



FINANCE, EMPLOYMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Parish Council Finance, Employment & Risk Management Committee on Monday 21 January 2013 commencing at 1800 in Conference Room 4, The Lindos Centre, Saddlemakers Lane Melton IP12 1PP.

Present:

Cllr Mr GK Butterwick

Cllr Mr HM Needham [Chairman]

Cllr Mr CW Taylor

Cllr Thompson [Vice Chairman]

Absent:

Cllr Mrs BK Abbott

In Attendance:

Mr MJ Green

Clerk to Melton Parish Council

13.01 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR AND CONSENT TO ABSENCE

13.01.01 Cllr Mrs BJ Abbott – Family Matters

Council considered this apology and it was **RESOLVED** to accept the apology and consent to the absence.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham

Seconded by: Cllr Thompson.

13.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

13.02.01 To Receive Amendments to the Register

There were no amendments to the register.

13.02.02 To Receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda

Cllr Taylor declared a pecuniary interest in respect of item 13.13 – the budget and precept for 2013/2014 as he is a council tax payer in Melton

13.02.03 To Receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest.

13.02.04 To Consider Full/Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared

Written application for Full Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared from the following councillor was considered and authorised by the Clerk under the delegated authority of the Disclosable Personal Interest Policy.

Cllr Mr CW Taylor

Item: Parish Council Budget and Precept for 2013/14 and subsequent years

Meetings: Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee 21/1/2013

Full Council Meetings

Period: maximum allowed i.e. 4 years

The reason given was that without a dispensation the number of councillors prohibited from participating would be more than one half of the councillors who would be entitled to vote at a meeting of the Council/committee/sub committee transacting the business

As there were no members of the public present it was not necessary to lift standing orders.

13.03 OPEN FORUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO TALK TO COUNCILLORS

There were no members of the public present.

13.04 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

13.04.01 Finance and Risk Management Committee on 3rd December 2012

It was **RESOLVED** that minutes FRM(12)M06 previously circulated be received, noted and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

13.05 TO REVIEW MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31ST DECEMBER 2012

The Clerk confirmed that written acknowledgement had been received from the CAB in respect of the grant given by Melton Parish Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Management Accounts contained in paper FRM(13)P05 previously circulated were received and noted.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

13.06 TO RECONCILE THE BANK STATEMENTS WITH THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm the bank reconciliation contained in paper FRM(13)P06 previously circulated.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

Bank Statement - Tracker	£48,824.01
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Plus unreconciled receipts	£0.00
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Less unreconciled payments	£0.00
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Balance as per Balance Sheet	£48,824.01
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Bank Statement - Current	£3,991.05
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Plus unreconciled receipts	£49.00
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Less unreconciled payments	(£461.61)
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Balance as per Balance Sheet	£3,578.44
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13.07 TO AUTHORISE SIGNING OF ORDERS FOR PAYMENT

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the signing of orders for payment contained in paper FRM(13)P07 previously circulated.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

13.08 TO REVIEW THE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICES AND PRACTICES OF THE COUNCIL

13.08.01 To Consider the ½ Yearly Interim Internal Audit Report

Paper FRM(13)P08.01 previously circulated was received and noted.

13.08.02 To Consider Engaging SCL L/S Mgt Ltd to Undertake Weekly Safety Checks on Play Equipment as recommended by our insurers.

Paper FRM(13)P08.02 previously circulated was received and noted.

The meeting noted that:

- The park warden carries out a visual check each day he visits the playing field and reports any issues to the clerk/assistant clerk
- The park warden includes reference to the play equipment in his monthly report to the Recreation Committee

- Playquip carry out a ½ yearly safety inspection of the play equipment and provide a written report with recommendations on action required

The clerk agreed to check the work specification to ascertain whether or not it contains anything specific about the play equipment [subsequent to the meeting it was confirmed that the work specification does NOT contain reference to the pay equipment].

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should engage SCL L/S Mgt Ltd to carry out a weekly check of the play equipment not exceeding ½ hour chargeable labour per week and provide written evidence that the inspection has been carried out and details of any issues arising.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham

Seconded by: Cllr Thompson.

13.08.03 Quality Parish Council

It was noted that the period of accreditation for Melton Parish Council as a quality parish council would normally have ceased in July 2012. SALC advises that due to a review of the Quality Parish Council Scheme all reaccreditations have been suspended until the results of the review expected in the autumn of 2013. In the meanwhile it is in order for MPC to still use the Quality Parish Council logo etc.

