well as people like Mr Southworth from CIC, Cllr Aitkin from ERYC and the whole community.

#### 5. **Financial Report by the Clerk of the Parish Council** – reporting on the financial position of the Parish Council

The Clerk through his role as RFO of the Parish Council stated that the main points of the financial picture of the Parish Council was as follows:

- The Parish Council turned a forecasted in year deficit of £5,125 to a surplus of £604 – this was through careful financial management of the Council as well as some expenditure not proceeding due to the pandemic
- The Parish Council, as at 31 March 2021, had a bank balance of £6,731 of which £5,500 was set aside as provision for the External Auditor investigation cost following the objections by a local resident



- Overall the financial position of the Council was far stronger at the end of the year than at the start of the year under the previous administration
- The Parish Council had committed to continue the very careful financial management of the resources and to ensure that it sustained the financial recovery from the previous years
- The Parish Council had set a surplus budget for 2021/22 to continue the attempt to build a NALC recommended reserve level of 50% of the Precept
- There is a total of £8,500 set aside (from financial years of 2020/21 and 2021/22) for the External Financial investigation

6. **Presentation of Mr David Southworth (Chair of the CIC)** – to provide full details of what the Community Interest Community is and what it does for Spaldington

The Chair of the Parish Council invited Mr David Southworth from the Spaldington Community Interest Company (CIC) to present his organisation and how.

Mr Southworth stated that himself and three other persons started the CIC around a year ago to support the community as a lot of residents felt that the Parish Council was non-functional (under the previous administration) and that it was felt the CIC may be the best way forward. The CIC was a company but unlimited and whilst there were directors there were rules that prevented the directors from taking out any resources through an asset locked company articles of association. The main aim of the CIC was to support the community and raise its funds through various fundraising – which included a newly opened ‘pop up’ pub of which all were welcome.

The overall aim of the CIC was to bring the community together through social cohesion and recently had started to work informally with the Parish Council in regards to Windfarm grants.

He continued that while he and the community felt the Parish Council under the leadership of Cllr Ashton had made great strides in management, professionalism and integrity of which now the community had great confidence in them, the CIC was going to continue as it allowed a different strand of support for the community. This included grants applications from the Windfarm and the ERYC.

He confirmed that the main method of communication and update with the community was through their FACEBOOK page.

Overall, he wanted to conclude by stating that he saw the Parish Council as the legislative arm of the community representation and the CIC as the informal side. But that all were welcome to be part of the CIC project and help support the community.

The Chair of the Parish Council thanked Mr Southworth for his presentation and his hard work (as well as the other directors of the CIC) for the support of the community.



## 7. Presentation of Ward Councillor – presentation by Cllr Victoria Aitkin

The Clerk confirmed that he was expecting Cllr Aitkin but had not heard from her unfortunately and thus was not provided with any reason why. He would invite her to attend a Parish Council Meeting in the future.

## 8. Questions to the Chair and Clerk of the Parish Council

There was a question from a member of the community who asked:

*Was there anything bigger that showed the community in a far better light the Council should consider in regard to funding from the Windfarm? One idea may be a new Council entrance sign.*

The Chair of the Council confirmed that the Parish Council and the CIC had met informally recently to ensure that they didn't apply for funds for the same projects and agreed which projects each organisation would apply for. One of the areas that the Parish Council would be applying for funds would be a new Spaldington village entrance gateway.

Other projects the Council had undertaken significant research and work and would be applying for was:

- New noticeboard for the Community
- Full repair and maintenance of the old Telephone Box
- Updated Christmas display
- Tree planting

The Clerk confirmed that further detail would be provided on the website as well as on the CIC Facebook.

**MEETING WAS CLOSED BY THE CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL AT 8.25PM.**