

BRADFIELD ST. GEORGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD
AT BRADFIELD ST GEORGE VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 13th MARCH 2024

Present: Cllrs P Squirrell (Chairman), C Stainer, A Therin, T Wright & J Peck.
C Hibbert (clerk). WSC Cllr S Mildmay-White.
No members of the public.

The meeting opened at 7.30pm

1. APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR APPROVAL OF APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllrs C Croot & G Mulley. No application for approval of apologies received.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

N/a.

3. INTERESTS

3.1 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest on any item in the agenda; CS declared an interest in item 5.3 and 8.2 as Trustee of the VHMC.

3.2 To consider any applications for dispensations. No dispensation applications were received.

4. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATED 17th JANUARY 2024. The minutes of the Council meeting held on 17th January 2024 were **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED** and signed as a true and accurate record.

5. REPORTS

5.1 Suffolk County Council report. In her absence, SCC Cllr Soons' report was received and will be uploaded onto the website.

5.2 West Suffolk Council report. WS Cllr S Mildmay-White presented her report, a copy of which will be uploaded onto the website. Discussion followed about the cost/benefit of various approaches to recycling; the unrestricted number of dogs which may be walked at any time; the willingness of police representatives to visit the villages; the apparent lack of SCC funding to address local drainage/highway issues; lack of information about the construction timetable for the Abbott Vale development.

5.3 Village Hall report. The Chairman of the VHMC presented her report (copy attached).

6. PLANNING AND APPEALS

6.1 To receive planning notifications. The following notifications were received:- [Householder planning application - carport and store](#) Abbots Hall Smallwood Green Bradfield St George Suffolk IP30 0AL | Ref. No: DC/23/2055/HH | Received: Tue 19 Dec 2023 | Validated: Tue 19 Dec 2023 | Status: Approved.

It was noted that WSC was aware of the use of non-compliant tiles on a house extension underway in the village.

7. TO CONSIDER

7.1 Emergency Community Plan update AT confirmed he has submitted the first draft emergency plan to WSC – comments are still awaited.

7.2 Review and approve risk assessments; The risk assessments were reviewed and **APPROVED**. It was **NOTED** that no tree inspection has taken place in the previous year; it was **AGREED** to consult informally with SB to check whether any tree work on the Green is required.

7.3 Review asset register.

The asset register attached was reviewed and **APPROVED**. It was **NOTED** that the noticeboard and bench in the vicinity of the Green remain serviceable, although they look rather shabby; it was **AGREED** to monitor their condition; those present confirmed that the apple press was locked away at the village hall and was only available for use under supervision of an experienced operator.

8. FINANCES

8.1 To receive and approve the bi-monthly financial summary for January-February 2024; received and **APPROVED**.

8.2 To approve payments to be issued; the following online payments were **APPROVED**. It was **NOTED** that two allotment rents remain unpaid for the current year; chasing correspondence has been sent.

Detail	Cheque no/online	Payment	Net	VAT	Gross
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	authorisation				
1.	BT	DD - TBC	23.94	4.79	28.73
2.	BT	DD -TBC	23.94	4.79	28.73
3.	VHMC	online	20.00		20.00
4.	CH	wage	521.40		<u>521.40</u>
5.	HMRC	Tax on wage	117.40		117.40

8.3 To appoint SALC as internal auditor; APPROVED

8.4 Review adequacy of internal controls. The internal statement of controls was reviewed and was **APPROVED** as adequate. It was **NOTED** that AT has completed the report on internal controls procedures for the period Sept 23-March 24, for which thanks.

9. CORRESPONDENCE AND CIRCULARS The following correspondence was received and **NOTED**;-

- 9.1 SALC e bulletins February/March;
- 9.2 SC Cllr Soons information on arts funding;
- 9.3 WSC information on Capital Sports Fund;
- 9.4 West Suffolk Local Plan (Regulation 19) Submission Draft January 2024- consultation draft;
- 9.5 SCC response re report of flooding on highway causing accident;
- 9.6 SALC member survey;
- 9.7 SALC info on ‘Devolution and what it could mean for Suffolk’ events;
- 9.8 West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations;
- 9.9 Info on West Suffolk Parish and Town Forum 18 March 2024;
- 9.10 Offer of free portrait of King;
- 9.11 West Suffolk Town and Parish Forum - Highways information request;
- 9.12 BT notice of annual contract price increase effective 1/4/24;
- 9.13 Crime stats for 2024 .

