

Cottingham Parish Council



FULL PARISH AND FINANCE MEETING OF COTTINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT ARLINGTON HALL
7:00PM ON THURSDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2022

PRESENT: Councillors: Abel (Chairman), Green, Casson, Medini, Moore, Cantrell & Duke
 Deputy Clerk: Nicola Pape
 12 members of the public

3453 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

3454 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllrs Kemp, Jump, Kind & Knight

Resolved: Apologies accepted

3455 TO RECEIVE LOCAL POLICING REPORT

In the absence of a PCSO being available to attend the meeting Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape circulated copies of the recent Crime Statistics to Councillors

3456 PUBLIC SESSION (10-MINUTE OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC PRESENT TO RAISE MATTERS)

Members of the public raised questions, answered by Councillors. regarding the pungent smell from Biowise, dangerous parking issues and roadworks

3457 TO CONFIRM, ADOPT, AND SIGN THE MINUTES/NOTES

3457.1 Events Working Party meeting held on 11th January 2022

3457.2 Full Parish & Finance meeting held on 20th January 2022

3457.3 Planning Committee meeting held on 1st February 2022

The Parish Council Office: 9 The Cottages, Market Green, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 5QG

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Chairman: Councillor Ann Abel Tel: 01482 875489 Clerk: Matthew Kay

Cllr Abel informed Councillors an amendment had been made to Minute 3451.5 of the Full Parish & Finance meeting held on 20th January 2022, it had been a Cottingham resident, not a member of Hessle Town Council, enquiring about the ownership of the land adjacent to Snuff Mill Lane

Resolved: That all minutes/notes be adopted as a true record

3458 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNCIL, REVIEW BUDGET, APPROVE JANUARY PAYMENTS AND ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF INTERIM AUDIT

3458.1 In advance of the meeting the Clerk had circulated details of the financial position of the Council, an updated budget and the interim audit to Councillors

Resolved: On a unanimous vote the schedules showing receipts and payments made during the month of January were approved

3458.2 Councillors discussed the interim audit. Cllr Duke enquired if a query regarding VAT had been addressed, Cllr Abel will confirm with the Clerk. Cllr Cantrell enquired if the Standing Orders had been amended and also wished it to be minuted that she felt the Council's Risks should be reviewed as a matter of urgency

Resolved: Councillors acknowledged receipt of the interim audit

3459 TO DISCUSS GRANT REQUESTS

3459.1 Cottingham Community Garden Group

A grant application of £1200 had been applied for towards the purchase of seeds, plants, materials, tools and a greenhouse

Resolved: £1200 grant approved

3460 TO DISCUSS CAPITAL PROJECTS

Cllr Abel requested this be moved to a bi-monthly agenda item

Resolved: Capital Projects to be a bi-monthly agenda item

3461 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON JUBILEE AND DISCUSS BUNTING

3461.1 Councillor Abel informed Councillors that the Events Committee were planning Cottingham Day for Sunday 3rd July. Although the Parish Council are not organising an additional event for the Jubilee, the Parish Office and Cllr Abel are supporting the Civic Hall with a grant application, working with market traders and helping organise road closures

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3461.2 Cllr Abel informed Councillors one small grant application for £50 had been received requesting funds towards a street party, the funds had been processed and receipts requested from the applicant

3461.3 Cllr Abel informed Councillors a quote had been obtained for 750 metres of Union Jack Bunting at a cost of £915 & VAT. John Ford's had offered to install the bunting and Cllr Duke enquired if there would be a charge for this. Councillors agreed the bunting be ordered

Resolved; Parish Office to order bunting at a cost of £915 & VAT

3461.4 Cllr Medini suggested the village shops could have Jubilee window displays

3462 TO DISCUSS FLY TIPPING

3462.1 Cllr Cantrell informed Councillors numerous residents had expressed their concerns on social media regarding the high volume of fly tipping, the areas of Middledyke Lane, North Moor Lane and the area close to the West Bulls pub on Bricknell Avenue being particularly problematic, she informed Councillors that although some of this had been cleared by ERYC/Hull City Council, debris had been left.

