



FULL PARISH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

07 February 2022 – 7.30pm

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors: Cllr. Ashton (Chair), Cllr. Murphy, Cllr. Westin, Cllr. Ward

Clerk and RFO: Mr S Baxter

Members of the public (MOP): 4

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

Meeting was held at the SALKO Offices, Main Street, Spaldington. Due to the Covid risk assessment and the location, only Parish Councillors were present at the location with the Clerk accessing the meeting via the remote digital Zoom software. All the community were invited to attend the meeting via the remote function. The link was as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6464337457?pwd=YktQVmRiK0tHOWdEVDVPZzR1UEtlQT09>

AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

1. **Welcome to all Councillors.** The Chair will remind all that the meeting is recorded and the recordings are kept for a minimum of 12 months.

The Chair welcomed all Councillors to the first face to face Parish Meeting. He confirmed that while the Councillors and Clerk were present in person, the meeting had been planned to be streamed via Zoom for members of the community and press.

The Chair confirmed that due to technological issues with the wi-fi connection, and specifically how unstable it was, the decision had to be taken to stop the remote digital recording. He took the decision to ask that the meeting be digitally recorded as to allow the members of the public to hear what the Councillors discussed during the meeting.

2. **Members of the public participation** – Any questions will be at the discretion of the Chair.

There were no members of the public in person or linking into the meeting via Zoom, although there was four that did initial connect before the connection was disabled due to the zoom connection being too unstable.



However there had been two questions sent to the Clerk to be put the Council:

- i) *Can the Parish Council explain why another Parish Council a long distance away has made a complaint to Spaldington Parish Council and for the Council to explain what the complaint is about?*

The Clerk did state that he had replied to this individual that the discussion of the complaint was discussed at the previous Full Parish Council Meeting on the 19 January 2022 but because of confidentiality the Council had discussed the issue in a closed session which was agreed by a voted motion.

The Chair in response to the question stated that as the complaint was still being reviewed and further responses or details were needed before any decision on the merit of the complaint, and because it was discussed in a closed session of the Council meeting no further comments could be made to the question.

He continued that if appropriate, in due course further details of the complaint may be published but that decision would be for the Council in future meetings.

- ii) *Can the Parish Council explain why they still allow an article on the website about harassment of the Council, Councillors and Clerk when this puts the wrong impression to people when they look at the Council's website? They continued that another Parish Council near doesn't include any articles that are perceived to be negative.*

The Chair stated that the article was the history of what had happened previously to the Councillors and Clerk, just as the good news was also the history - and he confirmed there were plenty of good news articles.

The Clerk confirmed that the article that the person was asking about was seven articles down on the front page and was not obvious when the website is first launched. He also stated that while the Council could discuss the question and the ramifications, as it was not a specific point on the agenda they Council could not vote to remove the item and, if the Chair or Councillors wish it to be included on the agenda for the next meeting (and thus be able to be voted upon) he would follow their direction.

The Councillors discussed the question in further detail and there was a consensus that it is not their place to discuss what other Councils do or how they manage their website. They agreed that the article did give details on the historical actions of some in the community and thus while the good news articles should be included and applauded, they also have a duty to show other elements as well.



3. **Proposal to exclude members of public from participation** – but can observe

For the following agenda points members of the public can observe the meeting but cannot take part in any debate. Any persons not Councillors or the Clerk will be asked to remain silent and muted on Zoom

With agreement of the Chair and the Clerk, no motion was proposed due to no members of the public or press being present at the meeting.

4. **Apologies for absence from Councillors**

There was an apology from Cllr J Hall who was unexpectedly called into work and thus was unable to attend. The apology was accepted by the Councillors.

5. **Declarations of interest** – for the Council to note including dispensations presented to the Clerk

The Clerk confirmed that there no declarations of interest submitted to him before the meeting.

Cllr Murphy did state however that the trees from the Tree Planting Grant were planted near his property and thus wanted to ensure that this was made public. They were planted on a public footpath.

