



DEEPING ST JAMES PARISH COUNCIL

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

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Parish Clerk: Julie Fortnum

Then minutes of the Finance, Policy and Personnel Committee meeting held in the meeting room at the Institute 38 Church Street Deeping St James PE6 8HD at 7.00pm on Tuesday 08 April 2025.

Present: Councillors Bowell, Gilbert, Halls, Hosking, Shinkins-Hoppe plus non-committee members Councillors Burdock, Laws and Neville

The minutes were taken by the Parish Clerk.

25.55 To receive apologies of absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Stevens.

25.56 To receive any declarations of interest.

None declared.

25.57 To adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 11 February 2025.

Agreed and signed.

25.58 To receive the Clerk's report.

-NALC have updated Model Standing Order 18 further to the recent changes to procurement legislation and to ensure consistency with NALC's Model Financial Regulations. The changes are to 18.a.v, 18.c, 18.d and 18.f of the 2022 version. Model Standing Order 14 has also been updated to better reflect Code of Conduct requirements. Model Standing Orders 14.a-c have been removed. They have also changed the language in the document, so it uses gender-neutral terms. This is in line with NALC policy and the Civility and Respect project. The new model Standing Orders document is now available in the LALC portal (Document Templates).

-The Clerk continues to work through the new model financial regulations comparing to them to DSJ Parish Council's current ones so that they can be adopted by DSJ Parish Council from May 2025 onwards.

-The Clerk has contacted a HR company with to arrange for the staff handbook to be reviewed and for work to be completed to standardise the contracts of employment of the current staff

-Notification has been received from both Unity Trust and Barclays that interest rates have been reduced. They are now

Unity Trust Instant Access - 2.50% AER

Barclays Business Premium – 1.36% AER

-From 1 April 2025 two of the maintenance staff have increased their hours by 12 and 8 respectively.

-The Clerk has worked with the payroll provider to ensure that the required amendments to the payroll have been made taking into account the additional hours, increases to the maintenance workers hourly rates, pension contribution amendments and the increase in employers national insurance contributions.

-The Clerk has received information via LALC about archiving documentation. The records that we particularly value from Parish Councils are minute books, allotment and cemetery registers, and if they exist, older records that have been retained in parish council custody but date from prior to a council's formation (e.g., Parish Officer Account books, enclosure awards, tithe awards, etc). We would **not** normally archive general correspondence, planning applications, brochures, pamphlets, copies of records, and other records that are

less than 30 years old, or any records that are likely to still need to be accessed by the council. Fill in the online form at is the procedure that is now required:

[Lincolnshire Archives – Donations - Lincolnshire County Council](#)

The form at that location needs to be completed with as much detail as possible describing each record being offered with the dates of each, or a list can be uploaded to it.

25.59 To receive a report of the financial position as at 2 April 2025.
Report noted with no comments.

25.60 To receive a report on the income and expenditure against budget for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Councillor Bowell asked for clarification regarding the budget overspend in respect of community events (overspend not deemed significant for the number of events DSJPC had organised or been involved in), repairs to the Cemetery (for advanced payment for materials to lay a slabbed path in section F included in the 2025/26 budget) and bus shelter purchase (this purchase had been paid for from section 106 monies which had been received and were included in the miscellaneous income cost code (11) under the income (A) cost centre.

The report was noted.

25.61 To consider recommendations or matters arising from the Internal Auditor's interim narrative report for the financial year 2024/25 which was received on 19 March 2025.
Councillor Gilbert introduced the Internal Auditors report referring to the following four comments

“At the time of first inspection, several sets of minutes of full council and committees were missing from the website. Council is encouraged to make sure minutes are published promptly.”

The Clerk was asked if the missing minutes mentioned had been added to the webpage. The Clerk advised that she had sent copies of what the Internal Auditor had asked to be added to the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils Webmaster with whom the parish Council had a service level agreement with and he had confirmed he had added them. Councillor Bowell questioned this and said that there still appeared to be some missing and that some of those on the webpage stated that they were draft minutes not approved minutes.

ACTION: The Clerk was asked to check this.

“Consideration of any report from the internal auditor should be made in full, prior to completion of the Annual Governance Statement for the given year.”

The committee acknowledged this comment

ACTION: The Clerk was asked to ensure that the Internal Auditors report was added to the agenda where the AGAR was to be agreed, as an item preceding the one relating to the completion of the annual governance statement, as comments in the Internal Auditors report would assist with the Parish Councils responses to the assertions within the governance statement

“According to the terms of reference, responsibility for review of standing orders and financial regulations lies with the Finance Policy and Personnel Committee. While it is acceptable for the committee to carry out such a review, it would be more appropriate for this to be referred to council as a recommendation for approval.”

The Committee agreed to amend the wording of point ii of the terms of reference to reflect this and to ensure that any review of the standing orders of financial regulations undertaken by this committee was always referred to Council as a recommendation for approval

ACTION: The Clerk to include this amendment when reviewing Standing Orders at the next FP&P committee meeting in June 2025

“Councillors are encouraged to take action where this is required to make sure that council has access to all bank accounts and council funds.

At the time of writing, this appears still to be an issue and will continue to be presented as a strong recommendation. Relying on a small number of signatories is a potential risk to council, should those signatories not be available. Council should consider mitigation for this risk.”

Councillor Gilbert directly asked Councillors Halls and Hosking if there were able this. Both agreed they would within the next week.

ACTION: When Council meet on Tuesday 15 April 2025 Councillor Gilbert to check if this has happened, and if not, alternative Councillors would be requested to come forward.

The Clerk was asked to respond to the internal Auditor acknowledging his comments and share the above responses to show that Deeping St James Parish Council had given them consideration and were working on them.

25.62 To receive the list of DSJPC’s policies and review the following policies:

The Clerk had provided the DSJPC policy and the NALC model policy for consideration

1. Communications

The Clerk had provided the DSJPC policy and in the absence of a NALC communications policy, the NALC model media policy (which included a section on Communication with the media), for consideration

It was proposed seconded and **RESOLVED** that this policy should be re-adopted.

ACTION: It was also agreed that agreeing a media policy should be considered at future meeting

2. Environmental

The Clerk had provided the DSJPC policy and the NALC model environmental and Sustainability policy for consideration

ACTION: Councillor Laws offered to review this policy and bring a draft back to the next FP&P meeting in June 2024

3. Grants

The Clerk had provided the DSJPC policy and the NALC model policy for consideration

The Committee agreed that both documents included good points so it was agreed that they should be merged and amended accordingly.

ACTION: Councillors Halls volunteered to complete this and bring a draft to the next FP&P meeting in June 2024

4. Records retention

The Clerk had provided the DSJPC policy and the NALC model policy for consideration.

Again, the Committee agreed that both documents included good points so it was agreed that they should be merged and amended accordingly.

ACTION: The Clerk agreed to do this

25.63 To note the date of the next meeting – Provisional date 8pm Tuesday 3 June 2025. To be agreed at the Annual Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm on 20 May 2025.