



# Rushmere St. Andrew Parish Council

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*"Seek The Common Good"*



## Minutes of the General Purposes & Finance Committee meeting held on 8th December 2016 at THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30pm

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CHAIRMAN:	Mr J Withey
COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:	Mrs M Brown, Miss A Cracknell, Mr D Francis, Ms C Evans, Mrs C Gower, Mr M Newton, Mr P Richings, Mrs S Todd, Mr B Ward, Mr J Westrup, Mr J Withey, Mr J Wright
APOLOGIES:	Mrs B Richardson-Todd (holiday), Mr M Sones (Domestic engagement), County Cllr C Hudson (SCC Meeting), County & District Cllr R Whiting (no reason given)
ABSENT (no apologies)	None
CLERK:	Mr M R Bentley;
ALSO PRESENT:	No members of the public, Mrs J Potter (Assistant Clerk) Mrs S Stannard (Assistant Clerk),

### 1. APOLOGIES, APPROVAL OF ABSENCE, PROTOCOL & CONDUCT REMINDERS

The Chairman read out a statement on the Code of Conduct, protocol for debate and statutory rights to film, record, photograph or otherwise report on the proceedings of the meeting.

Apologies were noted as detailed above. Mr Richings proposed acceptance of reasons for councillor absence, seconded by Mr Wright with all in favour.

### 2. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th October 2016

Mr Withey reminded Councillors to note the list of cheques issued. Miss Cracknell proposed acceptance of the minutes, seconded by Mrs Brown, with ALL in favour. The minutes were duly signed as a correct record with no alterations.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLOR INTEREST

Mr Newton declared a local non-pecuniary interest as a member of Suffolk Coastal District Council and also stated that he may be asked to reconsider any matter from this meeting at District Council and at any relevant Committee/Sub Committee and in so doing, shall take into account all relevant evidence and representations made at the District level before coming to a decision.

### 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

#### a. To Identify Public Participation with Respect to Items on this Agenda

None

#### b. County Councillor Report

The County Councillor monthly report had been distributed with the agenda. The contents were noted with no matters arising.

#### c. District Councillor Report

The District Councillor monthly report was distributed at the meeting, but news items on Christmas car parking and Christmas bin emptying schedules were distributed with the agenda.

Noted with no matters arising.

**d. Public Forum – Members of Public/Parish Councillors May Speak on Any Matter.**

Mrs Gower reported that Euston Avenue entrance hedge was overgrown – Mr Withey stated that SCC had already been informed.

Miss Cracknell reported that the Humber Doucy Lane hedge had been cut back much harder than usual.

**5. POLICE MATTERS AND REPORT FROM SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM**

There was no police attendance.

**a. Monthly Report**

Monthly police and PCSO reports had been distributed with the agenda.

Ms Evans reported that the 101 service was still appalling – A complaint had been made, but she was told 'that you phoned at too busy a time – try after 7pm'.

Mr Richings stated that it had been noted that PCSO Sarbutts had been abstracted for 2 days.

**b. Current SNT Tasking Priorities**

As per the respective SNT monthly reports

**c. Policing Review**

**i. Update on Correspondence**

In response to a generic letter from the PCC and Chief Constable asking for feedback on the first 6 months of operation of the policing model a further letter highlighting the problems with the current model would be sent to the Policing Command by the cut-off date of 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

**ii To Consider PCSO Funding for year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017**

Given the lack of information to hand regarding the 6 month policing review combined with local increases in ASB and other policing issues, there was a long debate regarding the pros and cons of providing funding to continue with a dedicated PCSO presence with effect from April 2017.

The discussion took into account previous reports from the MF PCSO, Councillors and Officers of the Council as well as reports from other Councils.

Mr Wright proposed that the Council provides one third funding for a 'Fully Funded PCSO' as part of a joint Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Kesgrave Town Council and Suffolk Police for a period of one year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. This was seconded by Mr Richings and resolved in favour on a majority vote. Councillors stressed that the SLA must be a one year agreement initially and that the full terms of the SLA must be acceptable to the Parish Council. Note: This decision forms part of the budget build in section 6d of this agenda and the resultant Budget & Precept recommendation will be carried into the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 full Parish Council meeting for ratification.

**d. Community Speedwatch – Update on position of joint scheme with Kesgrave and Playford**

A meeting had been held with the Clerk and Chairman of Playford Parish Council following their decision to pull out from the joint CSW scheme. The reasons for their decision were discussed and some misunderstandings resolved. The Playford Clerk and Chairman would now go back to their members for their January PC meeting to review the situation again. It would, however, be largely dependent on this PC writing a policy document for all three councils to agree on.

