

## Minutes of Annual Meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Present: Mr P Ridley (former Chair), Coun J Sanderson, Coun O Poulter, Coun K McGready, Cllr. A Wilkinson (NYCC). R Dale (Clerk) plus 5 members of the public

Pending the outcome of item 2, former Councillor P Ridley took the chair.

1. Apologies Fiona Farndale

2. Nominations for Chairman

Aldred ("Ollie") Poulter was nominated as Chairman for the forthcoming year – prop: Coun Sanderson, Sec: Coun McGready. There being no other nominations, Coun Poulter was confirmed as the new Chairman of Morton-on-Swale Parish Council for 2019/2020.

3. Appointed Chairman to Sign Declaration of Acceptance Office

Coun Poulter signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman. Couns Sanderson and McGready also signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office as members of the Parish Council. Coun Poulter thanked his predecessor, Phil Ridley, for his service to the community as a member of Council for the past 8 years, and as Chairman for the last 4 of these. He also thanked Angela Moore, who had now retired from Council, for her past services to the community, and offered his condolences on behalf of the Council and of the community for the recent sad loss of her partner.

4. Financial Matters

- 1) It was resolved that Morton-on-Swale Parish Council is exempt from external audit for the year 2018/19 as its annual turnover does not exceed £25,000.
- 2) It was resolved that the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2018/19 included at page 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2018/19 be noted.
- 3) It was resolved that Morton-on-Swale Parish Council approve Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 for Morton-on-Swale Parish Council on page 5 of the AGAR 2018/19.
- 4) It was resolved that Morton-on-Swale Parish Council approve Section 2 Accounting Statements 2018/19 for Morton-on-Swale Parish Council on page 6 of the AGAR 2018/19.
- 5) It was resolved that, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities, Morton-on-Swale Parish Council will publish the following documents on the Parish Council website:-
  - Certificate of Exemption
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19
  - Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018/19
  - Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2018/19
  - Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and other information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

5. Vacancies on Council

Only three nominations were received for the Parish Council election scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019, which had therefore been uncontested. Couns Poulter, Sanderson and McGready were therefore declared elected. Since the election there had been two expressions of interest from Parishioners wishing to be considered for co-option to fill the two vacant Seats: Council considered the applications of Matthew Baker and Fiona Farndale, and agreed that both should be co-opted to fill the vacant seats, subject to obtaining confirmation that they were still willing to proceed. Matt Baker, who was present at the meeting as an observer, confirmed his willingness to be co-opted. The Clerk was instructed to verify that Fiona Farndale was still willing to be co-opted and that, if this should be the case, then she too would be co-opted. (NB The Clerk subsequently reported that he had received a text message prior to the meeting, which he had missed, offering her apologies that she could not attend the meeting but confirming her continued interest in being co-opted).

6. Bank Mandate

The removal of Phil Ridley and Angela Moore from the HSBC bank mandate was agreed nem con, and it was further agreed that Kirsty McGready and Matt Baker should be added, together with Fiona Farndale subject to receiving confirmation of her co-option to Council.

7. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Council approved nem con an update to Standing Orders which entailed splitting the original Standing Order 5 (Ordinary Council Meetings) into a modified Standing Order 5 (Annual Meetings) and a new Standing Order 6 (Ordinary Council Meetings) with all subsequent Orders (previously 6-26 inclusive) being renumbered accordingly. The essence of the update was to redefine which agenda items should always be included in the agenda for an Annual Meeting and which should be included in the agenda for an Ordinary Council Meeting, and especially, where applicable, for the first Ordinary Meeting of the new Council Year. This is of particular relevance in an electoral year when the Annual Meeting and the first Ordinary meeting are not necessarily held at the same time.

Council also approved nem con the re-adoption of Council's Financial Regulations policy, which is unchanged.

8. Fixed Assets

The Clerk has now compiled a register of Council Assets (following a recommendation of the Internal Auditor following his audit in May 2018). There are still some gaps in respect of the acquisition dates and current valuations of certain older assets, some of which, in pure accounting terms, would probably have been written down, but, for insurance purposes, a value should probably nevertheless be attached representing the cost of replacement in the event that the item was damaged in an accident in circumstances requiring an insurance claim. The Clerk would aim to complete the register to include replacement costs prior to renewal of the insurance policy (see item 9 below) to ensure that the level of insurance cover on renewal was adequate. It was suggested that the Play Park land should be valued at £10,000 per acre.

9. Insurance Cover

The Council is currently insured with Aviva under a policy which expires on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Clerk was instructed to proceed with arrangements for renewal with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July, taking into account any changes in asset valuations (see item 8 above). He pointed out that the existing policy was a standard policy with cover generally considered appropriate for Parish Councils of our size, in particular with reasonably generous upper limits for cover on street furniture, which is one of the aspects of the asset register where information is presently still incomplete.

10. YLCA Membership

Council unanimously approved continued membership of Yorkshire Local Councils Association (YLCA) for an annual membership fee of £212. YLCA requires two members of Council to be identified to them as voting delegates at its regional meetings (Hambleton region normally meets three times per year alternately at Northallerton and Easingwold). It was agreed to defer a decision on this matter until the first Ordinary Council meeting, to give additional time for new members of Council to consider whether they wished to volunteer for this. In the meantime, Cllrs Poulter and Sanderson would continue as the nominated delegates as in 2018/19..

11. Dates and times of Ordinary Council Meetings in the coming year

It was agreed that Ordinary Council Meetings in 2019/20 should continue to be held bi-monthly as in the past, on the last Wednesday of the month in May, July, September, November, January 2020 and March 2020 respectively. However, it was agreed that the first of these meetings, which would otherwise be due on 29<sup>th</sup> May, should be postponed by one week until Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June. This was due to exceptional circumstances which would otherwise potentially result in the meeting being “incurate” if the meeting was scheduled for the “normal” date. This was agreed nem con. The Clerk undertook to publicise this change of date on social media and by direct email communications to Cllr Phillips, Cllr

Wilkinson and Northallerton Police. All meetings will be held in the Village Hall, commencing at 7.30pm, and should last for no more than two hours.

12. AOB

The Clerk advised that the payroll service bureau (Payroll For Any Business) whose services the Council had engaged for 2018/19 was no longer able to provide the service in the coming year. The Clerk had previously expressed dissatisfaction to them regarding the details shown in their invoices, which, although the invoiced amounts were in order, he felt would not be acceptable for audit purposes in terms of the description of the services provided. The bureau was unable to alter the presentation of its invoices, which were geared more to commercial businesses than to local authorities with only one employee. However, the company had agreed to waive its invoices for the 2018/19 fiscal year.

Via the YLCA, the Clerk had solicited and received advice from a number of other Parish Councils about the services they used. Although a number of different suppliers were recommended, two of them (T P Jones of Harrogate, and Autela of Hull) were used more than any others. The Clerk was authorised to pursue negotiations with these companies and to select the one which was considered to offer the best deal for Morton-on-Swale.

13. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019, commencing at 7.30pm  
The meeting closed at 20.00pm