The Councillors were also informed she had reported fly tipping issues to both ERYC and Hull City Council, difficulties had arisen in establishing which Council owns which area of land. Cllr Green informed Councillors some land in the Bricknell Avenue area is owned by ERYC, some by Hull City Council and some by the University. Cllr Green has also been in regular contact with both Councils and had arranged for rubbish to be removed. Councillors agreed it was frustrating and there is no easy solution to find out which Council, or the University owns which part of land

3462.2 Cllr Green informed Councillors that if a public litter bin is full the public have a legal right to place litter in a bag, seal it and place it next to the litter bin. Christmas Trees can be left with brown bin collections

3463 TO DISCUSS "HAPPY TO CHAT" BENCHES

3463.1 Cllr Abel informed Councillors she had been approached by ERYC during the summer of 2021 offering free "Happy to Chat" signs which could be installed on the Parish Council's benches. The signs were not forthcoming and ERYC have since explained that although signs would be available, they would now incur a charge. Cllr Abel had walked around the village and the benches in the Memorial Gardens, Wilburn Court, Grandad's Park and KGV are already used by the public, many of them chatting. It was agreed by Councillors there was no requirement for the signs

Resolved: "Happy to Chat" signs not required

3464 TO AGREE LOCATION OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Cllr Abel informed Councillors Arlington Hall had been reserved for the Planning Meeting of 1st March 2022 and the Full Parish Meeting of 17th March 2022, she suggested that from April 2022 meetings be held back in the Parish Office. Cllr Medini suggested the public

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book a space due to the size constraints of the Parish Office and Cllr Casson stated a Risk Assessment would need to be undertaken

Resolved: From April 2022 meetings to be held within the Parish Office following a Risk Assessment being undertaken

3465 REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Abel informed Councillors she had attended a meeting for Councillors undertaking the Chairman's role, this had been organised by ERNLLCA and highlighted the importance of a good working relationship between Chairman and the Clerk. A similar meeting was due to be arranged for Town and Parish Clerks, Cllr Green enquired if Deputy Clerks would also be invited to attend

3466 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM ERYC WARD COUNCILLORS

3466.1 Cllr Medini gave an update regarding the ongoing roadworks taking place on Thwaite Street, although there had been complications the work was due to end on the scheduled date of 4th March 2022

3466.2 Cllr Green informed Councillors that herself and Cllr Medini had been extremely busy dealing with housing issues and mental health. The quantity of young teenagers involved in incidents was alarming

3466.3 Cllr Medini informed Councillors the vandal who had caused the destruction at Blondes Coffee Shop on Hallgate had been apprehended

3467 TO DISCUSS RECEIVED CORRESPONDENCE

3467.1 Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape informed Councillors they had been invited to a Town & Parish Network Zoom Meeting to be held on Wednesday 16th March 2.00 – 3.30pm. Cllr Cantrell confirmed she would attend

Resolved: Cllr Cantrell to attend meeting

3467.2 Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape informed Councillors they had been invited to attend a meeting organised by Maureen Yates, ERYC Community & Crime Reduction Resilience Officer, on Wednesday 30th March 5pm – 8pm at the Darby & Joan Club. Councillors had been requested to contact Maureen Yates directly if they wished to book a place

3467.3 Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape distributed an update of the Cottingham Centre Recovery Plan provided by Nick Russell, ERYC Local Growth Programme Manager. Cllr Cantrell informed Councillors she had been in contact with Nick Russell and been advised grant applications needed to be submitted by 22nd March 2022. Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape requested a copy of the email sent to Cllr Cantrell from Nick Russell and will chase this up

Resolved: Deputy Clerk Nicola Pape to contact Nick Russell, ERYC Local Growth Programme Manager

3467.4 Cllr Abel informed Councillors the Parish Office had received an abusive phone call, this number has now been blocked. Cllr Cantrell requested this issue be reported to the police

3467.5 Cllr Abel informed Councillors an anonymous letter had been received by the Parish Office, this has been destroyed, the Parish Council has a policy not to act upon any anonymous correspondence. Cllr Cantrell asked for the content of the correspondence, which due to confidentiality and being a public forum was unable to be disclosed

