

# MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SAXTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018, after the Annual Parish Meeting

**1. To appoint Chairman**

The clerk called for nominations for a Chairman. Kevin Davis proposed George Cullingford to continue as Chair. This was seconded by Graham Ward and carried unanimously. GC confirmed that he would be happy to stand again.

**2. To appoint Vice Chairman**

Jonathan Sullivan proposed Kevin Davis to continue as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Graham Ward and carried unanimously.

**3. There were no apologies for absence**, although Cllr Handley had warned she would be late to the meeting, due to having another meeting prior.

**Present**

George Cullingford (Chair)	Kevin Davis	Graham Ward	Lisa Handley
Jonathan Sullivan	Lydia Kirk (Clerk)		

**4. Declarations of interests & applications for dispensations**

None

**5. The minutes of the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

**6. Matters arising**

None

*There were no members of public present so no public forum was held.*

**7. Chairman's report** The Chairman was pleased to report that the end of year accounts had been completed and signed off by the internal auditor with a glowing report, which provided much comfort to the Parish Council following some problematic audits in previous years.

The Chairman was also pleased to report that the new clerk's 13 week probationary period had now passed and both employer and employee were very happy with the employment continuing.

**8. Clerk's report**

The clerk wished to thank Trevor Brown for conducting a very thorough and prompt internal audit. The news from NALC that Parish Councils will not require a Data Protection Officer should be very beneficial to the Council.

The clerk has chased BT regarding removal of the kiosk at Chapel Road and has informed them of safety concerns with the broken glass.

Community Action Suffolk had been trying to contact the previous clerk regarding the Council's free membership which had expired. The clerk has renewed this and informed them of the new contact details.

NALC has implemented new pay scales for Council staff with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. The clerk's contracted pay rate is scale point 18 from the National Scale, and so the hourly rate will increase with these changes. This increase was proposed by GW, seconded by JS and carried unanimously.

**9. Appointment of Officers & Council Representatives**

Responsible Financial Officer	Lydia Kirk
Examining Councillor	Lisa Handley
Internal Auditor	Trevor Brown
Finance Sub Group	All
Risk Assessment/Compliance Sub Group	All
SALC Representative	Vacant
Footpath Officer	Graham Ward
Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator	Graham Ward
Webmaster	Lydia Kirk

The above positions were proposed by KD, seconded by JS and carried unanimously.

## 10. Responsible Financial Officer's report

a) The following payments were considered and approved.

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details
P01 18-19	£129.60	L. Kirk	Work Editing Suffolk Cloud Website (using Transparency Code Grant Funding), HWA- March & April, mileage
P02 18-19	£70.00	T. Brown	Internal Audit
P03 18-19	£178.46	SALC	Annual Subscription

*Invoices with full details of the above items were on display at the meeting.*

b) The following payments received since the last meeting were noted

Date	Amount	Payee	Details	Notes
05.03.2018	£0.15	Barclays	Deposit a/c interest	
15.03.2018	£337.50	SALC	Transparency Code Grant Funding	
27.04.2018	£2,325.00	SCDC	1 <sup>st</sup> instalment of precept	

c) The current and deposit account balances were noted as being £7,954.98 and £295.43 respectively. The bank reconciliation for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 was reviewed and signed off by LH. GC thanked GW for his help liaising with the bank regarding changing the address for correspondence.

## 11. Procedural

a) The **Accounts** for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 had been previously circulated and were accepted. This was proposed by JS, seconded by GW and carried unanimously. Since circulation of the initial accounts, the internal auditor advised the clerk may wish to recategorise some of the costs such as clerk's training and Home Working Allowance from 'Other Staff Costs' to 'Administration'. This did not affect any of the overall figures.

b) **Section One** (Annual Governance Statement) and **Section Two** (Accounting Statements) of the **Local Councils' Annual Return** for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2108 were approved by council and completed and signed by the Chairman.

c) The **Statement of Significant Variances** was explained and accepted. This was proposed by JS, seconded by GW and carried unanimously.

d) Council resolved **to opt out of an External Audit** as an exempt council & the **Certificate of Exemption** was completed and signed by the Chairman and RFO. This was proposed by GC, seconded by KD and carried unanimously.

