

## STAMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual General meeting held on Thursday 16 May 2024 at 7.35pm. The meeting was held in the village hall.**

**PRESENT:**

Mr Neil Pyman  
Mr Martyn Fall

Mr Michael Crago

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Cllr Peter Schwier (ECC) – arrived late  
Cllr Richard van Dulken (BDC) – arrived late

**CLERK:**

Mrs Deborah Hilliard

**24/29 Election of Chair for the year 2024-25**

Martyn Fall proposed and Michael Crago seconded, with all in favour, that Neil Pyman be elected Chair of the Parish Council for the year 2024-25. There were no further nominations and Neil Pyman was duly elected.

**24/30 Election of Vice-Chair for the year 2024-25**

Neil Pyman proposed and Martyn Fall seconded, with all in favour, that Andrew Drysdale be elected Vice-Chair of the Parish Council for the year 2024-25. There were no further nominations and Andrew Drysdale was duly elected.

**24/31 Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Val Kerrison. Karen Grant, Vanessa Young and Andrew Drysdale were not present.

**24/32 Vacancies**

It was noted that Vanessa Young had taken leave of absence due to an operation. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Vanessa to find out if she intended to continue as a parish councillor.

**24/33 Appointment of Representatives**

Representatives were confirmed as:

- Village Hall Committee – Vanessa Young
- Emergency Planning – Michael Crago
- Footpaths – Karen Grant
- Tree Warden – Andrew Drysdale
- Public Transport – Andrew Drysdale

**24/34 Declaration of interests, personal or prejudicial**

There were no declarations made.

**24/35 Minutes of meeting held on 14 March 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed.

**24/36 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

#### **24/37 Review of Documents**

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct – it was noted that new versions had been issued recently. It was agreed that these would be considered for adoption at the next meeting.
- Policies
  - Budget Virement Policy
  - Code of Conduct Policy
  - Co-option Policy
  - Disciplinary Policy
  - Equalities Policy
  - Expenses Policy
  - GDPR Policy
  - Grievance Procedure
  - Health and Safety Policy
  - Record Management Policy
  - Sickness Absence Policy
  - Social Media Policy
  - Reserves Policy

It was noted that there had been no changes to the policies and documents apart from the Code of Conduct and Financial Regulations which would be deferred. All other policies and documents were considered and accepted.

#### **24/38 Pavilion**

Points noted were:-

- Fire Risk Assessment – This had been circulated prior to the meeting. After consideration the risk assessment was approved. Neil was liaising with the electrician for a wiring check and the Clerk will update the booking conditions to reflect the risk assessment. The new booking conditions would be circulated to those who had already booked the pavilion.
- New Chairs – It was confirmed that the new chairs had been delivered.
- Old Chairs – It was noted that the old chairs had been donated by a previous parish councillor who had indicated they would be happy to have the old chairs back.

#### **24/39 Playingfield**

Points noted were:-

- The play equipment inspection was due. The Clerk will arrange for it to take place using Fenland Leisure.
- Grass Protection mesh – It was noted this still needed to be completed. The wood chippings needed to be removed before the mesh could be installed. It was agreed that Neil, Michael and Martyn would arrange to complete this w/b 10 June 2024.
- Safety Surface infill – It was noted this had not been completed due to the extremely wet weather. Martyn will complete w/b 10 June 2024.
- Lawn Mower – It was noted that the lawnmower was overheating and there were some problems with the steering. The Clerk will arrange for the grass cutting contractor to have a key for the pavilion to be able to access a power supply and repair the lawnmower.

*Cllr Van Dulken arrived at the meeting.*

**24/40 Footpaths**

Nothing to report.

**24/44 Highways**

- Potholes – It was noted that this was a continued and frustrating problem with many potholes in the parish and surrounding area which still had not been dealt with, despite being reported to ECC Highways.
- SID speed sign – It was noted that it with the addition of the second battery the sign worked for much longer. It was confirmed it appeared to be having a positive impact on slowing traffic down through the village.

**24/45 Planning**

Nothing to report.

**24/46 Insurance Renewal**

The renewal documents had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that a 3-year agreement had been signed up to in 2023 and which expired on 31 May 2026. The renewal was approved.

