

Meeting of South Leverton Parish Council

Minutes of **South Leverton Parish Council** held on the 22nd Dec 2020 virtually via Zoom, as per the regulations enacted under the Coronavirus Act 2020, the meeting commenced at 7:00pm.

Members Virtually Present Cllr Catherine Hoyle
Via Remote Attendance Cllr Chris Buckland Chairman
Cllr Ant Coultate
Also, Virtually Present Ed Knox Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer
Via Remote Attendance 3 Member of the Public

Bassetlaw District Council held a meeting on 10th Dec 2020 to invoke powers under Section 91 (1) Local Govt Act 1972 to resolve to appoint Ant Coultate as Cllr at South Leverton Parish Council, allowing a quorum of three and the Parish Council to legally function again until other Cllrs are elected and take up office.

- 7/20 Appointment of a Chairman for the meeting – Rotating Chair until a full Council is in place
After discussion, Cllr Hoyle **Proposed**, Cllr Buckland **Seconded** and the Council **resolve** that 1) Cllr Buckland be appointed Chairman. 2) The Chair will rotate as and when meetings are convened until after the Bi-Election. Cllr Buckland signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman.
- 8/20 To Approve Apologies for Absence
None.
- 9/20 To Record Declarations of Interest in any item to be discussed
None.
- 10/20 To Approve Minutes of the Previous Meeting
After discussion, Cllr Hoyle **Proposed**, Cllr Buckland **Seconded** and the council **resolved** to accept the minutes. The chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record.
- 11/20 To Receive District & County Councillors Reports
Dist Cllr Coultate: Provided a report of the key business of the District Council affecting parish councils. This included the draft Bassetlaw Local Plan, its reduction in housing requirements for the parishes from 20% to 5% and the adjustments to the plans regards the former Cottam Power Station site and the work being done in regards to Covid-19 pandemic.
County Cllr Ogle - No report received and did not attend.
- Adjournment for Public Forum
The Chairman adjourned the meeting. 3 members of the public logged into the virtual meeting without turning their camera's on. A member of the public asked if Cllr Coultate was wearing two hats as a District and Parish Councillor, questioned why it had taken so long to appoint Cllr Coultate and questioned the need for the meeting. Cllr Coultate explained that he could not give an answer to a hypothetical question. Cllr Hoyle asked the member of the public to pronounce Cllr Coultate's name correctly and explained the reason for tonight's meeting.
A member of the public stated they had contacted Bassetlaw District Council, who had replied to advise how Cllr Coultate had been appointed by the District Council on 10th December. Another member of the Public reiterated the question about Cllr Coultate wearing two hats.
The Chairman closed the public forums and reconvened the meeting.
- 12/20 Finance:
Monthly Income & Expenditure
All payments made since the previous meeting have been in-line with the delegated authority. After discussion of the financial information circulated by email before the meeting, Cllr Hoyle **Proposed**, Cllr Buckland **Seconded** and the council the council **resolved** to accept them as a true and accurate record. Direct Debits and Standing Orders for staff salaries including PAYE and Pension, all **approved** unanimously.

1. To Approve Payments:

The Council **approved** the following: -

| <u>Payee</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|--------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| J Foster | Lengthsman Services - Jun | £158.25 |
| J Foster | Lengthsman Services – Jul | £92.84 |

