



SAWSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2022

Held at Spicers Pavilion - Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Parish Clerk Jo Keeler

Councillors

Kieran Cooper (Chair)

Brian Milnes

David Bard

Kevin Cuffley

Colin Groves

Ian Reeves

Jayne Merrick

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Beck Laxton (Personal)

Paul Smith (Work commitments)

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING

None

3 CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 07 DECEMBER 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 07 December 2021 were read and confirmed with the above amend.

It was **proposed** by Councillor David Bard and **seconded** by Councillor Jayne Merrick **TO ACCEPT** the minutes.

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST (UNANIMOUS)

4 MATTERS ARISING

None

5 TO AGREE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that we needed to review our Safeguarding Policy. All councillors received a copy of the policy prior to this meeting and it was discussed.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Kevin Cuffley and **seconded** by Councillor Colin Groves **TO RECOMMEND TO FULL** we adopt this version of the policy and after the elections in May, all Councillors to attend Safeguarding training which the Clerk will arrange.

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST (UNANIMOUS)

6 POLICY ON CHANGING ALL LIGHTS TO LED IN PARISH COUNCIL PROPERTIES

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that at a previous meeting it was suggested we should have a policy to proactively change our light bulbs to LED. This was discussed and the Clerk was asked to get quotes to change all bulbs at the office to LED. Spicers has already been agreed to be changed and Mill Lane should have LED bulbs as this has just been renovated. Lynton Way Pavilion will be done when this pavilion is rebuilt/renovated.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Brian Milnes and **seconded** by Councillor Kevin Cuffley **TO RECOMMEND TO FULL** that we proactively switch to LED bulbs.

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST (UNANIMOUS)

7 TO REVIEW MOBILE PHONE CONTRACT

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained the mobile contracts for the staff are due for renewal. The Clerk has looked at SIM only deals which were discussed. The Clerk will check what data the staff have now and take costs to Full parish in March.

8 TO DISCUSS VAT FOR HIRE CHARGES AT PAVILIONS AND PARISH COUNCIL PROPERTIES

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that he and the Clerk had a meeting with the VAT consultant to discuss if we should be charging VAT on all our grounds and properties – Opting to Tax. We have already opted to tax on Mill Lane and Spicers so will need to start charging VAT on hirers. This was discussed.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Jayne Merrick and **seconded** by Councillor Kevin Cuffley **TO RECOMMEND TO FULL** that we charge VAT on all grounds and buildings and absorb the additional cost until it is reviewed in September.

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST (UNANIMOUS)

Councillor Kieran Cooper then explained that we should do analysis on income to ensure the VAT that has been claimed is under the exempt limit.

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that if there was to be a VAT enquiry, we would need 4 years of these calculations. The VAT consultant can retrospectively do the calculations/investigation for the parish council at a cost of approximately £400. Councillor Brian Milnes felt this was an unnecessary cost and that the Clerk should contact the internal auditor and accountant to ask why we haven't been informed we need this 4-year calculation regarding VAT. The Clerk will contact them and put on the next relevant meeting.

9 RECORDING AND BROADCASTING PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that we had much more engagement when we did meetings online and that we should proactively be live streaming or recording our meetings.

This was discussed and Councillor Brian Milnes and Councillor Colin Groves suggested using a webcam and maybe a couple of microphones. In principle it was agreed we should investigate the costs for this and take to another meeting.

10 LEASE OF LYNTON WAY RECREATION GROUND

The Clerk explained that she has been working with SCDC regarding the lease for Lynton Way. There seems to be no copy of a current lease but SCDC has confirmed that there is 58 years left. The parish council has been asked if they want to continue with the current lease or start a new 99-year lease. SCDC cannot transfer the land to the parish council due to their Asset Transfer Policy.

There would be a cost to have a new lease drawn up but SCDC has confirmed they are willing to take on some of this cost.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Kevin Cuffley and **SECONDED** by Councillor Ian Reeves to **RECOMMEND TO FULL** we ask for a new 99-year lease with automatic renewal.

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST UNANIMOUS

11 TO REVIEW THE LIMIT ON DEBIT CARD

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that the Clerk has a limit of £1,000.00 spend on the debit card per month but has overspent the last couple of months due to ordering online from companies we do not currently have accounts with and has asked if we can change our Financial Regulations to increase the monthly limit.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Kieran Cooper and **SECONDED** by Councillor Jayne Merrick to **RECOMMEND TO FULL** that we increase the monthly limit to £2,500.00 per month and update our financial regulations.

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST UNANIMOUS

12 TO DISCUSS SOLAR PV PANELS ON PARISH COUNCIL PROPERTIES

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained at a previous meeting it was suggested we look into retrospectively fitting solar panels to existing buildings and new buildings that belong to the parish council.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Brian Milnes and **SECONDED** by Councillor Kevin Cuffley to **RECOMMEND TO FULL** we make it a policy to have solar PV panels on all new builds to maximise renewable energy and for the Clerk to obtain quotes for solar PV panels on existing buildings.

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST UNANIMOUS

13 COUNCILLORS ISSUES AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING – F&GP ONLY

None

Pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960 – it is resolved that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press are asked to leave the meeting during consideration of the sensitive items in reserved matters.

It was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Jayne Merrick and **SECONDED** by Councillor Kevin Cuffley to **GO INTO CAMERA.**

VOTE: 7 FOR : 0 AGAINST UNANIMOUS

14 TO DISCUSS ALTERNATIVE USES FOR PARISH COUNCIL LAND NEXT TO CAR PARK

Councillor Kieran Cooper explained that we agreed to look into the land next to the Co Op car park that the parish council owns that is currently leased to Vindis. The situation was discussed.

Meeting closed 8.57pm