

Minutes of the Meeting of Dersingham Parish Council held virtually on 28th September 2020 at 6.30pm

**Present:** Councillor C Shepherd (Chairman), Councillor M Shepherd, Councillor T Bubb, Councillor D Murrell, Councillor R Frost, Councillor J Houston, Councillor V Brundle, Councillor J Stokes and Councillor B Anderson.

**Also, Present:** Sarah Bristow (Parish Clerk) Geraldine Scanlon (Communications Officer) and Borough Councillor J Collingham.  
No public present.

Actual meeting start time 6.40pm

**13572 To Receive and Consider Apologies for Absence from Councillor Wright, Councillor Noble, Councillor Osborne and Councillor Hopkins.**

**It was resolved to accept apologies**

**13573 Election of Vice Chair or this meeting/and or going forward.**

Councillor C Shepherd asked the Clerk if any written nominations had been received. The Clerk advised she had not received any therefore Councillor C Shepherd proposed the item be deferred to the next Full Council meeting where verbal nominations would be considered. **It was resolved to approve the proposal**

**13574 Virtual Meeting Protocol.**

Councillor C Shepherd asked if all Councillors had received and read the policy regarding protocol for virtual meetings she had circulated (see attached) Amendments to Standing Orders was also discussed. It was proposed the Virtual Meeting Protocol be adopted and Finance and Administration Committee to review Standing Orders.

**It was resolved to adopt the Protocol for Virtual meetings policy and defer Standing Orders to Finance and Administration Committee for review.**

### **Protocol for virtual meetings**

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 allow local councils to hold remote meetings. The regulations give automatic authority to hold remote meetings. These regulations remain in force until May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 or earlier if repealed.

This protocol should be read in conjunction with Dersingham Parish Council's Standing Orders.

1) Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

- i) The requirement to hold an annual meeting is to be disregarded prior to 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 but it may take place when either called by the Chairman or following a resolution of Full Council.

2) Remote Access to Meetings.

The definition of place includes where a meeting is held in more than one place including electronic, digital, or virtual locations, such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.

Open to the public includes access to meetings by remote means including video conferencing, live webcasting, and interactive streaming.

3) Councillors in remote attendance

A councillor is present and counted for the purposes of quorum when they can

- a) hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance,
- b) hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting, and
- c) to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting
- d) Members should connect to the Meeting shortly before the allotted commencement time and check that their connection is operational, in order that the meeting should commence promptly.
- e) Members should ensure that their microphone is muted other than when they are entitled to speak.
- f) At the start of a meeting there will be roll call so that those joining the meeting by telephone know who is present.
- g) At the conclusion of any debate and councillors are asked to vote, each vote will be by a roll call or by a show of hands,
- h) Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any particular matter must disconnect from the Meeting for that particular item. The Meeting will pause for up to ten minutes for the said Member to reconnect once the matter has been dealt with.
- i) When confidential, or "exempt" issues are under consideration. The Chair and Members should ensure that there are no members of the public at remote locations able to hear or see the proceedings during such meetings. Any Remote Member should confirm, prior to participating in any confidential and/or exempt item of business, that they are in a secure private location and that no one else is able to hear the proceedings from the device being used by that Remote Member and that no recording is being made. Any member in remote attendance who failed to disclose that there were in fact persons

present who were not so entitled will be in breach of their Code of Conduct responsibilities.

- j) The minutes of a meeting shall include reference to whether the meeting was held virtually.
- k) If, during the course of a Meeting, it becomes apparent that a Member is no longer in attendance, the Meeting will be paused for a period of up to ten minutes to re-establish their attendance. After the ten-minute period, if it has not been possible to re-establish the attendance of the particular Member:
  - (1) If the Meeting remains quorate, the Meeting continues.
  - (2) If the Meeting is inquorate, it will be adjourned until a suitable alternative time.
- l) In circumstances when a Member re-joins part way through a re-commenced matter in a quorate Meeting and have missed part of the debate: councillors must take a view as to whether they are sufficiently informed to properly cast their vote.

Councillor C Shepherd advised although the current Standing Orders procedural document is compliant with Government Legislation there were updates/amendments that needed incorporating such as collective responsibility and suggested this gets reviewed through the Finance Committee.

