

STOW BEDON & BRECKLES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Stow Bedon & Breckles Parish Council on Wednesday, 5 May 2021 at 7.30 p.m. This was a Zoom on-line meeting.

Present: Councillors: Jonathan White (Outgoing Chairman), Phil Childs, Dawn Jessett, Lee Pilkington.
Julian Gibson (Clerk).

Absent: Councillors: Hannah Reed; John Morfoot.

- 1 **Election of Chairman.** Councillor Childs was **elected** Chairman.
- 2 **Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** Councillor Childs signed the declaration, which was **received**.
- 3 **Appointment of Vice-Chairman.** It was **agreed** to leave this item until the next meeting.
- 4 **Apologies for absence.** It was **resolved** to accept the reason for absence offered by Cllr. Morfoot.
- 5 **Declarations of interest.** None.
- 6 **Dispensations.** None.
- 7 **Public participation session.** None.
- 8 **Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 12 April 2021 were **confirmed**, and **signed** by the Chairman.
- 9 **Matters arising.**
 - 9.1 [4.2] **SAM2.** Westcotec has examined the sign and said that the damage has been caused by an impact, possibly by somebody mowing the verge (which did appear to have occurred recently). The Clerk had written to neighbouring properties when it was thought to be the result of criminal activity, and one has kindly examined his CCTV, but failed to catch any sign of the impact. Although he was initially told that the insurance excess was £250, he has now been advised that it is £400, but as there is no penalty of making a claim, it was **agreed** that a claim should be submitted for the balance in cost of £88.
 - 9.2 [11] **Action in the High Court.** The Court ruling on whether parish councils should be able to meet virtually was that the decision had been "made legislatively for Scotland by the Scottish Parliament and for Wales by the Senedd", and therefore that in England this decision was one "for Parliament, not the Courts."
- 10 **Correspondence.** The following correspondence was **received**:
 - 10.1 Information Commissioner's Office: *ICO Registration Certificate* - End date 26 April 2022.
 - 10.2 Breckland Cllr. Phil Cowen: *District Councillor report May 2021*.
- 11 **Planning.** None.
- 12 **Pingo Trail Car Park.** Cllr. White updated the Council on a successful meeting with the Highway Engineer, at which he had been fully supportive of a proposal to place a sort of island in the layby, so as to make the entrance (and thus also to the dwelling and car park) at the south end, and the exit at the much safer north end. Sadly, it later appeared that he had been overruled by his senior officer, as he had now emailed saying that this was unlikely to be approved, and reverting to the "cut back a few trees and lower the bund" approach. It was **agreed** that Cllr. White should respond expressing the Council's disappointment and asking in what way this proposal would increase the danger to users of the layby, as claimed.
- 13 **Grants made to the Church.** A note from the Clerk regarding *Spending Parish Council money on maintaining Churchyards* was **considered**. This pointed out that the current legal opinion of the National Association of Local Councils was that the prohibition on councils providing funding in any way to churches contained in Local Government Act 1894 carried more weight than the later legislation in the Local Government Act 1972 which permitted providing funding for the

maintenance of cemeteries. The Clerk said that his formal advice would be that making a grant to a Parochial Church Council for the maintenance of a cemetery within the parish could be considered to be *ultra vires* and he suggested that members should be aware of this when coming to items later on the agenda. It was pointed out that relatives within the parish have friends and relatives buried in the churchyards, they expect that the churchyard should be maintained to a reasonable standard in order to enhance the beauty of the villages, and people travel considerable distances (and even from abroad) in order to visit the graves. In addition, the Council has been contributing to the maintenance of the cemeteries for many years.

