



DEEPING ST JAMES PARISH COUNCIL

The Institute, 38 Church Street, Deeping St James, Peterborough PE6 8HD

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Parish Clerk: Julie Fortnum

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the meeting room at the Institute 38 Church Street Deeping St James PE6 8HD at 8.00pm on Thursday 19 August 2021

Present: Councillors Bowell, Halls, Hosking, Shinkins-Hoppe, Stevens and Thomas.
Councillor Denman as an observer. The minutes were taken by the Parish Clerk.

22.13 To receive apologies of absence.

Apologies had been received and were accepted from Councillor Gilbert.

22.14 To receive any declarations of interest.

None declared.

22.15 To adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 9 June 2021.

Agreed and signed as a true copy.

22.16 To receive the Clerk's report.

No report given.

22.17 To review the following policies -

Councillor Bowell and the Clerk had reviewed the above policies and the following amendments were proposed

Complaints procedure

No change

Risk assessment and management

No change

Risk assessment form

Amendments to include not to complete ladder work alone, to work in wooded areas but be extra vigilant of branches falling from height in extreme weather, the wearing of hard hats when required, the storage of petrol in fire proof containers and to use qualified Contractors when required e.g. Electricians.

Publication scheme

ICO model publication scheme information should be attached the DSJPC template.

Grants policy

Remove the wording advising that grants are only considered at the June September December and March meetings

Action plan

This was updated with the actions from the last two years

Health and safety

The General Statement of Policy to be updated copied from LALC policy.

Communications

Amendments to be made to the contact details for the office.

Equality and Diversity

Add the following -

Disability Discrimination Act

We seek advice on making information and premises accessible under the DDA, where it is feasible to do so.

We seek advice on recruitment and employment issues as necessary under the DDA.

Training

The new policy which had been circulated to all before the meeting should be adopted.

This had been adapted from the Mablethorpe and Sutton Town Council policy (a gold quality award council)

Seconded and **RESOLVED**.

22.18 To receive an update on the financial position to date.

The reports which had been circulated prior to the meeting were noted.

Councillor Shinkins-Hoppe asked if there was a budget for the River Welland Footbridge project as the planning permission expired in May 2022 so would need renewing which would have cost implications especially if new environmental and ecological reports were required.

The Clerk advised that no budget had been set for the Footbridge project for the financial year 2021/22 however there was a budget of £1,000 to cover professional fees and £5,000 in an ear-marked reserve fund for projects of a culture, amenity and heritage nature.

22.19 To consider banking arrangements.

The Clerk advised that there were still outstanding changes that were required to be made to the Barclays banking mandate. This was mainly due to Barclays lack of understanding about Parish Councils as they required the Chairman to be a signatory so that he could approve mandate changes, despite the Clerk explaining that the Chairman had no more authority than other Councillors. The Clerk (and Chairman) would persevere and get these issues sorted.

Councillor Shinkins-Hoppe expressed concern that the Barclays account balance exceeded the financial Services Commission guarantee of £85,000. It was agreed to **RECOMMEND** to full council that a deposit account should be opened with Unity Trust Bank who the Parish Council already had a current account with and money should be transferred to it.

22.20 To consider the offer of website management via Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils.

Pete Langford's expertise to manage the free LCC website being coordinated by Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils would become available from 1 September 2021. Two levels of service were being offered –

Basic – which includes access for advice queries and problem solving, to current guidance documents, updates as appropriate and access to the e-group for peer support.

Cost £5 per month

Premium – all the above plus all documents uploaded to the free LCC website.

Cost £15 per month

The Clerk advised that the amount of time spent by the office staff uploading documents each month cost more than £15.

It was agreed to **RECOMMEND** that the premium service was purchased.

22.21 To consider the offer of an Internal Audit Service via Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils.

The offer of an Internal Audit service will begin in September 2021. What will be provided is a mid-year audit which will go over the Parish Council's governance in depth and a light touch audit at year end when the Parish Council can confidently sign off the Annual and Governance Accounting Return. Again, this service is being coordinated by Lincolnshire Association of Local Clerks who once an Audit is requested would put the Parish Council in touch with an Auditor (trained by LALC) who would discuss the requirements needed. The cost for Deeping St James (based on the number of electorate and the services offered) would be £360 per annum. It was agreed to **RECOMMEND** that this service should also be purchased.

22.22 To agree the date of the next meeting – 7.45pm Thursday 21 October 2021.