**Scrayingham Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Scrayingham Parish Council Meeting**

**Held on Wednesday 19th April 2023**

**At 19:00hrs in Leavening Methodist Hall**

**Attendees:**

Phil Jones (Chairman) (PJ)

Jo Booth (JB) (Vice Chair)

Mervyn Stone (MS)

Carolyn Stone (CS)

Stuart Wood (SW)

Nigel Prewett (NH)

Caroline Goodrick (CG) North Yorkshire Council

**Not Present**: Hugo Hildyard (HH)

PJ thanked all for attending.

**1. Minutes of Previous Meetings & Actions Arising**

a) The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2023 were read and approved by all in attendance at that meeting

**2. Financial Statement/Audit/Authorisation of Payments and Subscriptions**

a) JB has managed to obtain bank statements for FY22/23 from Barclays and received two payments of compensation for poor service from them to the value of £250 and £50 paid directly into the Parish Council bank account.

b) JB has completed the accounts for FY22/23

c) JB visited Elkerlodge Bookkeeping, Carrie Pillow on 08/05/23 (following email authorisation via email for a fee of £115) to draw up FY22/23 AGAR and audit the accounts.

d) Online banking is not yet sorted. JB discussing with Barclays.

e) JB has been sent the bank statements back to 2018 in order to build the accounts for the previous 5 years and needs to request statements back to 2015 in order to make the accounts fully transparent.

f) Barclays have now approved JB as a bank signatory

g) Cheques approved and signed as follows;

100215 PKF LittleJohn @ £240 Fines for non-submission of previous AGARS (Signed by PJ/ JB)

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100217 PKF LittleJohn @ £240 Fines for non-submission of previous AGARS (Signed by PJ/ JB)

100218 Elkerlodge Bookkeeping @ £115 (Signed by PJ/ JB)

100219 YLCA Membership @ £128 (Signed by PJ/ JB)

100220 To Jo Booth/ Webador fees (website and email hosting for FY 22/23) @ £57.60 (Signed by PJ/ MS)

100221 Leavening Methodist Trust (meeting room hire) @ £15 (Signed by PJ/ JB)

h) CG asked that we initial our cheque stubs going forward too.

**3. To approve and sign this year’s AGAR submission**

a) FY22/23 AGAR approved by all and signed by Chair (PJ) and Vice Chair (JB)

**4. To discuss this year’s internal audit report**

a) JB ran through the AGAR/ Internal Audit report findings as per below table.

