

Coxhoe Parish Council

Meeting: Ordinary Meeting

Date & Time: 23 June 2021 8.00pm

Venue: Main Hall of Coxhoe Village Hall

Councillors present: S Dunn (Chair); K Simpson (Vice Chair); J Slater; I Armstrong.

Also present: County Councillor M McKeon; C Llewelyn, Parish Clerk.

898 To receive meeting safety information, to agree the willingness to hold the meeting and to note the Parish Council Public Participation Policy

The Clerk had sent a report stating that the meeting had been convened using advice and guidance from the Government and National Association of Local Councils (NALC), and following the relevant risk assessments drawn up by the Clerk, and enclosed a risk assessment. It was **Resolved (1)** to note the safety measures and risk assessment and further **Resolved (2)** the agreement of Councillors present to hold this meeting while upholding the safety measures and controls implemented by the Clerk.

899 To note apologies

Apologies were given from Councillors D Brown, K Lowes, C Thirlaway J Barber and A Hedley. Apologies were also received from County Councillor G Hutchinson and A Searle, Administration Officer. It was **Resolved** the apologies were noted.

900 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda

No declarations of interest were made.

901 Deferral of agenda items

It was **Resolved** to defer the following items to a future meeting:

- 4 To confirm the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 19 May 2021; and
- 8 To consider any response to Planning Applications;

902 Public participation

No members of the public were present.

903 To confirm Annual Governance

a) Review effectiveness of internal control including banking facilities and mandates

A report had been circulated with the agenda. The Clerk read through the measures for internal control:

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.
2. We have an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of elector's rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.

It was **Resolved (1)** the internal control measures were noted and agreed. It was further **Resolved (2)** to confirm the Clerk is the Responsible Finance Officer for the financial year 2021 to 22.

It was **Resolved** to approve and agree the banking facilities as follows:

(3) to note that the council holds a current account with Unity Trust and a savings account with Nationwide, and a credit card which is currently held by the Administration Officer.

(4) to note and approve the current bank administrators: Claire Llewelyn, Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer; Angela Searle, Administration Officer (in progress) and the current authorisers and cheque signatories: Councillor Dunn; Councillor Lowes; Councillor Simpson; Councillor Thirlaway.

(5) to note the precept is being received in two tranches.

(6) to note the report.

b) Receive the Internal Audit Report

The Clerk had circulated the internal audit report upon receipt and with the agenda. The Internal Auditor had found no issues or actions to be taken. It was **Resolved** the Internal Audit Report is noted.

c) Approve Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement 2020 to 21) of the Annual Return

All sections of the Annual Governance Statement had been circulated with the agenda. It was **Resolved** that the Annual Governance Statement is agreed.

d) Approve Section 2 (Accounting Statement 2020 to 21) of the Annual Return

It was **Resolved** the Accounting Statement is agreed.

904 To consider other Financial Matters

a) Finance Report, Bank Reconciliation and Payment Schedule

It was **Resolved (1)** to note the report.

The following payments from April and May were presented for approval:

June

No	Payee	Description	Amount
1.	Staff	Salaries	£3,305.53
2.	NEST	Employer & Employees' Pension Contributions	£219.09
3.	HMRC	Employer Liabilities	£724.63

4.	SE Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance Contract	£884.90
5.	BT	Landline & internet	£52.92
6.	ITC	Sophos Internet Security & One drive storage	£10.80
7.	Vodafone	3 x Mobile Phones	£51.69
8.	Scottish Power	Memorial Garden Lighting	£11.00
9.	Total Business	Photocopier Usage	£21.12
10	Cloud Next	Domain Name Hosting	£47.98
11	Wave Water	Quarrington Hill Allotments Water	£27.04
12	Thom Marley Boxing & Fitness	Boxing Coaching for Youth Clubs (grant funded)	£50.00
13	Gordon Fletcher	Internal Audit	£300.00
14	Parsons Containers	Container (part grant funded)	£2,766.00
15	Mano Mano	Wall Mounted Postbox for Parish Office	£16.99
16	Spar	Mobile phone Topup	£15.00
17	Amazon	Stationery	£14.50
18	Amazon	Hand sanitiser	£11.00
19	Amazon	Stationery	£24.95
20	Microsoft	365 Subscription	£5.99
21	Zoom	Zoom Subscription	£14.39
22	Lloyds	Monthly Fee	£3.00

Payments are gross unless indicated otherwise.