Kesgrave Town Council had agreed to participate in a three-way CSW partnership scheme.

**6. FINANCE MATTERS**

**a. To Consider Charity Donation Requests**

The Clerk reported that there was currently £1,000 in the charity budget as none had been allocated this fiscal year. Requests for charity donations were agreed as below:-

*'Fresh Start-New Beginnings'* – Child Sexual Abuse Charity with local involvement – Agreed on a majority vote with a donation of £250.

*'Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)'* The GP&F declined in 2015/16, but very much involved locally. Agreed on a majority vote with a donation of £250

'Revitalise' – There appeared to be no evidence of a local branch or local involvement as the letter was from HQ in London. - Request was declined by Councillors.

Many parishioners make use of the Kesgrave Community Library and as this was seen as a valuable community resource the PC had made a donation to its operating costs for the previous three years. Mr Wright therefore proposed a donation of £250 to the Kesgrave Community Library, seconded by Mr Ward with a majority in favour.

Thus there would be £250 remaining in the charity budget for potential allocation before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

It was also noted that Parish Halls RSA may request some financial contribution for a CCTV upgrade at Tower Hall - This would be decided at a forthcoming Halls Management meeting (14<sup>th</sup> Dec) . The Clerk pointed out that any such request would more likely be funded from the PC Crime Prevention budget rather than the charity budget as part of the upgrade at Tower Hall was related to the security for the new parish council office in that building.

**b. To Review the Current Financial Position**

The Clerk reported that the account balances at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016 were:

Balance in Business Premium Account Includes £5k contingency and £15k cemetery earmarked funds. Parish Room replacement fund £36,215 (after payment of new office setup; plus other smaller earmarked amounts).	£ 54,225
Balance in General Account 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of Precept paid to PC on 27 <sup>th</sup> Sept was £52,719.18. Items still to be paid include:- Mill Stream/Sandlings maintenance £3,375; Salaries £11,600; Admin £600; POS & parish maintenance £2,500 (estimated)	£ 93,160
Balance in Cemetery Current Account Cemetery expenditure outgoings in current period totalling about £10,000, including £2,300 for headstone beam construction	£ 19,576

Note: Last year at the same time these figures were £54,198; £101,263, and £7,002 respectively

The Clerk also reminded councillors of the Governance & Accountability Guidance on reserves which state:- *Earmarked reserves, which are set aside for specific purposes and for savings for future projects, should be realistic and approved by the council. It is generally accepted that general (ie un-earmarked) revenue reserves usually lie within the range of three to twelve months of gross expenditure. However, the amount of general reserve should be risk assessed and approved by the Council.*

Also SCDC had issued advice in the precept letter which stated that:- *In determining your precept it is often advisable to look beyond the requirements of the coming financial year and to make provision for projects and expenses further ahead. This allows you to have sufficient monies in hand to meet those costs without the need to increase precepts unduly in any one given year.*

**c. To Consider the GP&F Committee Budget for 2017/18**

The Clerk distributed draft copies of a proposed GP&F budget with the agenda that laid out a suggested expenditure (after allowance for income) of £87,332 for 2017/18, an increase of £7,140 on the current year. (This included £3,000 on parish office rent as a new ongoing expenditure, £3,000 extra on crime prevention, £1,000 extra on salaries.

Mr Richings proposed acceptance of a GP&F Budget for 2017/18 of £87,332 seconded by Miss Cracknell.

**Resolved:** With ALL in favour. Decision would now be carried forward into the next item to build the full budget and precept.

**d. To Recommend to the PC a Council Budget & Precept for 2017/18**

The Clerk reported that the parish specific precept letter had been received from SCDC detailing the final date for precept applications (20th January 2017) and detailing the calculation for equivalent band D properties as 2,534.69 an increase of 27.79 properties.

There was no Council Tax subsidy available for 2017/18 and thereafter.

The 2017/18 budget for the PA&S and Allotments had been provisionally agreed at the PA&S meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> Nov. A budget of £23,030 plus £1,500 for allotments (Total £24,530) was recommended for forwarding to the GP&F..

A provisional 2016/17 P&D budget of £250 to be recommended to the GP&F was agreed at the P&D meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> November. The same amount as the previous year.

Taking all budgets into account including the above agreed GP&F budget, Mr Newton proposed that the GP&F accept the overall draft budget and precept for 2017/18 at £117,348 overall spend with a Precept request for **£112,000** and to recommend this for acceptance to the next full Parish Council meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017. Proposal Seconded by Mr Wright. **Resolved:** with ALL In favour.

