



# DEEPI NG ST JAMES PARISH COUNCIL

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Parish Clerk: Julie Fortnum

Minutes of the finance and general purpose meeting held on Thursday 9 April 2015 at 7.00pm in the meeting room at the Institute.

Present - Councillors Barber, Howell, Dilks, Gilbert, Pelling, Shinkins, J.Stevens, T.Stevens and Wallis (Chairman)

You are hereby summoned to attend the next meeting of the **Finance and General Purposes Committee** on **Thursday 9 April 2015 at 7.00 pm** in the **Meeting Room** at **The Institute**. The business to be dealt with at the meeting is listed in the agenda.

**10.15 To receive apologies of absence.**

None

**11.15 To receive declarations of interest.**

None declared

**12.15 To adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 15 January 2015.**

These were proposed as correct by Councillor Howell, seconded by Councillor Pelling and agreed by all.

**13.15 To receive a report of matters arising from the minutes not deal with elsewhere on the agenda.**

The Unity Trust bank account is open and 15 bank transfers have been successfully paid. The Alto MasterCard attached to the Unity Trust bank has been received and credited with £250.00 - it has not yet been used.

The Clerk has provided Councillor Barber as webmaster with a number of documents that the parish council are required to make available on their website, if they have one, in order to qualify for the foundation status of the local council award scheme.

**14.15 Internal Audit issues, if any.**

The internal Auditor has visited the office and has again found some invoices earlier with in the financial year 2014/15 that have not been initialled by two signatories. The Clerk has explained to the Internal Auditor the agreed new procedure of paying by bank transfer and she has reinforced that the procedure being followed for authorisation does need to reflect what the council has agreed in its standing orders and financial regulations.

**15.15 To consider the lease agreement terms being offered by DSJUC.**

The Parish Clerk informed that members that she had met with the Charities Clerk on Tuesday 10 March 2015 as the Trustees are seeking legal advice to draw up a lease to formalise the current rental relationship between the two parties.

The Solicitor has advised that a ten year lease which is what the Charities wanted to offer would need to be registered – the maximum without requiring registration is seven years. They have also been told that it is normal practice for a tenant to contribute to the insurance of a building. Both of these would have cost implications.

After receiving this legal advice the Charities intend to offer a seven year lease, with a three year rent review clause, and a one year break clause to be exercised at any time by either party. They have also decided NOT to request a contribution towards the insurance of the building. This lease will allow the council staff access to all areas of the Institute except the DSJUC Clerk's office, allow the parish council to site the shed in the garden and the staff to park vehicles there, if there is space.

Please note there will be a rent increase to cover the legal costs incurred in this process although this will not be that large. The Solicitor has suggested three hours work at £180 per hour. Current rent is £1500pa for the office and £100pa for the shed.

Due to the upcoming election it has been agreed that the draft lease will not be presented to the council until the new council has been sworn in.

All agreed that it a Solicitor should be used to check the wording of the lease and the Clerk was asked to contact one.

Any member of the public can attend all Council and Committee meetings to see the work of the Council. Full Council meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month which start with a 30 minute public forum for questions and issues to be raised.

- 16.15 To consider and agree the bank transfer payment authorisation process for the Unity Trust Bank account.**  
After discussion the Clerk was asked to write a policy and circulate it to the members of this committee for comments.
- 17.15 To agree the parish council's health & safety and risk assessment policies and procedure documents (as prepared by the working party consisting of the Clerk and Councillors Barber and Bowell)**  
After a minor amendment to the wording of 2.2 of the Health and safety policy from 'the Parish Clerk is responsible for safety in the following areas' to 'the council's premises are as follows' and a request that the Clerk should check with both the insurers and NALC regarding personal indemnity cover **it was agreed that it should be recommended to full council that the policies are adopted.**
- 18.15 To consider and agree the current complaints procedure policy and disciplinary and grievance procedure policy.**  
After a discussion Councillor Gilbert proposed that they current policies should be agreed as acceptable, this was seconded by Councillor Pelling and agreed by all. Councillor Pelling also volunteered to look at the contents of the staff handbook and asked for this item to be put on the next committee agenda for an update.
- 19.15 To consider and agree a staff and councillor training and development policy.**  
After discussion it was Councillor Dilks proposed that it should be **recommended to full council that standing orders should be amended to include the expectation that all Councillors should attend the councillors training course and should not be able to represent the council on an outside body or chair a committee or the council if they have not done so.** This was seconded by Councillor Pelling and agreed by all.  
The Clerk was also asked to set up a CPD record for each member of staff and each Councillor.
- 20.15 To receive an update regarding the long term sickness of the maintenance worker and covering his duties.**  
The Clerk confirmed that the maintenance worker had been signed off work until 31 April 2015 and that cover for his duties until that date had been agreed. The members requested that the Clerk obtain an update for them at the end of April so the matter could be discussed again at that time.
- 21.15 To agree to payment being made to the Clerk and Assistant for additional hours worked from October 2014 to March 2015**  
As it had been agreed at full council on 25 September 2014 that the additional hours would be approved by the Chairman of the Council this matter was referred to Councillor Pelling, who approved the payment.  
As the same number of additional hours were not being worked every week it was agreed not to increase the Clerk's contractual hours
- 21.15 Date of next meeting**  
As the members of the parish council will not sign their declaration of acceptance of office until annual meeting of the parish council on Thursday 21 May 2015 it was agreed that the finance and general purposes committee scheduled for Thursday 14 May 2015 at 7.45pm should be postponed until a later date. The Clerk would notify the members of the date.