- 13575**      **Standing Orders – Covid 19.**  
This item was covered in minute number 13574
- 13576**      **To Receive Declarations of Interest and request for Dispensations by Councillors in any of the Agenda Items listed.**  
None Received.
- 13577**      **To receive verbal report from Norfolk County Councillor.**  
Councillor Dark was not present.
- 13578**      **To receive verbal report from Borough Councillors.**  
Councillor Collingham advised the Regeneration and Development panel she chairs have met to discuss expenditure of the £750,000 received from the Government. Some of the grant has been allocated to establishing an undergraduate school of nursing however there is a remaining £150,000-£160,000. The panel next meet 6<sup>th</sup> October at 4.30pm should anyone wish to attend.  
With respect to the ward Councillor Collingham advised there were only a couple of issues regarding planning applications received.  
Councillor C Shepherd asked if the money was for any specific purpose. Councillor Collingham advised it was to help regenerate and enhance King's Lynn.

Councillor C Shepherd asked if many businesses within King's Lynn had closed due to the impact of the Covid virus. Councillor Collingham advised she had no figures to hand but would investigate it.

Councillor Bubb reported there had been nine shops closed during lockdown however one or two had been re-opened.

A Parishioner had reported a noise heard in the Pell Road area. It has been investigated and is not thought to be streetlights etc. Councillor Bubb had asked the parishioner to contact him at any time so he could hear the noise.

Councillor C Shepherd asked if there was an update on the proposed government white paper on Planning. Councillor Bubb advised there is a presentation next Wednesday and would update Full Council accordingly.

**13579 Accounts for payment.  
Full Council to approve payments to be made.**

Dersingham Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/20

Tn no	Cheque	Gross	Vat	Net Invoice	date	Details	Cheque
102		£475.01	£0.00	£475.01	30/06/20	HMRC-VAT - VAT repayment 01/04/20 - 30/06/20	
107	B/T 28.09.20- 107	£712.80	£118.80	£594.00	02/07/20	P J & B Jones Ltd - Grasscutting	£712.80
1		£152.40	£25.40	£127.00		WARR the Warren	
2		£417.60	£69.60	£348.00		ENV Village Cuts	
3		£142.80	£23.80	£119.00		REC Playging Field	
108	DD 28.09.20	£49.92	£0.00	£49.92	11/08/20	Mike Shepherd - Tool Station	£49.92
104	DD 28.09.20- 104	£13.40	£2.23	£11.17	08/09/20	Utility Warehouse - Mobile Phone	£13.40
105	DD 29.09.20- 105	£58.44	£9.74	£48.70	15/09/20	British Telecommunications - Phone Bill/Broadband	£58.44
106	D/P 28.09.20- 106	£198.81	£11.93	£186.88	15/09/20	OPUSEnergy - Energy	Streetlight £198.81
1		£250.50	£11.93	£238.57		ENV Monthly Bill	
2		-£51.69	£0.00	-£51.69		ENV Credit note	
103	B/T 28.09.20- 103	£1,272.00	£212.00	£1,060.00	21/09/20	UK Power Network - Replacement Streetlight on Woodside Close	£1,272.00
109	D/P 28.09.20- 109	£2,750.00	£0.00	£2,750.00	28/09/20	Dersingham Sports Ground Management Committee - 1/2 grant	£2,750.00
110	d/p 28.09.20- 110	£2,400.00	£0.00	£2,400.00	28/09/20	Dersingham Parochial Church Council - Grasscutting 2/3 Grant	£2,400.00
111	D/P 28.09.20- 111	£40.00	£0.00	£40.00	28/09/20	C & E Handyman Services - Cleaning Contract x 4	£40.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£7,970.38</b>	<b>£354.70</b>	<b>£7,615.68</b>			

Two payment lists had been circulated for approval. Councillor C Shepherd advised additional payments had been received including sport ground committee grant, parochial church council payment for

grass cutting, Handyman contract increase, Public works loan, E-On energy, system 3 and utility warehouse which had arrived after the original list was circulated.

