

Acton Parish Council

Fiona Mullins, Clerk Tel: 07931 381751 Email: clerk@actonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at 7:00pm on Wednesday 15 May 2024 in Acton Village Hall

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Nick Antill, Eleanor Clark, Carol Dyer, Christine Johnson, Katie McSweeney, Graham Round (chairman)

In attendance: County Cllr Phillip Faircloth Mutton, Fiona Mullins (clerk) and 2 members of the public.

Minutes

Election

- 1(i) Cllrs elected Cllr Graham Round as chairman of Acton Parish Council. AIF
Cllr Round and the clerk signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 1(ii) Cllrs elected Cllr Christine Johnson as vice chairman of Acton Parish Council. AIF
Cllr Johnson and the clerk signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Apologies

- 2 Cllrs received apologies from Cllrs Steve Le Grys, John Gibbens and Roberta Caradine and resolved to approve their reasons for absence. AIF

Minutes

- 3 Cllrs resolved to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2024. AIF
The minutes were signed by the chairman.

Declaration of interest

- 4(i) Cllrs were reminded to update their Declaration of Interests on Babergh District Council's website and to declare any interest on any item on this agenda at this point or at any point during the meeting in accordance with Acton Parish Council's Code of Conduct.
- 4(ii) There were no declarations of interest or requests for a dispensation.

District, County reports

- 5(i) There was no verbal report from County Cllr Faircloth Mutton. His emailed report was circulated to Cllrs.
- 5(ii) There was no verbal report from District Cllrs Malvisi and Nunn. Their emailed report was circulated to Cllrs.

Acton Field Trust

- 6 Nick Antill briefed Cllrs on the Acton Field Trust. Cllrs agreed a grant of £1,000 to enable the Trust to operate in this interim period before the Trust has received the funds that have been offered by the Innominate Trust. AIF

Signed: *G Round* Chairman Date.....19-06-2024....

Page | 1

Cllrs noted that the Trust now has a bank account and that next steps include contacting the Innominate Trust to request an early transfer of some of the funds and registering the Trust with HMRC as a tax-exempt charity on behalf of Acton Parish Council as the sole trustee.

Clerk's report

- 7(i) Cllrs noted the clerk's report on significant matters not on the agenda and not already drawn to councillors' attention.
- 7(ii) Cllrs noted that the following decisions had been taken under delegated powers since the last meeting:
- New battery for village hall defibrillator £267.60, New pads and battery for the Tamage Road estate defibrillator £138 (clerk, Health and Safety);
 - Unity Bank account application for Acton Field Trust and discussions with Trethowan's for legal advice on completing transfer of the field (clerk);
 - Confirmed the SCC work order for pedestrian access improvements £2,652.03 (clerk and chair within budget);
 - Annual fee for the Easy PC Accounts software (clerk and chair within budget);
 - Renewed SALC and NALC membership subscription £681.41 (clerk and chair within budget).

Public Forum

- 8 Members of the public commented as follows:
- (i) Anglian Water should regularly clear the overflow pipe at Marsh Walk, which is blocked. It should drain within 24 hours. Cllr Johnson noted that this request has been made to the water company but that it is not evident action has been taken. Cllrs asked the clerk to write to Anglian Water about this issue.

Planning

- 9(i) There were no planning applications to consider at this meeting.
- 9(ii) Cllrs noted planning application validations, parish council recommendations and local planning authority decisions made since the last meeting.

Governance

- 10(i) Cllrs confirmed that the Council has appointed the clerk to be the Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer. AIF
- 10(ii) Cllrs confirmed the council's adoption of the Local Government Association Code of Conduct. AIF
- 10(iii) Cllrs confirmed the council's commitment to the Civility and Respect pledge. AIF
- 10(iv) Cllrs confirmed that the council's Standing Orders are up-to-date and that the Council is using them. AIF
- 10(v) Cllrs resolved to agree the following amendments to the scheme of delegation to the clerk: AIF
- a) Clause 11. ~~Following consultation with the Chair of the Council or relevant Chair of Committee, to~~ To spend up to £250 in situations where such expenditure is within budget

and considered to be justified. To spend up to £1,000 in consultation with the chairman where such expenditure is within budget and considered to be justified.

