

# GREAT RISSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019, at 7:00pm, the Great Rissington Club**

**Present:** Parish Councillors Richard Cleverly, John Durrant, Jane Carter, Graham Ramsay, Jenny Stewart and Debbie Braiden (Parish Clerk and Financial Officer)

**In attendance:** Local Government Electors (4) & newly elected District Councillor, Andrew MacLean representing the Green Party.

### **1 Election of Chairman**

Richard Cleverly was elected chairman proposed by John Durrant and seconded by Graham Ramsay. The clerk received notice of acceptance signed by Richard Cleverly.

### **2 Election of Vice-chairman**

John Durrant was elected vice-chairman proposed by Graham Ramsay and seconded by Richard Cleverly. The clerk received notice of acceptance signed by John Durrant.

### **3 Notices of Disclosure**

Register of Interests Forms should be signed by **ALL** elected councillors and sent direct to Bhavna Patel, The Monitoring Officer, Council offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Glos, GL7 1PX, **within 28 days of being elected (29<sup>th</sup> May 19)**. The clerk confirms receipt of these forms from Jane Carter and Jenny Stewart and will post these to the Monitoring officer on their behalf.

### **4 Ratification of Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer**

Cllr Durrant confirmed the ratification of Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer, as Debbie Braiden.

### **5 Appointment of Internal Auditor and Tree Warden**

Cllr Durrant confirmed that David Turnbull is willing to continue as internal auditor and it was understood that Mark Darwent is willing to continue as Tree Warden. Both appointments were approved.

### **6 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**

An apology for absence was received from the County Councillor Nigel Moore. No declarations of interest were made.

### **7 Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019 were approved as an accurate record and was signed off by the Chairman.

### **8 Accounts and financial matters**

#### **Budget**

The clerk confirmed the council was in surplus as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. The total brought forward from 2018/19 amounted to £4184.88.

The annual precept for 2019/20 had been set at £6000 with 75% due in April. The payment from the District Council had been delayed and still not received. The District Council had tried to make payment to the PC's bank but this was returned by the PC's bank stating, error with account number/sort code. The clerk will investigate the issue with the District Council in order to accomplish receipt of the due funds.

It was also noted that the bank account details appeared to have two sort codes which is believed to have risen when the old bank (Alliance) merged with Santander. This may be the problem for the precept not being received. The Clerk will also investigate this with the bank.

The total budget available to the PC taking the balance brought forward and precept will be £10,224.88 (this figure does not include any VAT payments the Council may be able to claim back throughout the year).

Estimation for already committed expenditure for 19/20 currently amounts to £4,349.24. Councillors Carter and Stewart queried the overall expenditure amount as it was lower than expected from setting the precept budget last year. The Clerk confirmed that this figure does not yet include any expenditure towards community groups or supporting ongoing projects such as grit bins and the refurbishment of the old BT telephone box to house the defibrillator. Cllr Durrant confirmed that apart from certain provisions agreed in November, the budget he prepared at that time and the budget prepared by the clerk were very similar. He proposed that, as the clerk has now taken on the role of financial officer, her budget be the one used as a reference. This was agreed. Cllr Durrant volunteered to prepare and circulate a reconciliation of the two budget forecasts.

Councillor Carter debated whether or not the council should be holding such a large balance of approximately £5,800 remaining after committed expenditure, as the balance amounts close to the precept figure itself. The clerk reminded the

Councillors that £4184.88 of the balance was brought forward from the previous year. Following general discussions it was agreed that this figure would reduce once group donations and projects are carried out during the year. Further unplanned expenditure might also arise and it was agreed that a reasonable level of contingency funding is necessary and desirable.

### **Insurance renewal for 19/20**

Councillor Carter confirmed she had read the document and all agreed to pay the insurance renewal figure of £220.67.

### **Change of bank**

The clerk confirmed she had been in to Santander bank, Cirencester to obtain forms to enable a change of authority signatures. Whilst there, the clerk queried the online banking and confirmed that Santander only operated a one signature system. Cllr Durrant agreed this is why they had decided to change banks as other banks operated a different system which enabled double authority for payments. He also confirmed that Council's have to legally provide double authority for payments as set by government legislation. After discussions of the process Cllr Durrant stated previously the decision was made to suspend changing of banks to Barclays until it was known who had been elected/re-elected and who the clerk would be for the signatories & authority going forward. It was agreed that the new clerk would complete the necessary forms to give her authority whilst removing the old clerk's authority for Mike Saunders. For the time being, the clerk agreed to continue with the manual cheque process for payments and later make a decision whether to ask the Council to change banks if she felt the current process was not efficient and timely to pay invoices. It was noted that changing banks would incur monthly charges of £10 per month.

