



## **RINGSHALL PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council held at the Village Hall on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** H.Nunn  
N.Last  
L.Hitchcock  
D.Shann

**In Attendance** Clerk – L. Luther  
One member of the Public

### **RPC/1/24/25 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN TO THE COUNCIL**

Cllr Hitchcock proposed Cllr Nunn. Cllr Last seconded. All in Favour. **It was AGREED** Cllr Nunn would be Chair.

### **RPC/2/24/25 ELECTION OF VICE -CHAIR TO THE COUNCIL**

Cllr Nunn proposed Cllr Hitchcock. Cllr Last seconded. All in Favour. **It was AGREED** Cllr Hitchcock would be Vice-Chair.

### **RPC/3/24/25 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None

### **RPC/4/24/25 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

### **RPC/5/24/25 TO RECEIVE ANY APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None

### **RPC/6/24/25 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**It was AGREED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 be approved as a true and accurate record.

### **RPC/7/24/25 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO COMMITTEE AND OUTSIDE BODIES**

- a) **Personnel Committee** Cllr Last, Cllr Nunn & Cllr Hitchcock
- b) **Ringshall Village Hall Representative** Cllr Hitchcock
- c) **Tree Warden** Cllr L. Hitchcock
- d) **Footpath Warden** Cllr L. Hitchcock
- e) **SID Operator** Cllr L. Hitchcock, Mr G. Hitchcock & Harriet Atherton

### **RPC/8/24/25 AUTHORISATION OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION**

A) Suffolk Association of Local Councils £339.87  
All in Favour. **It was AGREED** to pay the Subscription Fees.

### **RPC/9/24/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

No issues were raised.

### **RPC/10/24/25 TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Oakes was not present, but her report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

### **RPC/11/24/25 TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**

Cllr Pratt was not present, but his report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

### **RPC/12/24/25 HIGHWAYS**

- a) Cllr Oakes was not present, so no update on fallen finger post sign at Baker's Corner – which still needed repairing.
- b) Bakers Corner. It had been noted that part of the road just before Bakers Corner was collapsing and Highways had been advised. No updated via the Suffolk County Council Website to date. **It was AGREED** that the Clerk would follow up with SCC.
- c) It was pointed out that the wooden handrail, adjacent to the Bus Shelter outside the Village Hall had become rotten. It was discussed that this would need to be repaired. **It was AGREED** that Clerk would contact Highways to ascertain whose responsibility the handrail was, in order to progress the case for it to be repaired.

### **RPC/13/24/25 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- a) The decision relating to DC/23/01433 – DC/23/05779 NMA Broad View Farm was noted.
- b) The decision relating to DC/24/01103 – (Also DC/24/01284) Woodlands was noted.
- c) The decision relating to Appeal for DC/22/02458 Anglia Business Park was noted.
- d) The Planning Consultation request for DC/24/01653 (relating to DC/22/04231) Planning for building on Wattisham Base was considered. **It was AGREED** Clerk would advise 'No Comment'.
- e) Planning Consultation request DC/24/01771 – Council discussed the consultation. **It was AGREED** that Clerk would comment that Council had no objections subject to Highways being satisfied with the work.

### **RPC/14/24/25 To receive the Clerk's Report including the following Financial Matters**

- a) Clerk reported that Councillor Barry Shann had sent a letter of resignation after the previous meeting. Council were sorry to lose Cllr Shann's presence from the meetings, as his knowledge and experience were invaluable.
- b) Clerk asked Council for approval of 5 hours overtime, as since the last meeting, Clerk had had two weeks holiday, had completed the updated Questionnaire document for the Emergency Plan and distributed, completed the Internal Audit, reviewed the Financial Regulations and completed all other duties of the Clerk, including monthly playground inspections. **It was AGREED** to approve the 5 hours overtime.
- c) Clerk read out an e-mail received from Ron Bailey, which was about the Safety of Lithium Ion Batteries and E-Bikes and Scooters. Ron Bailey is seeking support for the Bill that Lord Foster is looking for Parliament to adopt, to ensure greater safety in the use and disposal of Lithium batteries. Council discussed and asked what kind of support Ron Bailey was looking for. In principle, Council agreed they supported the bill, but before any commitment could be made, Council wanted to know what kind of support Ron Bailey was looking for. **It was AGREED** that Clerk would contact Ron Bailey to ascertain what support he was looking for and would report back at the next meeting.
- d) Clerk read out the Finance report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- e) Clerk reported on the funds retained by Council, as awarded for Neighbourhood CIL monies. The report was circulated prior to the meeting. **It was AGREED** to approve

