

Belstead Parish Council

Approved Minutes of the Remote Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10 March 2021 at 7.30pm via Zoom

Present: Cllr Richard Clift (Chair), Cllr Christine Eade, Cllr Chris Markham and Cllr Ken Stowe

Attendance: Simon Ashton (Parish Clerk & RFO), John Taylor and Peter Gudde (Greater South East Energy Hub) and three Members of the Public

1. Apologies and Approval of Absences

There were no apologies and absences for approval as all Members were present.

2. Declarations of Interests by Members & Requests for Dispensation

There were no interests declared by, or requests received from, any of the Members.

3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting on 13 January 2021

Minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council on 13 January 2021 were received and approved as a true record.

4. Reports by the District Councillor and County Councillor

Copies of the district council report received from Cllr Jane Gould and the county council report received from Cllr Christopher Hudson had been shared with Members in advance of the meeting. Cllr Gould and Cllr Hudson did not attend the meeting.

5. Contributions by Members of the Public

A member of the public expressed his interest in the Swaffham Prior district community geothermic heating scheme for potential consideration in the locality (see 7e). Another was interested in the reduction in road noise from the A14 (see 9d).

6. Finance

(a) Members noted the Barclays Bank account balances of £15,819.33 and £6,358.14 as at 29 January 2021.

(b) Following review, Members approved the action taken by the Parish Clerk following the issues previously reported in the internal audit report action plan for 2019/20.

(c) Following discussion, Members approved the RFO's attendance at the Preparing for Internal Audit (2020/21) webinar on 11 March 2021.

(d) As the Council's receipts and payments were not expected to exceed £25,000, the Council approved the submission of an exemption certificate to the external auditor for 2020/21 which would not attract any costs.

(e) Following review, Members approved the RFO's request for an increase in the Council's fidelity guarantee insurance cover to £50,000 which amounted to £8.28.

- (f) Following discussion, Members agreed not to approve the donation request received from Lighthouse Women's Aid.
- (g) Payments were authorised in favour of the Parish Clerk's wages and office and personal expenses (£707.59), HMRC for income tax and national insurance (January to March 2021) (£125.20), Sharward Services Ltd for newsletters and postage (January 2021) (£30.22), Business Services at CAS Ltd for increase in fidelity guarantee cover (£8.28), F M Hartley for review of internal controls checklist (2020/21) (£20.00) and Suffolk Association of Local Councils for payroll service (October 2020 to March 2021) (£54.00). These payments were approved by Members.

7. Governance

- (a) Members were advised that little progress had been made in connection with matters relating to the Mill Farm Place Open Space and understood that there was a new person at BDC involved. Cllr Gould had previously confirmed that she had pursued the matter on the Council's behalf and was awaiting a response.
- (b) Members were advised that no further progress had been made in connection with matters relating to the Public Nature Reserve. Cllr Gould had previously confirmed that she had pursued the matter on the Council's behalf and was awaiting a response.
- (c) The RFO advised Members that, following the preparation of the necessary supporting documentation, a review of the annual internal controls checklist had been carried out by Fran Hartley on 10 February 2021. Following a review and discussion, including the benefit of this work being undertaken by a councillor in the future, Members approved the internal controls checklist completed for 2020/21.
- (d) Members were advised by the Parish Clerk that there had been no expressions of interest received to be co-opted as an additional Member to the Parish Council. Members agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting.
- (e) Mr Taylor and Mr Gudde of Greater South East Energy Hub presented information relating to the district community heating scheme previously introduced to Swaffham Prior in Cambridgeshire. Members agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting.
- (f) Members agreed to hold the Council's meetings on the second Wednesday evening of odd-numbered months in 2021/22. Draft routine agendas for the planned meetings in 2021/22 presented by the Parish Clerk were agreed by Members.

8. Consultations

- (a) Following discussion, Members agreed not to submit a response to the Mersea Homes Red House Neighbourhood consultation by the due date of 12 March 2021.
- (b) Following discussion, Members agreed not to submit a response to the NALC Planning Model Design Code consultation by the due date of 12 March 2021.
- (c) Following discussion, Members agreed not to submit a response to the BDC Leisure, Sport & Physical Activity Strategy consultation by the due date of 15 March 2021.
- (d) Following discussion, Members agreed not to submit a response to the EA Power Station Design Assessment consultation by the due date of 4 April 2021.

9. Highways

- (a) Members were advised that the HGV sign on the old A12 had been replaced.

- (b) An update on the possible extension to the 30-mph speed limit on Grove Hill was provided by Cllr Eade. Members then agreed that a further approach should be made to the Police once the level of traffic had returned to normal following the summer.
- (c) Members were advised that completion of the county-wide grit bin refill programme confirmed by SCC Highways following the recent fall of snow was still awaited.
- (d) Following discussion, Members agreed for contact to be made with the Member of Parliament in connection with a request for a reduction in road noise from the A14.

10. Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

- (a) The Council gave its approval to exclude the public and press during its consideration of the next item on confidential grounds.
- (b) Following discussion by Members, approval was given to the confidential Council employment matter under consideration.

11. Matters for Future Consideration

- (a) Consideration of the Installation of Lighting to the Public Footpath under A14

12. Dates of the Next Meetings

- (a) 12 May 2021 (Agenda Items & Supporting Documents Received by 4 May 2021)
- (b) 9 June 2021 (Based on TBC Year End Submission Deadline of 30 June 2021)
- (c) 14 July 2021
- (d) The meeting finished at 9.00pm.

Simon Ashton, Parish Clerk
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26 May 2021