Councillor Bubb asked if all payments could be circulated when the agenda is issued rather than separate lists which could easily be missed. Councillor C Shepherd advised the Clerk receives additional payments after issuing the list and therefore needs to create another for authorisation.

Councillor M Shepherd advised as an observation the cheque number transaction 102 had not been entered. This had no impact on the payment details. The Clerk advised she would need to change the method of payment and use the debit card. Councillor C Shepherd advised once the payments had been approved it would give authorisation for the Clerk to make the debit card payment.

**It was resolved to approve the payments.**

**13580 Minutes of Dersingham Parish Council meeting held virtually 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

**It was resolved to approve the Minutes as a true and accurate record once the following amendments had been made.**

**13560** Should read: Councillor M Shepherd asked if Councillors wished for the Summary Cashbook to be attached to the minutes along with Councillor M Shepherds report.

**13566** should read: Norfolk ALC had contacted the Clerk advising they had not received the relevant documentation from Dersingham Parish Council for the external audit report.

Also:

Former Youth Club Leader had contacted Barclays bank to arrange the transfer the balance of their account to the Skatepark fund.

**13581 Minutes of Communication Committee meeting held virtually 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

Village Voice is currently running at a loss due to the decrease in advertisers. Communications Committee discussed the possibilities as to why there was a loss in revenue, and it was felt businesses were less willing to commit due to the uncertainty caused by Covid 19. Councillor C Shepherd had asked the committee to consider ways to save money on publications which will be discussed at the next Communications meeting.

Facebook had also been discussed with the view of closing the Parish Councils page due to inactivity also, there is a Dersingham Village page which has a high volume of members and updates regularly with events etc in the area. After discussion it was decided to review the Parish Council Facebook again at the next Communications meeting.

**13582 Minutes of Finance Committee meeting held virtually 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.**

Councillor M Shepherd informed councillors notification had been received that a refund of £2856.24 was due in respect of National Insurance.

The Parish Council had received a £10,000.00 grant from the Borough Council. It is a grant issued to business based on rateable value and is to help absorb expenses incurred due to the Covid 19 virus. Finance had discussed allocation of the grant and proposed the money be ringfenced and expenditure would have to be authorised by Full Council. **It was resolved to approve the proposal.**

Councillor Bubb suggested some of the grant be allocated to cover the Village Voice shortfall as advertisers may have been cautious due to the virus and therefore had impacted on the Village Voice income. Councillor C Shepherd advised she hoped the shortfall would be reduced throughout the remainder of the year however it was a possibility the grant could be considered to supplement the magazine.

Councillor M Shepherd said another possibility for the use of the grant was to aid councillors with technology to enable them to attend zoom meetings, for example the purchasing of a webcam for those that currently attend zoom meetings via telephone link. This is something the Clerk has already implemented for other Parish Councils.

Currently the only expenditure from the £10,000.00 is for the cleaning of the playground which is currently carried out three times a week.

Councillor M Shepherd asked if Councillor Anderson had been able to get access to the bank account to authorise payments in the absence of Councillor Noble. Councillor Anderson advised he is currently awaiting Barclays to issue the necessary details. Councillor M Shepherd asked if Councillors felt a third person should be nominated for authorisation to prevent payments being unable to be paid in future. Councillor Bubb explained he is already authorised for the Borough Council and would therefore be willing to become the third signatory. It was suggested, for ease, Councillor Bubb replaces Councillor Frost on the account. It was suggested the Clerk investigates the process needed to add or replace signatories.

**13583**

### **Accounts**

#### **IAC summary report July/August.**

Councillor M Shepherd advised he had completed the bank reconciliation to 31 August, and all was in order.

The outstanding issue regarding the Precept transfer to the Projects Reserve has now been resolved.

An unrepresented payment list for approval has now been presented to Full Council and approved.

**13584**

### **Procurement Process.**

Councillor M Shepherd had circulated the report below.

