



DEEPING ST JAMES PARISH COUNCIL

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

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Parish Clerk: Julie Fortnum

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Policy and Personnel Committee held in the meeting room at the Institute 38 Church Street Deeping St James PE6 8HD at **8.00pm on Tuesday 13 June 2023.**

Present: Councillors Bowell, Halls, Hosking, Shinkins-Hoppe, Smith, Stevens and a member of the public.

The minutes were taken by the Parish Clerk, Julie Fortnum

24.1 To note the election of Councillor Bowell as committee Chairperson resolved at the Council meeting held on 16 May 2023 (minute 24.5)

Noted.

24.2 To receive apologies of absence.

Apologies had been received and were accepted from Councillor Gilbert.

24.3 To receive any declarations of interest.

None declared.

24.4 To adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 11 April 2023.

Agreed and signed.

24.5 To receive the Clerk's report

No further letters have been received from Barclays Bank Plc since 23 March 2023 and access is still available to the bank account although there is a warning message at the top of the screen but when the Clerk follows the link to provide the information requested another message says the Clerk does not have the authority. The Clerk suggests that one or both of the remaining two signatories of the account, Councillors Stevens and Shinkins-Hoppe, accesses it online to see if the issue can be resolved or visits a local branch.

The year-end has been completed on accounting system and the Internal Auditor has signed the section entitled, Annual Internal Audit Report, within the Annual Governance and Accounting Return 2022/23 which is completed and ready to be presented to full council for approval and signature at the meeting on Tuesday 20 June 2023

Several complaints regarding grass cutting within the parish have been received and the clerk has left voice messages and sent emails to the contractors EnvironmentSK but received no response. The Clerk then spoke to the ground's maintenance Officer at South Kesteven District Council who provided information regarding the decision to return the work of EnvironmentSK Ltd back in-house and the work taking place to make this happen – TUPE transfer of personnel, legal and contractual changes, etc. The Clerk was assured that the contract the Parish Council has regarding the cutting of the Highway verges will be honoured.

Work is still ongoing regarding the transfer of ownership of Jubilee Park which has been delayed due to the discovery that a small section of the land is unregistered. The best way to move this forward is being considered by the Solicitors and current owners, South Kesteven District Council.

24.6 To receive a report of the current financial position.

A report had been circulated to all members advising that the bank balance as at 31 May 2023 was £245,694.90 which included general reserves of £50,874.55 and earmarked reserves of £100,050.00 was noted.

24.7 To receive a report on the income and expenditure for the period 1 April 2023 to 7 June 2023

A report had been circulated to all the members and the contents was noted.

24.8 To receive the list of payments made regularly by direct debit and standing order.

Direct debit payments

British Gas

E-on

Bourne Skip Hire

Biffa Waste Services Limited

British Telecom

Fuel Card Services

Anglian Water Business (National) Ltd

Information Commissioner's Office

Debit attached to Mastercard

Zoom Communications

Cloud Next Ltd

Standing order payments

Deeping St James United Charities

24.9 To receive the list of Council and staff subscriptions to other bodies

Society of Local Council Clerks (including Association (union membership) for both Clerks)

Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (including membership to the National Association)

Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management

National Association of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners

24.10 To receive the asset register as at 31 March 2023

This document had been circulated to all the members and at the recommendation of the Internal Auditor has been added to the Parish Councils website. It was noted that since 31 March 2023 the container at the allotments, storage unit in the Cemetery and a vehicle had been purchased.

24.11 To consider the updated Internal Auditors report

This report had been shared with the members of the committee prior to the meeting. As well as the above the following recommendations were noted and it was agreed that they would be put in to practice

Asset register Areas within the asset register were discussed

Recommendations

- Gifted items or items without a functional resale value including burial grounds should be valued at £1 in line with Practitioners' Guide 5.61 and 5.62.
- Land that is not owned by the council should not be included on the asset register.
- Legal advice should be sought regarding whether unregistered land can be transferred to council ownership.
- Up to date current valuations will be required for insurance purposes as has already been carried out for the village cross.

Charity

Recommendations

- Charity accounts are kept separately from council accounts in line with statutory requirements. Recommendation
- Refer to Practitioners' Guide 5.105 to 5.115 for proper practices relating to charities.
- In particular, note 5.113: Meetings of the authority when it is acting as charity trustee must take place separately from those of the authority acting as the authority. Separate minutes must be kept. In order to avoid confusion, trust business should always be minuted separately from authority business. Separate notices and agendas for meetings should be issued.

24.12 To review the following documents

1. Standing orders

The Clerk had compared DSJPC's standing orders to the National Association of Local Councils model document which was last reviewed and updated in April 2022 and proposed that the amended/additional clauses in the model document should be adopted by DSJPC. These had been highlighted in yellow on the paperwork that had been provided to the members. **RESOLVED**

The paperwork also included three clauses highlighted in green which required discussion and agreement. The wording of clauses 3 f and g were considered it was proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** to add to clause 3 e the following to ask members of the public to register their attendance at least 48 hours prior to a meeting and give notice of the question they intend to pose.

The wording of 3 x was also considered and it was proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** to remove "not exceed two hours".

2. Financial regulations

The Clerk had compared DSJPC's financial regulations to the National Association of Local Councils modal document which was last reviewed in 2019 and proposed that the wording "Thresholds currently applicable are:

- i) For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£181,302)
- ii) For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,551,413)" should be removed from clause 11 c. **RESOLVED**

The figures quoted in clauses 4.5 and 6.18 were also considered and it was proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** to increase them from £1000 to £5000 and £500 to £2000 respectively.

It was also proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** to amend the wording of clause 8.3 from "The council will arrange with the council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairperson man of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk or RFO".

To

"Those Parish Councillors who are authorised signatories will from time to time log on to Barclays and Unity Trust banking checking the balances and transactions"

3. Risk management

It was agreed to defer the review of this document until the meeting on 15 August 2023

4. Health and Safety

It was agreed to defer the review of this document until the meeting on 15 August 2023

24.13 To discuss ideas to enable all the Parish Council policies to be reviewed over the course of the year

Councillor Howell proposed that a working party is formed to look at the core policies and documents and agree a review timetable, the proposal was not seconded. The Clerk offered to look at these with Councillor Howell.

24.14 To consider the need for additional authorised signatories for online banking verifications.

The Clerk advised that Councillor Gilbert had volunteered to be a signatory, and Councillors Hosking and Stevens also volunteered. Councillor Halls who is already an approved signatory agreed to try to log in online again.

24.15 To agree the date of the next meeting.
8pm Tuesday 15 August 2023