

ROUGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 18 May 2023 in Rougham Sports Hall

Councillors Present: John Newman (JN) (Chairman), Deborah Hockey (DH) (Vice Chairman), Christine Old (CO), Dan Steed (DS), Davina Strong (DSG) and Sara Mildmay-White (SMW).

In Attendance : Sara Mildmay-White (SMW) District Councillor, Tina Newell (TN) (Clerk) and 2 members of public.

Prior to the meeting opening TN confirmed all four elected Councillors have completed the Declarations of Acceptance to Office.

- 180523/01 With no outgoing Chairman present DH proposed to elect JN as the Chairman of Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council for the meeting.
- 180523/02 JN signed his Declaration of Acceptance to Office form
- 180523/03 DH proposed to elect JN as the Chairman of Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council for the year ended 31 03 2024. DS seconded the proposal; with no other proposals and with all Councillors in favour JN was unanimously elected as Chairman of Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council
- 180523/04 JN duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance to Office form.
- 180523/05 **Co-option:** All Councillors noted there were four members elected following the recent elections; with three seats available all Councillors agreed to co-opt noting this is not a Casual Vacancy and therefore notices are not required (NALC LTN 8 paragraph 22). There were four candidates for the three positions available and after Councillors heard from all four candidates they voted on each seat in turn.
- 180523/06 Seat one: After a vote vacancy one was filled by Davina Strong (DSG).
- 180523/07 DSG accepted the position of Councillor and signed the Declaration of Acceptance to Office form before joining the meeting as a Councillor.
- 180523/08 Seat two: After a vote vacancy two was filled by Christina Old.

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- 180523/09 CO accepted the position of Councillor and signed the Declaration of Acceptance to Office form before joining the meeting as a Councillor.
- 180523/10 Seat three: After a vote vacancy three was filled by Sara Mildmay-White (SMW)
- 180523/11 SMW accepted the position of Councillor and signed the Declaration of Acceptance to Office form before joining the meeting as a Councillor
- 180523/12 **Vice Chairman:** SMW proposed DH as Vice Chairman of Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council for the year ended 31 03 2024. The proposal was seconded by CO and with all Councillors in favour DH accepted the position of Vice Chairman.
- 180523/13 **Apologies for absence:** Tracey Skoyles offered apologies prior to the meeting.
- 180523/14 Councillors resolved to accept apologies from TS.
- 180523/15 **Declarations of Interest:** None to consider
- 180523/16 **Dispensation Requests:** None.
- 180523/17 The Chairman re-ordered the meeting to allow all Councillors to read the minutes from the previous meeting.
- Public Forum:**
- 180523/18 Speaking as District Councillor, SMW presented her annual report in brief, the full report is appended.
- 180523/19 County Councillor KS was not in attendance and no report had been received.
- 180523/20 A member of the public requested assistance with the monthly checks of one of the defibrillators confirming new batteries and pads will be required for one defibrillator in 2024; a working party maintains the play equipment at the Sports Hall; a decision made by the previous Parish Council to donate £300 a year for the next five years to maintain the play equipment will be put to full Council at the next meeting; an increase in litter around the Parish has been noticed since a local retail development opened.
- 180523/21 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors confirmed receipt of the draft minutes for the Parish Council meeting held on 11 April 2023 prior to the meeting and resolved to accept these as a true record of the decisions made. JN as Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes (reference 170423/01 -170423/34).

Planning: Councillors considered the following planning applications:

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- 180523/22 **DCON(A)/22/0476** Application to discharge conditions 10 (Construction management), 14 (surface water management plan), 21 (Bird Mitigation Strategy) and 22 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy) from DC/22/0476/FUL
Land South Of General Castle Way, Rougham Industrial Estate, Rougham
Councillors noted whilst this is a discharge of condition application they would like details of the exact position of this development on the Industrial Estate; confirmation of exactly where the two off site plots for the Skylarks will be and how the monitoring, for a minimum period of five years, will be undertaken.
- 180523/23 **DC/23/0593/HH** Householder planning application - ramped access 7
Wheelwright Close, Rougham IP30 9JD
Councillors agreed this addition would have no impact on neighbouring amenities merely allowing continued use of the dwelling by the current occupant and resolved to SUPPORT this application.
- 180523/24 **DCON(A)/22/0152** Application to discharge conditions 6 (hard and soft Landscaping) and 7 (boundary treatment) of DC/22/0152/RM
Land Rear Of The Lodge, The Green, Rougham
Councillors noted leylandii will be used to fill any gaps to the rear of the development; with no comment from neighbouring properties all Councillors agreed they have no issue with this discharge of condition application however concern over the erection of a large fence surrounding this development, not in the original application, requires investigating.
- 180523/25 **DC/23/0239/FUL** Planning application - installation of storage and distribution building (B8) and office and conference/training space and ancillary agricultural plant machinery display area; b. together with associated infrastructure including means of access, vehicle and cycle parking, service yard and landscaping
Land Off General Castle Way, Rougham Industrial Estate
Councillors agreed whilst this is in the local plan for development concern surrounding the creation of additional traffic on the highways should be considered; Councillors noted and appreciated the installation of air source heat pumps and solar panels.

Finance:

- 180523/26 All Councillors viewed the bank reconciliations for the period ended 31 March 2023 and agreed it reconciled to the bank statements showing a balance of £11,307.41; £3,719.51 in the Community Account and £7,587.90 in the Business Premium Account.
- 180523/27 **Budget vs Actual:** As there was no budget available for the year ended 31 March 2022 all Councillors confirmed the payments during the year totalled £40,435.30 with receipts of £25,012.40; this equates to a decrease in reserves of £15k in the year.
- 180523/28 **Reserves:** All Councillors viewed the reserves account as presented and agreed to accept this with a general reserve of 30%.
- 180523/29 **Assets:** All Councillors reviewed the asset register noting it was produced with the limited information available and agreed to accept the value of Parish Council owned assets at year ended 31 March 2023 of £21,778.
- 180523/30 **Bank reconciliation for period ended 28 04 2023:** All Councillors were in receipt of a bank reconciliation for the period ended 28 04 2023 and noted there had been just one receipt of £28,211.00 being the Precept for 2023/24 with no payments or cheques cashed. All Councillors agreed the bank reconciliation produced agreed to the bank statements presented.
- 180523/31 All Councillors received a schedule of payments due and resolved to approve confirming receipts and invoices in support of the payments had been seen. At the time of the meeting there was no cheque book available and no way of making any payments; the previous Chairman and TN had tried to retrieve the cheque books and all documents from the former Clerk without success:
- 180523/32 Tina Newell Salary and reimbursements £834.03
- 180523/33 Suffolk Association of Local Councils £447.91
- 180523/34 PKL Littlejohn LLP £240.00
- 180523/35 TN confirmed contact with Rougham Estates had been made but no invoices had yet been received. It was agreed to request a copy of any lease/rental agreement and make payments when the invoices have been seen and authorised by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