*The clerk will put copies of the end of year paperwork on the village website.*

12. **The Internal Auditor's Report for the year ending March 2018 was reviewed, having been previously circulated.** Councillors were pleased with the Auditor's very thorough and transparent report, and were pleased to note that no issues for concern had been raised during the audit.

13. **The following policies were reviewed:**

a) Standing Orders. These had been circulated previously and included revisions as per NALC's recommendations, which were then adopted. It was noted that these revisions refer to a Data Protection Officer. As Parish Councils are now not required to have a DPO it is

likely that this clause will soon change but until replacement wording is provided the Council agreed to stick with NALC's template.

b) Assets Register. There was some discussion as to whether or not the Assets Register should include Little Green. Whilst the Council maintain it, they do not actually own it and so it was decided not to include it.

c) Financial Regulations

d) Statement of Internal Control. This was considered fit for purpose and effective.

e) Risk Assessment- Financial & Physical Assets. The revisions discussed at the last meeting were considered and approved.

**14. The 2012 Suffolk Model Code of Conduct was re-adopted.**

**15. A Privacy Notice relating to GDPR that will come into place 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 was considered.** LH reported that for 2 other voluntary organisations she is involved with, individuals are setting up private email addresses used solely for communications regarding that organisation, and have to use an external hub with log-ins to access private documents. LK has not received advice from SALC that this will be necessary for parish councillors but will let Councillors know if this changes. Council considered the issues raised by LH but did not think this necessary as most of the documents they hold are already in the public domain, with only the clerk holding invoices and correspondence which includes personal data such as names and addresses.

The proposed Privacy Policy was adopted but it was noted that this is likely to need revision as and when further obligations regarding the GDPR are ascertained.

**16. Councillor Sullivan has now met with the Community Support Officer at SCDC to discuss the application for registering *The Old Mill House* as an Asset of Community Value.** JS reported that they had a very useful meeting and the Officer provided practical advice regarding what to include in a new application.

**ACTION POINT** GC to liaise with the pub landlord regarding activities and events which occur at the pub which help to make it such a beneficial community asset.

**ACTION POINT** JS will then re-submit the application when he has the above-mentioned information from GC.

**17. Since the last meeting, the Council has heard that the Highways Department had reviewed the informal lay-by and were not planning any remedial action in this regard.** Councillors found this response wholly unsatisfactory and the clerk responded with Councillors' concerns that this was actually fly-tipping of road planings on land that did not belong to the road contractor. The clerk is chasing a response and will keep Councillors updated.

**18. Traffic calming measures in the village and communications with the Highways Department were discussed.** The clerk has chased the Highways Department regarding costings for 4 entrance signs for the village with white gate surrounds to help raise drivers' awareness that they were entering a village and as such should reduce their speed. The Highways Department have now responded with a quotation of £13,000 plus VAT. This sum is wholly unachievable by such a small Parish Council; even if they were able to secure several thousand pounds worth of funding, they would still be significantly short of the required sums and would also leave themselves without a safe level of reserved funds.

The Council discussed various other speed calming measures such a Speed Indicator Device and speed bumps. It was agreed that the entrance signs were considered the most suitable methods for the locations and that the clerk should advertise the quotation from the Highways Department on the village website. Parishioners would be invited to sponsor some of all of an entrance sign, or could suggest other ways to try and raise the necessary funds.

The Council had also heard from a parishioner who wishes to extend the 30mph zone along Tannington Road. The Council has previously tried to extend a different 30mph zone in the village to no avail and unfortunately Council cannot see extending the zone at this location would be any more successful.

19. **The clerk has received only one item of hard copy correspondence since the date of the last meeting- a *Clerks & Councils Magazine*- and it is thought that correspondence may still be being posted to the previous clerk.**  
Follow-up emails from a parishioner regarding traffic calming in the village and responses from the Highways Department were considered at item 17 & 18.
20. **Matters to be raised at the next meeting**  
Receive an update regarding hedge planting at the former site of the public toilets.  
Consider parishioner responses to funding entrance signs to the village.
21. **The next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm.**  
KD sent his apologies in advance of the next meeting as he is abroad.

*There being no further business, the Chairman thanked Councillors for attending and closed the meeting at 9.20pm.*

**Signed:**

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**G. Cullingford**  
**Chairman**

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**Date**