

Advisory & Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a Meeting held on Thursday 12th November 2024 at 19:00 via Zoom

Present: Cllr K Applegate (Chairman), Cllr R Tungate, Cllr A Bonham, Clerk: C Dickson		
Minute	Details	Action
AC310	Apologies for Absence None.	
AC311	Declarations of Interest None received.	
AC312	Minutes of the Last Meeting 5th September 2024 The minutes were unanimously approved and will be signed by Cllr Applegate as Chairman of the meeting.	
AC313	Matters Arising AC301 – ToR for the Social Media Group – on agenda AC302 – retention of WhatsApp messages – mentioned in Document Retention Policy	
AC314	Public Participation None in attendance.	
AC315	Social Media Group Terms of Reference The Social Media Group Terms of Reference were discussed by the Council at their meeting on 23 rd September. One amendment was suggested: the group will report to the Recreation and Wellbeing Committee from now on rather than full Council. The Committee recommended the amended Social Media Group Terms of Reference for approval by the full Council.	
AC316	Church Fen Working Group Terms of Reference The Committee considered Terms of Reference for a Church Fen Working Group to look at the creation of a Management Plan for Church Fen, as referred by the Land Management Committee. No changes were suggested. The Committee recommended the Church Fen Working Group Terms of Reference for approval by the full Council.	
AC317	Members Expenses Policy The Committee considered a Members Expenses Policy based on the Staff Expenses Policy. 2 amendments were made: 4. Subsistence Claims for the costs of meals and beverages reasonably purchased when travelling on Parish Council business. This is intended to reimburse the elected member for expense as a result of having to travel on Parish Council business. was amended to: Claims for the costs of meals and beverages necessarily purchased at reasonable cost when travelling on Parish Council business. This is intended to reimburse the elected member for expenses as a result of having to travel on Parish Council business. The Committee recommended the revised Members Expenses Policy for approval by the full Council. The Committee also recommended revising the Staff Expenses Policy.	

AC318	Employment Policy The Committee discussed several amendments to the current Employment Policy but found that the Disciplinary Procedure was disjointed and unclear. It was agreed it was not worth pursuing amending the old policy and the Clerk will look for better examples to create a new policy.*	*Clerk
AC319	Gifted Bench Policy The Committee was asked to review the Gifted Bench Policy to ensure the installation and maintenance contributions were in line with what the Council is being charged by contractors. The following changes were made: 3.11 "Any maintenance carried out by a third party will be in strict agreement with the Parish Council and by appointment only" was removed. The Committee suggested that the maintenance charge be combined into the charge for the bench therefore at 4.2 the charge for a Hardwood Bench was amended from £400 to £500 and the charge for a Recycled Bench was amended from £500 to £600. The Installation Charge was removed and "depending on location, market cost to be approved in advance" was substituted. The Committee agreed that the revised Gifted Bench Policy would be recommended for approval by the full Council.	
AC320	Land Management Committee Terms of Reference The Committee considered revised Terms of Reference for the Land Management Committee as discussed at the Strategy Day. A committee responsible for land management may have non-Council members but it may not have non-voting members therefore the Council discussed revising the ToR to make the Committee Council members only but to invite representatives of the Land Groups to the meeting. The Committee suggested one further amendment: 'facilities' was amended to 'assets' in the first paragraph. The Committee recommended the revised Land Management Committee Terms of Reference for approval by the full Council.	
AC321	Records Management and Document Retention Policy The Committee considered a revised Records Management and Document Retention Policy. One sentence was added at the end: The users of these systems should be aware that any communication by email, SMS or WhatsApp can be subject to an FOI or SAR request by the general public. The Committee recommended the revised Records Management and Document Retention Policy for approval by the full Council.	
AC322	Dissemination of Information The Committee were concerned about the use of WhatsApp for chats and discussions and that they would be liable to FOI and SAR requests. A suggestion that messages should be deleted after 1 year will be recommended to full Council, and to remind Councillors that they should be aware how they communicate within and outside the Council.	
AC323	Items for the next Agenda (not for discussion) Employment Policy	
AC324	Next meeting(s): 14th January 2024 7pm Meeting Closed at 20.38pm	
	Signed as a true record..... Date.....	