

MINUTES OF MEETING OF SAXTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Thursday 15th February 2018 at 7.30 pm

1. **The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.**
2. **There were no apologies for absence.**
Present
George Cullingford (Chair) Kevin Davis Graham Ward Lisa Handley
Jonathan Sullivan Lydia Kirk (Clerk)
3. **Declarations of interests & applications for dispensations**
None
4. **The minutes of the meeting on 11th January 2018 were approved as a true record of the meeting.** The Chair thanked JS for taking the minutes.
5. **Matters arising**
N/A
There were no members of public present so no public forum was held.
6. **Chairman's report** The Chairman thanked the new clerk for her work to date with Parish Council matters and the new website- www.saxtead.suffolk.cloud
Despite chasers, GC has not received the pay figures from the previous clerk for his work up until 11th November 2017 and so Council have not been able to pay him his final salary cheque and expenses. Councillors were concerned that over 3 months have passed since the previous clerk's resignation and are keen to sort this promptly with the financial year-end now approaching. GC spoke to the previous clerk at the weekend and will continue to put pressure on him in this regard.
7. **Clerk's report**
The clerk reported that she has submitted a claim for VAT payments for the period 01/04/2016-31/01/2018. She has asked SALC to split future invoices for clerk training workshops between Saxtead Parish Council & Parham Parish Council. PKF Littlejohn confirmed at a SALC training session that Saxtead PC are not required to have a Limited Assurance Review (formerly known as an External Audit) this year, despite having received a qualified audit for the previous financial year.
The Transparency Code application for funds for the new website, staff costs for web editing and hosting fees has been submitted and we should hear back from SALC in this regard shortly. The new website is live and is now showing more prominently in search results. The clerk is continuing to work on updating the web content and adding Parish Council documents to ensure it is Transparency Code compliant before the next internal audit.
8. **LH proposed appointing the new clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer.** This was seconded by GW and the motion was unanimously approved.
9. **The following policies were approved and adopted:**
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Disciplinary Procedure
 - Freedom of Information Policy
 - Internal Control Statement
 - Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and Charges, with amendments to include village facilities provided by the Parish Council.
 - Lone Worker Policy
 - Grievance Procedure
 - Sickness Absence Policy
 - Protocol for Recording of Meetings
10. **Council resolved to register with the Information Commissioner's Office at a cost of £35 per annum.** The Data Protection Act 1998 requires every data controller who processes personal information to register with the ICO.
11. **Council considered its Internal Control Statement and considered itself compliant.** Council checked infidelity insurance was in place, and considered the insurance level of £25,000 to be sufficient.

12. **Council reviewed the internal audit report for the year ending 31/03/2017 and the issues raised therein.** Council resolved to consider the recommendations and requirements when undertaking this year's financial year-end paperwork.
13. **GC proposed using Trevor Brown as the internal auditor for the year ending 31/03/2018.** This was seconded by JS and approved unanimously. Council accepted the auditor's terms of reference.
14. **Council adopted revisions to its Standing Orders in order to bring them more in line with the national model Standing Orders.**
15. **Dates for Parish Council meetings in 2018 were discussed and agreed.**
16. **Council agreed to remove the previous clerk as a non-signing official on the bank account and to replace with the current clerk.** Council resolved for all statements to be sent to the new clerk's address and GC and GW signed the bank forms in this regard.
17. **Council agreed to send the new clerk a standard letter regarding workplace pension provision as provided by SALC.**
ACTION POINT Clerk to respond to this letter for Council's records.
18. **PLANNING The following application was discussed:**
DC/18/0495/TCA Mr Michael Stracey, Highfield, The Green, Saxtead
To fell trees A & B and reduce the crowns of trees C & D by up to 60%.
Council looked at the application but the plan referred to in SCDC's letter was not included with the hard copy received and could not be found on the online planning portal.
ACTION POINT Clerk to contact SCDC to ask for a plan showing the location of the trees and the applicant's boundary.
19. **A parishioner has contacted the Council with concerns about speeding around World End's Lane and Tannington Road.** Councillors looked at the extent of the current 30 mph zone and with this, and the ninety degree bend in the road, they were surprised that speeding would be an issue in this area. The Council would welcome suggestions from the parishioner as to suitable traffic calming measures for the location.
ACTION POINT Clerk to contact the parishioner to this extent and to ask if he has contacted the police regarding the speeding.
20. **GW has been approached by a parishioner who is concerned about speeding through the village.** It was suggested that signs along the line of "Welcome to Saxtead- Please drive carefully", might help motorists to slow down as at present it is not clear that you are entering a village. Council discussed this idea and would like to look into costs and feasibility. Such signs might also help the issue raised at item number 19.
ACTION POINT Clerk to contact the Highways Department for advice and costs for signs, and possibly wooden gated surrounds, for all four entrances to the village and report back.
21. **GC has been in contact with Bidwell's regarding the fallen tree on the green.** They have responded that they have not asked anyone to remove the tree as yet but hope to reply with more information this week. GC will keep in contact with them as the Parish Council would like a response one way or the other.
22. **GC has been in contact with Bidwells regarding the poor condition of the informal lay-by near to the windmill.** Bidwells have confirmed that they did not ask the road contractor to put any plantings down in the layby area when the recent repairs were carried out. GC has sent Bidwells pictures showing the large potholes and they are considering the issue. GC will keep Council updated when he hears more.
23. **Councillors were somewhat surprised by SCDC's response to its application to register *The Old Mill House* as an Asset of Community Value.** The Council felt that its reasons for wanting the registration still apply and the planning issue is still relevant despite there being no current planning application.
ACTION POINT JS and LK to respond to SCDC's letter noting Council's concerns and looking for a more in depth and justified response from them.
24. **The Council has received a quotation of £75+VAT per cut from the current contractor to cut the triangle on The Green as required through the growing season of 2018.**

Councillors felt this was very reasonable but that they should have other quotations to compare and to comply with tender obligations.

ACTION POINT Clerk to contact other local mowing contractors and invite them to quote for cutting the triangle on a 5 year contract. Also to put an open tender invitation on the village website, with a deadline date of 31/03/2018.

ACTION POINT GC to contact the current mowing contractor inviting him to quote for a 5 year contract and explaining the Council's financial obligations to seek additional tenders.

25. **Correspondence received since the last meeting was considered.** Council agreed not to donate to Disability Advice Service at the moment, as per its recent resolution to suspend grant funding (*11th January 2018- Item 9*).

26. **Councillors' Reports**

GW reported that he had contacted SCDC regarding the refuse bins blowing over and spreading litter in high winds. The district Council had replied that they are not planning on changing the shapes of the bins at present and they do not have bins which have catches to fasten them shut. They recommended weighting the bins down in strong winds.

27. **Items to be raised at the next meeting**

To review the risk assessment of physical assets, such as benches and goalposts.

28. **The next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 27th March at 7.30pm.**

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked Councillors for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10pm.

Signed:

.....
G. Cullingford
Chairman

.....
Date