6. **Minutes of the last Full Parish Council Meeting** (19 January 2022) – to formally agree that the minutes are an accurate record

The Chair confirmed that the Clerk had sent the DRAFT Minutes of the last Full Parish Council meeting on the 19 January 2022.

There was a discussion between the Councillors to confirm receipt and all stated they were happy it was a true and accurate record of the meeting.

- *Motion to agree the Minutes of the Full Parish Council Meeting of the 19 January 2022 was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

7. **Financial update from the Clerk** (including bank reconciliations) - from the Clerk

The Clerk confirmed that he had sent the recent financial report to the Councillors for their perusal. He confirmed that the report covered January 2022 period.

He stated that on his projections, the Council would have approximately £9,200 left in the bank at the end of the financial year. The bad news was that he had received an estimated cost from the External Auditor, in regard to their investigation following a complaint by a member of the community, was that the next cost of this was £9,500. This would mean that the bank balance accrued from careful management would be erased.



The Clerk stated that the Council did have an estimate for the External Auditor but had not as yet received the final cost.

The Chair thanked the Clerk for the work and that while it was good news that the prudent financial management for this year enabled the Council to ensure everything was paid (including the External Auditor cost) it was with great regret that the council and the community, despite careful planning by this administration, was left with nothing in reserve because of the effect of the legal issues several years ago.

- *Motion to agree the financial report laid by the Clerk to the Council was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

8. General expenditure for approval - to formally agree that the payments are acceptable:

PAYEE	AMOUNT
Salary, and overtime (for February 2022)	Amount withheld due to confidentiality
Clerk's office allowance (for February 2022)	£ 26.00
Peninsula Insurance (paid by standing order)	£138.62

The Council briefly discussed the payments and agreed they were acceptable.

- *Motion to agree the expenditure as detailed in the schedule of payments was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

9. Grant from the ERYC for tree planting

The Clerk confirmed that they were still awaiting the actual payment for the grant although he was confident that this was just a paperwork issue and the grant would be paid in due course.

Cllr Murphy confirmed that he had been in contact with the nursery and the nursery had delivered the trees. They had already started to be planted and would be take effect in root shortly.

The Councillors thanked Cllr Murphy and felt they created a suitable recognition for the Queen's Jubilee and hoped that through possible other grants they would create a 'Queen Elizabeth's Avenue' with a noticeboard and possible a bench.

10. Planning Applications - to discuss and agree the Council's viewpoint on each

The Clerk confirmed that there had been no new planning applications. He did also confirm that he had reported the issues raised at the last Council Meeting and had a confirmation response from the Planning Team at ERYC.



11. **Parish noticeboard** – to discuss and agree way forward, including funding options

The Clerk had confirmed that due to the funding arrangement with two local businesses, SALKO Ltd and ASHTON COMPOSTING Ltd who stepped in after the funding promise from a local organisation fell through, the noticeboard can be ordered. He confirmed that he had received the lettering and font details from the local benefactors.

The Council agreed it was good news the noticeboard could proceed and asked the Clerk to get the noticeboard ordered. It was confirmed that the lead time is approximately 12 weeks. They confirmed that due to the state of the old noticeboard, once the new one is installed the old one will have to be scrapped.

Action: The Clerk to collate all the details for the order and place the order with the supplier.

12. **Spring / Summer Fete for the village** – Funding options

The Board discussed the idea of having a spring / summer fete possibly over the Queen's Jubilee extended bank holiday weekend. The idea was to have a similar event as last autumn but possibly scaled down depending on finances.

The Clerk advised that the autumn fete they had last year cost £5k which was funded through the Coming Out of Covid grant from ERYC. If the Council wished to have a similar function they would need to source grant or funding as the Council was not able to pay for this event by itself.

There was strong consensus for this idea and that the Councillors agreed that external funding should be sought either through grants or other financial options.