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| **Concern at Audit** | **Comment of AGAR form** | **Action taken to rectify** | **Actions outstanding** |
| **Governance** |  |  |  |
| Illegal spend at church (Not allowed to spend on private or church land) | Simple spreadsheet, small amount of transactions, acceptable. No powers specified, spending on maintenance of open churchyard. Council have no power to spend on this. |  | Need to discuss the shed that was previously approved for purchase.  Need to discuss linesman duties |  |
| No clerk | No clerk working with vice chair | Advertised. We have had 25x applicants, all not geographically suitable. Advertised on web and LinkedIn.  JB stated that although advertised, it would be better to have finances and documentation in order before employing someone new into this position. | CG advised that she will look into possible options for Clerk. |  |
|  | Cllrs need to remember they have signed a declaration of acceptance of office and need to uphold duties and responsibilities and work within powers. | JB reminded all at this meeting |  |  |
|  | Recommend a whole council YLCA training session |  | Training session to be arranged. CG agreed this was a good idea. |  |
| Cannot see 'Declaration of Acceptance' forms | Need to re-sign our Declaration of Acceptance into office forms | NY Council don’t have these | All to re-sign this form |  |
| Cannot see 'Register of Interest' forms on NYCC | Need to re-sign our Register of Interest forms | JB has received these forms from NYC and has uploaded them to the website |  |  |
| Transparency - need minutes dating back to 2015 on website |  |  | PJ was asked to find these so they can be placed on the website |  |
| Transparency - need financials dating back to 2015 on website |  | JB has done the accounts from 2018-current. Have bank statements for 5 years. | Need bank statements 2015-2018. Need old cheque book stubs and minutes from 2015-2022. PJ asked to locate and provide these to JB. |  |
| Insurance policy - break in payment/ policy |  | We have our policy documentation. Premium has gone up threefold. | PJ to check we are covered due to policy lapse and non submitted AGARs and investigate why the premium has gone up 3-fold. |  |
| Insurance policy - 3 quotes not obtained |  | JB has 4 companies lined up for quotes at renewal time.  CS asked when renewal time was. JB confirmed this to be some time in August. | Check cover. If not, see if fidelity insurance covers us. All personally liable if not covered. |  |
| Website | Needs work to bring up to transparency standard | JB has done website accessibility statement | JB to keep building website and ensure Accessibility |  |
| Minutes | Current year only |  | PJ to find previous minutes and put these onto website |  |
| **Bookkeeping** |  |  |  |  |
|  | There is doubt as to the legality of this council. I am very concerned that the last 5 years accounts are unaudited |  |  |  |
| No AGAR submitted for 5 years. Collecting public money/ precept illegally | The AGAR has not been submitted for 5 years. 20/21 failed to submit/ 19/20 failed to submit/ 17/18 failed to submit/ 21/22 failed to submit |  | PJ to confirm which fines have already been paid from his own account. JB to contact PKF LittleJohn to see what is outstanding. |  |
| Large amount of money in funds. Balance too high. Collecting public money/ precept illegally. Spend or consider not collecting precept to reduce it. | There is a large reserve £7744.91 and council continues to collect precept. General reserve is high for a parish council. |  | Our outgoings are higher than precept. Discussed and decided to review after the payment of outstanding fines and fees. |  |
| No public rights held for 5 years | The council needs to consider using the reserve to the benefit of the parish or reducing or stopping collecting the precept |  |  |  |
| No budget done | No budget done | Budget in place for FY20/21. Budget in place for FY22/23. | Budget has been done for FY23/24 but needs approval – JB to send this to all for approval at next meeting. |  |
| No PAYE/ NI/ tax paid on Clerks wages | no clerk at present, no paye in past | JB has advised Jo Green of the situation and she will be submitting a self return. JG will let us know if she encounters any issues. |  |  |
| Onedrive | Digital copies of data need saving to a cloud that can be accessed by more than one person | Onedrive set up. JB to share this with all. | 14 days to put everything anyone has on there. Only the council have access to this. |  |
| No accounts records for the last 5 years |  | JB has done the accounts from 2018-current. Need minutes and receipts | PJ to locate minutes and receipts for 2018-current |  |
| FY21-22 Questionable transaction (40k grant)  No powers to obtain this grant Was on private land, private individual gain Gov grant form doesn’t look legit Company Buro Happold looks like scam, a lot of mini companies under name of Alan John Harbison. Looks like Money Laundering. Co. turnover not high. Set up 2 days before receiving money. | In 2021 29/07/21 £35000 came into the account (then £5179.91 £34820 totalling £40000.31) £5000.31 of public money spent? Power to spend? Power to Act? What spent on? Legal? Who has benefitted as the council don’t own property? Power to spend? Land owners need to repay the council the public money. |  | The Internal Auditor Carrie Pillow has escalated this to the Ward Councillor (CG), Monitoring Officer Barry Khan and PKF Littlejohn for investigation. CG agreed that any private land owner benefitting MAY need to repay but this will be investigated.  Objections were made as to these accusations. JB reminded all that the Internal Auditor was working on information provided at the time of the audit and no evidence regarding these transactions were present as we had only gone to the audit with FY22/23 information. JB requested that all documentation relating to this be gathered and made available for the return visit. |  |
| FY21-22 Questionable transaction (40k grant) Need evidence of it all. No report. No grant application forms |  |  | PJ to locate report and all documentation relating to this, and make it available. PJ to find all transaction receipts and correspondance |  |
| FY21-22 Questionable transaction (40k grant) 5k received currently missing. Need to prove with bank statements |  | No longer missing. JB has bank statements to prove it was received from Tees into the Parish Council account. |  |  |
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| **Assets** |  |  |  |  |
| No asset register | No asset register. Has defibs, needs to be rebuilt |  | PJ has an asset register and will provide this to JB to make available on the web. Dog bins to be added. |  |
| Defibs not on maintenance |  | JB has asked for quote from Community Heartbeat (who just do consumables) and have other quotes eg. AED Expert £149 AED Service £165 Safe lines £126 Defib4life £145 (All x2). | All - need to discuss and agree cover at AGM. JB to provide detail as to what each company covers.  CG advised that we can set aside money for defibs in the budget. |
| **Missing documents** |  |  |  |  |
|  | Requires placing on web asap |  |  |  |
| Standing orders |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Financial regulations |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Members Register of Interests |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Declaration of Acceptance of Office -all |  |  | Need resigning |  |
| Declaration of Acceptance of Office -chairs |  |  | Need resigning |  |
| Co-option policy |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |
| TOR for committees |  |  | JB to do |  |
| Publication scheme under the freedom of information act 2000 |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Privacy Notice - general |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Privacy Notice - employees, councillors, role holders |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Data audit |  |  | To do |
| Data Protection/ infosec policy GPDR |  |  | JB to do |  |
| Complaints procedure |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Recording policy |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Website Accessibility Statement |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Schedule of charges/ fees |  |  | JB to do |  |
| Reserves policy |  |  | JB to do |  |
| Grievance policy |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Disciplinary procedure |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
| Business Continuity Plan |  |  | To discuss as a group - extra meeting? |  |
| Training Statement of Intent |  | JB has produced this – now approved and on the website |  |  |
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**5. To discuss the impact of the Internal Audit**

