

HACHESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of Wednesday 23rd November 2022

1. Apologies for absence were received from Ward Councillor Carol Poulter.

Present

Cllr. Adrian Revill (Chair) Cllr. Stephen Leach (Vice Chair) Cllr. Graeme Hall
Cllr. Terry Mee Cllr. Nikki Markham Cllr. Chris Hurlock Lydia Kirk (Clerk)

Public

Jonathan Lakin-Hall (*until item 5*)

2. There were no declarations of interest.

3. The minutes of the council meeting of 28th September and extraordinary meeting on 31st October 2022 were approved as true records of the meetings.

4. There were no matters arising.

PUBLIC FORUM

The Ward and County Councillors' Reports have been circulated and published on the village website

Mr Lakin-Hall discussed his planning application referred to at item 15i). He explained the necessity for the the additional application, and showed photos of how the proposed roof trusses would like. He has also been in contact with his neighbours about the application and they have not sent any objections.

5. Chairman's Report

The Chair wanted to thank the new clerk for her hard work since taking up office. He is relieved that the Council is now becoming more compliant.

6. Clerk's Report

The clerk has been working hard on the financial year-end documents for 2021-2022 and has produced bank reconciliations and a payments and receipts account for the year. She has been in contact with both the internal and external auditors in regard to the statutory recommendation that the Council has received. She wanted to thank the internal auditor for his assistance and very prompt provision of his audit report.

Work on the new website- www.hacheston.suffolk.cloud - is going well and she thanked Councillors for sending in information for their online profiles.

Wickham Market's new newsletter will be distributed to all postcodes in the IP13 0 area. If the Parish Council would like to contribute content, it would be required to cover the extra print (likely to be a maximum of £50 per issue.)

The clerk has introduced a postage book and a minute's reference chart to help with accountability. The auto-enrolment duties for The Pensions Regulator have now been completed. The clerk has organised the physical files and has spent considerable time replying to emails and assigning them to the relevant folders. The clerk has introduced new aspects to the Financial Officer's Report for good practice, including bank reconciliations and year-to-date spending records which show the budget figures. This, teamed with the Internal Control Statement that the council will be adopting, should help the council comply with end-of-year and audit requirements moving forwards.

As per the recent email, the local government pay offer has now been agreed. For Hacheston Parish clerk, this is a £1 per hour increase plus 1 day permanent additional annual leave entitlement.

7. Financial Officer's Report

a) The following payments were approved:

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details
P22 22-23	£54.00	SALC	6 months monthly payroll service *
P23 22-23	£84.00	Hacheston Village Hall	Hall hire
P24 22-23	£36.00	CPRE	Membership subscription <i>Approved January 2022</i>
P25 22-23	£186.74	CAS	Insurance
P26 22-23	£311.40	Westcotec	4 x replacement batteries for SID <i>Approved July 2022</i>
P27 22-23	£200.00 £120.00	Suffolk Cloud	Provision of template for new website and transfer of assets and data Website support and hosting
P28 22-23	£75.00	Gary Whiting	Cut and strim grass 25/10/22
P29 22-23	£10.20	L. Kirk	15 x 2 nd class stamps- reimbursement
P30 22-23	£200.00	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit 2021-2022

* Cllr. Revill proposed moving to carrying out payroll quarterly to half these costs. This was seconded by Cllr. Leach and carried unanimously.

b) The funding request from the Corrance Trust was reviewed. The Council were concerned about the low levels of interest returned on the Trust's assets and agreed to consider this again at the next Annual Parish Meeting, if the accounts for the year 2022-2023 are received by this date.

c) Payments made since the last meeting were noted:

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details
P19 22-23	£60.00	Community Action Suffolk	Website Hosting
P20 22-23	£216.72	Sarah Mott	Pay for September
P21 22-23	£6624.00	Moyes Surfacing	Petanque paving slabs and fence

The Chair commented on how well the petanque fencing has been received. It keeps animals off the court and allows easy-access to all residents.

d) Funds received since the last meeting were noted:

01/10/22 East Suffolk Council £1,947.68 CIL funds

e) The bank balances as at 16.10.2022 were noted as being:

Current account £31,612.30

Deposit account £1,212.34

It was agreed that once the agreed payments had cleared, funds will be transferred to the deposit account to earn interest.

f) The bank statements and bank reconciliation were reviewed by Cllr. Leach.

g) The year-to-date report on payments and receipts was noted and this was considered in line with the budget.

h) It was agreed that there was no need to add an additional banking mandate at present. Councillors who are no longer in office, and the former clerk, must be removed from the mandate.

i) Councillors agreed to consider applying for online banking again, having tried on two occasions previously. It was agreed that the clerk should be granted "view only" online access also.

8. The local auditor's statutory recommendation, below, was considered:

Failure to submit an Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31 March 2022. Councillors accepted this recommendation.

