

OUSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14th July 2020 via Zoom (due to Coronavirus restrictions)

Councillors present: John Gale, Alan Johansen, Guy Holland Bosworth, Sylvia Pettitt and Geoff Ingham

Also present: Joanne Kirk (Clerk) and two members of the public. District Councillor Mike Chester joined the meeting at 8.15pm.

Open Forum

No issues were raised during the Open Forum.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Chris Ridge and the reason for absence accepted. County Councillor Mary Evans sent her apologies.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda and no dispensations were requested.

3. Approval of minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 12th May 2020 and the planning meeting held on 16th June 2020.

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. Co-option of a new councillor

Two residents have expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council. They both introduced themselves and explained why they were interested in becoming councillors.

The Chairman explained that the Council would make the decision about who to co-opt during a closed session at the end of the meeting and would notify both residents of their decision after the meeting.

5. County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Mary Evans sent a written report.

The clerk was asked to follow up with Mary Evans about the VAS agreement for the Hargrave entrance to the village which was emailed to Craig Daley at Suffolk County Council Highways on 11th September 2019.

6. District Councillor's Report

District Councillor Mike Chester sent a written report.

7. Police issues

17 dogs and puppies were stolen from a boarding kennel near Barton Mills. An attempt was also made to steal a dog from the owner on Warren Hill near Newmarket.

There has been an incident of attempted fraud in the village. Someone rang up posing as a Government body and tried to obtain the National Insurance details from two elderly residents.

8. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting

There were five outstanding councillor actions.

The following actions have been completed:

- Update on the phone box: The painting on the outside is almost complete. The electrics have been checked and are all safe and no longer live. The interior needs painting and the door re-fixing. Shelving will be installed in the next few weeks. The door is still with the joiner.
- Geoff Ingham had made enquiries about a hand drawn footpath map. The cost would be at least £800 which councillors felt was too expensive.

9. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of the Schedule of Payments

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- J P Kirk - expenses - LGA 1972, s111 – **£14.90**

Sylvia Pettitt and Geoffrey Ingham signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman then countersigned it.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings

No payments were authorised between meetings.

c) Statement of receipts and payments (including online payments) made since the last meeting

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
30/05/2020	Clerk's salary	J Kirk	
01/06/2020	Grass cutting	McGregor Services	£120.00
11/06/2020	Pension payment	Risby Parish Council	£15.00
30/06/2020	Clerk's salary	J Kirk	
			£609.24

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

d) Bank balances as of 30th June 2020 and confirmation of bank reconciliation

Lloyds Bank Current Account	£4,513.82
Lloyds Bank reserve account	£5,710.08
Total in Banks	£10,223.90

Geoffrey Ingham verified and signed the bank statements.

e) Councillor to complete the checklist of internal controls

Sylvia Pettitt and Geoffrey Ingham signed the checklist of internal controls.

f) Internal auditor's Report

No issues were raised by the Internal Auditor Cathy Whitaker and the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20 has been completed. The clerk has submitted the Certificate of Exemption to the external auditor PFK Littlejohn.

g) Approval of the continued use of electronic banking

It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would continue to use electronic banking.

h) Disposal of Parish Council documents

It was resolved that the clerk would be authorised to spend up to £60 to dispose of parish council documents with the cost split between her six councils.

i) Change of Account signatories

Lloyds has confirmed that the bank mandate has been amended. Ian Harding has been removed as a signatory and Alan Johansen has been added.

10. Planning

a) Update on DC/20/0668/FUL

The application has been approved by West Suffolk Council

b) DC/20/1004/HH - The Old School, Front Street, Ousden - (i) First floor single storey rear extension with 1no. balcony (ii) single storey side extension with 4no roof lights to accommodate a swimming pool (following the demolition of existing conservatory) (iii) alterations to existing site entrance to consist of new double gate and fencing that is 1.8 metres high (iv) side porch extension (v) partial roof raising by 0.6 metres on north west and north east elevations (vi) front porch extension (vii) 2no dormers to front elevation (viii) 2no roof light to side elevation

It was resolved that no objections would be made to this application.

11. Review of the following policy documents

a) Financial Regulations

It was resolved that the following amendment would be made to section 4.5:

~~In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, The clerk in conjunction with the Chairman may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £500. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.~~

NALC has not yet issued advice regarding their model financial regulations, however it was resolved that following footnotes would be added to the bottom of **section 11** to show the correct thresholds for contracts as advised by SALC:

Section 11 – Contracts

The footnotes should now read

- **For public supply and public service contracts £189,330**
- **For public works contracts £4,733,252**

b) Standing Orders

It was resolved that the following amendments would be made:

- Section 1b - A public forum will be held at the start of the meeting at which members of the public are invited to speak to councillors *about any items on the agenda.*
- Section 1c - *If public meetings are not allowed (as for example during the Coronavirus outbreak in 2020), remote meetings will be held via Zoom. Members of the public can request the meeting login details and join the meeting. A public forum will be held at the start of the meeting at which members of the public are invited to speak to councillors about any items on the agenda.*
- Section 3d - *If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the Code of Conduct, that member is under a duty to report the breach to the Monitoring Officer at West Suffolk Council*

It was also resolved the following amendments would be made as recommended by NALC:

Section 18 – Financial controls and Procurement (parts f and g)

- f) A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £189,330 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,733,252 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.*
- g) A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £378,660 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,733,252 for a works contract; or £663,540 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.*

c) Equal Opportunities Policy

It was resolved that no amendments were necessary.

12. Approval of the following policy documents

a) Protocol for dealing with correspondence

It was resolved that the Protocol for dealing with correspondence would be approved and uploaded onto the website.

b) Persistent and vexatious complaints and correspondence policy

It was resolved that the Persistent and Vexatious Complaints and Correspondence Policy would be approved and uploaded onto the website.

c) Filming and recording at meetings policy

It was resolved that the Filming and Recording at Meetings Policy would be approved and uploaded onto the website

d) Email policy for councillors

It was resolved that the Email Policy would be approved and uploaded onto the website and that councillors would set up separate accounts for Parish Council emails, if they do not have them already.

a) **Planning applications and how to respond and the role of the Parish Council in dealing with planning applications**

It was resolved that the document *Planning Applications and How to Respond* would be approved and uploaded onto the website along with an explanation of the role of the Parish Council in dealing with planning applications.

e) **Procedure for handling requests for information**

It was resolved that the Procedure for Handling Requests for Information would be approved and uploaded onto the website.

f) **Co-option policy**

It was resolved that the Co-option Policy would be approved and uploaded onto the website.

13. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues:

No issues were raised.

14. Local Government Association (LGA) consultation on a new model member code of conduct.

It was resolved that no comments would be submitted.

15. Village issues:

a) **Possibility of purchasing a footpath map**

It was resolved that councillors would make further enquiries about getting a local artist to draw a footpath map.

16. Correspondence

a) **Email from Ousden Village Hall thanking the Parish Council for their donation – for information only**

17. Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda

There have been three deaths in the village during lockdown. Sylvia Pettitt agreed to check if the families would be happy for an article about each person to be included in the newsletter.

18. Closed session

The Chairman ended the meeting and a closed session was held to discuss the co-option of a new councillor.

It was resolved that Helyn Dudley would be co-opted onto the Parish Council. The clerk agreed to email a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and a Register of Member's Interest form.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.24pm

Signed (Chairman) Dated