

**Approved Minutes of the Meeting of Rippingale Parish Council,
held Remotely via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 11 February 2021**

Present: Cllrs C. Charlton (Chairman), A. Vaughan, H. Fuller & J. Howard

In Attendance: Michelle Free (Clerk/RFO) & 1 Member of Public (Cllr household member; not item 8.1)

Public Forum

There were no Press or Public in direct attendance. The Clerk briefed the Council on concerns from a resident:

- Repeated dog fouling by a large dog not picked up by owner, and horse and riders using the public footpaths. The Chairman had previously included the issue of dog fouling in the last Newsletter and encouraged anyone witnessing this to report it to SKDC; a request for riders not to use the footpaths had also been posted on the village Facebook page. This would be repeated in the next Newsletter.

No further comments were raised, so it was agreed to open the Council Meeting at 7.02pm

Agenda Items

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence & Reasons Given

521. Not applicable. All Members present.

2. To Receive any new Declarations of Interest

522. There were no new Declarations of Interest to be recorded.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Last Meeting

523. The previously circulated DRAFT Minutes were considered for approval. **The Council unanimously resolved to accept the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2021 as a true and accurate record.** Chairman to sign the file copy previously issued. **Clerk to publish the approved Minutes.**

4. To Co-opt New Councillor

524. No applications or expressions of interest had been received. The Cllr vacancies were advertised on the Noticeboard, website, village Facebook page and had been included in the Newsletter. The Chairman asked all Cllrs to encourage suitable candidates to apply for the Co-option vacancies. Chairman to include repeated call for Cllr candidates in the Newsletter.

4.1 To Review & Reallocate Lead Councillor roles

525. With 3 Cllr vacancies, the allocated and vacant roles were discussed. To avoid overburdening the available Cllrs, the roles requiring a Council representative for a Community Meeting would be allocated as required. The Chairman and Clerk would remain the published point of contact in the first instance for the unallocated roles. Cllr Howard would take on the Defibrillator Maintenance. The equipment and information had been handed to the Chairman by former Cllr Field-Lucas. **Chairman to issue set of JPF keys and the Defibrillator equipment to Cllr Howard. Clerk to publish roles and contacts.**

5. To Receive External & Community Group Reports

5.1 Police, County & District Councils

526. There were no reports from the County & District Councils. Cllr Fuller had arranged a Meeting with the Police Safer Together campaign rep, but they had not attended; Cllr Fuller chasing another Meeting. Following the withdrawal of the Bourne & Billingborough Neighbourhood Policing Panel, volunteers had been asked to join the Independent Advisory Group (IAG). More information was required. **Cllr Fuller to obtain more information on the requirement of IAG Members.**

5.2 Community Groups & Organisations

527. The Clerk confirmed that the revised **Allotment Plot Tenancy Agreements** had been issued; some had already been signed and returned.

528. The Chairman stated that the draft **Neighbourhood Plan** was still with the Consultant; redundancies and Covid restrictions had delayed the completion. There was no update from SKDC on when the Referendum would be held.

6. Parish Matters:

6.1 To Resolve Play Equipment Surface Issues & Approve Final Payment

529. Cllrs Charlton & Vaughan had met with the Company Sales Director to reiterate the Council's dissatisfaction with the unresolved installation faults. The issues were acknowledged and agreed; a joint visit with the subcontractor and national engineer would be scheduled. Another potential issue had been highlighted in the Annual Inspection. See item 6.2 (Para 530). The Council unanimously resolved to withhold the retention payment until the issues were completely resolved.

6.2 To Receive Play Equipment Annual Inspection Report & Resolve Remedial Actions

530. Cllr Vaughan had reviewed the Annual Inspection Report. The only issues were low or very low risk and included missing fasteners on the new basket swing; the lack of acknowledgement for the refurbishment of the old equipment was disappointing. The basket swing was safe to remain in use.

Clerk to request specific details of missing fasteners from the Inspector.

6.3 To Review Coronavirus Impact & Resolve Changes

531. The national lockdown was ongoing and there were no changes to the restrictions: play areas and allotments could remain open but not sports courts. **Ongoing.**

6.4 To Receive Tree Survey & Resolve Remedial Actions

532. The report from the 3-yearly tree survey of the Village Green was discussed. In addition to some general maintenance, 3 trees required specialist work on overhanging branches and crown lift; the trees were subject to a TPO so Planning Permission was required. **Chairman to obtain quotes for the specialist work ahead of next Meeting.** Cllr Vaughan volunteered to remove the ivy and epicormic growth with assistance. **Cllr Vaughan to discuss with the Casual Worker.**

6.5 To Resolve Comments on Planning Applications

533. Applications S20/0677, S20/1103 and S20/2192 were still pending. The Clerk had responded to the applicant of S20/1951, no further reply had been received.

534. Two Public Consultations had been received: Local Plan Design Guidelines for Rutland and SKDC and Planning Policy Draft Statement of Community Involvement. Council comments to be agreed at the next Meeting. The details had been published on the website and Noticeboard, plus a link on the village Facebook page.

