

Metheringham, Sots Hole and Tanvats Parish Council

Draft Notes from the Full Council Meeting on Tuesday 20th December 2022

Attendees:

Cllr Parker (Chair)
Cllr Toynton
Cllr Westerman
Cllr Parry
Cllr Peek
Cllr Grummitt
Cllr Nelson
Cllr Holmes
Cllr Worthington

L Allen (Temporary Clerk)

County Councillor Kendrick and six members of the public were also present.

Absences:

Cllr Pembury, Cllr Rymer and Cllr Tatton

Meeting Commenced 6.15pm

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and made the housekeeping announcements along with a request for anyone wishing to speak during the public forum of the meeting. No members of the public wished to speak and the meeting continued to the next agenda item.
2. Apologies for absence and reasons given in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)
Absences were noted from Cllr Pembury, Cllr Rymer and Cllr Tatton.
It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Grummitt, **SECONDED** by Cllr Westerman and unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies.
3. Members Declarations of Interest
 - a) Members declarations of interest:
Cllr Holmes declared an interest in Agenda Item 8.
 - b) Dispensations
No dispensations were requested.
4. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on:
 - a) 22nd November 2022

A question was raised by Cllr Holmes regarding the transition to closed session during the last meeting which was not shown as being voted by resolution in the minutes. Clarification

had been received from the temporary Clerk who was present at the previous meeting that the process was correct.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Parry, **SECONDED** Cllr Worthington with seven in favour and two abstentions to approve the minutes as a correct record.

5. To receive a report from representatives on outside bodies:

a) County Councillor

A report was received from County Councillor Kendrick including:

- News that additional public health guidance was being circulated in relation to Scarlet Fever/Strep A.
- County Council Budgeting Priorities were to be open to public consultation.
- Also that proposals are to be considered for the 40mph speed reduction for Waynham Hollow / Dunston Junction
- Cllr Kendrick concluded his report by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and with hopes to see everyone in the New Year.

b) District Councillors

None

c) BBH Policing Team

None

d) To receive reports from Council representatives on other outside bodies

i) Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Parry shared that there were no updates since the last meeting.

ii) Metherringham Swimming Pool

Cllr Worthington informed on a Maintenance Plan and Statement of Account for the Swimming Pool and that bank details had been passed on.

iii) Metherringham Community Hub

Cllr Westerman shared that the Digital Hub continues to grow in numbers, with all ages and backgrounds. There has been an increase in returners and a recruitment drive is underway for volunteers.

iv) Metherringham Bowls Club

An update was received that there was a new Chair and Secretary and the AGM took place last week. Unfortunately the Christmas Feast and Fair had to be abandoned as not enough members were able to be present to run and organise the event. However, a Burns Night event is to be held late January.

v) Metherringham Football Club

A report was received that no minutes had come through yet, but all fixtures were fulfilled.

6. To consider and resolve to employ the services of LALC to provide professional services for the following items:

a) To update Parish Website and upload minutes of meetings etc.

Due to being unable to update the website at present, two options were considered. To hire the professional services of LALC on a yearly contract or to hire a temporary

clerk/admin assistant to update the website until a permanent Clerk has been appointed.

PROPOSED by Cllr Grummitt, **SECONDED** Cllr Westerman and unanimously **RESOLVED** to defer until the next meeting when costings for both options would be presented to Council to make a decision.

- b) To provide assistance and guidance on AGAR Form to be published

Due to financial irregularities assistance is urgently needed to comply with what is required by PKF Littlejohn.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Parry, **SECONDED** Cllr Grummitt to seek further assistance from LALC.

- c) To update the accounts package (Rialtas)

It was agreed to defer this until the next meeting until further options could be considered. **PROPOSED** Cllr Westerman, **SECONDED** Cllr Grummitt and unanimously **RESOLVED**.

- d) To conduct audit on accounts and issue report to council

It was noted that given the status of the AGAR and lack of access to the forms, which were being sought by both LALC and the Monitoring Officer, the Council are also currently awaiting a report from Jack the locum clerk.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Worthington, **SECONDED** Cllr Westermann and unanimously **RESOLVED** to use the services of LALC going forward.