Signed: *John Newman*

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- 180523/36 **Bank mandate:** It was resolved to update the bank mandate immediately to add the Clerk, with administration access only and JN, DH and DS to have full access to include authorisation to view, set up and release payments. It was agreed to remove all previous Councillors from the mandate. TN will contact the bank (Barclays) for advice on how the mandate can be updated noting the current authorised signatures are no longer Councillors.
- 180523/37 It was resolved to defer the consideration of a speed indicator device to the next meeting as KS was not at the meeting.
- Governance:**
- 180523/38 **Internal Audit report:** All Councillors agreed for SALC to carry out the internal audit report at a cost of £261 plus VAT; TN booked this during the meeting for w/c 10 July 2023. It was agreed to defer this item to the July meeting.
- 180523/39 All Councillors received the Annual Governance Statement Section One of the Annual Governance and Accountability Statement (AGAR) for the year ended 31 March 2023; TN read aloud the statements in turn and Councillors answered in one in turn. It was noted all Councillors present did not serve the previous term of office and as the information from the period in question were minimal all Councillors relied on the TN's advice. It was resolved for JN and TN to sign Section One of the AGAR with those present at the meeting as witness.
- 180523/40 All Councillors approved the Accounting Statements for 2022/23 as transposed on Section Two of the AGAR in turn confirming the statements presented fairly the financial position of Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2023 noting TN had completed the accounts from bank statements with no cheque books or invoices available. Councillors noted the re-stated figures in boxes 2 and 3 for the 2021/22 year were as advised in the external auditors report from the year ended 31 March 2022 and TN had re-stated figure in box 8 as the assets were in situ during at the year ended 31 March 2022.
- 180523/41 All Councillors noted Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council are subject to a Limited Assurance Review and an extension has been granted until 31 July 2023 to allow for the Internal Audit to have been carried out.
- 180523/42 All Councillors agreed to the dates for public inspection to be from 13 June 2023 and ending 14 July 2023; a notice will be displayed on line and on the Parish noticeboard.

Signed: *John Newman*

Dated: *22 06 2023*

After consideration the following positions were appointed:

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| 180523/43 | Asset management officer | DS |
| 180523/44 | Risk assessment officer | DS |
| 180523/45 | Play equipment officer | It was noted two residents carry out this task; confirmation of who owns the play equipment is to be sought before the next meeting. |
| 180523/46 | Road safety officer | Currently not required |
| 180523/47 | Footpath officer | SMW |
| 180523/48 | Tree warden | All Councillors |
| 180523/49 | Defibrillator officer | DH will assist a resident in carrying out monthly checks; confirmation of owner of the defibrillator is to be sought. |
| 180523/50 | Social Media | DS and DH |
- After discussion it was resolved to appoint the following positions to external bodies:
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|-----------|--------------------------|-----|
| 180523/51 | Sports Committee | DS |
| 180523/52 | James Stiff Charity | SMW |
| 180523/53 | Rougham United Charities | CO |
- 180523/54 All Councillors agreed to continue with the paid subscription to SALC and the free subscription to Community Action Suffolk.
- 180523/55 All Councillors agreed to adopt the model standing orders in draft form; they will be reviewed by all Councillors before consideration to adopt them at the next meeting.
- 180523/56 After consideration all Councillors agreed to adopt the model Financial Regulations in draft form and agreed to bring them to the next meeting once all Councillors have read them.
- 180523/57 All Councillors agreed to adopt the Code of Conduct in draft form and resolved to review at the next meeting.
- 180523/58 All Councillors noted the draft policies had not been available in time for the meeting and resolved to consider adopting them at the next meeting.
- 180523/59 All Councillors noted the draft risk assessments were not available and resolved to consider adopting them at the next meeting.
- 180523/60 TN has requested a copy of the Parish Councils insurance prior to the meeting however this has not been received from the insurance agent; TN will chase this again and pass to all Councillors before the next meeting to review.

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- 180523/61 **Correspondence:** A resident has concerns re the clearance of public rights of way as a number are becoming overgrown.
- 180523/62 **Any matters for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda:** anti-social behaviour, planning, budget and three year forecast, stakeholder relationships, donation to play equipment and local plan.
- 180523/63 Councillors agreed dates for future meetings to be: 22 June, 20 July, 11 September, 13 November, 2024: 8 January, 11 March, 15 April and 13 May.
- 180523/64 As there were no members of the press or public present no resolution to exclude them was required.
- 180523/65 TN left the meeting whilst Councillors considered the appointment of a permanent Clerk.
- 180523/66 TN re-entered the meeting room.
- 180523/67 It was resolved to offer the position of permanent Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to TN at a salary of £15.02 per hour for ten (10) hours a week with an office allowance of £6 per week. It was agreed to send a letter with a formal offer of employment to TN.
- 180523/68 Councillors noted the Clerk will require a laptop and agreed to consider this at the next meeting.
- 180523/69 JN closed the meeting at 10.07pm

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