535. The Council had finally been invited to comment on the appeal against the SKDC refusal of S20/1527 (erection of one dwelling on land at rear of 155 Station Street); the original comments had no objections but safety concerns regarding the shared access and the preference for a single storey dwelling had been highlighted. **The Council resolved that the original comments remained but, if permitted, should be deemed infill, be in-keeping with adjacent properties and not set precedence for further development of the site. Clerk to submit representation to Planning Inspectorate.**

6.6 To Review Casual Worker Contract & Resolve Changes *Discussed after item 6.4 (532)*

536. The Council discussed amending the issue of the Casual Worker contract from just the individual to trading as the Company name (Roof-rite Contracting). The Clerk had reviewed the implications of this with regards to the changes to IR35 (contractor status for tax purposes). The results had confirmed that this was a business-to-business non-employment contract. **The Council unanimously resolved to reissue the Contract; Clerk to notify Casual Worker.**

7. Financial Matters:

7.1 To Receive FY2020/21 Accounts to Date & Transactions Since Last Meeting

537. The Accounts to 31 January had been previously circulated; the payments for the play equipment balance, hedge cutting, and Casual Worker had not been submitted by month end. There had been no additional payments. The allotment and land rent invoices had been issued with some already settled. The reconciled bank statements and outstanding invoices had been issued to the Chairman for inspection in advance. There were no questions for the RFO.

7.1.1 To Approve Income & Expenditure List

538. The previously circulated list was presented for approval. In addition to the regular payments for the Newsletter, JPF waste and Clerk salary, the December Casual Worker invoice, the Microsoft 365 renewal, and additional Clerk hours were considered. The JPF waste and the LALC Training Scheme for FY2021/22 were also discussed.

539. To minimise the handling of documents, the available hard copies had been issued to the Chairman and electronic copies to all Cllrs in advance; only the cheque book and transactions sheet required sharing for signing. **The Council unanimously resolved to approve the presented income and expenditure list**, which included joining the LALC Training Scheme and remain with SKDC for the JPF waste. The Chairman signed the **cheque and transactions sheet; to be forwarded to Cllr Vaughan for second signatures. Clerk to submit BACS payments subject to receipt of invoices.**

7.2 To Approve Accounts Software Package

540. The options and quotes for an Accounting Software Package were discussed. One designed for Councils which produced reports based on the required Annual Return and VAT reclaim formats with

flexible training and support was preferred. **The Council unanimously resolved to use Scribe for its Accounts from the start of FY2021/22. Clerk to arrange.**

7.3 To Review & Resolve Cutting of LCC Verges for FY2021/22

541. The contribution from LCC for including the emergency grass cuts of the allocated verges had only increased by 1.2%; LCC had granted a deadline extension to the RFO for a formal review now the rate was confirmed. Although less than the increase in costs to the Council, it currently covered the expected outgoings; the inclusion of these verges also resulted in a better service for the village. **The Council unanimously resolved to include the LCC verges. Clerk to notify.**

8. Admin Matters:

8.1 To Review Response & Resolve Next Steps to Complaint *Discussed after item 9 (548)*

542. Due to the currently confidential nature of the business to be discussed, the Council unanimously resolved to move into Closed Session in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960; the Chairman read the mandatory statement and the Cllrs moved to away from other household members. No response had been received to the Council's request for an update or outcome. **Ongoing.**

8.2 To Review & Resolve Changes in Part 1 of Policy Review

543. The listed policies and procedures, legislation changes, minor amendments, model documents and access to the LALC templates had been previously circulated to all Members; the Chairman and Cllrs thanked the Clerk for her detailed efforts.

544. **The Council unanimously resolved to accept the legislation and proposed changes, and the existing figures for meeting and speaking durations, Cllr requests, spending limits and delegated authorities.** The changes included the option to issue a credit card to the Clerk to provide greater payment protection, providing certain conditions were met. Cllr Fuller requested clarification on credit card reward schemes to ensure transparency. **Clerk to publish the approved policies and clarify appropriate credit card reward schemes.**

8.3 To Receive Clerk Report

545. The previously circulated Report was discussed. The archiving of Council records was ongoing; a timescale for the completion of the annual hedge cutting had been requested; the fault reports for the uneven and waterlogged footpaths had been submitted; the Trustee details for the RJPFT had been updated with the Charity Commission. A national Census was due to take place on 21 March. The S.137 limit for FY2021/22 had been set at £8.41 per electorate; Annual Parish Meetings were now permitted to take place virtually; an Annual General Meeting must also be held this year due to the expiry of the Government deferment on 7 May. Election Polls were still due to take place on 6 May.

546. The website updates to ensure accessibility requirements were met was ongoing but a lengthy process; some of the additional hours spent on it had been claimed under item 7.1.1 (537). The Clerk confirmed that the required accessibility statement was published and included a timescale for completion.

8.4 To Appoint Clerk Vacancy Interview Panel

547. The appointment of the Interview Panel for the w/c 1 March was discussed; the Panel would make a recommendation for Council approval at the next Meeting. Subject to confirmation of no knowledge or relationship with any candidate, **an Interview Panel of 3 Cllrs was unanimously appointed; the Clerk was also requested to attend.**

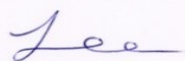
9. Items for Inclusion at Next Meeting

548. In addition to items already raised, the annual review of the remaining policies to be included. **Clerk to action.**

There being no more business, the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.12pm.

Prior to Closed Session Public Forum

There were no comments or questions.



Michelle Free, Clerk

22 February 2021