the CIL report and for Clerk to forward it to Mid Suffolk District Council as part of its annual obligations as a recipient of Neighbourhood CIL Funds.

- f) Clerk had circulated the internal audit report prior to the meeting and uploaded it to the website. The Recommendations Summary Report was circulated prior to the meeting and uploaded to the website. Clerk read out the recommendations from the report and how those recommendations would be implemented over the next year. **It was AGREED** to approve the report. **It was AGREED** that Chair would sign the AGAR Form.
- g) Clerk read out the Payments and Receipts for the month.

Payments	Amount	Payments	Amount
Clerk Pay April	£273.20	Tax Payment - L Luther March & February Pay	£2.40
Clerk Pay May	£321.45	Suffolk Cloud - Annual Invoice	£120.00
Working from Home Allowance	£50.00	SALC Membership Fee	£339.87
SALC Payroll Service	£54.00	SARS Donation	£100.00
Tax Payment Refund	£87.00	Internal Audit Invoice	£140.00
Questionnaire Printing Costs	£54.00	MSDC Annual Play Area Inspection Report	£63.78
Annual Street Lighting Invoice	£129.20	Clerk Tax Payment for April and May	£23.20
Installation Invoice for Dog Waste Bin	£330.00		

**It was AGREED** to approve the payments and receipts.

- h) Clerk provided the Bank Reconciliation and asked for a Councillor who was not the chairman to approve them. Clerk pointed out that in the Financial Regulations, 2.6 *“At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair or a cheque signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations for all accounts produced by the Clerk.”* **It was AGREED** that Cllr Last would review and approve the Bank Reconciliation.
- i) Clerk requested for permission to provisionally appoint Mrs V. Waples to complete the internal audit for 2024/25 year next year. **It was AGREED** that Mrs V Waples could be appointed for Ringshall.
- j) Council noted that PKF Littlejohn would be completing the External Audit for the financial year 2023/24.
- k) Clerk asked Council for approval to complete the four training sessions for Planning Guidance that were taking place in June. **It was AGREED** that Clerk could complete the training for planning.
- l) Clerk reported that Cllr Nunn had contacted her in the interim period between meetings and had advised that the battery for the defibrillator had expired and was due for replacement. According to the Financial Regs, Clerk has power to authorise a purchase under section 5.18 *“In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.”* **It was AGREED** that Clerk was correct to authorise the purchase of a new battery.

### **RPC/15/24/25 TO REVIEW AND APPROVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- a) Financial Regulations – Clerk advised council that the new updated Financial Regulations from NALC had been issued and confirmed on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May. Clerk had circulated the new Financial Regulations to council prior to the meeting and uploaded the document to the website. Clerk went through the individual items that needed to be tailored to the Council, to seek agreement on these items. A report with details of the items that needed approval was circulated to Council prior to the meeting and uploaded to the Website. **It was AGREED** that council approved all the recommendations. **It was AGREED** to adopt the New Financial Regulations Policy for Ringshall Council.
- b) Asset Register. Clerk had circulated an updated Asset Register to Councillors prior to the meeting. Clerk advised where the report had been updated to include new purchases since it was last approved last year. **It was AGREED** to approve the updated Asset Register.

### **RPC/16/24/25 GOV.UK DOMAIN NAME TRANSFER**

Clerk advised that SALC had advised that Councils are being asked to transfer their websites to a gov.uk domain, to ensure that council's data stays within the UK's jurisdiction, simplifying compliance with GDPR regulations.