13.08.04 Review Standing Orders

Each year the Council needs to review its standing orders. Each councillor has an up to date copy of the standing orders – these are also available on the website at

www.melton-suffolk-pc.gov.uk/comm-frm.html

It was RESOLVED that the review of the standing orders be confirmed and that at this date no amendments were required.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham

Seconded by: Cllr Thompson.

This is to be an agenda item for the April meeting of the Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee to consider any impact of the decision to be taken by Full Council in March on the future of bi-monthly meetings.

13.08.05 Review Financial Regulations

Each year the Council needs to review its financial regulations. Each councillor has an up to date copy of the standing orders – these are also available on the website at

www.melton-suffolk-pc.gov.uk/comm-frm.html

It was RESOLVED that the review of the financial regulations be confirmed and that at this date no amendments were required.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham

Seconded by: Cllr Thompson.

This is to be an agenda item for the April meeting of the Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee to consider any impact of the decision to be taken by Full Council in March on the future of bi-monthly meetings.

13.08.06 To Review Banking Arrangements [Financial regulation 05]

- (a) To confirm that the Current Account and Base Rate Tracker Account should both remain at Barclays Bank Woodbridge

Due to a number of concerns about the level of service provided by Barclays the Clerk was requested to investigate the options of opening a bank account at the Co-operative Bank [Britannia] in The Thoroughfare Woodbridge and report back to the next meeting of Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee.

- (b) To confirm that the signatories to the accounts should be The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee

It was RESOLVED to confirm that the signatories to the accounts should be the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee

Proposed by: Cllr Needham

Seconded by: Cllr Thompson.

13.08.07 To Approve the use of Direct Debit [Financial Regulation 06.06]
Payments to utility companies for supplies to the pavilion for electricity and water are made by variable direct debit. The use of the mechanism for payment needs renewing by council.

It was RESOLVED that the use of Variable Direct Debit payment mechanism for the payment of electricity and water at the pavilion be confirmed.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

13.08.08 To review the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit and confirm the continued appointment of Heelis and Lodge as Internal Auditors for 2013-2014

(a) The Effectiveness of Internal Audit
Paper FRM(13)P08.08(a) previously circulated was received and noted.
All items on the Expected Standard on Page 1 were met.
All the Characteristics of Effectiveness on Page 2 were met but that an area for development is to include 'impact of divestment' under the item 'Be looking forward'.

It was RESOLVED that with this amendment the review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit be confirmed.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

(b) The Scope of Internal Audit Provided by Heelis & Lodge
Paper FRM(13)P08.08(b) previously circulated was received and noted.

(c) Information required to assist with the audit
Paper FRM(13)P08.08(c) previously circulated was received and noted.

It was noted that in July 2011 the following resolutions were passed:

It was RESOLVED to confirm the appointment of Heelis & Lodge as Internal Auditors for 2012-2014 subject to an annual review.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

It was further RESOLVED that at the end of the financial year 2013/2014, for governance reasons, council will review the appointment of an internal auditor as Heelis & Lodge will then have completed eight such audits.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

It was RESOLVED to confirm the appointment of Heelis & Lodge as Internal Auditors for the 2013/2014 Financial Year.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

13.09 STAFFING MATTERS

13.09.01 To Consider Engaging SALC to Undertake Job Benchmarking for Clerk & Assistant Clerk Posts.

The Chairman reported that SALC were able to provide an objective assessment of the bands for the posts of Clerk and Assistant Clerk to Melton Parish Council. The anticipated cost would be in the order of £250. A report would be prepared that would give a detailed breakdown of the benchmarking exercise including comment on the job description, post and grade.

A specification for the work would be prepared and circulated to members of the Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee before submitting to SALC with a request for a firm quotation.

It was RESOLVED to engage SALC to undertake Job Benchmarking for the Clerk and Assistant Clerk at a cost of circa £250.00

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Butterwick.

