

Swainsthorpe Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council
held at St Peter's Church on Wednesday 13 January 2016 at 7.30pm

In Attendance: Cllr G Frost, Cllr P Frost, Cllr P Webster, Cllr Y Folkard, Cllr B Lincoln, Cllr P Bocz

Parish Clerk Anne Rayner
District Councillor Phil Hardy
County Councillor Colin Foulger
1 member of the public

1. **To consider apologies for absence** – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Nielsen.
2. **To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2015** – The minutes were approved without alteration and signed as correct by the Chair.
3. **Declaration of interest for items on the agenda** – Cllr Lincoln declared a pecuniary interest in item 12 on the agenda.
4. **Public Open Forum including reports from District and County Councillors** – PCSO Darrin Sore advised that between 14 October 2015 and 12 January 2016 there had been no reported crime in the village. Cllr Frost asked about the apparent increase in online and telephone fraud and asked if more could be done to warn people about these issues. PCSO Sore advised that Norfolk Trading Standards often issue “scam alerts” and these are frequently mentioned on Radio Norfolk. Members of the public can also register with “Police Connect” to access crime statistics and crime prevention advice.

County Councillor Foulger reported that it had been a quiet month and he had nothing specific to report. District Councillor Hardy advised that he still had some remaining money from his members’ ward fund. If Councillors had any ideas relating to community projects or funds, a small grant could be applied for from this fund (before the end of March).
5. **To consider co-option in relation to the Councillor vacancy** – Paul Bocz confirmed he had received the information sent to him by the clerk, relating to the role of parish councillor. With approval from councillors, Paul was co-opted as a member of Swainsthorpe Parish Council. Cllr Bocz signed the declaration of acceptance of office and confirmed he would return the register of interest form to the clerk within 28 days. Welcome to the parish council.
6. **To consider ICO registration** – The clerk explained that it is necessary for parish councils to be registered with the Information Commissioners Office, as a public body subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. The registration fee is £35 per annum. Cllrs unanimously agreed that the clerk should arrange registration. **Action AR.**
7. **To consider the appointment of an internal auditor** – The clerk advised that Pauline James would be carrying out the internal audit for two of the other parish councils for which she is clerk. Pauline is herself a clerk and a NALC trainer, being the tutor for the CiLCA qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration). It was resolved to appoint Pauline James as internal auditor. **Action AR.**
8. **To consider the procurement of external audit for smaller authorities** – The clerk reported that, following the changes to external audit requirements, parish councils need to opt out of the Sector Led Body audit procurement if they wish to appoint their own external auditors from 2017/18. The information provided states there will be “a small fee charged to cover the whole five year period” and the next opportunity to opt out of the arrangement will be in five years time. It was resolved not to opt out of this arrangement.
9. **Planning.**
 - a) **To review Planning Meeting decisions since the last full Parish Council meeting** – 2015/2544 – discussed at the planning meeting of 6 January 2016. There were no objections.

b) To hear a report on plans approved/refused by South Norfolk Council

I. 2015 / 2451 10 Church Rd - Attach lean to car port - Approved

c) To consider planning applications – None to report

d) To consider a new planning procedure – South Norfolk Council will no longer be issuing paper copies of planning applications. Paper copies can specifically be requested for large or contentious applications. Following discussion, it was agreed that the clerk would, in future, circulate an e-mail notification of a new application and Councillors would view the plans online. If there were any queries or issues, Councillors will aim to contact the clerk prior to the meeting. The plans will then be discussed at the meeting, as usual. This method will be adopted initially. Alternatives can be considered at a later date, if necessary.

10. To agree resolution of ownership of items listed on the asset register – It was agreed that Cllrs Folkard and Webster will liaise with the Chair of the Community Trust in order to agree ownership of the items on the asset register. It was agreed that the play equipment is the most pressing issue. The clerk will circulate a copy of the latest play inspection to Councillors and will also seek further advice from South Norfolk Council relating to procedures for repairs.

11. To consider bus shelter repairs – Three quotes were reviewed and considered by Councillors. It was resolved to ask David Ireland to undertake the work, on the understanding that it would be completed within a month. The clerk will contact Mr Ireland to check this. **Action AR.**

12. To consider the grass and hedge cutting contract – Before any discussion of pricing began, it was asked if Ben Willis had been given an opportunity to quote for the contract. The clerk advised that the issue had been advertised by means of notification on the agenda (on the noticeboard and website) but Mr Willis had not been specifically contacted. Cllrs advised that, as someone who had previously expressed an interest, they would like to give Mr Willis the opportunity to quote. The clerk will attempt to make contact with Mr Willis and send him the specification. Cllr. P Frost advised he would like to see the quotes for the grass cutting contract in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that the clerk will circulate details of the quotes to all Councillors (except for Cllr Lincoln) in advance of the next meeting.

13. To consider the quotation for repairs to the play area – A quote has been received via Mr Talby for repairs to the play equipment. The clerk will send a copy to Cllrs Folkard and Webster, in order that it can be considered when they talk to members of the Community Trust.

14. To consider the adoption of:

a) A Code of Conduct – Following discussion, it was agreed to adopt the South Norfolk Council code of conduct.

b) Standing Orders – Standing Orders were read through with appropriate information added in or deleted. The clerk will send a copy of Standing Orders to all Councillors. Standing Orders were officially adopted.

15. Finance.

a) To receive the financial report – The financial report, circulated prior to the meeting, was approved. Cllr Folkard asked if a better rate of interest could be obtained for the parish council's money. The clerk advised that parish council's are eligible for community accounts, which give the benefit of no bank charges but also attract low interest. However, adopting a business account would almost certainly prove more expensive, due to charges.

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b) To consider the payment of the following:

As well as the items listed on the agenda, the clerk asked for an additional payment to be considered, in respect of the councillor training provided by NPTP. The invoice is for £100 and is dated 16 October.

Chq no	Amount	Payee	Notes
100601	£458.55	A Rayner	Clerk salary Nov, Dec & Jan
100602	£43.44	S Talby	Post repair
100603	£100.00	NPTP	Councillor training

A replacement for cheque no 100599 was also approved – cheque no 100600 was written to the “East of England Ambulance” in respect of the donation to the Mulbarton Community First Responders.

c) To consider donation requests from

- i. **Age UK Norfolk** – Following discussion, it was resolved to send a donation of £25.

16. To review the budget for 2016/17 and agree the precept – The budget and precept were discussed again at some length. The amount of council tax grant being awarded from South Norfolk Council has decreased to £225. It was resolved to increase the precept to £5419, an increase of £258. The parish council acknowledged that there are potentially some large bills coming up, for the repair of the bus shelters and repairs to the play equipment, both likely to be between £1000 and £2000. Further discussions took place as to the long term maintenance of the play area and how the funding has been arranged in the past. Councillors also raised concerns over the cost of potential repairs to street lights and the clerk will try to find out any information relating to likely costs. It was resolved to pay for the bus shelter and play area repairs from the reserves and in future years specific amounts of money would be set aside for repairs and maintenance of play equipment etc to be built into a reserves ring fenced amount. The clerk will quantify the budget headings and amounts discussed and circulate accordingly.
Action AR.

17. To receive items for the next agenda – Grass cutting contract

18. To agree the date for next meeting – Wednesday 9 March 2016.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.20pm.