

MINUTES OF AN EXTRODINARY MEETING OF SWEFFLING PARISH COUNCIL
Wednesday 19th January at 4pm, taking place at the Sweffling Village Hut, Low Road, Sweffling.

1. Attendance and apologies:

- PRESENT: John Stanley in the Chair
- COUNCILLORS: Julia Kinsey (JK), John Tesh (JT), Audrey Lummis (AL), Jude Chin (JC).
- IN ATTENDANCE: Erika Spall, Clerk to the Council.
- APOLOGIES: No apologies.

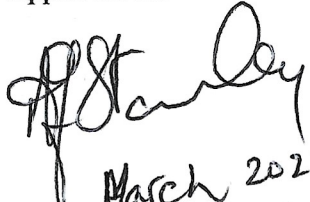
2. To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations:

- There were no declarations of interest and no request for dispensation.

3. Finance

3.1 To approve the Council's budget for 2022/23 and to agree the Council's precept.

- Cllr Chin highlighted several figures in the 21/22 and 22/23 budget and made recommendations to cut expenditure and advised against using financial reserves to support revenue costs. Councillors recognised that if the draft budget remained the same for the next financial year then the precept would need to significantly increase.
- It was agreed by Councillors that cutting expenditure whilst increasing the precept would be the most suitable solution to prevent having a deficit budget.
- Cllr Stanley suggested that he knows a member of the public that would support the grass cutting on Jubilee Field and has made other enquires about equipment needed to do this and will look into this further.
- It was unanimously agreed that the Council should consider reducing grass cutting expenditure and seek volunteers to support the Council in maintaining Jubilee Field.
- Councillors have received no update from the Townland Trust regarding reimbursement of ride on mower which is partially owned/shared by SPC and the TT. Cllr Kinsey will contact James Row to seek further information regarding ride on mower usage.
- Cllr Tesh (JT) is to contact a member of the public to receive further quotes on initial grass cutting fees as it was agreed that the initial cut must be done by someone with access to a tractor. Cllr Stanley (JS) proposed that he contacts Derick Bolton as he cuts paddocks around the local area.
- It was unanimously agreed that the budget for Jubilee Field grass cutting costs to be reduced to £600 annually.
- Councillors highlighted the importance of the public understanding why there is a significant increase in expenditure for the next financial year which is a result of Jubilee Field being maintained by volunteers and the current Clerk previously acting as a volunteer.
- Cllr Lummis (AL) questioned if ride on mowers were allowed on public roads. Cllr Stanley highlighted that Holdens Lane is not a designated road and that he would store this in his garage.
- Cllr Tesh (JT) highlighted that having a designated area on Jubilee Field for wildflower meant there was a smaller area to cut. Cllr Kinsey and Cllr Stanley advised that this eventually would need maintaining and Cllr Kinsey highlighted the purpose of JF as a children's park and it was agreed that it be topped across the whole field.


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- The Clerk reports that from 11/01/22 they will be invoicing the council quarterly for their services and will no longer work unpaid. Cllr Chin highlighted that the Clerk needs support with the accounts but was reassured this was due to no training given. Cllr Kinsey suggested that for this reason the Clerk receives £8.91ph rather than £9.02ph, and that once training has been given this be increased.
- Cllr Kinsey and Cllr Stanley proposed that a section on the contract of employment should emphasise that if training is paid and the Clerk decides to resign within one year that this should be repaid. This was unanimously agreed by the Council.

3.2 Precept

- Councillors acknowledged the need to cut expenditure to ensure the council doesn't propose a deficit budget for 22/23. Cllr Kinsey (JK) highlighted that the precept hasn't been increased for a number of years.
- It was recognised that Councillors highlighted the importance of increasing the precept to complete revenue costs and highlight to residents that expenditure has risen as previous years the Council relied on volunteers to support the Council.
- The previous precept for 21/22 was set at £3,331.38 and it was **unanimously** agreed to increase the precept to £3,900 a total increase of £568.62.
- Cllr Kinsey (JK) highlighted that it would be nice to have spare funds to spend on the village rather than relying on grants to support the village projects and events.
- The council were happy with Cllr Chin proposing the precept and Cllr Kinsey was to second this.

3.3 Approval of invoice and purchases for Jubilee Field

- Invoice to be paid for a new goal post on Jubilee Field was approved by the council.
- Approval was given by the council for the Clerk to purchase the outdoor gym equipment since receiving all relevant grant money.

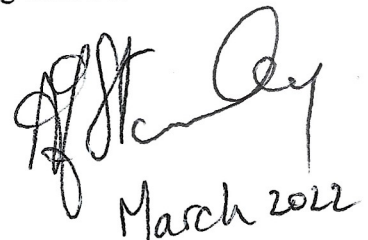
4. Questions to the Chair

- Cllr Tesh enquired what SPC is doing to celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- The Clerk informed the Council that Bruisyard Parish Council have approached the Clerk suggesting that all local villages come together to plan an event for local residents in honour of The Platinum Jubilee. The Clerk is to pass on more information regarding this.
- Cllr Kinsey suggested that County Councillors might offer grants to support councils for this event.

5. Date and time of next meeting

- The Chairman gave confirmation that the next parish meeting would take place at the Village Hut on Tuesday 8th February at 7:30pm.

There being no other competent business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4:56pm.


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