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is **Wednesday 8th May 2024 at 7.30pm** to follow the APM at 7.00pm.

AOB the meeting discussed the serious car accident along Felsham Road in January caused by water ingress onto the carriageway which had then frozen making driving conditions hazardous. The meeting had been reported to SCC but they confirmed that they would not be taking any action in response. The meeting heard about a generous offer from a local firm to survey the relevant section of culvert at no cost, for which many thanks. It was **AGREED** that contact would be made with the relevant landowner prior to this exercise being undertaken.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Attachment to item 5.3 Bradfield St George Village Hall Management Committee -Chair’s Report to the Parish Council March 2024

- The first Bradfield Night (BN) of 2024 was very well attended and many people enjoyed a meal cooked by Arnaud on the first Friday of February.
- The March BN was the first in which food was bought in from The Bennett Arms. This proved to be very successful, and everyone enjoyed the shepherd’s pie and cheesecake provide by them. The kitchen was staffed by volunteers from the village and there was a convivial atmosphere in both the kitchen and the hall. The only downside to this new arrangement is that we stand to make a loss as we sell the food at the price that we pay for it. The few leftovers were ‘sold’ for a donation. When Lynn was cooking, we made a modest profit.
- At the March BN a gift was presented to Lynn for her excellent cooking ever since BN began!
- Unfortunately, the quiz night in February was not well attended and the March one was cancelled due to lack of teams.
- Bookings continue to tick over, with regular yoga classes and occasional bookings from private individuals and other groups.
- Rugby matches continue to be live streamed when England is playing with the bar being open.

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- Christine (and Richard) ran a bar for an event run by Bradfield St Clare Church in March which will have made a profit for the VH.

Attachment 7.3 BRADFIELD ST. GEORGE ASSETS REGISTER

As at 13th March 2024 the following assets were held:-

Item	Location	Purchased	Value
Village Green	Church Road	Pre 2003	current agricultural rate £5,500 approx
Allotments	Church Road/Rougham Road	Pre 2003	current agricultural rate £4,500 approx.
Village sign	Cnr. Freewood Street	Pre 2003	£2,811
Notice Board	Freewood Street	2006	£810
Notice Board	Village Hall	2010	£340
Replacement Coronation Seat	T junction /Rougham Road	2011	£400
Bench	Oakey Lea	2020	£345
BT phone Kiosk	Hollybush Cnr. Inc shelving		£1 + £795.70 =£796.70
5 Grit bins	1 top of Freewood Street 1 opposite VH 1 Hollybush Corner 1 Maypole Green 1 corner church lane	2012	£530x 2/3 = £353
Defibrillator and housing	Village Hall	2020	£2,140
Apple press	Village Hall	2022	£948
Wild fowl signage	Nr Smallwood Green	2022	£228
Total value			£19,171.70

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Attachment to item 8.4 BRADFIELD ST GEORGE PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Bradfield St George Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

The council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its November meeting and also approves the level of precept for the following financial year.

A Councillor is asked to check bank statements at each meeting against the bank reconciliation.

The full council meets 6 times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the parish clerk.

The council has now resolved to carry out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures using the attached Report.

Clerk to the Council:

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments:

All payments are reported to the council for approval. Two members of the council must sign every cheque or online payment schedule. The signatories should consider each payment against the relevant invoice, sign the invoice and initial the cheque counterfoil/ schedule of payments All authorised cheque/online payment signatories are members of the Council. Online payments can only be processed after two councillors have signed the schedule for online payments and supporting invoices.

Income:

All income is received and banked in the council's name in a timely manner and reported to the council.

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Risk Assessments/Risk Management:

The council reviews its risk assessment annually in March, and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

Internal Audit:

The council appoints an independent and competent internal auditor who reports to the council on an annual basis on the adequacy of it's:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management

External Audit:

The council's external auditors, submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Council.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which should include a review of the effectiveness of internal audit. The results of that review must be considered by the Council, which should also approve the Statement of Internal Control.

Chairman

RFO/Clerk

Approved and adopted by Bradfield St George Parish Council

Meeting date: 13 March 2024

Signature.....