## **9 Matters Arising**

### **Defibrillator update**

Cllr Cleverly confirmed that the electrician had picked up the defibrillator from Cllr Durrant to install but when he arrived on site no power was available for the installation. Cllr Carter confirmed that the power to the telephone box had been cut off by Scottish Power a while ago. Conversations are being held between BT and Scottish Power. Cllr Durrant confirmed that BT had originally agreed to provide electricity to the box free of charge indefinitely, but that the new contract they have asked the PC to sign, which is far more specific concerning requirements for fitting defibrillators, only guarantees the free supply of electricity for five years. The clerk will confirm that the second contract is in place. It was confirmed that the defibrillator was being kept safe by Cllr Durrant until installed.

### **Closed grave yard update**

Cllr Ramsay confirmed that he had met up with Jenny from the PCC and 2 Cotswold District Council officers for a site visit. All the details were clarified including the amount of cuts and boundaries. Cllr Ramsay was happy from the meeting that there were no issues for the PC to be concerned with and it would be left for CDC to now continue with the process of taking it over from the PCC.

CDC officers reported back to the clerk that there were a couple of small issues regarding maintenance they would be discussing with the PCC prior to taking over the graveyard maintenance. Sheila Jesson confirmed these were now being dealt with by the PCC to move the process forward with CDC.

The PCC made CDC officers aware that no grass cutting should take place during funerals and that the grass cutting was done monthly and sometimes fortnightly. Cllr Durrant asked if CDC officers mentioned how often the grass would be cut by Ubico, the District Council's contractor. Cllr Ramsay confirmed that CDC believed Ubico would be able to accommodate the routine monthly grass cutting and funeral regime if notified in time by the PCC. Cllr Ramsay also reported he was surprised that CDC held very few grave yards within the district. Sheila Jesson pointed out that most closed grave yards are still being maintained by the parishes hence CDC does not have many on their account.

### **Emergency Plan update**

Cllr Ramsay confirmed that in general the Emergency plan agreed last year was still in force. There has been no other offers received for assistance in an emergency therefore, the original plan was still up to date which is published on the website. The clerk rose whether the PC should have a list of vulnerable people in the area to be priority in a local emergency but advised to date there is no such register. The clerk had discussed with Cllr Ramsay that she would contact CDC and discuss any improvements the PC could make going forward with their emergency plan.

## **10 Planning**

The following first four listed applications regarding trees held no concerns. For the last application \*\*19/01164/FUL for Lower and Upper Orchard Cottage, the PC agreed for the district conservation team to monitor any changes to the frontage. Cllr Durrant asked should the PC be concerned with the loss of two medium sized residences being turned into one very large residence and how it affects the future of the village and future affordability. Councillors believed that this would be dealt with under planning policy and conservation; Cllr Durrant stated he thought this was a chance for the local parish council to voice its opinion regarding housing policy and within its rights to make comment to assist with the decision. Cllr Ramsay reported he thought there were some local concerns with the site lines in the local vicinity and Cllr Stewart stated that although the two properties being joined together made for a bigger residence, the actual footprint would not be much bigger. The majority agreed that issues would be picked up under local planning and that immediate neighbouring properties can express and lodge their own concerns with the planning department at Cotswold District Council.

### **11 Correspondence and matters raised by residents**

An email was received from Mr Guillebaud regarding the grass cutting around the telephone box. He wanted confirmation as to who would continue to cut the grass. Cllr Cleverly confirmed Mr Chris Bowen had volunteered to cut the green. Councillors confirmed that grass cutting was under constant review and thanked volunteers for their help.

### **12 Report from District & Parish Councillors**

The District and Parish Councillors will provide their introductions and reports as part of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to follow.

### **13 Any other business**

Cllr Durrant stated there are currently two vacant positions for councillors on the PC. Cllr Cleverly reported that Natasha Shearsby had expressed an interest to be co-opted as councillor. The clerk will advertise the two seats available for co-option on the notice board and web site. All interested parties are requested to declare their interest in writing (emails accepted) [greatrissiparish@gmail.com](mailto:greatrissiparish@gmail.com) to the clerk by the date of the next meeting, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

The Chairman opened up the floor. An electorate reported that weeds were growing inside the bus shelter by the Lamb Inn and requested a volunteer to deal with it. It had also been noted that some bushes and overgrowth were overhanging public foot paths preventing easy passage; the PC are requesting that residents monitor their own boundaries to assist with the problem.

### **14 The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 7:45pm**