- 9. The Internal Auditor's Report on the 2021-2022 annual paperwork was reviewed and the Council made the following comments on the recommendations:**
- Recommendation 1** The current clerk did this on 6th November 2022.
- Recommendation 2** This is being considered at item 13.h of this meeting.
- Recommendation 3** This is being considered at item 13. of this meeting.
- Recommendation 4** Bank reconciliations will now be carried out at meetings regularly throughout the year. Please see item 7f. of this meeting.
- Recommendation 5** The Council is adopting an Internal Control Statement at this meeting, see item 13. Moving forwards, the Council will be regularly reviewing its internal controls system.
- Recommendation 6** The Council is in the process of creating a new village website. All relevant information relating to the 2021-22 accounting year will be published here as soon as possible.
- Recommendation 7** This is noted. The council will ensure the public rights period is set for a minimum of 30 days moving forwards.
- Recommendation 8** This is noted and will be acted on. Please see recommendation 6.
- Recommendation 9** Moving forwards, the Council will regularly compare its year-to-date expenditure to the budget. Please see item 7g.
- Recommendation 10** The current clerk completed the re-declaration on 16th November 2022.
- Recommendation 11** Moving forwards, the Council will list all payments and receipts in its minutes. Please see items 7a. and 7c.
- Recommendation 12** The Council has noted all recommendations from the Internal Auditor for the year-ending 2021-2022. Actions are set in place to help ensure future compliance.
- 10. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return Form for the year-ending 31st March 2022 was considered.**
- a) The Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2022 were considered and accepted.
- b) **Section One** (Annual Governance Statement) and **Section Two** (Accounting Statements) of the **Local Councils' Annual Return** were duly completed. The Chair read out each of the Annual Governance Statements. The Council could not confirm compliance with the following statements: 2, 4, 5 and 7. As requested, a written explanation will be provided to the External Auditor.
- c) The statement of significant variances was considered and accepted.
- d) The bank reconciliation for 2021-2022 was considered and signed by Cllr. Leach.
- 11. Procedural:**
- a) The Chair and Vice Chair signed Acceptance of Office forms.
- b) Councillors confirmed agreement to being summoned to meetings electronically.
- c) Cllr. Revill proposed appointing Trevor Brown again as the internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2023, if he is willing to do so. Cllr. Hall seconded this and it was carried unanimously.
- d) The clerk signed two copies of her contract for employment from 1st November 2022. The contract includes the current HWA allowance and recently agreed National Pay award figures.
- e) The Asset Register for 2022-2023 was considered and is up-to-date. The Chair commented that the noticeboards are in poor condition and may need replacing soon.
- f) The CIL report for 2021-2022 was considered and the figures agreed.
- ACTION** Clerk to itemise the CIL expenditure on the report, before presenting to the Chair for authorisation. Then to submit to East Suffolk Council before 31st December.

12. The following Officers and Council Representatives were appointed:

		<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Responsible Financial Officer	L. Kirk	NM	CH
Examining Councillor	S. Leach	TM	NM
Village Hall Parish Council Representative	C. Hurlock	SL	NM
SALC Representative	<i>Vacant</i>		
Footpath Officer	A. Revill	NM	TM
Webmaster	L. Kirk	AR	TM

These proposals were carried unanimously.

13. The following policies were considered:

a) Standing Orders *The latest version of NALC's model standing orders were adopted.*

b) Data protection policy *This has been updated in regards to the ICO obligations but will need further consideration in the new year.*

c) Financial Regulations *The latest version of NALC's model financial regulations were adopted.*

d) Statement of Internal Control *This policy was adopted. Following the statutory recommendation, the Council will review compliance to it regularly.*

e) Risk Assessment Physical Assets *Currently there is no risk assessment for the council's physical assets. The clerk will work on this in the new year.*

f) Financial Risk Assessment *This was adopted. It was agreed that some of these risks will need further consideration in the future, especially concerning cyber risks.*

g) *Internal control statement See item 13.d)*

h) Councillors considered both the Local Government Associations' Model Code of Conduct and the Suffolk Code of Conduct. Cllr. Markham proposed adopting the Suffolk Code of Conduct again. This was seconded by Cllr. Hall and carried unanimously.

14. The council's insurance premium for 2022-2023 was considered. It covers £10,000 of physical assets, fidelity insurance and public liability insurance. This was considered fit for the Council's needs.

15. Planning Applications and Notifications

i) Application DC/22/4079/FUL was considered.

Pear Tree Cottage The Street Hacheston Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 0DT

Extension and conversion of flat roof to pitched roof

Cllr. Mee proposed not objecting to the application. This was seconded by Cllr. Hurlock and carried unanimously.

ii) Cllr. Leach gave an update on the current situation regarding the Sizewell C application. He reported that the Chancellor has now confirmed that Sizewell C will be going ahead as planned, but the *Stop Sizewell C* group will continue to campaign against it. He also noted that the issues regarding water provision and financing have still not been resolved, and that it is likely to be some time before it commences, if it does go ahead.

16. Councillors agreed that it would be a good idea to write a welcome letter to new residents to the village. ACTION Clerk and Chair to draft a letter.

17. Correspondence received since the date of last meeting was considered.

The Council- and some residents- very much supports recommendation LR14.1 of the East Suffolk Council Walking & Biking Strategy which aims to create a safe path from Campsea Ashe to Framlingham. **ACTION** Clerk to write to ESC in this regard.

The consultation on Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan's was noted and the Chair has read through the proposed plan.

Fibre broadband in the village. Residents have received communication directly in this regard.

East Suffolk Council precept request. This will be considered in January's meeting.

The Chair urged Councillors to read Campsea Ashe Parish Council's Letter to East Suffolk Council regarding an inquiry into the Local Plan inquiry thoroughly for further discussion.

The clerk is liaising with Barclays regarding its periodic review and is providing the documentation required.

18. There were no additional Councillor Reports

19. The following matters are to be raised at the next meeting:

Budget 2023-2024

Precept 2023

Physical assets risk assessment

Campsea Ashe's letter to ESC

20. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 7.30pm on Wednesday 25th January 2023.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.52pm.

Signed: *A Revill*
A. Revill
Chair

Date *25th January 2023*