Action: The Clerk to seek if other grants or funding is available and then to bring the information back to the Council at the next meeting.

13. **Windfarm Fund** – update from the Parish Council representative

Cllr Murphy, as the PC's windfarm representative, updated the Council after a recent Spaldington Windfarm Grant Fund. He stated that the grant application would be opening in mid-March 2022 and would run until mid-May 2022. The grants would run on the same lines as the previous year with the category of £500 and under and over £500.

The Councillors discussed the grants opportunity and agreed that they would again seek to apply for grant/s for items they felt the village needed or would enhance the community. It was agreed that this item should be discussed in detail at the next meeting at which Councillors would bring any ideas for consideration.



14. Urgent or important correspondence including FoI request – update from the Clerk

The Clerk stated that other than what had already been discussed at the meeting, there was no urgent communication

He confirmed that the Council had received a FOI request about wanting a digital copy of the last Council Meeting. This request had been confirmed as received to the person sending the FOI request and that they had been made aware that as per legislation the Council had 20 working days to fully respond or provide the necessary detail if this was available. This would be handled as per the policy and legislation.

15. Parishioner concerns relayed to Councillors – any update from Councillors from Parishioners

The Chair stated that he had received two queries from the Community that had been raised with him:

i) *Recent thefts of metal type objects*

The Chair stated that he was aware through discussions with some community members that there appears to have been a rising amount of thefts of metal type objects including various farm signs, metal holders for bins and street signage.

The Council feared that it was a rising problem and to ensure that if any information about the alleged perpetrators is passed to the Police.

ii) *Misleading information stated by the former administration in regard to the financial discussion at the previous Parish Council Meeting which stated that legal issues that came from actions from the previous administration had cost the community in excess of £45k.*

The Chair stated that he was made aware from a local resident that the previous administration was refuting the details that were discussed.

The Council restated that the £45k costs to the community all came from legal issues, audit challenges (and investigations) or insurances that all arose from the time that the former administration was in place. While some of the actual expenditure was paid after the former administration left office, it was all in connection with the actions and decisions that the former administration made.

The Chair wished to make it clear that while some of the detail about the cost must remain confidential due to legal ramifications, he was clear that the financial impact of the actions and decisions of the former administration had a direct or indirect cost of £45k.



He also stated that he was very proud that 2020/21 was the first year in a long time that there were no audit challenges – something that the Council had not achieved for many years. The Council agreed this was down to the careful administration of the current Clerk but also that the Council were clear on their responsibilities and obligations.

Cllr Westin brought the following query to the Council after being contacted by a resident:

i) *There is a missing or broken drain cover in the village near Oak Tree Farm*

The Clerk stated that this issue had been brought to the attention of the Council on a few occasions and on each time ERYC and Yorkshire Water had been contacted to ask for this H&S issue to be reviewed.

The Council discussed the issue and there was a fear that the metal thefts (that the Chair had stated) was possible the cause of this drain cover being constantly damaged or removed and that it ERYC and Yorkshire Water had replaced the cover only for it to be damaged or removed subsequently.

16. To agree the date and location of the Full Parish Council Meeting – 7.30pm Monday, 07 March 2022.

- *Motion to agree the next Full Parish Council meeting to be held on the 07 March 2022 at 7.30pm at the SALKO Offices with members of the public joining by a remote digital means was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

17. Proposal to exclude members of public from participation due to confidential items

For the following agenda points members of the public cannot take part in any discussion or debate. Any persons not Councillors or the Clerk will be removed from the meeting.

- *Motion to exclude any members of the public and press was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously. Motion carried.*

18. Vexatious communication – update

The agenda point was discussed but due to confidentiality the details will be recorded in a separate report.

19. Complaints – discussion and update

The agenda point was discussed but due to confidentiality the details will be recorded in a separate report.

MEETING WAS CLOSED BY THE CHAIR AT 9.05PM.