Council discussed the quote that Clerk had circulated prior to the meeting for the cost of the domain name change. Clerk also advised that the government were offering a £120 subsidy for the cost of the domain name change, that Clerk had already applied for. **It was AGREED** that Clerk should proceed with changing the domain name for Ringshall Parish Council and should procure new e-mail addresses for the Clerk and Chair.

### **RPC/17/24/25 SOLAR PANELS ON VILLAGE HALL ROOF**

Clerk advised that the Village Hall Management Committee had been looking at the possibility of having Solar Panels installed on the roof of the Village Hall to aid with sustainability, reduce energy costs and provide a new stream of income for the Hall. Clerk advised the initial quotation costs that had been obtained so far. Council discussed the proposal. **It was AGREED** that Clerk should present further calculations as to the payback period for Solar Panels before the Council made any decisions regarding approval of this kind of project.

### **RPC/18/24/25 SPEED INDICATOR BOARD UPDATE**

- a) Cllr Hitchcock informed the council that the current batteries on the Speed Indicator Board were not lasting very long in between charges. As a result of the inconsistency of the life of battery, this was making data collection very difficult. **It was AGREED** that Clerk would speak to the company the SIDS were purchased from to ascertain whether there was some kind of guarantee on the battery and the length of time they should hold charge for.
- b) Clerk pointed out that the 30mph sign on Stowmarket were very faded and needed replacing. At the meeting in March, Cllr Oakes stated that she had funds available for the updating and replacement of signs that needed it. **It was AGREED** that the Clerk would get in touch with Cllr Oakes to find out if any funds remained available for this purpose.

### **RPC/18/24/25 EMERGENCY PLAN**

Clerk reported that only 17 questionnaires had been received back, out of 140 delivered around the village. In the previous emergency plan project, approximately 90-95% of the questionnaire had been returned, making this effort ineffective in terms of its goal of formulating a useable emergency plan for the village. **It was AGREED** that the return date for

the questionnaire would be extended until the 23<sup>rd</sup> July and Cllr Nunn would put a note in the next newsletter for the village, advising that the date had been extended.

**RPC/19/24/25 MAINTENANCE OF FENCE AROUND SEPTIC TANK**

Cllr Hitchcock reported that the fence around the Septic Tank needed repainting. Paint leftover from the last job was available to use, so the job just needed a volunteer to complete it. Cllr Nunn advised she would ask her husband to do the job. Council thanked Mr Nunn for doing that.

**RPC/20/24/25 PARISH NOTICEBOARD**

Cllr Hitchcock reported that she would like to ask Robert Johnson if he would be able to sand and varnish the Parish Noticeboard, which was in clear need of repair work to keep it in a usable condition. **It was AGREED** that Cllr Hitchcock would ask Robert Johnson to complete the repairs needed on the Parish Noticeboard.

**RPC/21/24/25 RINGSHALL PLAY AREA**

- a) Clerk updated the Council that small repairs were needed to the Play area, where fixing covers had come loose and needed tightening. A small tool was needed to be purchased to fix that.
- b) Clerk reported that the annual Mid-Suffolk Babergh District Council Playground Inspection had taken place, and the report had been circulated to everyone prior to the meeting. The report had overall deemed the playground to be safe but picked up on the damaged football goal and basketball apparatus. **It was AGREED** that notification of this would be sent to the Village Hall Management Committee, for them to arrange repairs to the goal.
- c) Clerk reported that it had been a year since a request was made to purchase a strimmer for the play area, and over that year Daniel Luther had done most of the strimming around the play area, so it was obvious that a strimmer was very much needed. Clerk requested permission to purchase a strimmer for the purpose of maintaining the grass in the play area. **It was AGREED** that the Clerk could purchase a strimmer for the play area. Clerk had come prepared with three different petrol strimmer options that could be purchased, all of different brands – Stihl, Husqvarna and Makita. **It was AGREED** that Clerk should purchase a Stihl Strimmer, as that was the preferred make of Council owing to quality manufacturing.

**RPC/22/24/25 MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

None

**RPC/23/24/25 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

**It was AGREED** that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 7pm at Ringshall Village Hall.

The meeting finished at 20.42

**Chairman:** ..... **Dated:**.....