7. To receive update on ex Clerk's status

An update has been received from Chris Randall that ACAS has been extremely difficult to deal with. A monetary settlement has been requested from the ex Clerk through ACAS and the Council has been advised to consider this against the cost of going down the tribunal route.

It was agreed to discuss further at the next meeting so that that Council can make an informed decision.

6.47pm Cllr Holmes having declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 left the meeting room.

8. To consider FOI Request and SAR request from Cllr I Holmes

Following a FOI and SAR Request from Cllr Holmes it was recognised that in order to provide a response specialist assistance was needed.

It was **PROPOSED** Cllr Nelson, **SECONDED** Cllr Grummitt, with eight in favour to request LALC to present to and advise the Council on what is required from them in order to respond.

7.52pm Cllr Holmes rejoined the meeting.

9. To receive an update on Banking:

a) Access to bank accounts

Signatories have now been setup to effect payments and to pay off debts.

b) Paid Invoices

It was noted that some electricity payments had been made by Direct Debit, but complications with 6 different providers and no meters read has left the council with a very large amount of unclaimed credit.

c) Receive update on remaining invoices/debts outstanding and approve for payment

It was noted that the HRMC invoice is still to be paid, the outstanding cleaning services payments and also an invoice for the Remembrance Wreath is still to be expected.

10. To consider and Resolve to advertise a permanent Clerk's position to include:

a) To accept Job Description received from Councillor Westerman

After discussion by Councillors, there was some confusion whether the Clerk's role was to be a separate position from the RFO and what the benefits would be if splitting the role. Accuracy of the job description was considered and whether Risk Assessments were part of the role that a Clerk should undertake.

The temporary Clerk stated that as per the Financial Regulations a Clerk is required to carry out risk assessments as part of their job description and the type of risk assessments would vary depending what activities a Council carries out, this is in addition to the overall Financial Risk Assessment which is approved by the Council as a whole.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Toynton, **SECONDED** Cllr Peek with eight in favour and one abstention to refer the description to the Staffing Committee to finalise a more accurate version as soon as possible, with options for combining the Clerk/RFO role as one.

b) To discuss and agree the contract hours for the post

PROPOSED by Cllr Parry, **SECONDED** Cllr Toynton and unanimously **RESOLVED** to refer to the Staffing Committee.

c) To discuss and resolve the salary for the post

PROPOSED by Cllr Parry, **SECONDED** Cllr Toynton and unanimously **RESOLVED** to refer to the Staffing Committee.

11. To receive a report from the Investigating Panel following the suspension of the cleaning contract with Buzzing Ladies and matters arising to include:

It was noted that the report will be made public once it has been accepted.

PROPOSED Cllr Nelson, **SECONDED** Cllr Westerman with eight in favour and one against to accept the report.

- a) To consider and resolve to lift the suspension of the cleaning contract or to terminate the contract with Buzzing Ladies

PROPOSED by Cllr Nelson, **SECONDED** Cllr Worthington with eight in favour and one abstention to terminate the contract with Buzzing Ladies.

- b) To consider and resolve to pay invoices submitted by Buzzing Ladies, offer amended payment or refuse payment

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Nelson, **SECONDED** Cllr Worthington and unanimously **RESOLVED** to pay Buzzing Ladies for the months owed up to the 22nd November when the Contract was suspended for a total of £2261.32.

- 12. To consider and revolve a response to the Lincolnite's article regarding Buzzing Ladies

Due to information being printed that was incorrect, an official response from the Council was still needed.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Parker, **SECONDED** Cllr Grummitt with eight in favour and one against to allocate two Councillors to send a response. This was noted to be Cllr Parry and Cllr Worthington.

- 13. To resolve to request Solicitor to contact Clerk over missing items:

- i) Seagate External Hard Drive
- ii) SD Card
- iii) Dictaphone

After consideration of the costs and spending of additional public money to hire a solicitor and the likelihood receiving a response or a successful outcome, it was **PROPOSED** Cllr Nelson, **SECONDED** Cllr Parry with eight in favour and one against to write off the items to cut the Council's losses.

- 14. Date and time of next meeting: 24th January 2023

Meeting Closed 7.45pm

Approved



K. A. Parker

Chair