b) New clause 14. To carry out day-to-day management and maintenance of Acton Field

- 10(vi) Cllrs noted that a new Service Level Agreement is needed with Sudbury Town Council for the community warden service.
- 10(vii) Cllrs confirmed the following lead Cllrs roles noting the limitations on Cllr authority: AIF
- a Suffolk Association of Local Councils area meetings: Cllr Antill
 - b Wildlife Reserve: Cllr Le Gry
 - c Allotments: Cllr Johnson
 - d Chilton Woods development: Cllr Antill
 - e Sudbury Town Council Community Wardens: Cllr Round
 - f SCC Highways and Babergh Public Realm: Cllr Round
 - g Acton Playing Fields and Village Hall Committee: Graham Round
- 10(viii) Cllrs agreed to upgrade to Microsoft 365 Business Standard £10.30 user/month at an annual cost of £250 plus VAT for 2 users. AIF
- The chairman proposed that in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, the Council consider item 10(ix) in private session due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*
- 10(ix) Cllrs resolved to receive a report from the chairman on staff appraisals in closed session. AIF

Finance

- 11(i) Cllrs resolved to approve items of expenditure for March and April and regular payments that are due before the next parish council meeting. AIF
- 11(ii) Cllrs resolved to approve the 2023/24 end of year accounts showing expenditure of £123,121.97 and receipts of £111,593.04 noting the clerk's explanation of variations from budget. AIF
- 11(iii) Cllrs resolved to approve the 2023/24 end of year bank reconciliation showing 1 April 2023 balance of £302,944.14, net cash movement of -£11,528.93 and closing 31 March 2024 balance of £291,415.21. AIF
- 11(iv) Cllrs resolved to approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) return for 2023/24 showing total Neighbourhood expenditure of £28,400.08 and CIL retained at year end of £126,275.32 and authorised the Chairman to sign the CIL return. AIF

Environment

- 12 Cllrs noted Cllr Round's update on the gym trail.

Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

- 13(i) Cllr Antill will attend the next SALC area meeting on 11 June.

- 13(ii) Cllr Round reported that the Acton Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) has been through the Independent Examination process and is fully support by Officers at Babergh District Council. A referendum will take place in the near future. The ANP Steering Group will be formulating a publicity plan to encourage residents to cast their votes. If supported, Acton ANP will cover the period from now until 2037. The ANP Steering Group has consulted with the community at each stage and kept in touch throughout the drafting of the plan. They have taken on board local and expert opinion on the wide range of subjects which a Neighbourhood Plan can cover and believe that they have brought together a plan which has properly assessed both the future development needs and the local policy required to protect and enhance the rural nature and historic features of Acton parish. The plan sets out local policy designed for Acton, the plan assesses new homes requirements and development design standards for Acton. It also identifies local green spaces, historic assets and identifies important views. All residents are encouraged to vote at the referendum which will be held in the Village Hall (date to be confirmed).
- 13(iii) Cllr Round reported that 4 “village gateways” were installed last week. The gateways are there to remind drivers that they are entering a village environment. They are designed to have maximum impact day and night to remind drivers that the maximum permitted speed throughout the village is 30 mph. It is hoped that the gateways, together with our 3 parish-owned speed indication signs, will help to reduce speeding.
- 13(iv) Cllr Round reported that SCC Officers have advised that due to contactor availability work on Public Right of Way 15 (from Vicarage Rd onto the airfield) is now scheduled for July or August this year.
- 13(v) Cllr Round reported that no meetings of the Acton Playing Fields and Village Hall Management Committee took place during 2023. So far in 2024 no meetings have taken place and no AGM (as prescribed within the Governance document) took place in April 2024. Currently the hall does not have a functioning management committee and is managed solely by the unappointed chairman.

Closed session

- 10(ix) Cllrs received a report on staff appraisals including training needs and resolved to maintain pay grades at the current level.

The chairman closed the meeting at 7:58 pm

Acronyms used:

AIF	All in favour	CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
Cllr	Councillor	NALC	National Association of Local Councils
SALC	Suffolk Association of Local Councils	SCC	Suffolk County Council

Next meeting Wednesday 19 June 2024 7pm