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**BRANTHAM PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
27 March 2014, 7.30pm at Brooklands Primary School

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Liz Dunnett (Chair)  
Sarah Keys (Clerk)  
Alastair McCraw  
Trevor Nobbs  
Paul Revell  
Pat Smith (RFO)

**1. Apologies**

None

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting on 27 February 2014 were approved and signed as a true record of the meeting.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes:**

Bottle Banks

PS has emailed Debbie Kerry about this issue twice but has had no reply to date.

**ACTION:** SK to informally check that DK has received the emails.

Church Farm

SK confirmed that following the last Parish Council meeting a response had been received from Richard Keeble stating that he had no land available for graveyard space. In addition an email had been received from Rev Steph Van Der Toorn confirmed that additional space for burials could not be found in the upper churchyard.

LD stated that she had looked into the possibility of green burials at Pattles Fen, and although it is possible to scatter ashes there it looks unlikely that green burials would be possible.

The committee agreed that this issue should be addressed by full Parish Council.

Pine Cottage

The Committee reviewed the updated quotes received since the last meeting

- English Rose Landscapes: £975.00
- Rose Builders: £5437.88
- JG Contracts: £1440.00



Following discussion the Committee agreed to propose to full Parish Council that the Council should confirm to Mr Brackley that it would be willing to support this improvement to his property by paying 50% of the costs as per the quote from English Rose Landscapes.

**ACTION:** LD to make proposal at Parish Council meeting on 02 April 2014

Merriam Close Play area

SK confirmed that she has booked to attend a workshop aimed to help with accessing Lottery funding. In addition, 57 responses have been received for the online survey about the play area which will be used to inform the bid.

Bus Shelter

This has not yet been actioned and will therefore be carried over to the next meeting.

**ACTION:** Clerk to source a quote.

Letter to Lloyds

PS confirmed that the letter to Lloyds Bank requesting that £5000.00 should be left in the current account at the end of each day had been sent. No reply had been received to date.

**4. Village Hall Insurance**

The Committee reviewed the Insurance Renewal documents that had been received. Following discussion it was agreed that SALC should be contacted to find out whether there were recommendations for alternative insurance companies. A comparison of premiums would then be made and a decision about policies made.

**ACTION:** PS to contact SALC and alternative insurance companies to review this

**ACTION:** LD to make a recommendation to full Parish Council on 02 April 2014 following receipt of information.

**5. Cheques and other Financial Metters (SALC email 13 March 2013)**

LD drew attention to the guidance documents that had been received from SALC, which pointed out that the grant from BDC should be recorded as a grant in the Parish Council's finances and not as part of the Precept. PS confirmed that this was being done.

The Committee then reviewed the documentation in reference the implementation of the repeal of s. 150 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 which repeals the statutory requirement for 2 elected members to sign cheques and other orders for payment. This will give councils the opportunity to review how they control their money and if they wish can take advantage of new technology such as internet banking.

The guidance highlights that any council that wants to take advantage of it must follow "proper practices" in line with the Governance and Accountability Guide for



Local Councils (2010) which states that the two signature rule must not be abandoned until a council has put in place safe and efficient arrangements in accordance with the guidance.

The Committee reviewed and noted this documentation but agreed that at this time there was no need to change from the current means used by Brantham Parish Council of making payments via cheque with 2 signatures.

**6. Clerk's hours:**

LD informed the Committee that an informal meeting had taken place with the Clerk where she had raised concerns about her workload and her capacity to fulfil the role of Clerk, particularly in light of the additional work likely to come as a result of developments at Brantham Industrial Site.

LD stated that the Clerk had confirmed that at this time she did not have capacity to take on extra hours in her role. A discussion had taken place about possibilities to ease the future workload and it has been suggested that LD take on the secretarial duties of the Clerk's role at the Village Hall in an unpaid capacity for a limited period whilst additional work was experienced as a result of the development at the Industrial site.

The committee considered other possible options to reduce the workload of the Clerk and agreed that it would be helpful to change the classifications of some of the Parish Council's Committees so that they did not have to meet formally, in public and therefore at cost.

**ACTION:** It was agreed that AM would make a proposal to full Parish Council on 02 April 2014 to change our standing orders to avoid the additional cost of hiring public facilities for non-critical meetings.

Propose to change **Standing Order 4 d) xii** to read as follows;

Standing Committees include:

<i>Finance Committee</i>	<i>Four members</i>
<i>Planning Committee</i>	<i>Four members</i>

Sub-Committees include:

<i>Maintenance and Services Sub- Committee</i>	<i>Four members</i>
<i>Legal Sub-Committee</i>	<i>Four members</i>
<i>Recreation Sub-Committee</i>	<i>Four members</i>
<i>Contribution Sub-Committee</i>	<i>Three members</i>
<i>Footpath Sub-Committee</i>	<i>Four members</i>

(note: the last five were previously categorised as Standing Committees)

The council also has the following representation on these local organizations:



# BRANTHAM

Parish Council

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<i>Suffolk Association of Local Councils</i>	<i>One member</i>
<i>Parish Transport Liaison Officer</i>	<i>One member</i>
<i>Village Hall Management Committee</i>	<i>Two members</i>
<i>Brantham Management Limited</i>	<i>One member</i>

PS highlighted that as a result of the Clerk's achievement of the CiLCA qualification it was expected that she should progress up the salary spine from SCP 18 to SCP 19 and pay should therefore increase from £9.01 per hour to £9.35 per hour, increasing the annual pay by £314.64. PS confirmed that this had been accounted for in the budget.

**ACTION:** LD to make this proposal to full Parish Council on 02 April 2014

## **7. Staff Appraisals:**

LD highlighted that no staff appraisals had taken place for a number of years. It was agreed that all paid staff would be offered a staff appraisal via email if they would like one and that SK and PS would have a staff appraisal in June 2014.

**ACTION:** SK to email Phil Wainwright and Sue Butcher

## **8. Donations Policy:**

LD confirmed that this had been included on the agenda in preparation for the forthcoming audit and following advice from the Clerk (and SALC) that it is good practice to have a short policy for making donations. A number of example policies had been provided by SALC and circulated prior to the meeting.

SK stated that it was her advice, as Clerk to the Council, that a donations policy should be put into place to ensure that decisions about donations could be supported by an appropriate policy.

The Committee discussed policies provided and agreed that in their opinion the current practice for making donations was working well, however it was agreed that it would be useful to review the example policies to see if one could be made to fit the requirements of the Parish Council and this would be reviewed at a later date.

**ACTION:** AM to review/amend the example policies

## **9. Audit Preparation:**

PS confirmed that the internal audit to be undertaken by SALC had been set for w/c 19 May 2014 in time for presentation to full Parish Council in June 2014. The audit by BDO has been set for 30 June 2014.

The Asset and Risk Register will be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting as preparation for the forthcoming audit.

## **10. Any other business**

None.



**11. Dates of next meetings**

- Wednesday 23 April 2014, 7.45pm, Brantham Village Hall (Chaired by Trevor Nobbs)
- Wednesday 28 May 2014, 7.45pm, Brantham Village Hall
- Wednesday 25 June 2014, 7.45pm, Brantham Village Hall

**Meeting finished at 9.05pm**

**SIGNED.....DATED.....**