

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE SWEFLING PARISH
COUNCIL
01 APRIL 2021
Virtual Meeting
7.30-8.50 pm

1. **PRESENT:** John Stanley in the Chair
2. **COUNCILLORS:** Prof. John Tesh, Julia Kinsey, Jude Chin and Martin Wyard.
3. **IN ATTENDANCE:** Michael Smithson ,Clerk to the Council and Robert Rusack a parishioner.
4. **APOLOGIES:** An Apologies were received from Cllrs Stephen Burroughes and Maurice Cook.
5. **5.BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**
 - i. The sole business to be transacted by the Council was the co-option of an additional councillor to fill a casual vacancy which had arisen following the resignation of Annie Rogers during March 2021.
 - b. The Clerk at the Chair's invitation;
 - i. welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded all, that two candidates remained in contention to fill the casual vacancy. Public notice had been given both by District Council Democratic services and notice of the meeting had been posted on the village website and displayed on the village notice board;
 - ii. welcomed both applicants to the meeting and explained that as previously notified by email the applicants would be interviewed in alphabetical order meaning that Erika Spall would make her presentation and answer questions from the Councillors first, followed Debbie Thornton;
 - iii. explained that in an ideal world the Council would have liked to have appointed both candidates and enquiries had been made accordingly. Advice received from East Suffolk Democratic Services, was to the effect that this was not possible currently as the number of councillors was fixed at seven. Changes to this arrangement would require the undertaking of a lengthy process which would certainly not be achieved within the timescale



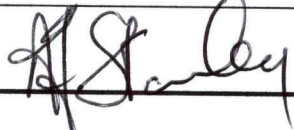
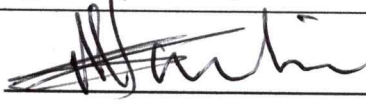
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- permitted as the obligation on the Council was to appoint to the vacancy as soon as reasonably practicable;
- iv. The Clerk advised the Councillors that there were few specific rules to apply as to how they should determine which applicant to appoint. There were however two overriding considerations;
 1. the first being fairness; and
 2. the second being the likely benefits which the successful candidate might be expected to bring to the village;
 - v. The resolution to appoint the successful candidate would be passed on a simple majority vote with the chair if necessary having a casting vote.
- c. Detailed presentations were made well by both candidates and each councillor was given the opportunity to put individual questions to each of the applicants.
 - d. After presentations and questioning was completed, the applicants each voluntarily agreed simultaneously to leave the meeting at this stage thereby allowing the Councillors discuss matters to their exclusion.
 - e. The Councillors spent a considerable amount of time discussing the relative merits of both candidates, each of whom were in the Councillors' view strong candidates for the vacancy. The Councillors then took an informal/ preliminary sounding to see how many votes we're likely to be cast for each candidate before the Clerk invited one of the Councillors to advance a formal proposal to appoint one or other of the applicants.
 - f. A proposal was therefore formally made by the Chair proposing that ***Erica Spall be elected as Councillor to fill the casual vacancy on the Parish Council for the Parish of Swefling.*** The Chair's proposal was seconded by Cllr Martin Wyard and then unanimously approved by the meeting on a show of hands.
 - g. Notwithstanding the above resolution it was however felt that although Debbie Thornton's application had been unsuccessful she had in the view of the Councillors the potential to meaningfully contribute to the amenity of the village and the Chair with the agreement of all Councillors confirmed he would contact her to see if she would be prepared to play roll in one of the Councils committees to which she could be co-opted without significant formality.
 - h. The chair requested that the Clerk immediately notify both candidates of the outcome of the meeting which the Clerk agreed to do.



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There being no further business the meeting was closed by the Chair at 8.55 pm

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John Stanley	Michael Smithson
Chairperson	Clerk
Dated 13.4.2021	Dated 13 April 2021

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