## **Discussion Paper – Procurement process.**

### **Introduction**

At the Parish Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 a number of councillors expressed the desire for changes to be made to the process used for ordering goods and services to give all councillors more say in the selection of contractors. **The purpose of this discussion paper is to seek councillors' confirmation that the proposed revisions to the procurement process is what they want prior to making any necessary changes to Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, and committee terms of reference.**

Councillors expressed the view that full council should approve an order being placed with a particular contractor, although there did not seem to be clarity as to whether this was intended to relate to all orders or just those over a certain value. We must however bear in mind the risk of slowing the whole process down. It is my opinion that some flexibility needs to be built into the process.

### **Proposed changes to procurement process**

Existing Financial Regulation 4.1 specifies that Authority to spend is determined by:

- The Clerk in conjunction with council or committee chairman for any item under £500.
- A duly delegated committee for items over £500
- The council for all items over £5,000
- The council for all items funded from reserves

*It is suggested that this regulation be changed such that council authority is required for items between £500 and £5,000. Council could decide to delegate this decision to no less than three councillors for specific orders to avoid unnecessary delays due to council meeting cycles.*

It is a specific requirement that Contracts (i.e. orders) may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by this regulation.

*This should be clarified to ensure the specification covers the whole job to achieve the desired outcome. Jobs should not be split into component parts without very good reasons.*

Existing Financial Regulation 11.1k requires that for all orders over £1000, the specification should be in writing and be approved by the appropriate committee or by the appropriate chairman and two other councillors **before** quotations are sought.

*It is suggested that for consistency with Financial Regulation 4.1 this limit be changed to relate to orders over £500. In most cases, low value orders should have a very simple specification so this should not be onerous in practice.*

### **Overview of proposed process**

1. For orders under £500 – no change

2. For orders over £25,000 – no change
3. For orders over £500 and under £25,000
  - Committee and Clerk to be responsible for agreeing written specification including deadlines.
  - Committee and Clerk to be responsible for agreeing the contractors to be invited to quote, taking into account any feedback on choices from councillors not on the committee. Clerk or committee member to email councillors advising them of the list of contractors to be invited to quote for work. Short deadline for comments to be given for a response. No response to be taken as no objections.
  - Clerk or agreed councillor to obtain quotes using agreed written specification.
  - Clerk or agreed councillor to assemble a pack containing the following documents and pass to committee for consideration.
    - Agreed specification
    - Copy of the complete response to quote request from each contractor including their names.
    - Copy of any clarification emails or written record of any discussions with contractor.
  - Committee to evaluate quotes and make recommendation to full council. *Councillors to be provided with the document pack and recommendation with agenda to give time for consideration.*
  - Council authorises Clerk to raise the order.

There are a few implications of this that need to be noted.

- For councillors to be free to discuss the names of contractors at council and committee meetings, the Agenda item will need to be dealt with in closed session. The names of contractors and their quotes must not be discussed in open session. *(Would the Clerk please clarify whether the names of contractors that we wish to ask to quote can be legally discussed in open meeting. It could be argued that this should be done for transparency)*
- Councillors must not discuss quotes received with anyone outside the Parish Council. This would in any case be a breach of the councillors' code of conduct, disclosing confidential information.
- It is important that we do not waste time deciding who will be invited to quote for work, or by rejecting suppliers late in the process. Therefore, I have suggested the committees retain the responsibility for agreeing those contractors/suppliers to be asked to quote for work, but that other councillors will be consulted by email before the final decision is taken.



The intention is to allow councillors to comment on contractors or suggest others to be invited if they so wish, but this must be done by email and within a very short agreed timescale to avoid delays. I propose that in this case no response within the deadline should be taken as agreement and to cut down on emails councillors should not respond unless they wish to raise an issue. We need to guard against this process becoming too bureaucratic.

**Councillors are requested to consider these proposals and their implications and confirm the process meets their requirements.**

**Councillors may wish to try this process for a period, say for twelve months.**

Mike Shepherd  
23/09/2020

Councillor M Shepherd explained he had written the suggested revised process after Councillors had requested sight of quotes etc for new contracts. Councillors discussed the proposed process with Councillor C Shepherd suggesting the new process be trialled for 12 months.