3468 MEMBERS' POINTS OF INFORMATION AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING (DISCUSSION ITEMS ONLY)

3468.1 Cllr Green requested a public meeting be arranged for the police to attend and Cllr Duke requested the Police Crime Commissioner also attend. Parish Office to arrange meeting for Police Crime Commissioner Jonathan Evison, Chief Inspector Ahmed Hussain and Inspector Rob Danby to answer questions raised by residents

Resolved: Parish Office to organise meeting

3468.2 Cllr Duke requested the roles of Parish Chairman and Deputy Chairman be defined and enquired of the contingency measures for chairing meetings in the absence of the Chair

Exclusion of the Public: The Committee will decide if, due to the confidential nature of the business to be conducted, it is advisable that the public and press be excluded

The public left the meeting at 8:18pm

3469 TO CONFIRM, ADOPT AND SIGN THE MINUTES

Cllr Abel read out the following statement at the request of the Clerk:

As some Councillors have raised concerns regarding the publishing of the Personnel minutes on the Cottingham Community Facebook page and I will be on Annual Leave on the evening of the Full Parish Council meeting, I would like to make a statement on the matter. Though the public will not be present when the Personnel Minutes are discussed, I would like this statement minuted under the agenda item in its entirety in order for it to be on public record.

Cottingham Parish Council publishes minutes on its website. This includes Personnel Minutes and draft Minutes. Some Councillors have concerns regarding the publishing of draft minutes but it is something that we must do in the interests of transparency. For obvious and legitimate reasons, we are more reserved with Personnel minutes but any resolutions made, with a brief explanation, must be a matter of public record. Given that it was myself who wrote the minutes and that the majority of any sensitive information relates to me, I have no concerns with the information contained within them. I have nothing to hide and am perfectly happy to answer any questions that may arise.

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However, there is a world of difference between the minutes being available on our website for genuinely interested parties to examine and raise questions in a private and respectful manner and a member of the public taking it upon themselves to publish them in an open forum, make inaccurate comments, and leave the door open for others to make additional inaccurate comments. Further, I find it strange that only the Personnel minutes are highlighted and not the Planning minutes, which I uploaded to the website at the same time. Unfortunately, this is the type of thing that I have had to get used to over the last 12 months, is one of the reasons why morale is so low at Cottingham Parish Council, and is why I am seeking alternative employment. Most of my career has been in the public sector yet I have never encountered as much undue interference as I have since becoming the Clerk of Cottingham Parish Council. I have friends and family in Cottingham who are members of the Cottingham Community facebook group and it is highly embarrassing to me when they see inaccurate comments regarding my employment.

I was not aware of the publishing of the minutes on the Cottingham Community Facebook group, and the subsequent comments, until Cllr Casson raised the matter as I left the group a few months ago due to posts I had seen and the impact they were having on my mental and physical health. It is my hope that, in this #bekind age that we all purport to live in, this statement will encourage people to examine the way they behave online. I have reached out to an administrator of the Cottingham Community Facebook group to discuss the relationship between the Parish Council and the group, but am yet to receive a reply. People both within the Parish Council and outside have professed to support staff welfare and I would call on them to act on their words.

I am all for transparency, accountability, and democratic rights however I do feel like posts are made on the Cottingham Community group with little understanding of the impact they can have, little care for factual accuracy, and little chance for Cottingham Parish Council to defend itself. The Parish Council is very different to East Riding of Yorkshire Council, we do not have millions of pounds to spend with hundreds of members of staff, we are a small team with limited resources that carry out important work on a day-to-day basis that goes unrecognised. Under normal circumstances I am completely fine with this situation but not when we also have to deal with the highly toxic environment that has arisen within Cottingham in the last year.

Councillors discussed the content of the above statement, Cllr Cantrell wished it to be minuted she was unhappy that references continue to be made that issues have arisen at the Parish Council since May 2021

3469.1 Personnel Committee meeting held on 9th February 2022

Councillors discussed the proposed pay increase for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, this was approved on a majority vote. Cllr Casson wished it to be minuted that he couldn't vote for this increase to salary as there were no details attaining to total costs to the Parish, he, Cllr Duke and Cllr Cantrell wished for a breakdown of the salary details

Resolved: That all minutes be adopted as a true record

There was no other business and the Meeting closed at 8:45pm

Signed Chairman of the Cottingham Parish
Council