

**OLD CATTON PARISH COUNCIL,
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY 6TH NOVEMBER, 2003,
AT 7.30 P.M., AT THE PAVILION, CHURCH STREET**

PRESENT: Mrs G Masdin – Chairman
Mrs P Mattocks Mrs A Riches Mr B Sabberton-Coe
Mr D Thompson Miss P Wilkin

APOLOGIES: Mr K Leggett

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting.

142. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

142.1. There were no declarations of interest.

142.2. It was AGREED that the form issued by Broadland District Council should be used in future to declare interests. The interests would continue to be read out at the meetings.

143. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 2.10.2003

The minutes had been confirmed as a true record and adopted by the Council. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

144. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were none.

145. CHEQUES, PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS AND COMPARISON WITH BUDGET

145.1. The attached lists of vouchers numbered 346 to 410, with payments totalling £13,145.35 and receipts of £3,273.96, were approved and the comparison with the budget and the bank reconciliation and list of un-presented cheques for the current account noted, also the reconciliation for the Business Premium Account.

146. TO AGREE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AND STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE IN THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR EXTERNAL AUDIT

These were AGREED and the Statement of Assurance signed by Mr D Thompson.

147. TO APPOINT AN INTERNAL AUDITOR

The internal auditor used for the last two years was NSA, now called Parys Snowden. The charge agreed for the last year had been £440.00 but the company had stated that this did not cover their costs and proposed to charge for the time taken at £40.00 per hour for the current year. The maximum charge anticipated would be £1,000 although it was hoped the time taken could be minimised.
APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR (continued)

An alternative quotation had been obtained from RBS Accounting Solutions (also experts in councils' accounts) at £320.00 per day. This company was not local and there would be a cost for travelling.

It was PROPOSED by Mr D Thompson that Parys Snowden be awarded the contract for internal audit for the year 2003/4 and also for 2004/5 if the same rate could be negotiated for the two years. AGREED.

148. STREET LIGHTING POWER AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

148.1. Power. Electricity had been supplied through a consortium of local councils and organised by Peter Mills Consultant Ltd.. The contract was offered for renewal for 2 years until 30.09.2005, at a further discount of 12.02%, bringing the monthly payment down to £341.43, including VAT (from £383.82). It was AGREED to renew the contract.

148.2. Repairs and maintenance. Three contractors had been invited to tender for three years beginning 1st November 2003. Cozens Lighting had not replied, despite a reminder. MacAlpine Infrastructure (ex Eastern Contracting) had stated, when reminded about its failure to quote, that a competitive quote could not be offered to include attending to repairs within 5 days; its normal response time was 7 working days. T T Jones Electrical, the current contractor proposed to increase charges by 3% in each of the three years of the contract and continue to attend within 5 days.

Members felt that it was important to retain the good level of service currently enjoyed and that the increase of 3% proposed by T T Jones was reasonable. It was therefore AGREED to renew the contract with T T Jones Electrical Limited for three years beginning on 1st November 2003.

149. AGENCY AGREEMENT FOR GRASS CUTTING

Norfolk County Council wished to extend the current contract for highway verge cutting for another year, until 31st December 2004; with the payment increased in line with inflation. This was AGREED.

149. BUDGET for 2004/5

The attached draft summary budget was agreed, in principle, subject to further scrutiny at the next meeting. The increase proposed to the precept would be just over 3% if there were 12 new band D properties to be accounted for. Mr D Thompson PROPOSED and Mr B Sabberton-Coe SECONDED the levying of a precept of £107,000. AGREED.

The sums requested by the Planning and Property Committee had been included.

However, it was noted that it was only possible to keep the increase to this level by using balances anticipated to be unspent at the end of 2003/4 and reserves totalling £8,500.00.

The scale of Hire Charges would be considered at the December meeting.

150. PARISH PLAN

The three councillors to serve on the working group would be Miss P Wilkin, Mr S Dunn and Mr K Leggett. Mr A Vincent would represent the Church and Mr P Wright

the three village schools. The Old Catton Society had not yet met to appoint its representative.

A meeting of all the volunteers would be arranged in the near future.

151. VILLAGE HALL

The Management Committee had written asking the Council's views about possibly removing the stage, with the exception of the back section. Members had no objection.

152. CATTON PARK

152.1. Planning application for change of use. The application was on the agenda for Broadland District Council' planning committee on 12th November. The Council's views had been sent by letter and it was not proposed to ask to be heard at the meeting.

152.2. Progress. A press release had been made on the Steering Group's preferred option and the public meeting that the Council had offered to host had been arranged for 8th December at the Church Hall. It was AGREED to ask if the Council could have copies of any background papers before the meeting. It was also AGREED to check on the timetable for the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund as the Council wished time to formulate its views taking into account those expressed by residents at the public meeting. If necessary a special council meeting would be arranged.

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153. COMMUNITY POLICING

It was AGREED to write to the Chief Constable with the view that insufficient time was being spent on Community Policing in the Village and asking that it be increased.

154. CONSULTATION ON SCHOOLS REORGANISATION

Members did not think it appropriate to form views on the reorganisation of the schools in Spixworth Hainford and Frettenham.

155. REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

Mr D Thompson would lay the Council's wreath and it was hoped that other members would attend the service.

156. CORRESPONDENCE

156.1. The attached list was received and discussed.

156.2. It was AGREED that the Clerk would attend the Planning Committee at Broadland District Council on 12th November and speak against the change of

use application at Dixons Fold.

156.3. As there had been no call for an election to fill the vacancy for a councillor it was the Council's responsibility to co-opt to fill the vacancy. It was AGREED that the Committee would recommend that Mrs A Chandler be co-opted but that the views of the Planning and Property Committee should also be sought before this recommendation was made to the full council on 27th November.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everybody for attending and closed the meeting at 9.55 p.m.

Chairman, 4.12.2003.