a) JB advised that the Internal Auditor, Carrie Pillow has reported Scrayingham Parish Council to the Monitoring Officer Barry Khan, to Councillor Caroline Goodrick, and to the external auditors PKF Littlejohn.

b) JB stated that the Internal Auditor, Carrie Pillow advised that the Chair should step-down or be issued with a vote of no confidence. CG advised that nobody needs to be stepping down hastily and that we should speak with Sheena Spence at YLCA for advice.

c) JB stated that the Internal Auditor, Carrie Pillow advised that there may be a 5 year investigation into finances/ transactions

d) JB stated that the Internal Auditor, Carrie Pillow advised that the Scrayingham Parish Council may be dissolved and 2x District Councillors put in place.

e) At the advice of Carrie Pillow, JB reminded all of the seriousness of this. That we are spending public money and are all personally liable as Councillors.

f) JB advised that the next steps will be to return to Elkerlodge Bookkeeping to submit and send the AGAR for FY22/23

g) CG advised that we speak with Sheena Spence at YLCA for advice, although when she spoke with Sheena did not believe we had paid our membership (JB confirmed that we have and have received a receipt)

**6. Any Other Business**

a) JB provided an update on the Scrayingham pot hole and gullies situation. She had spoken with Highways (John) who was coming to further assess within the next two weeks and put in an order for the completion of the work towards the Buttercrambe end of the Scrayingham road and what is known as Middle Lane. (Evers/ Malton end already completed)

b) SW asked if we could have a village gathering by way of a rounders match and BBQ for the two villages once an appropriate field had been mown. CG offered to contribute £300 from the locality budget for this gathering, if the Scrayingham Parish Council also make a small contribution (£5)

c) MS asked CG as to whether we could also ringfence money for footpaths, and was advised no, only for the defibs.

d) MS queried CG as to whether the road in Scrayingham could be reduced to 20mph, but CG advised that it couldn’t.

e) CG provided Sheena Spence’s details to JB. CG advised us to check our YLCA membership status.

f) CG will look into whether her daughter could fulfil the role of Clerk for us.

g) No members of the public were present at this meeting

**7. Date & Time of Next Meeting**

a) The next meeting will be the Annual Meetings and will be held on Monday 15th May 2023 at 18:30hrs, followed by Annual meeting of the Parish at 19:30hrs