**It was resolved to approve all proposals presented in Councillor M Shepherds report.**

**13585 Possible De-fib within the village – discussion.**

The Clerk had circulated details of a grant available for the purchase of a de-fib machine within the village. Currently there are De-fibs located at the Social Club, Library, St Georges school, Doctors surgery and the bowls club. The DVCA have been offered a de-fib machine by a regular user of the centre. Councillor C Shepherd asked for Councillors suggestions as to where a new de-fib could be installed if it was felt there was a necessity for another within the village. Discussion was had and Councillor Stokes suggested Thaxters/Spar shop be approached and asked if they would be willing for one to be installed. This would mean all areas of the village would be covered. **It was resolved for the Clerk to contact Thaxters to discuss the possibility of a new De-fib being installed outside their premises.**

**13586 Chairman's report – Future ways of working.**

Councillor C Shepherd advised Councillors after the latest Government announcement surrounding the Covid virus the Clerk would remain working from home for the time being and Mrs Scanlon would continue to work in the office.

Councillor Stokes is yet to join a committee since his co-option. Councillor C Shepherd asked if he preferred a committee. Councillor Stokes said he would like to join the Environment committee. **It was resolved for Councillor Stokes to join the Environment Committee.**

With regards to the future ways of the Parish Council working, Councillor C Shepherd suggested a working group be formed to allow Councillors to discuss how the Parish Council goes forward with the Committees, working

groups etc. **It was resolved for a working group to be formed, consisting of Councillors Bubb, C Shepherd, Anderson and M Shepherd. Councillor C Shepherd is to approach Councillor Hopkins regarding joining the working group.**

**13587 Clerk/ RFO report.**  
The Clerk advised she had nothing to add.

**13588 Applications and Determinations:**

**All these applications can be viewed, and commented on, online at the Borough Council's planning portal [online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/](https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/)**

Applications:

20/01349/F Application for extension to rear of the dwelling at 5 Glebe Close, Dersingham. - **Approved**

20/01404/F Application for proposed two storey rear and side extension to form kitchen/diner at ground floor and additional bedroom at first floor at 14 Stanton Road, Dersingham. - **Approved**

Determinations:

20/00842/F Application for - *Lawful Development Certificate: Construction of a timber framed garage/store/workshop. Existing access and drive to remain unaltered. Soak aways to be installed to cater for surface water.* At Tit Willow 16 Park Hill, Dersingham – **Granted.**

19/00992/NMA\_1 NON-MATERIAL AMENDMENT TO PLANNING PERMISSION 19/00992/F: Single and two storey rear extension and alterations including pitched roof over existing garage. 48 Doddshill Road, Dersingham - **Granted.**

20/01072/LDP Prior notification: A 2m wide flat roof extension to the side elevation of an existing bungalow with parapet wall. Replacing existing path and bathroom drain. 8 Prince Charles Close, Dersingham – **It would be lawful.**

**13589 Correspondence.**  
None received

**13590 Items for inclusion on the next agenda.**  
No items requested.  
Councillor C Shepherd asked Councillors to notify the Clerk of any requests for inclusion

**13591 Date and place of next Full Council meeting.**

26<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 7.00pm to be held virtually

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

#### **13592 Dersingham Centre Garden Room air conditioning.**

Councillor M Shepherd advised he had circulated the quotes received regarding the installation of air conditioning. Councillor Anderson had previously raised concerns regarding the air conditioning being installed, with respect to the impact on the environment but as all other possibilities had been considered he felt, after looking at the quotes and specifications he was happy.

**After discussion and a recorded vote, with Councillors Bubb, Murrell, M Shepherd, Stokes, Frost and Anderson voting on favour and Councillors Brundle and Houston against, it was resolved for the Parish Council to meet the costs of the Air conditioning and installation and request the DVCA meet any further costs incurred regarding installation**

#### **Action Points Dersingham Parish Council Meeting 31.07.20**

##### **Clerk.**

- To discuss with Councillor C Shepherd the charitable status and implications regarding the Recreation ground.

#### **Action points Dersingham Parish Council Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

##### **Clerk**

- To contact NS&I regarding signatories – see action points Dersingham Parish Council meeting 15.06.20.

#### **Action points Dersingham Parish Council Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

##### **Clerk.**

- To contact Thaxters regarding the possible installation of a de-fib outside their premises.