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Minutes of the Fressingfield Parish Council meeting held on 16 February 2021 at 7.30pm. This was a 'Zoomed' meeting.

Present: Cllrs Alex Brockhurst; Garry Deeks, Philip Eastgate, Tom Lindsay, Nigel Lucker, Trevor Orchard, Nick Stolls, Rachael Troughton, Neil Venton, and Di Warne (Chair).

Also in Attendance: Cllr Guy McGregor (Suffolk County Council), Andy Parris, clerk to the council and responsible finance officer (RFO). There were 3 members of the public present.

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- 1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2 Apologies for absence: From District Cllr Lavinia Hadingham.
- 3 Members' declarations of interest. Cllrs NS, RT and PE declared non-prejudicial personal interests in item 7, when a grant application from St Peter and St Paul Church was to be considered.
- 4 Minutes of the previous meeting
  - 1 It was resolved that the minutes of the full council meeting on 19/01/21 were correct. It was resolved that the minutes of the planning committee meeting on 02/02/21 were correct. The finance committee resolved that the minutes of the finance committee meeting on 09/02/21 were correct.
- 5 To decide how to respond to queries about council minutes The Chair clarified that the minutes consist of a record of decisions taken by the council at public meetings, with some contextual information. They are not verbatim records. The clerk confirmed that he uses his recording of a meeting as an aid memoire. Once used it is deleted so that there is one official record of the meeting, the minutes. Some councillors have been approached to give more detail than is in the minutes. It was agreed that in future councillors would use this standard response to such an enquiry:

*Thank you for your email. The minutes of meetings are a record of the decisions made. It is not appropriate for individual councillors to provide detailed verbatim feedback on council meetings, council decisions or actions. This applies to all members of the parish council.*

*Our meetings are open to the public and it is at these meetings where you will be able to hear the discussions and decision making. You and others are of course encouraged to attend and contribute with your views during the public forum.*

*I shall forward your email to the clerk who will collate it with all similar contacts with the council.*
- 6 Report from county councillor Cllr GMcG alerted the meeting to the fact that Suffolk is receiving less from central government for education than other local counties. This is also the case for the police. Increasingly resources from the county council are skewed to the vulnerable. Adequately funding services for these groups is important, but in the current financial position, will have an effect on other services such as highways and flood defence. Increasingly, central government is instructing county councils how to spend its money in these areas.

GMcG confirmed that he would use a transport grant to pay for erecting of the poles for the speed indicator devices (SIDs) in Fressingfield. (£760)
- 7 The public forum There were no comments from the members of the public.

## 8 Finance

- 1 To receive a report for the finance committee. Cllr NS informed the council that there will be no end of year surprises – expenditure and income match the budget plan in most areas, although expenditure on the SIDs will be below budget (see item 6). A discussion about the Fressingfield Community Fund revealed that the difficulties of setting up a bank account for a foundation charity were further complicated by Covid-19. The council is happy to continue to hold the Trust's funds until it opens its account.

NS confirmed there had been an extensive review of the internal audit report for 2019-2020. Based on this, it was agreed that VAT will be reclaimed quarterly in future and that funds for contingencies will be placed in the investment rather than current account. The factors leading to a 'no' answer in the annual governance and accountability return (AGAR) were discussed. The council recorded its gratitude for the efficient and timely way the RFO carries out his responsibilities. One effect of this is that the audit can be completed satisfactorily.

Cllr NS confirmed that a review of the internal audit process has been completed. The committee considered each of the annual governance statements (using the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance guide) and will give advice to the full council when the AGAR is completed later in the year.

It was agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair will discuss with the clerk the hours he has worked during the first half of the year, as recorded on the software Clockify. The council's risk assessments had been reviewed and the document completed and was recommended for the council's approval. The council approved the risk assessments.

**Clerk to advise how to add general data protection regulation (GDPR) to the risk assessments. The finance committee will review cemetery charges in six months.**

- 2 Cllrs NL and NV confirmed that the vouchers and invoices, where appropriate, were accurately recorded on the summary sheet previously circulated to all councillors. The council agreed to make these payments. Online authorisation of these payments was completed after the meeting by Cllrs TL and PE.
  - 3 February's reconciliation statement was presented to councillors prior to the meeting. Cllrs GD and NV confirmed that the balances shown on the reconciliation statement match those on the bank statements for 3/2/21. There were no questions relating to this statement. The statement was accepted by the council.
  - 4 The RFO passed on an application for grant from St Peter and St Paul Church. The council agreed to award a grant of £600. The RFO confirmed that there is money in the budget if another application is submitted before the end of the financial year.
- 9 To review proposed costings in the village development plan (VIP) Following discussions of anticipated costs for the different elements of the plan, the council agreed to accept the plan with these costs.

