

**WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD 16 MAY 2016 AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllrs Esme Richardson, Lee Sutton, Paul Widdowson, Raymond Catchpole and about 20 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr Phillip Dunnett.

Also in attendance: County Cllr Michael Gower.

In the absence of a clerk, minutes were taken by Cllrs Catchpole & Richardson.

The meeting opened at 7.20pm, immediately following the Annual Parish Meeting.

160516/1 Election of Chairman: there being no other nomination Cllr Esme Richardson was re-elected as Chairman and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, countersigned in this instance by Cllr Catchpole as acting Proper Officer for this purpose; all proposed by Cllr Widdowson, seconded by Cllr Sutton.

160516/2 Apologies for Absence: Cllr Dunnett

160516/3. Declarations of Interest: None

160516/4. Open Forum: Mr MacCarthy raised various matters with regard to items on the agenda concerning finances and protocols. Particularly, two items of expenditure had been made in the year 2015/16 rather than the previous year which resulted in the accounts submitted for approval needing amendment. Difficulties continuing from the absence of an RFO and Clerk were referred to.

160516/5. Report from District Councillor: Cllr Catchpole's annual report on the activities of the District Council will be placed on the Parish Council website. He referred to his Locality Budget which is now open again from which groups in Walberswick had benefitted during 2015/16.

160516/6. Report from County Councillor: Cllr Michael Gower had given his annual report to the previous meeting on 21 April 2016 and had nothing further to add.

160516/7. Reports from any other external authorities: chairman referred to reports received in respect of the village play areas which will be available on the parish council website.

From this point the Chairman took the meeting into council mode.

160516/8. Minutes of the Meeting 7 March 2016: approved subject to amendment changing reference to 'Tree Orders' to 'Tree Officer'; proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton.

160516/9 Matters arising: the position regarding co-option of new members of the parish council was outlined and potential interest referred to. Co-option of parish council members will be an Item on the next appropriate agenda.

160516/10 Highways: there was no specific update on this matter, but the likely costs were again reported as around £14,000 of which the Parish Council would be expected to bear no more than one-third.

160516/11. Planning: (a) no planning applications had been received. **(b)** a proposal to change procedures so that when the Planning Advisory Group advises on an application, the chairman will circulate such advice to councillors with delegated authority to respond to SCDC without waiting for the next meeting of the parish council. The proposal was approved, proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton.

160516/12. Responsible Financial Officer: in the continuing absence of a Clerk and RFO the temporary appointment of Cllr Catchpole as the parish council's RFO was approved until a formal appointment may be made. Proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton.

160516/13 Proper Officer: in the continuing absence of a Clerk and RFO the temporary appointment of the Chairman as the parish council's Proper Officer was approved until a formal appointment may be made. Proposed Cllr Catchpole, seconded Cllr Sutton.

160516/14 Parish Council Protocols: it was approved that Cllr Catchpole will endeavour to bring existing processes for Standing orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Risk Assessment, Asset Register, Financial Management and Internal Controls in line with current legislation and advice received from DALC and BDO. Proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton. During this Item, Cllr Catchpole read in entirety the Public Interest Report issued by BDO regarding the closure of the accounts for 2014/15 which will be posted on the parish council website.

160516/15 Finance: (a) a report on the parish council's finances was submitted to be noted, as below:

Lloyds Bus Bank Instant (current) b/f from 31 March 2016		£ 1 9 , 0 3 8 . 5 6
Lloyds Treasurers Account (deposit) b/f from 31 March 2016		
<i>Balance</i>	<i>£465.14</i>	<i>Cheque 981</i>
<i>(held back)</i>	<i>£885.88</i>	<i>C a s h i n</i>
<i>hand awaiting banking</i>	<i>£213.30</i>	<i>£ -207.44</i>
		<i>£18,831.12</i>

Payments since 7 March 2016: None

Receipts since 7 March 2016: None

Transfer of funds since 7 March 2016: None

Transfer of funds for approval 16 May 2016:

£10,000 from Deposit Account to Current Account		£18,831.12
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Payments for approval 16 May 2016:

SCDC Non-Domestic Rates arrears and current	£ 1,544.97	£17,286.15
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Balances to carry forward, assuming all above:

Current Account	£ 8,247.59	
Deposit Account	£ 9,038.56	£17,286.15

The report was noted.

(b) payment of the invoice in the report above was approved, proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton. **(c)** transfer of £10,000 from deposit account to current account was approved; proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton. **(d) (e) & (f)** yearend accounts 2015/16 and the Annual Return intended to be submitted for approval were withdrawn in the light of amendments needed. Delegated authority for signature by the chairman after amendment was agreed, proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton. **(g)** Cllr Catchpole undertook as temporary RFO to prepare a budget for 2016/17, but would require access to previous files which will now be relocated to The Heritage Hut for ease of access.

160516/16 Internal Auditors: it was proposed by Cllr Catchpole that SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils) should be appointed as Internal Auditors to Walberswick Parish Council. Proposed Cllr Widdowson seconded Cllr Richardson.

160516/17 Appointment of Clerk and RFO: there was no update and the position remains vacant, leading to inevitable and unavoidable ongoing difficulties.

160516/18 & 19 Playing Field and Play Area Equipment: Cllr Richardson produced two detailed reports prepared in respect of equipment at both sites, commissioned by Walberswick Common Lands Trust. It was agreed to ask the charity to handle both reports and obtain the best quotes for both sets of work, subsequently actioning the work as agreed with the parish council and invoicing the parish council as appropriate. The parish council will require seeing quotations, but in principle will consider setting aside up to £5,000 for repairs and up to £500 for an immediate safety bark input. Proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton.

160516/20 Correspondence: **(a)** request from two local artists to hold a short exhibition of their work during August in The Heritage Hut, rent free. **(b)** request from WI to plant daffodils around the village seat in commemoration of the Queen's 90th birthday. **(c)** request for light pruning of

some trees in the same area. **(d)** request for cannon bollards to prevent parking in the same area, Cllr Sutton to research availability and report back. **(e)** invitation to attend Southwold Town Council Civic Service has been received and Cllr Catchpole will attend on behalf of the Chairman.

All agreed as above; proposed Cllr Richardson, seconded Cllr Sutton.

160516/21 **Next meetings:** 1 August, 21 November 2016, 20 February, 15 May 2017

Cllr Esme Richardson
Chairman
Walberswick Parish Council

NOTE OF CLARIFICATION:

This note does not form part of these minutes, but is included to clarify a situation which arose shortly after the meeting.

BDO LLP, external auditors, gave advice regarding the position of councillors holding also positions of Clerk and/or RFO, which although quite lawful, prevents that councillor from discussing matters in council relating to financial matters.

In the light of that advice Cllr Catchpole reluctantly chose to resign from any temporary position relating to Clerk or RFO. Items 160516/12, 14, 15 (d) (e) (f) & (g) are thereby affected and the parish council continues without clerk or RFO appointment.

160516/1 **Election of Chairman:** there being no other nomination Cllr Esme Richardson was re-elected as Chairman and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, countersigned in this instance by Cllr Catchpole as acting Proper Office for this purpose; all proposed by Cllr Widdowson, seconded by Cllr Sutton. **160516/1** **Election of Chairman:** there being no other nomination Cllr Esme Richardson was re-elected as Chairman and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, countersigned in this instance by Cllr Catchpole as acting Proper Office for this purpose; all proposed by Cllr Widdowson, seconded by Cllr Sutton.