

NEWICK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Newick Parish Council Finance and General Purposes Committee held at the Sports Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Allington Road on Tuesday, 13th January 2015 at 7.25 p.m.

Present: Councillors: R. Houghton, C. Jago (Chairman for this committee), J. Lucas, and Mrs M Thew
In Attendance: Mrs. S. Berry (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given** – No apologies had been received.
2. **Disclosure by Members of personal interest in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct** – No disclosures were made
3. **Questions or Statements by Members of the Public** – No members of the public were present.
4. **Review of Statement of Performance against budget (Outturn) as at end of December 2014** – The statement of performance against budget as at the end of December 2014 had been distributed in advance of the meeting and was noted.
5. **Risk and Management Controls** – It was reported that the Chairman of the Council had checked the quarterly bank reconciliation on 8th January 2015. He had also checked the calculation of the Clerk's salary and the calculation of pension contributions sent to the East Sussex Pension Fund. Copies of the completed bank reconciliation had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Draft updates of the Freedom of Information Policy and associated Freedom of Information Scheme had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was agreed to recommend that the Parish Council should formally adopt these documents.

6. **Internal Audit**

The Internal Auditor's interim report had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was noted. The auditor had highlighted page 50 of 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils' 2014 and advised that it would be wise to cover these internal controls before the submission of the 2014/15 Annual Return. It was noted that the Parish Council's procedures were mainly in accordance with this guidance, however, the Clerk was asked to seek further clarification on four of the items as to how these requirements could be satisfied.

It was noted that the auditor had suggested that clarification of the Sports Club's activities at the Sports Pavilion should be sought. It was agreed that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of F&GP, would draft a letter to be sent to the Sports Club.

It was noted that a meeting had already been held with officers of the Sports Pavilion Management Committee (SPMC) and that arrangements had been agreed for the SPMC accounts and balances to be incorporated into the Parish Council's end of year accounts in March 2015 and quarterly thereafter.

7. **Review of Financial Regulations** – It was noted that Cllr. Allen had carried out a comparison of the Parish Council's Financial Regulations with the new Model Financial Regulations produced by NALC. It was agreed to recommend that the Parish Council should make only minor amendments to its Financial Regulations but that the new council to be elected in May 2015 should be advised to reconsider the

matter at an early stage in its term of office. The proposed amendments were to paragraphs 7 (Banking Arrangements and Cheques), 8 (Payment of Accounts), and 9 (Payment of Salaries). It was noted that the existing Regulations specified that the Internal Auditor also needed to approve changes to payment arrangements.

8. **Review of Flag Policy** – A draft updated Flag Policy had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the Parish Council's Flag Officer had approved the update and it was agreed to recommend that the Parish Council should formally adopt the updated document.

9. **Review of Policy for the Retention of Parish Records** – A draft updated policy for the Retention of Parish Records, based on the National Association of Local Council's Legal Topic Note 40 (January 2013) had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was agreed to recommend that the Parish Council should formally adopt the updated document.

10. **Retention of Parish Records** – A report from the Clerk, which requested additional resources to carry out a review of the records held and to dispose of or retain records in accordance with legal requirements and the Parish Council's policy, had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk could purchase storage boxes, transfer files and memory sticks in accordance with existing delegated authority (Financial Regulation 12 – Clerk's delegated authority). It was agreed that the former Clerk could be engaged for up to 7 hours and the Clerk could be paid for an additional 7 hours at the normal hourly rate in order to carry out the review and disposal exercise (Financial Regulation 12 – Chairman's delegated authority).

The Meeting Closed at 8.03 p.m.

Signed.....Dated.....