**24/47 Verge Cutting**

It was noted that the Parish Council had been funded to verge cut for 2024 by ECC. It was agreed that M&N Pyman would undertake 2 cuts in June and September.

*Cllr Schwier arrived at the meeting.*

**24/48 Correspondence**

None.

*It was agreed to invite Cllrs Van Dulken and Schwier to present at this point of the meeting.*

Cllr Van Dulken's annual report had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted.

Cllr van Dulken then updated the parish council. Points noted were:-

- Cllr van Dulken had visited the asylum centre at Wethersfield airbase recently. There were currently 480 residents, and it was confirmed that the maximum number was expected to be no more than 800. It was anticipated that the site would be in use for approximately 3 years.
- The Councillors Community Grant was available for the year 2024-25 with a total of £1,250 available for community groups.
- Call for sites – noted.
- Fit for the Future – The District Council was reviewing its way of working and use of buildings, partly due to financial pressures and changes of practice since Covid. It was noted that the District Council had approximately £60m of assets both inside and outside of the District, which needed to be used to raise income.

There were no questions and Cllr Van Dulken was thanked for his report.

Cllr Schwier reported. It was noted that Cllr Schwier's annual report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Points noted were:-

- The programme of changing streetlights to LEDs was almost completed.
- Launch of a new Water Strategy alongside the water authorities of East Anglia.
- Locality grants have begun.
- The change of UK telephone networks from analogue to digital.
- The King's Award which has been given to 11 Essex companies.
- Continuation of Exoflex and insulation grant schemes.

Councillors challenged Cllr Schwier regarding the poor state of the roads both in the parish and wider community. Cllr Schwer acknowledged that it was an issue and ECC were endeavouring to deal with the problems. It was a complex situation. There was a discussion around the highways issues and financial situation of the County Council.

There were no further questions and Cllr Schwier was thanked for his update.

*Cllr van Dulken and Cllr Schwier left the meeting.*

#### **24/48 Accounts Year Ended 31 March 2024**

- *Annual Governance Statement* – The Annual Governance Statement was received, considered and accepted.
- *Accounting Statement* – The Accounting Statement, AGAR form and associated documents for the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were considered. It was noted that the documents were currently with the internal auditor and after consideration it was proposed and agreed that the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 be approved in principle subject to approval by the internal auditor. The Clerk would arrange for the Chair to sign the forms once completed.

#### **24/49 Nominate Person responsible for Finance for the year 2024-25**

It was agreed to nominate the Parish Clerk, Debbie Hilliard as person responsible for finance for the year 2024-25.

#### **24/50 Nominate Internal Auditor for the year 2024-25**

It was agreed to nominate Saffron Accounting as the Internal Auditor for the year 2024-25.

#### **24/51 Finance**

##### Accounts Paid

Nicom IT Services (new laptop and domain)	£358.00
Eon (electricity)	£11.41
Titan Direct (pavilion chairs – reimburse DH)	£902.52
Paul Clark Printing (newsletter)	£64.00
Mrs D Hilliard (wages)	£766.25
EALC (annual subs)	£146.61
Wave (water in pavilion)	£39.73

##### Accounts to be paid

Mr R Wright (pavilion cleaning)	£48.00
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##### Monies Received/to be received

ECC verge cut 2023-24 (2 <sup>nd</sup> cut)	£651.84
1 <sup>st</sup> half precept	£4,505.00

**Bank Balances at 9 May 2024**

Notional Current Account Balance	£13,506.69
High Interest Account	<u>£4,128.21</u>
Total	£17,634.90
Less Bonfire Fund	<u>£4,123.74</u>
	£13,511.16

**24/52 Date, time and place of next meetings.**

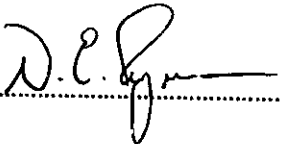
Thursday 18 July 2024

Thursday 19 September 2024

Thursday 21 November 2024

All 7.30pm

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 8.35pm.

Signed:  .....

Dated: 18. 7. 24 .....