456

Signed _____

Date _____

| | | |
|------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| J Foster | Lengthsman Services – Aug | £158.24 |
| J Foster | Lengthsman Services – Sep | £265.89 |
| J Foster | Lengthsman Services – Oct | £123.36 |
| J Foster | Lengthsman Services – Nov | £166.96 |
| S Foster | Litter Picking Services - Jun | £108.42 |
| S Foster | Litter Picking Services – Jul | £130.80 |
| S Foster | Litter Picking Services – Aug | £104.64 |
| S Foster | Litter Picking Services – Sep | £130.80 |
| S Foster | Litter Picking Services – Oct | £78.48 |
| S Foster | Litter Picking Services – Nov | £104.64 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Burial Ground in Churchyard Grass Cutting - Jun | £146.00 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Land & Millennium Corner Grass Cutting - Jun | £238.34 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Burial Ground in Churchyard Grass Cutting - Jul | £146.00 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Land & Millennium Corner Grass Cutting - Jul | £238.34 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Burial Ground in Churchyard Grass Cutting - Aug | £146.00 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Land & Millennium Corner Grass Cutting - Aug | £238.34 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Burial Ground in Churchyard Grass Cutting - Sep | £146.00 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Land & Millennium Corner Grass Cutting - Sep | £238.34 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Burial Ground in Churchyard Grass Cutting - Oct | £146.00 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Land & Millennium Corner Grass Cutting - Oct | £238.34 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Burial Ground in Churchyard Grass Cutting - Nov | £73.00 |
| Holmes Groundcare Ltd | PC Land & Millennium Corner Grass Cutting - Nov | £239.40 |
| Came & Co Ltd | Insurance Renewal 2020 | £369.32 |
| S Rockcliffe | Website Services- Apr, May, Jun | £75.00 |
| S Rockcliffe | Website Services- Jul, Aug, Sep | £75.00 |
| Eyelid Productions Ltd | Website Development and Transfer | £700.00 |
| K.R Hewitt Ltd | PC Burial Ground in Churchyard Hedge Cutting | £74.40 |
| Royal British Legion | S.137 payment - Annual Remembrance Poppy Wreath | £17.50 |
| R&G Garden Centre Ltd | S.137 payment – Annual Christmas Trees for village | £190.00 |
| Total Payments | | <u>£5,358.64</u> |

2. Receipts:

| <u>From</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Sturton Parish Council | Share of Lengthsman Scheme Grant 2020-21 | £962.00 |
| Bassetlaw District Council | 2 nd Half Precept 2020/21 | £5014.00 |
| Bassetlaw District Council | 2 nd Half Concurrent Grant 2020/21 | £7.00 |
| Bassetlaw District Council | 2 nd Half Street Cleaning Grant 2020/21 | £192.50 |
| Total Receipts | | <u>£6,175.50</u> |
| <u>Bank Balances</u> | | |
| The Current Account Balance | | <u>£12,241.77</u> |
| The Deposit Account Balance | | <u>£5,708.59</u> |

13/20 To Approve Adoption of the following documents:

After discussion of the documentation circulated by email, the Council **resolved** to adopt the following with immediate effect:

- Annual Parish Meeting Rules
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Financial Regulations
- FOI Model Publication Scheme
- Grant Awarding Policy
- Grievance & Disciplinary Procedure
- Health & Safety Policy
- Petitions Policy
- Public Participation Policy
- Risk Assessment
- Standing Orders

- Warden Risk Assessment
- Consent Form Council
- Data Breach Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- General Privacy Notice Council
- Privacy Notice for Staff, Councillors and Role Holders Council
- Privacy Policy Council
- Records Retention Policy

14/20 To Approve 2020/21 Budget & Set a Precept

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had circulated this draft budget statement, providing precept requirements for 2020/21 to allow each member time to prepare for making a decision. Bassetlaw District Council Concurrent Grant has reduced year on year to just £9 in 2020. Explaining the reduction of the Concurrent Grant, Bassetlaw District Council wrote to each Parish Council to state that: “we continue to reduce the concurrent grant; therefore, you need to factor in these reductions, you will see that Harworth & Bircotes Parish Council decided some years ago to substantially increase their precept and invest in their infrastructure for their local people.”

NALC and the SLCC advise that Parish Councils should not set any arbitrary, random figure for their precepts, the law requires parish councils to set a precept that is a ‘balancing figure’ known in legislation as the ‘council tax requirement’. The precept should be set to be the amount of money required to ‘balance’ the accounts after deducting all ‘other expected regular annual income’ in our case this is all rental income from Parish Land and Property as follows:

| Other Income | Income Amount | Precept Saving per home @ Band D | Precept Saving per home @ Band A |
|--|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Bassetlaw Concurrent Grant | £9 | £0.05 | £0.03 |
| Bassetlaw Street Cleaning Grant | £385 | £1.96 | £1.31 |
| Notts County Council Lengthsman Scheme Grant | £962 | £4.91 | £3.27 |
| Bank Interest and Wayleave | £12 | £0.06 | £0.04 |
| Total | £1,368 | £6.98 | £4.65 |

Therefore, the precept is already reduced, by the above figures.