This represented a 5% increase on the 2016/17 precept per band D equivalent property or £2.12 increase per year per dwelling (based on Band D average).

## **7. CEMETERY MATTERS**

### **a. To Note Progress on Ashes Scattering Plot**

Mrs Potter reported that the stonework originally selected by F Masters for the scattering plot had proven to be faulty, but with a slight change of design another stock piece of stonework could be used without changing the fee for the work. Mrs Potter showed councillors a diagram of the revised design and wording.

Miss Cracknell proposed acceptance of the modified design and wording at a cost of £750. Seconded by Mr Richings with ALL in favour.

### **b. To Note Installation Costs for Seats in New Cemetery Extension**

Mrs Potter reported that the cost of collecting the four new seats from Genesis and installing them on concrete bases with secure fixing in the new cemetery extension would be £735. This was slightly more than originally anticipated as the contractor (SCL) had suggested a more secure method of fitting the seats to the ground than originally envisaged by the Cemetery Management Panel. Noted by Councillors.

### **c. Cemetery Extension – Southern Boundary Maintenance Zone – Update**

Mrs Potter and Mrs Stannard had been to see Mr Morris regarding his blocking of the maintenance gate in the Lawn Cemetery Extension. To resolve the situation it would cost £110 to screen off the front of the access gate with wattle and relocate some of the new shrubs. Noted by Councillors.

In the hope that issues could be resolved verbally without recourse to legal action Mrs Potter and the Clerk had been to see Mr Lambert regarding his encroachment onto the maintenance strip with the construction of a brick wall. Mrs Potter and the Clerk were unable to reach any sort of agreement with Mr Lambert so the only recourse now appeared to be for the PC to proceed with the already agreed legal action.

## **8. NEWSLETTER AND WEB EDITORIAL BOARD REPORT**

### **a. To Note Correspondence Received Following Publication of Newsletter**

Following publication of the Autumn Newsletter, two emails had been received concerning the Clerks article on Neighbourhood Planning. The subject matter of the emails was basically criticising the author and questioning his capability to stand up for the village.

The Clerk read out the emails and the content was noted by Councillors.

### **b. To Adopt a Policy for Signing of Articles Published in Newsletter**

Based on the circumstances outlined above, the Chairman suggested that the Newsletter Terms of Reference (ToR) be modified such that under general circumstances the authors name should be excluded from published articles. It was agreed that an amended ToR document should be presented to the Council for approval before publication of the next newsletter.

### **c. To Confirm Advertising Rates for 2017**

Mrs Potter stated that advertising rates in the Newsletter had been reviewed against production costs and she was of the opinion that the rates for 2017 should remain unchanged.

Mr Newton proposed that the current advertising rates should remain unchanged for 2017, seconded by Mr Wright, with ALL in favour.

## 9. GENERAL PARISH MATTERS AND CORRESPONDENCE

### a. To Note Matters Arising Since Publication of Agenda

None identified.

### b. Dates to Note

12<sup>th</sup> January, PC Meeting, 7.30pm Tower Hall

16<sup>th</sup> January, Neighbourhood Plan - meeting with SCDC, 7.30pm, Tower Hall

19<sup>th</sup> January, PA&S Meeting, 7.30pm, Tower Hall

## 10. DETERMINATION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

The Council Chairman, Mr Richings, made the following statement in recognition of the retirement of Mrs Jean Potter as Assistant Clerk:- *'Christmas will soon be here and gone and another new year will be with us. As this is our last meeting of the year may I wish you all an enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year?'*

*However, New Year's Eve heralds the retirement of Jean Potter, our Assistant Clerk. Over the past three months, she has been passing over the reins to Sylvia and I am sure the Parish will continue in good hands with Mel & Sylvia carrying on the day-to-day running of the Council.*

*Over recent years Jean has provided us with great service. Her knowledge of identifying pots of money, and persuasive powers, has been invaluable in allowing us to give more to the Parish than the Precept would afford.*

*On the Newsletter side, she and husband Rob have gathered copy and produced the Newsletter. During her period in charge, not only has editorial content been gathered but the organisation and arrangement of advertising has significantly reduced the costs of our twice-yearly publication.*

*At the Cemetery, considerable effort has gone into maintaining good relations with contractors both on day-to-day maintenance issues and also the development of the extension. Significant effort went into arranging quotations for presentation to Council and, once accepted, keeping a watchful eye that all was well.*

*In a similar vein, significant challenges and works at the allotments have similarly been handled.*

*Our play areas have also benefited from Jean's watchful eye. Many of the enhancements which have taken place are as a result of Jean identifying funds available from third parties. Again management of contractors carrying out day-to-day and new work has been carried out to a high standard.*

*Jean, we'll be sorry to see you go but are pleased links with the Parish will still be there as you'll still be wearing your Parish Halls hat!*

*On behalf of the Parish Council, I'd like to wish you a very happy retirement?'*

Mrs Potter was then presented with flowers and a gift voucher from the Councillors and Officers.

