

CHARSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting Held on Monday, 24th July 2023

Present: Councillors Pedgrift (Chair), Haird, McArthur, Youngman and Pam Hembra (Parish Clerk)

County Councillor Elaine Bryce
District Councillor Dan Clery

Members of the Public:

		Action
1.	Apologies and Approval of Absence Councillors Moor (Vice Chair) and Sharp (approved). Councillor Laird	
2.	Declarations of Interest None	
3.	Approval of Minutes of the Minutes held on 22nd May 2023 and Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting dated 3rd July 2023 Minutes were approved and signed by Councillor Pedgrift	
4.	Progress Reports for Information or Matters Arising Connect Meeting – Councillor Moor attended this on 25 th May but felt it was not of much relevance to the Parish Council.	
5.	Points from the public – A chance for the public to raise matters of relevant interest. Dan Poulter has asked to come to Flower Show and Flower Show Chair happy for him to come. Due to the success of the first Thermal Imaging Cameras Loan Project in autumn 2022 - spring 2023, The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership is running the scheme again. The PC will register to participate in this.	Clerk
6.	Reports County Council (full report available on request) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trading Standards prosecutions successful. - £100 million for Broadband development – City Fibre (Suffolk one of three) - Fire and Rescue Service coming back into Suffolk - Milestone Infrastructure, part of M Group Services, has been awarded Suffolk’s new highways services contract, which will begin on 1 October 2023. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drain in Church Street to be checked out. <p>District Council (full report available on request)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The East Suffolk Uniform Bank grant scheme provides funding for community groups to open a new uniform bank or expand an existing uniform bank. This fund seemed to be time limited. Councillor Clery to clarify. - Privately rented housing scheme – a way the Council can help affordable accommodation for lower paid people. Collecting names and addresses of local landlords. - Community Partnership – active travel – easier for short journeys by foot or bicycle. - Environment and Road Safety - Changes to the Planning Rules – previously the referral panel decided whether a planning application needed to be sent to the Planning Committee or could be decided by the Planning Officer. Now the Parish Council can ask their District Councillor and a Councillor on the Planning Committee for a application to be sent to the Planning Committee. Our District Councillor Colin Hedgley is also on the Planning Committee). <p>Recreation Ground The toilets are about to be handed over from Park Properties. The Treasurer of the Recreation Ground has written to ask if the Parish Council would take ownership of them as a village facility. After some discussion it was felt this would not be appropriate but consideration to be given to increased funding for the maintenance of the recreation ground. Clerk to ask for a breakdown of running costs for the Recreation Ground along with estimated water costs. To be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	Clerk
7.	<p>Road Safety Road Safety is to be one of the three priorities of the Carlford & Fynn Valley Community Partnership for 2023/24.</p>	
8.	<p>Planning:</p>	
	<p>Planning Application DC/23/2622/FUL – Shrubbery Farm PC have no objection to this application.</p> <p>Land behind St Peter’s Close The sale has now gone through of the land and construction fencing will be erected shortly. An archaeological survey of the site is to be undertaken. The surface water drainage has not yet been approved.</p> <p>Planning Forum - Councillor Moor and the Clerk attended this meeting on 7th July. East Suffolk Council are trying to engage more but it seemed a one-way process. Not sure they would have taken on board any Town or Parish Council feedback. Presentations from the meeting were circulated on 18th July.</p>	
9.	<p>Finance</p>	

