

COTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the full Council meeting held on 13 March 2024 held in Cotton Village Hall

Councillors Present: Sarah Wenban (SW) (Chairman), Paul Howlett (PH) (Vice Chairman), Peter Gibbs (PG), Beryl Ellis (BE) and Sue Pushman (SP).

In Attendance : David Rayner (DR) (Cotton Parish Clerk), Andrew Stringer (AS) (County Councilor), Andrew Mellen (AM) (District Councilor) and three members of the public.

130324/01 **Apologies for absence:** Trevor Woods (TW) apologised for his absence which was accepted by all councillors.

130324/02 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations:** There were no declarations of interest or dispensations to consider.

130324/03 **Minutes of previous meetings:** The draft minutes of the meetings held on 10 January and 14 February 2024 were approved by all councillors present as true records of the decisions made and SW was authorised to sign the minutes reference 100124/01 to 100124/25 and 140224/01 to 140224/28 respectively.

130324/04 **County Councilor report:** AS report was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. AS highlighted that the MSDC element of the Council Tax was going up by 3.99% which is about £74 a year increase on a band D property. Sizewell C has begun construction and the traffic through the County will increase as it's the largest building site in Europe with 60% of supplies arriving by road. PH queried the length of time it takes for a full section 19 report to be produced for larger flooding issues as SCC have an expected date for a major report in 2 year's time. AS stated that these comprehensive reports do take a long time.

130324/05 AM joined the meeting during the above item.

130324/06 **District Councillor report:** AM mentioned the budget position with MSDC and the necessary Council House rent increase. He also mentioned the "Cosy Homes" grants for insulation that are available.

130324/07 **Pylons:** SW briefed the council on the latest position regarding the recent ESO 'independent' review of the proposed pylons which effectively ruled out the offshore option. SW suggested the pylons could be made the main theme for the Annual Parish Meeting in May. SW may put a flyer in the next copy of the local magazine to raise awareness. The members of the public present said that there are massive objections to the pylons from the land owners in the area.

130324/08 After further discussion all three members of the public left the meeting as did AM.

Planning

130324/09 Councillors noted there were no new planning proposals received and no determination made by MSDC since the last meeting.

Finance

130324/10 All councillors confirmed receipt of the bank reconciliations as supported by the bank statements for the period to 29 February 2024 prior to the meeting showing total cash held of £12,528.69. This is represented by the Community Account balance at £3,649.79 and the Premium account at £8,878.90.

130324/11 All Councillors confirmed receipt of the budget to actual payments and receipts prior to the meeting. All Councillors accepted the budget to actual report for the period ended 29 February 2024 with no questions.

130324/12 All Councillors confirmed receipt of the reserves account prior to the meeting and, with no questions, accepted it as a true reflection of the Parish Councils financial reserves.

130324/13 Councillors noted there were no receipts for the period to 29 February.

130324/14 All Councillors resolved to approve the following gross payment to be paid by internet banking as shown in the bank papers received prior to the meeting with PH and SP authorised to sign the invoice.

Payee	Details	£
David Rayner	Clerk salary March	270.48

130324/15 **Traffic calming around Cotton:** SW has requested Josh White of SCC to give us accurate costings for the painting jobs on the roads, white lines, slow signs etc. and subsequence SW has asked for costs for extra signage at the Brook House Road crossroads to be added as there had been another accident there recently with the car written off.

130324/16 **Assets:** DR mentioned that the assets that were missing from the list last year have been added back in as advised by SALC. SP spotted there is a dog bin missing as there were to on the list and we have three. DR to check and add. PG mentioned that once the situation regarding the tree on The Green has been resolved that the Green should be added at £1. PH inquired regarding the insurance value of the Bus Shelter. SP mentioned that she and a family member had tidied up the Bus Shelter and found, amongst other general rubbish, a knife. There is a possibility of a sale of the Bus Shelter and the Council would be open in principle to that outcome. AS suggested that if it was sold and the current entrance bricked up that a noticeboard be attached to the wall as there are lots of people passing. Agreed in principle.

130324/17 **New website:** PG updated the Council on his general findings and recommends a company called parishcouncilwebsites.co.uk. The aim would be to link to other village organisation websites in addition to the essential and desirable PC information. The cost is £749 for setup and transfer of data and £21.85 per month for hosting. After discussion PG was given authority to pursue this further.

130324/18 **New laptop:** DR to get some quotes for the next meeting for a Windows based laptop and Office software.

- 130324/19 **Barclays Bank:** We now are fully working again.
- 130324/20 **Aggressive dogs:** PG has chased Suffolk Police and will chase again. Councillors expressed dismay at the inefficiency of the local police in pursuing this matter.
- 130324/21 **BT Cables:** The low hanging cables were reported to BT and they said they would look at them in 4 to 6 weeks.
- 130324/22 **Matters for a future agenda:** Pylons, tree on the Green.
- 130324/23 **Next meeting:** Councillors advised that the next meeting is scheduled for 10 April 2024.
- 130324/24 The Chairman closed the meeting at 20:53.