In addition to the usual running costs, after taking into consideration the ‘other’ income, a precept rise is required to cover the balance of regular recurring expenditure, as follows:

| Costs for 2021-22 | Amount |
|---|----------------|
| Total Staff Costs for all members of all staff including PAYE | £8,582 |
| Grass, Hedge & Tree Cutting | £2,380 |
| Clock Maintenance | £160 |
| S137 Payments | £210 |
| Neighbourhood Plan | £296 |
| Administrative Costs, Professional Fees & Subscriptions | £1,215 |
| Training | £400 |
| Insurance | £385 |
| Village Parish Council Asset Maintenance | £600 |
| Website/Email Fees | £1,260 |
| Contingency/Emergency Fund | £250 |
| Bi Election | £2,100 |
| Total | £17,838 |

The costs include inflation, an increased training budget to allow new future councillors to attend National Association of Local Council training courses, cost of living rises for the staff salaries and the upcoming bi election which at best, Bassetlaw Council estimate it to cost £2,100 or at worst if, the election cannot piggy back off of other elections, then it may cost around £5000, any deficit will be covered from reserves.

After discussion Cllr Buckland **proposed in favour** to accept the budget and set the precept of £15,248 = to requesting £77.82 at Band D (£6.49 per month) Cllr Hoyle **Seconded** and Cllr Coultate **Abstained. Action**, the RFO to submit the completed Precept paperwork to Bassetlaw District Council.

It is also worth noting that the parish has approximately 217 properties, 85 homes out of these are in bands A to C which will pay less than the Band D figure. Homes with only 1 adult occupant are entitled to receive a further 25% reduction on the above figures, with additional reductions for residents in receipt of certain benefits. Details are found by contacting Bassetlaw Council regards Council Tax reduction.

Cllr Hoyle suggested that a precept statement be sent around the parish, Cllr Coultate advised that due to Covid-19 it is perhaps best avoided as a paper leaflet drop and concentrated as an electronic one if a statement is issued.

15/20 To Discuss Staffing matters

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the Council Cllr Buckland **Proposed**, Cllr Hoyle **Seconded** and the council the council **resolved** that this item shall be closed to members of the public due so that the Council can discuss Staffing matters (including, but not limited, to contracts of employment, salaries, HR Policies, terms of service, engagement, conduct and dismissal of employees, appointment of employees, financial or personal business affairs of the individual)

After discussion, the Council unanimously **resolved** to adopt the following internal HR Policies with immediate effect:

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Annual Leave Policy | Antibullying and Harassment Policy | Whistleblowing Policy |
| Expenses Policy | Equality and Diversity Policy | Flexible Working Policy |
| Homeworking Policy | Maternity Leave & Pay Policy | Paternity Leave & Pay Policy |
| Sickness Absence Policy | Performance Improvement Policy | Training & Development Policy |

Emergency, Bereavement & Dependants Leave Policy

The Council checked with National Association of Local Council's legal HR specialist who has advised that "*There is no legal obligation for any Employer, Councils included, to have to conduct an external recruitment campaign to fill a vacancy of a suitable internal candidate, if such a person already exists.*"

The Council discussed the Council staff roles, the Council is happy with the performance of the temporary Locum Clerk, and agreed that as an experienced ILCA and CiLCA qualified clerk, it would be in the best interest of the council to make his contract of employment permanent, so that the Clerk is in place ready to support the new Council once the Bi-Election has been held. Cllr Buckland **Proposed**, Cllr Hoyle **Seconded** and the council **resolved** that the Council offers the Locum Clerk the role on a permanent basis with immediate effect. The Clerk accepted. The Chairman and Clerk signed contracts of employment.

The Council then discussed the Village Lengthsman and Litter Picker, roles which have been historically on a self-employed basis since they were created, the Clerk has asked the Village Lengthsman and Litter Picker if they would accept a contract of employment and they would prefer to be employed. Cllr Buckland **Proposed**, Cllr Hoyle **Seconded** and the council **resolved** that the Council employ the Village Lengthsman and the Litter Picker on a permanent basis with immediate effect. The Clerk as line manager to the other staff members will sign and issue contracts to them as soon as practically possible.

16/20 Closure of the Meeting

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting at 8:30pm.