Section 137 payments are marked as such.

It was further **Resolved (2)** to approve the payments.

b) Budget

The Clerk had circulated and tabled a budget document with projections and notes. It was **Resolved (1)** to note the budget had been circulated. It was **Resolved (2)** to defer discussion of the budget.

905 To consider Land, Buildings and Open Spaces

a) To consider the Council's position regarding the Old School Site

The Clerk had circulated an informal report from the financial adviser which was tabled for the meeting. It was **Resolved (1)** to note the information. It was **Resolved (2)** to note that in accordance with a previous resolution the Clerk will seek further advice and a full report from the financial adviser.

b) To consider resolutions about Quarrington Hill Churchyard

A report had been circulated which was written by Councillor Dunn and the Clerk. The following were **Resolved:**

(1) to note the report and previous reports referenced, and further advice received from the Society of Local Council Clerks.

(2) that Coxhoe Parish Council resolves to fund the whole costs of the survey and request permission formally from Cassop cum Quarrington Parochial Church Council to carry out the survey.

(3) that if the survey is carried out and recommends closure with no further burials to be carried out for technical reasons, that the Parish Council supports the application for closure to the Ministry of Justice.

(4) that if the survey is carried out and recommends that burials could continue to be carried out with acceptable risk and mitigations, that the Parish Council continues to oppose the application for closure to the Ministry of Justice.

(5) that if Cassop cum Quarrington Parochial Church Council object to the survey, the Parish Council will escalate this request to the Diocese and Bishop.

(6) to communicate the up-to-date information to residents via Facebook, website and Chronicle and facilitate their involvement in any consultation process with Ministry of Justice.

906 To confirm delegation arrangements to the Clerk during continuing pandemic restrictions

It was **Resolved** to continue delegation resolved on 23 March 2020 to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair where she deems appropriate, until the Council decides otherwise, to do anything expedient and necessary to ensure the continuous business of the Council and to deal with mandatory undertakings in order to prevent the authority from incurring liability during the period that the delegation is applicable, and to re-adopt or update Parish Council policies if necessary, to be brought to the Council as soon as reasonably practicable.

907 To confirm the date and time of the next Ordinary Meeting

The Clerk had sent a report including that she would call an Extraordinary Meeting if needed. It was **Resolved (1)** to note the report and **Resolved (2)** the next meeting will be the Ordinary Meeting on Monday 2 August at 6.30pm.

908 To consider a resolution that the following items were classified as being of a confidential nature in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. At this point of the agenda, if agreed, all members of the press and public were asked to leave the meeting.

At this point of the agenda, it was **Resolved** that all members of the press and public were asked to leave the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

County Councillor McKeon left the meeting at this point.

909 To agree action on Parish Council operational matters

The Clerk had sent a report including ACAS advice. The Parish Council regrettably noted the resignation of A Searle, Administration Officer, and thanked her for her hard work with the Parish Council. Discussion took place over the budget and projections of reserves, internal and external recruitment and human resources advice.

The following were **Resolved**:

(1) the report was noted.

(2) to agree the overall hours for Officers at up to 65 per week.

(3) to approve the Chair and Vice Chair to discuss her working hours with the Clerk.

(4) to approve the job description and person specification, noting the Clerk will review in the light of increased hours.

(5) to delegate to the Clerk to manage the recruitment process working with Councillors who wish to be involved in external recruitment to the Administration Officer post.

(6) to agree the structure and the hours, pay rate and the job description for Youth Team Leader as presented in the report.

(7) that the Council will undertake internal recruitment initially from the pool of existing staff, and posts will be advertised externally if they are not filled through the internal recruitment process.

(8) Delegate to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair and the Chair of Human Resources Committee, to undertake any required recruitment to other posts as appropriate and in the

same manner as resolution 909 (7), if current staff apply to advertised posts and are successful, thereby leaving a vacancy.

(9) the Clerk to discuss hours with staff as detailed in the report.

(10) Delegate to the Clerk to manage the recruitment process for the Youth Staff Team, working with Councillors who wish to be involved.

(11) the Clerk to advise other organisations that the parish council is not in a position to support with staff.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Certified as a True Record:

Chair (Sign)

Date