

# KESSINGLAND PARISH COUNCIL



## Minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee Meeting At 10.30am on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 held in the Council Chamber, Marram Green

**Members present:** Councillors N. Glendinning, I. Graham, A. Green (Chair), S. James (Vice-Chair), J. McLean & B. Saunders

**Others present:** None

**Clerk to the Meeting:** N. Coleby (Clerk) & S. Hogg (Deputy Clerk) D. Blowers (Admin/Committee Clerk)

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### 107. Welcome

The Chair welcomed councillors to the meeting and explained the meeting protocol.

### 108. Apologies for Absence.

There were no apologies to receive as all committee members were present.

### 109. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda and no written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. It was noted that a standing dispensation has been approved for Cllr Green in respect of his dual position as district councillor for Kessingland and for Cllr McLean in respect of her membership of the Friends of Kessingland CofE Primary Academy and the Kessingland Sports and Social Centre.

### 110. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee meetings held on 23rd August & 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1st & 22<sup>nd</sup> November and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023 had been circulated. Cllr Graham proposed approval of all sets of minutes and Cllr Glendinning seconded with all in favour.

### 111. Governance.

111.1 It was noted that the Policy Working Group has not met and that there are policies which need updating, new policies recommended by NALC as well as other policies that are redundant. Councillors considered that for the remainder of this council year that this working group meet to review policies into four groups. A meeting was set to consider these policies to be held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February at 10am.

- Policies which are fit for purpose or only need minor

corrections/amendments which can be done prior to the AGM. If those with minor changes can be ready to go to a Parish Council meeting before the AGM then they will however if they can only be ready for the AGM they will go with those that are fit for purpose but with an explanatory paper on any alterations.

- Policies which need significant review but will come before the council at the AGM with to be approved but with the proviso that the six-month rule will not apply should any of those policies be ready for consideration prior to six months having passed (The working group may wish to consider a priority for these).
- Policies which are no longer beneficial or needed by the council.
- New polices which need to be drafted (The working group may wish to consider a priority for these).

111.2 Councillor Graham proposed to consider a revised standard contract of employment for council staff and whether to recommend it to parish council. The aim of this contract is to remove anomalies between different groups of staff within the council as much as possible. There are some contractual clauses which are affected by the number of hours worked or by levels of pay which cannot be amended. This draft contract will also be considered by the Personnel committee and for them to consider recommendation to parish council. This was seconded by Cllr Glendinning with all in favour.

## 112. Banking

- 112.1 The RFO monthly report was received and noted.  
112.2 The current balances from the report were noted.  
112.3 The payments made via direct debit and standing order from the report were noted.  
112.4 The payments made under delegated responsibility from the report were noted.  
112.5 The payments made via council business cards from the report were not available.  
112.6 The payments made via petty cash were not available.

## 113. Payments

- 113.1 Councillors considered the payments provided in the RFO report and Cllr Graham proposed authorising the payments. This was seconded by Cllr McLean with all in favour.

## 114. Accounts and Budget

- 114.1 It was noted that the precept form was emailed to East Suffolk prior to the deadline and that the Chair was copied into the email so that they were aware in line with the council's financial risk assessment.

## 115. Other Financial Matters

- 115.1 Progress was noted with the updating of Scribe.  
115.2 Councillor James proposed purchasing the Allotment and Booking packages from Scribe in order that these areas are aligned with the finance system. There will be additional costs however it is proposed that the allotments package should be covered by income from allotments and that the bookings package should be covered by income from the hiring of rooms with the Compass Suite, so that there would not be any addition costs applied to the

- council's budget. This was seconded by Cllr Graham with all in favour.
- 115.3 It was noted that there are outstanding orders which should be completed prior to the end of the financial year, all of which are historic and have previously been approved by either this committee or parish council. These orders should mainly come from reserves and specifically external funding pots. This is being brought to the committee's attention so that they are aware when future RFO reports come before the committee and more importantly so that the reserves can be properly aligned at year end. The intention is that outstanding orders will be completed and any funding reserves which have not been used will be transferred to a relevant council reserve covered by the council's Reserves Policy.
- 115.4 It was noted that once the actions in 115.3 are complete, an updated Reserve's Policy will be brought before committee for consideration as the current policy does not cover all the reserves and the upper limits and methods of funding may need reviewing.
- 115.5 It was noted that council signatories for the Joint Francis Road Account have completed their paperwork and that a meeting will be arranged to consider matters including water rates, matters relating to the car park and lighting complaints, the overspill car park and insurance in relation to water supply.

#### 116. Audit

- 116.1 Councillors are still to receive a report and recommendations from the RFO in respect of recommendations from the Internal and external audits. The report will come before the next meeting of this committee due to budget preparation work.

#### 117. Insurance

- 117.1 The Chair of Finance and the Clerk will review the level of insurance cover prior to the next meeting of this committee in order that any changes to the insurance can be considered by this committee and actioned so that any amendments are actioned prior to the approval of insurance at the AGM.

#### 118. Legal

- 118.1 To note that the Planning Committee has requested that the Clerk consult a solicitor in respect of an issue within the parish and to consider setting a budget within which the Clerk, in liaison with the Chairs of Finance & Governance and Planning & Highways can progress this matter (Confidential).
- 118.2 To note that the Clerk has contacted a company in relation to legal advice on planning matters and will update the committee when potential costs have been received (Confidential).

#### 119. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting will be the 10.00am on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

#### 120. Items for the next agenda

To note that items for the next agenda need to be with the Clerk by 5pm on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

#### 121. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Councillor Graham proposed that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 (Sections 100 and 102), the public and press be excluded for the remaining items of business due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted including contractual and personnel related matters. This was seconded by Cllr Saunders with all in favour.

**122. Close of Meeting.**

This meeting closed at 11.15am.