	9.1 To authorise payments as listed below:					
	Date	Detail	Ref	Power	Amount	
	19/05/2023	ICO	Direct Debit	LGA 1972 s.111	£35.00	
	05/06/2023	Boldfield Limited (website)	Direct Debit	LA 1972 s142	£108.00	
	29/06/2023	Charsfield Village Hall	Bank Transfer	LA1972 ss 133	£35.10	
	29/06/2023	HMRC	Bank Transfer	LGA 1972 s 112	£123.00	
	29.06/2023	P Hembra – services	Bank Transfer	LGA 1972 s 112	£492.68	
	03/07/2023	SALC Audit	Bank Transfer	LGA 1972 s.111	£202.80	
	18/07/2023	Microsoft 365	Bank Transfer	LGA 1972 s.111	£59.99	
	18/07/2023	Netphobia (website)	Bank Transfer	LA 1972 s142	£70.00	
	24/07/2023	East Suffolk Council – uncontested election fees	Bank Transfer	LGA 1972 s.111	£78.54	
	9.2 Bank Balance as at 30 th June 2023 - £13,749.28 9.3 To note receipt of income as listed: None 9.4 Bank reconciliations were agreed and signed 9.5 The Clerk to open a Premium Business Account at Barclays					Clerk
10.	Internal Audit Report					
	See below					
11.	Risk Assessment					
	Councillor Moor suggested removing COVID 19 references throughout, but still leave “risk to health”.					
12.	Internal Control Report					
	Councillor Haird undertook the annual Internal Control Report which is available to view. Suggested we undertake this in January 2024 as it was late this year.					
13.	Councillor Training					
	Councillors reminded to do training. Last SALC newsletter had good link. It was suggested the sessions are pre-recorded with no opportunity for questions. Clerk to check this out.					Clerk
14.	CIL Funding					
	Decided to defer any decisions until the next payment is received and then form a Sub Committee to examine possibilities. Full information is available on the East Suffolk website.					
15.	Emergency Plan/Flooding					
	Vulnerable properties in the village have been identified and reported to the Environment Agency. The following needs updating in the document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appendix 4 – List of local resources and their provider - Community Emergency Coordinator Group (page 3) 					Clerk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add Councillor Youngman and remove Councillor Murray - School contact to be checked - Village Hall contact to be updated <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk to check with Village Hall Committee to ask if we could store some sandbags more centrally at the village hall(covered and protected from weather) - Emergency Box to be checked. - Send email to village asking them to sign up to resources list 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>Chair</p>
16.	Speeding in Magpie Street/Grit Box	
	<p>Met with concerned residents. Meeting with Josh White (Suffolk Highways) on 11th August for better signage. Could the start of Magpie Street be a quiet lane? The residents also asked if they could have a grit bin on the corner of Magpie Street and Church Road. Permission has been sought from Suffolk County Council. Clerk to purchase bin.</p> <p>We also need to check with Josh White if concealed entry signs are allowed at the entrance to properties.</p>	Clerk
17.	Telephone Kiosk	
	The plaque dedicated to Ed Winkworth is now made and needs to be erected along with some floor tiles we have been given. Small width table to be purchased.	Chair
18.	Village Historian Update	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk given to WI on Monday, 12th June – “Historia Caresfelda – a remarkable legacy to Charsfield from a remarkable Victorian grocer and antiquarian.” 2. A version of the above talk has been made for the village website but I have only just requested this to be uploaded. It has a fuller explanation and clearer linkages between slides to make it a more coherent read given the absence of a presenter. 3. Planning the next display board to be put up in the village – maybe just on blacksmiths (5 in 1841) or perhaps broader on past occupations. <p>Historian has now been given permission to access the new website add his own input.</p>	
19.	Village Website	
	<p>This is now up and running. There have been a few teething problems but these are now settling down. Working towards being able to send out village emails directly from the website to improve the current system.</p> <p>Data protection being looked into</p>	
20.	Date of Next Meetings	
	Monday, 25th September 2023	

	<p>Monday, 20th November 2023</p> <p>Monday, 22nd January 2024</p> <p>Monday, 18th March 2024</p>	
	The meeting closed at 09:15 pm.	

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – Comments from Audit

Section 2 – Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

Standing Orders - Annual review date to be added to documents.

Financial Regulations – Council to review the Procurement Thresholds amendments (SI 2022/139) of the Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2022 which came into force on 21st December 2022 and make the changes to the contract value limits from £25,000 to £30,000 for non-central government authorities. The contract value limits are to be calculated inclusive of VAT (effective from 1st January 2022).

Standing Orders and Financials Regulations are to be reviewed in the September 2023 Parish Council Meeting

Section 4 – Risk Management

Evidence of Risk Assessment Document

Recommendation: Council is advised to ensure that within the financial year, it carries out such a review as soon as practically possible, with a minute to reference that such a review has been undertaken thereby demonstrating that, in accordance with Proper Practices, the risks are being annually reviewed, assessed and appropriate measures are in place to protect public money.

Risk Assessment Document to be reviewed in the July 2023 Parish Council Meeting

Evidence that a Review of the effectiveness of internal audit was conducted during the year, including consideration of the independence and competence of the internal auditor prior to their appointment

Recommendation: by reviewing the terms of reference and effectiveness for internal audit, the council would have followed guidance and demonstrated that it recognises that the function of internal audit is to test and report to the authority on whether its system of internal control is adequate - Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 refers.

Review of the internal audit to be discussed at the July 2023 Parish Council Meeting

Section 5 – Budgetary Controls

Comment: in accordance with guidance, Council might wish to demonstrate best practice by reflecting within the minutes the impact the precept being set will have upon a Band D property, as compared to the previous year.

After some discussion the PC were concerned how this was to be achieved. Clerk to write to SALC for clarification. SALC were subsequently unable to clarify how this is achievable.

Section 11 – Year End Procedures

Evidence

Council should ensure that there is formal evidence of the legal decision taken to claim exemption and approval to be given for the Chair and RFO to sign the Certificate of Exemption for onward submission to the external auditor.

Clerk to ensure this is done next year

Section 12 – Internal Audit

Evidence

The following recommendations were raised in the internal audit report for the period ending 31st March 2022. Those in bold are either still outstanding or were not actioned:

1. Review of annual policy as part of overall risk management process
2. **Review of income as stated in AGAR and amend the signed Statement of Accounts**
3. **Provision of public rights in accordance with the accounts and audit regulations 2015**
4. **To answer in the negative to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31st March 2022**

Recommendation: in order to answer in the affirmation to Assertion 7 of the Annual Governance Statement, Council must be able to confirm that it has responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.

The above items were all actioned and discussed in the July 2022 meeting but were unfortunately not minuted.

Section 14 – Additional Information

Website Accessibility Statement

As The Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 are now in force, Council should ensure that at the very minimum it publishes on its website, a Website Accessibility Statement, which has identified the areas which are not accessible and shows that Council has a forward plan so that it can make changes to improve this.

Clerk is putting together a Statement to be ratified by the Parish Council at their September meeting.