- 13.09.02 Park Warden**
It was noted that in extreme weather the playing field main gates are not locked every evening.
- 13.09.03 Assistant Clerk**
It was noted that in accordance with the contract of employment for the Assistant Clerk to Melton Parish Council the hourly rate would be increased by one increment with effect from 1st January 2013.
- 13.09.04 Clerk**
There were no matters requiring action.
- 13.10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN ON MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA**
Paper FRM(13)P10 previously circulated was received and noted.
- 13.11 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS**
- 13.11.01 Accommodation**
Paper FRM(13)P11.01 previously circulated was received and noted.
The paper was fully considered and the various options discussed in detail.
It was RESOLVED that the Convener of the Accommodation Working Group be authorized to issue the 'Invitation to Submit Proposals' to a number of local builders in order that a further report can be considered by the Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee at their next meeting in April.
Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Butterwick.
- 13.11.02 Communications**
Paper FRM(13)P11.02 previously circulated was received and noted.
The paper was fully considered and the various options discussed in detail. As a result of the discussion a number of the recommendation were amended or deleted.
It was RESOLVED that:
- (a) The Working Group prepares the Communications Action Plan for adoption at the next meeting of Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee to include:
 - (i) Routinely adding all 'other councillors' in the 'cc box' of the eMails alert to Committee members of the publication of committee agendas, reports and minutes.
 - (ii) Developing an 'eMail Protocol' for councillors' communications with the Chairman &/or Vice-Chairman.
 - (iii) Agreeing a minimum level of functionality for councillor's eMail platforms.
 - (iv) Developing an 'eMail Protocol' for councillors' communications with the Clerk &/or Asst. Clerk.
 - (v) Routinely copy relevant media contacts (e.g. Radio Suffolk, EADT, 'free papers') into the eMail alerts for Full Council and Committee meetings.
 - (vi) Establishing a protocol for the preparation and distribution of press releases.
 - (b) A report setting out the financial and HR implications of the following aspects of Communications Action Plan be presented to the April meeting of this Committee:-
 - (i) Considering cost-effective ways of improving the appearance of items posted on *Melton Enews*.
 - (ii) Arranging a one-off whole-village leaflet drop, solely for the purpose of 'selling' the benefits of *Enews* service.
 - (iii) Revamping the website.
 - (iv) Producing and distributing an at least quarterly MPC newsletter.
 - (v) Setting up an MPC presence on social networking sites (e.g. *Facebook*, *Twitter*).
 - (vi) Identifying any further cost-effective means of better engaging with older people and other 'hard to reach' groups.

- (c) The April meeting of this Committee considers whether the Clerk and Asst. Clerk's working arrangement should, as part of their on-going appraisal process, include a degree of 'mutual cover' and, if so, appropriately adapt the proposed 'eMail Protocol'.
Proposed by: Cllr Butterwick **Seconded by:** Cllr Taylor.

13.11.03 Divestment

- (a) To consider letter from Margary & Miller Solicitors regarding the transfer of land from Barratts to Melton Parish Council
Paper FRM(13)P11.03 (a) previously circulated was received and noted.
Concern was expressed about the possible non-inclusion of disbursement costs and the Clerk was asked to contact Barratts to clarify this issue prior to responding to Margary & Miller.
It was also agreed that the Clerk should contact the SCC Rights of Way Department to determine the responsibility of the footpaths prior to any commitment to accept the transfer of the land.

13.12 TO AGREE THE EXPENDITURE ON REPLACEMENT COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

The Chairman advised the meeting that the hardware costs were well within the budget but that currently it had not been possible to obtain best possible software costs. The County Councillor had confirmed that SCC was not able to obtain reduced price software.

The Clerk will investigate alternative sources of software.

It was RESOLVED that the replacement of the office computer equipment and software should proceed provided the over all cost was within budget of circa £2,000.

Proposed by: Cllr Thompson **Seconded by:** Cllr Taylor.

13.13 TO CONFIRM THE REVISED BUDGET AND PRECEPT AGREED BY FULL COUNCIL ON 10TH JANUARY 2013

Paper FRM(13)P13 previously circulated was received and noted.

It was RESOLVED to confirm the budget and precept as contained in paper FRM(13)P13 and to send the appropriate paperwork to SCDC by 31st January 2013.

Proposed by: Cllr Needham **Seconded by:** Cllr Thompson.

13.14 FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S URGENT BUSINESS

13.14.01 Terms & Conditions Briefing at SALC 14th February 2013

Cllr Butterwick advised that he would now not be able to attend with the Clerk. Cllr Thompson will attend if work commitments allow.

13.14.02 Chairman of Finance, Employment and Risk Management Committee

Cllr Needham advised that he would be standing down as Chairman at the end of April and that Cllr Thompson had agreed to stand as Chairman.

Councillors will consider if they are willing to stand as Vice Chairman in May.

13.14.03 To consider items for inclusion in the Melton Messenger

The article for the budget will be in the April edition to coincide with the Annual Parish Meeting.

13.14.04 To receive items for future meetings

There were no items.

13.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 15th April 2013

The meeting will take place in Conference Room 4, The Lindos Centre, Saddlemakers Lane, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1PP commencing at 1800.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1925

Signed: _____

Date: _____

[Chairman]