## 11. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm

---COUNCILLORS to note items BELOW ---

The following expenditure had been incurred and income received since the items listed in the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016

### GENERAL EXPENDITURE

Paid Date	Supplier	Item	Cheque No.	Cost inc. VAT	Cost exc. VAT	VAT	Category
01-11-16	IT Services at CAS	12 Months Webserver Support & Rent	D/D	£ 60.00	£ 50.00	£ 10.00	S142
10-11-16	PWLB	Loan payment on Tower Hall	D/D	£ -	£ 10,665.41	£ -	S19
10-11-16	M Bentley	3 x Key cutting TH Office Post Box	689	£ -	£ 9.00	£ -	Admin/clerk
10-11-16	Robert Potter	Litter Clearance - October	690	£ -	£ 62.50	£ -	Litter
10-11-16	Robert Potter	Noticeboard & letters round - October	691	£ -	£ 42.00	£ -	S142
10-11-16	BT	Parish Office phone bill (inc install fees)	D/D	£ 248.36	£ 206.97	£ 41.39	Admin
17-11-16	UK Servers Ltd	Via M Bentley - 2 year domain renewal	692	£ 39.60	£ 33.00	£ 6.60	Admin/clerk
19-11-16	SCL L/S Mtce Ltd	Play area mtce - October ( 3 visits)	693	£ 285.00	£ 237.50	£ 47.50	PF&POS
19-11-16	SCL L/S Mtce Ltd	Chestnut Pond Mtce	695	£ 42.00	£ 35.00	£ 7.00	Pond
19-11-16	SCL L/S Mtce Ltd	Repair Work to Chestnut Pond-Embanker	696	£ 1,140.00	£ 950.00	£ 190.00	Pond
22-11-16	M Bentley	Post Office - 100 x 2nd class stamps	697	£ -	£ 55.00	£ -	Admin/clerk
22-11-16	M Bentley	via Amazon - bag for new laptop	698	£ -	£ 10.30	£ -	Admin/clerk
22-11-16	Net Salaries paid after PAYE & NI - Nov 2016		699/700/01/02/S	£ -	£ 2,861.54	£ -	Salary
22-11-16	Mr J Wright	100th B/D gift to S Chambers (ex-chairma	702	£ -	£ 27.00	£ -	S137

## CEMETERY EXPENDITURE

Paid Date	Supplier	Item	Cheque No.	Cost inc. VAT	Cost exc. VAT	VAT	Category
10-11-16	Cooks Waste Kare Ltd	Cemetery Mtce 19-10-16	1122	£ 138.00	£ 115.00	£ 23.00	Maintenance
10-11-16	A Duncan	Cemetery Admin	1123	£ -	£ 20.00	£ -	Admin
19-11-16	SCL L/S Mgt Ltd	Cemetery Mtce - October	1124	£ 414.60	£ 345.50	£ 69.10	Maintenance
19-11-16	Cooks Waste Kare Ltd	Cemetery Mtce - 02-11-16	1125	£ 138.00	£ 115.00	£ 23.00	Maintenance
22-11-16	A Duncan	Cemetery Admin X 3	1126	£ -	£ 60.00	£ -	Admin
22-11-16	Cooks Waste Kare Ltd	Cemetery Mtce 08/11/16	1127	£ 138.00	£ 115.00	£ 23.00	Maintenance

## ALLOTMENT EXPENDITURE

Paid Date	Supplier	Item	Cheque No.	Cost inc. VAT	Cost exc. VAT	VAT	Category
19-11-16	SCL L/S Mtce Ltd	Grass Mtce - October	694	£ 106.20	£ 88.50	£ 17.70	Maintenance

## INCOME RECEIVED During November 2016

Cemetery	£250
Newsletter Advertising	£28.80
Allotments	£29.95
Grants (SCDC ECB)	£2,000

## ACCOUNT BALANCES AS AT 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016

General Account	£93,160
Business Base Rate Tracker	£54,225
Cemetery Account	£19,576