

COVENEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council to be held on Monday 11 November 2019 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Coveney

Present: Mrs C Badcock, Mr A Bensted, Mrs N Laredo, Mr B Matthews, Mr C Senior, Mr A Stygal

Also Present: Cllr A Bailey, Cllr L Dupré, Mrs S Thompson (The Clerk)

19/155 Apologies for absence

Cllr Ingham was not present

19/156 Members' declaration of interest for items on the agenda

None made

19/157 To Approve the Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The minutes of 14 October 2019 were approved and signed.

19/158 Public Question Time

None present.

19/159 District and County Councillors'

Reports

Cllr Bailey has sent a report and took questions.

Cllr Dupré has sent a report and summarised the points

19/160 Public Interest Report from ECDC solicitor

See attached appendix

19/161 Parish Clerk

See attached appendix

19/162 Working Groups

- a) Allotments – It was confirmed that Caroline Badcock, Chris Senior and Vernon Ingham will lead this project. A date for planting the quickthorn needs to be set, possibly 24 November, 10-12. There is a query on the marked position of the boundary.
- b) Policies and Procedures – This will be led by Naomi Laredo, Andy Bensted, and Barry Matthews.
- c) Website – Barry Matthews has started a basic shell. Naomi Laredo and Tony Stygal will also be involved
- d) Assets – Barry Matthews and Chris Senior

19/163 Pond

Mr Matthews has contacted approximately 10 organisations for quotes. Many were not interested in providing a quote. It was agreed the quote from Greenwood Tree Surgery to clear the site for £760 + VAT was the best value quote and it was agreed to accept it.

19/164 LHI 2019/20

The Clerk has met with the manager in charge of the project. Revised drawings were presented and approved.

19/165 Finance

Monthly income and expenditure, financial reconciliation and budgetary control reports for the year to date were received.

The following cheques were approved and signed.

Payee	Detail	Chq No	Amount
CPRE	Subscription	1051	36.00
Mrs S Thompson	Clerk's Salary	1043	306.33

19/166 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday 9 December 2019, Coveney Village Hall

Agenda Minutes Appendix

Item 19/160 Public Interest Report from ECDC

The Chairman can confirm and emails have been sent by the clerk to confirm that the relevant documents have now been submitted to ECDC. We have received confirmation from ECDC we are now in compliance.

The council after discussion agreed that the failure in this process was in two parts:

- a). The councils oversight of the mandatory and legal responses was not documented and not clear and therefore it was assumed rather ensured that the relevant schedules were met.
- b). The clerk failed to send the relevant documents (whilst completed) in the correct time and respond to the requests from ECDC.

Actions were agreed to ensure that this situation doesn't reoccur.

- 1). A clear schedule of events must exist each year clearly showing what and when is due to be submitted and the deadlines. This should be available to all councillors.
- 2). Email forwarding to be put in place to ensure emails do not go unanswered.
- 3). A more robust structure and review of the clerks job role and responsibilities with further follow up to understand what support is required to ensure the incident doesn't re-occur. More detailed actions are to be discussed regularly in **19/161 Parish Clerk**. With this item to stay on the agenda until such time the councillors feel the issues are addressed.

19/161 Parish Clerk

A number of actions to be completed and the item to stay on the agenda until the councillors feel more comfortable that all relevant policies, procedures and frame works are in place.

It was agreed the recent issues surrounding the clerk had left the council vulnerable and a list of actions were to be addressed:

- 1). Policies and procedures need to be agreed and made publicly available with urgency (but not at the cost of quality)
- 2). Parish documentation not available to be made available and accessible at all times. Examples minutes, agreements, contracts, official letters etc.
- 3). Investment in a computer, scanner, phone, shredder and printer for the clerk
- 4). A clear understanding of the clerks job description, contract, roles and responsibilities
- 5). Policies and procedures for the management of council employees. (timesheets, holiday entitlements, sick leave, absence management, disciplinary management and poor performance management, support for employees)
- 6). X 1 week responses for councillors on any question or agreement on escalation of the issue.
- 7). The chairman is to be the official line manager for the clerk.
- 8). Access to CAPALC and NALC, websites to be made available to all councillors
- 9). In the event that the clerk is unavailable we should have a procedure in place. (this can include the use of Locum services from CAPALC).
- 10). The clerk must be clear that whilst the council as a body failed in its duties on a number of issues that the clerk also bears responsibility and must work with the council to help bring us back in line with pace and urgency to ensure the comprehensive actions are put in place.