

Metheringham Parish Council

Finance, Staffing and Communications Committee Meeting

Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting held at The Parish Council Office, Metheringham
Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr M Westerman (Chair)
 Cllrs R Grummitt S Peek F Pembery

In Attendance: Miss A Driver (Clerk & note taker)
 0 members of the public

00001. **CHAIRS COMMENTS**

The Chair opened the meeting with general housekeeping and welcomed those present.

00002. **TO RESOLVE TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND REASONS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 S85(1)**

Councillors present were advised that Cllr R Grummitt would join the meeting slightly later than the committee meeting start time of 6.30pm.

00003. **TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- a. Members are required to declare any declarations of interest at this point and may also make them at any point during the meeting in accordance with Metheringham Parish Councils Code of Conduct

None received

- b. Dispensations: To consider and grant dispensation to relevant members in accordance with Metheringham Parish Councils Code of Conduct

None received.

00004. **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS ACT 1960 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC: TO RESOLVE THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 1(2) OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 AND BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE REMAINDER OF THE BUSINESS THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED**

Proposed Cllr M Westerman, Seconded Cllr S peek and **Resolved:** Council members present unanimously agreed to move into a closed session.

- a. To receive an update on Clerks induction

The Chair updated members present that the Clerk had settled into their new role well. Following their induction on 1st November 2023 a one-month review took place on 29th November 2023 and a further review scheduled for 29th February 2024.

Cllr R Grummitt joined the meeting at 6.50pm

- b. To discuss current software packages used by the parish Council

Council members present discussed the existing software package used Rialtas (Alpha Receipts and Payments) and were not against considering the use of a new financial software package in the future should the need arise along with the 3-month cancellation notice period to Rialtas.

c. To discuss the current financial status of the Council prior to discussions regarding the precept for 24/25

The Clerk provided a verbal update and brought to the attention of council members present that with having no Clerk/RFO in post this had impacted the data available and held within the existing Alpha accounts application.

Rialtas customer services confirmed out of six accounts held within the Alpha application, five bank accounts have been inputted and reconciled until May 2023 by the previous locum Clerk/RFO. Two accounts, petty cash which had an opening balance of £51.22 and the credit card account have had nothing inputted or reconciled on the Alpha application during the 2023/2024 financial year period.

Half a day's Alpha training has been scheduled for the Clerk/RFO via teams on 14th December 2023 to gain a basic understanding of the system and its features. Additional training is available from Rialtas at a cost for more specific in-depth training topics such as Earmarked Reserves, Budgets, Cashbook Reconciliation, Interpreting Reports, Yearend.

Bank statements showed on the 19th April 2023 the overall combined bank balance total was £396,498.94. At a Parish Council Meeting on the 19th April 2023 it was resolved that £198,000 was to be Earmarked, Reserves was £98,779.30 and CIL was £22,760.87 a combined total of £319,540.17.

Bank Statements showed the first week in November 2023 the combined total of all Parish Council bank accounts held was a total of £398,322.24.

Bank mandates have been completed, signed by signatories and posted to enable the new Clerk/RFO access to all Parish Council bank accounts held.

Concerns were expressed by the Clerk/RFO they were operating a little bit blind until all financial data has been inputted onto the Alpha accounts system, reconciled and full access to the bank accounts has been granted and received. All of this coupled together may have a knock-on effect given deadlines which fast approaching for budget setting, precept and the end of year and AGAR and wished to highlight this potential risk to council members.

The Precept agreed for 2023/2024 was £161,360 and the Precept for the period 2024/2025 needs to be submitted to NKDC by 26th January 2024 and will form as an agenda items at the next meeting of the Parish Council on 10th January 2024.

00005. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be held ad-hoc as and when required.

The meeting closed at 7:30pm