**Clerk to add columns for maintenance and expected life columns to assets register**

## 10 Reports

- 1 The Chair: Report previously circulated is on the website. There was an extensive discussion about how to react if the council is approached for views on a proposed housing development. It was agreed to put this on the agenda of the next planning committee meeting.  
The clerk informed councillors that although neighbouring parishes have flooding issues, none have sewerage problems like Fressingfield.

The response from Anglian Water to clerk's enquiries will be discussed at next drainage group meeting. **GD and clerk to investigate possibilities of a local rain gauge**

- 2 Speeding group – Costs for various safety measures are expected soon from Suffolk Highways. These will replace the estimates in the VIP.  
**TO to organise putting the SIDs in place, now the posts have been put up.**
  - 3 Emergency plan – Cllr NL to present latest information at the April council meeting
  - 4 Covid-19 support. Continuing as before – low level of take-up, volunteers meeting the needs and still committed.
  - 5 The clerk: Report previously circulated is on the website. From it, the council decided to hold the annual parish meeting (APM)2020 online.  
**Clerk to develop proposals on how to organise a virtual APM**  
**Council will consider at the next meeting how to respond to the death of a national figure.**
- 11 To decide how to handle a formal complaint against the council It was decided to form a complaints panel (Cllrs NS, RT, and TL) and an appeals panel (Cllrs NL, AB and TO).  
**Clerk to supply the complaints panel with the information it needs. NS to contact complainants.**
  - 12 To decide how best to support community litter-pickers The usual Parish spring clean can't be held this spring due to Covid-19 restrictions. The council can support those who are doing this off their own back by lending litter pickers. Also, MSDC has given the council a few (20) orange bin bags. Cathy Tooley and Cllr NV to give out for this informal community activity.  
**Clerk to get bags to Cllr NV and CT. Cllr GD to give litter picker to CT.**
  - 13 To review and adopt the SALC model Code of Conduct Councillors reviewed, adopted and agreed to adhere to the code.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.05 pm.

Signed:

Chair

Date

#### Dates of next meetings

(Currently, all meetings are video conferences, using Zoom. The details of how to join a meeting are attached to the agenda.)

I	planning committee	Tuesday	2 March	at 7.30pm
II	full council	Tuesday	16 March	at 7.30pm

Date of council meeting		16 February 2021	
Current account and savings account statements		issued on 03/02/2021	
<b>Current Account</b>		balance on statement no. 071	£23,001.03
Unpresented cheques			
	300529	30.00	30.00
<u>New payments to be authorised on 19/01/2021</u>			
SO			
SO Staff	salary	£170.40	
SO Staff	salary	£661.40	
BACS Information Commissioner's Office	subscription	£35.00	
BACS			
BACS			
BACS			
			£866.80
<u>Receipts since statement no. 071</u>			
No receipts since the statement		0.00	
			£0.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>£22,104.23</b>
<b>Instant Access Account</b>		balance on statement no. 066	£27,684.83
No activity in the account since this statement			
			<b>£27,684.83</b>
		<b>Total available from both accounts</b>	<b>£49,789.06</b>
<u>Ringfenced reserves</u>			
Neighbourhood Watch		280	
Playground		1,600	
SIDs		1,479	
Fressingfield Community Fund		2,651	
			£6,010
<u>Contingencies</u>			
Emergency		15000	
Assets (capital)		7000	
In-year		530	
			£22,530
		<b>Total 'set-aside' sum</b>	<b>£28,540</b>
		<b>Balance of available funds:</b>	<b>£21,249.31</b>
		balance available at January reconciliation	£22,237.27
		balance available at December reconciliation	£23,259.60
		balance available at November reconciliation	£27,016.43
		balance available at October reconciliation	£29,378.96
		balance available at September reconciliation	£22,575.28
		balance available at August reconciliation	£23,585.51
		balance available at July reconciliation	£24,630.54
		balance available at June reconciliation	£25,905.29
		balance available at May reconciliation	£26,633.28

*D L Warne*  
D L Warne (Apr 8, 2021 17:30 GMT+1)

# FullCoun20210216

Final Audit Report

2021-04-08

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