- 14 **Receipts & Payments Account.** The Receipts and Payments Account for the year 2020-2021 was **approved** and **signed** by the Chairman.
- 15 **Internal Audit.** The report to Council of the Internal Auditor and the completed Annual Internal Audit Report from the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21 were **received** and **noted**.
- 16 **Annual Governance Statement.** The AGAR 2020/21 Part 2 Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 was **approved** by the Council.
- 17 **Accounting Statements.** The AGAR 2020/21 Part 2 Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2020/21, already signed off by the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), were **approved** by the Council.
- 18 **Certificate of Exemption.** The Certificate of Exemption on Page 3 of the AGAR 2020/21 Part 2, confirming that the Council is a Smaller authority where the higher of gross annual income or gross annual expenditure does not exceed £25,000 and meets the qualifying criteria, and is therefore exempt from a limited assurance review, was **approved** by the Council.
- 19 **Signing of Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements.** The Chairman and the Clerk were **authorised** to sign the Annual Governance Statement, and the Chairman was **authorised** to sign the Accounting Statements.
- 20 **Electors' rights.** It was **noted** that the Clerk, as RFO has set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights as 14 June 2021.
- 21 **Signing of Certificate of Exemption.** The RFO and the Chairman were **authorised** to sign the Certificate of Exemption.
- 22 **Explanation of variances and Bank reconciliation.** The Explanation of variances and Bank reconciliation for the year ended 31 March 2021 were **approved**.
- 23 **Internal Auditor.** It was **resolved** that Mr. Peter Cotes be reappointed as Internal Auditor for the year 2021-2022.
- 24 **External Audit.** It was **noted** that the Clerk will then send the Certificate of Exemption to the External Auditor, and publish all the required documents on the website and notice boards.
- 25 **Finance**
 - 25.1 **Maintenance of the burial grounds.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100840 for £150.00 to Stow Bedon Parochial Church Council be signed as a grant towards the cost of maintaining the burial ground in the parish at St Botolph's Church. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 214(6)*)
 - 25.2 **Maintenance of the burial grounds.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100841 for £150.00 to Breckles Parochial Church Council be signed as a grant towards the cost of maintaining the burial ground in the parish at St Margaret's Church. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 214(6)*)
 - 25.3 **Training.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100842 for £11.25 to SLCC Enterprises, be signed being this parish's share of invoice no. BK201819 for the Clerk to attend the Virtual Regional Training Seminar - East on 21 April 2021. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 111*)

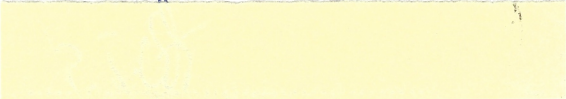
- 25.4 **Other.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100843 for £585.60 (£488.00 + £97.60 VAT) to Westcotec Limited be signed, being payment for the repair of the SAM2. (*Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s. 72*)
- 25.5 **Subscriptions.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100844 for £45.90 to the Society of Local Council Clerks be signed, being this Council's share of invoice no. MEM23490 for the Clerk's membership subscription for the year ending 31 May 2022 (*Local Government Act 1972 s.143*)
- 25.6 **Monthly Financial Report.** The Clerk reported that he had been unable to present this month's report as the meeting was so early in the month, so it was **agreed** to carry this over.

26 Matters for consideration at next meeting.

- 26.1 Appointment of a Vice-Chairman.
- 26.2 Internal Auditor.
- 26.3 Pingo Trail Car Park update.
- 26.4 SAM2 post.
- 26.5 Frosts Common update.

27 Next meeting. It was **agreed** that the Council should not meet physically until after the implementation of Step Four of the Government's Road Map. However, the Councillors are planning to meet virtually on **Monday, 14 June 2021 at 7.30 p.m. via Zoom video link.** The agenda for this Meeting of Councillors and the necessary link for the public to attend will be published in the same way as for formal meetings of the Parish Council.

Confirmed:



Phil Childs, Chairman

12 July 2021

Scheduled future Meeting dates:

Monday, 12 July 2021	Monday, 18 October 2021	Monday, 17 January 2022*
Monday, 16 August 2021*	Monday, 15 November 2021	Monday, 14 February 2022
Monday, 13 September 2021	Monday, 13 December 2021	Monday, 14 March 2022

*If needed