**SALT & ENSON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Meeting Held Wednesday 8th January 2025**

**at Salt Village Hall, Salt at 7.30 pm**

The meeting began at 7.30 p.m.

**Mrs Pat Scott.**

**It is with deep regret that the Parish Council learned of the passing of Mrs Pat Scott As a past Chair of Salt and Enson Parish Council, the late Mrs Scott was highly regarded, and effective in guiding the Parish Council for many years. The present Parish Councillors, and Chair, wish to record an acknowledgment of the debt the Parish has to Mrs Scott for all her past work, and offer their deepest condolences to the Scott family.**

**Funeral arrangements are yet to be finalised but will likely take place before the end of January at St James Church, Salt.**

**Public Open Forum** – One member of the public attended.

The member of the public produced a paper commenting on the recent visit of the County Highways Officer to the village on 12th November. This was read and discussed under **Agenda item 8 To Discuss Highways issues and note any requiring reporting.** See later minute under item 8.

1. **Attendees and Apologies**

Attendees: Chair - Barbara Clancy

Councillors R Walls, J Starr, C Beardmore , JD Scott , N Tonks, I Wimshurst

Stafford Borough Councillor Karine Aspin

Clerk DW Croxford

Apologies – None

The meeting was quorate.

1. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests relating to items on the agenda**

None declared.

1. **Minutes of the meetings held on 6th November 2024**

These were agreed as a true and correct record by all present.

**4. Matters arising from those minutes**

None arisen, albeit is noted that a decision from Stafford Borough Council Planning Office is yet to be made on the application 24/38837/LDC Brick Kiln Lane. An extension of time to 31 January 2025 has been granted.

**5 .Planning**

No applications received at date of publication of Agenda

**6. Reports**

* Report from County Councillor John Francis – no report received.

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* Report from Borough Councillor Frances Beatty – last written report was 12th October 2024 and previously circulated.
* Borough Councillor Aspin reported that there was presently a consultation period running in respect of the 4 Year Borough Corporate Plan, that there was similarly a consultation period running for the Borough Homeless and Rough Sleepers Strategy, that the Borough were conducting their annual request to landowners to highlight vacant land with building potential, and that there had been a planning appeal lodged in respect of the solar farm in Drointon.
* Report from Village Hall Management Committee – Councillor Clancy advised that the Village Hall needed roof repairs and that a quotation had been obtained to complete the work at £2,000. In response to a request for donation support it was suggested the VHMC return with a formal request to the next Parish Council meeting in March for the part of the cost they cannot afford.

**7. To receive Financial Statement and Clerks report**

i) To approve financial payments, receipts and transfers.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Paid prior to the meeting** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Paid To** | **Details** | **Amt** | **VAT** | **Total to pay** |
| ICO | GDPR Annual DD | £35.00  |   | 35.00 |  |
| Vision ICT  | Website / E mail hosting annual fee | £154.38  | £30.88  | 185.26 |  |
| Clerk D Croxford | GROSS Salary 1 Oct - 31 Dec 2024 | £813.20  |   | 813.20 |  |
| HMRC | Paye re above  | £203.20  |   | 203.20 |  |
| Clerk D Croxford | Expenses 1 Oct - 31 Dec 2024 | £113.75  |   | 113.75 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | 1,350.41 |  |
|  **To be Paid** |  |  |  |  |  |
| St James Church, Salt with St Peter’s Hopton | Burial ground upkeep donation | £500.00  |   | 500.00 |  |
| Salt Friendship Club  | Donation | £400.00  |   | 400.00 |  |
| Mid Trent Churches (Compass Magazine) | Donation | £200.00  |   | 200.00 |  |
|   |   |   |   | 0.00 |  |
|   |   |   |   | 0.00 |  |
|   |   |   |   | 0.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | 1,100.00 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **TOTAL** |  |  | 2,450.41 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

These were approved by all present.

ii) The clerk had circulated the **financial statement** and **bank reconciliation** reports and both were approved by all present.

iii) To consider Draft **Budget and Precept 2025-2026**

The final **Budget / Precept request for 2025-2026** had been circulated by the Clerk before the meeting for consideration. It was **RESOLVED** by unanimous agreement to set the annual budget for 2025-2026 at £8,974 and to submit a precept request to Stafford Borough Council of £8,614 plus £360 concurrent function funding. *Clerk to apply to SBC for this sum.*

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iv) To consider **donations to village organisations**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to make the following Donations:

£500 to St James Church, Salt with St Peter’s Hopton for the upkeep of Burial Ground

£400 to Salt Friendship Club

£200 to Mid Trent Churches (Compass Magazine)

*Clerk to make the payments***.**

v)To consider **Earmarked Reserves for 2024/2025**

Clerk advised the current position is as follows. Funds are held in the separate reserve Bank account.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **RESERVES January 2025** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Purpose of Reserve |  | Amount Held at 31/03/2024 |  |
| General Funds Reserve |  | £8,100 |  |  |  |
| Cost of Elections Fund |  | £5,500 |  |  |  |
| Computer/Printer (over 5 years) |  | £580 |  |  |  |
| Village Notice Board @ Holly Bush added 28/9/21 |  | **£2,000** |  | **Spent 1/2025** |  |
| Coronation Celebration (£500) and Tree(£250) |  |  | £750 | Released to C/Acc 9/2023 |
| Defibrillator Reserve |  |  | £1,520 | Released to C/Acc 9/2023 |
| Probable Donation to St James Church Salt |  | £1,000 | Added 3/24 |  |  |
| To secure benches /planters adj Hunters Ct |  | **£350** | Added 3/24 | **Spent £350 5/2024** |
|  |  | £17,530 |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

To regularise matters it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to transfer £2,350 from the Reserve Account to the Current Account following the installation of the benches and planters and the purchase of the new notice board. *Clerk to arrange.*

It was considered prudent to increase the Cost of Elections Fund by £500

and the Computer/Printer fund by £40. This will be formally agreed, alongside any other newly designated Reserves at the March Parish Council meeting.

vii) To consider **changing Bankers to NatWest.**

The Parish Council’s present Bankers, Lloyds are to impose charges on the two bank accounts the Parish hold, totalling c £127 per annum. They will not waive these charges.

NatWest offer a free Community Bank account and it was decided that the Clerk should attempt to open such an account(s) with NatWest via their online portal. It was decided that the present three signatories would remain, but joined by a fourth, to give more flexibility on an “any two to sign” basis. The Clerk will remain not a signatory on the account(s).

*Clerk to proceed with opening a NatWest Community Account(s).*

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**8. To discuss Highways issues and note any requiring reporting**

* Issues following the visit by the Highways Officer to Salt village on Tuesday 12th November at 11 a.m.

As indicated above a member of the Public had been made aware of the Highways Officer visit, and the proposed actions following; namely that there should be a joint collaborative approach to resolve the longstanding annual flooding issues in the village, between the County Highways team and the local landowners. The latter deemed by County Highways, to have responsibilities for clearing their roadside ditches that drain their land, and when not clear, flood onto the highway.

The County Highways team contend that until the ditches are cleared, then any other highways maintenance, including gulley emptying, would be futile and the problem would remain. If the ditches are cleared the County Highways team could schedule and commence subsequent necessary works to resolve the problem.

Currently the Parish Council are advised that the local landowners are willing in principle to clear their roadside ditches but have concerns as to Highway safety, and related implications, whilst they do the work. The Clerk is seeking to clarify matters with the Highways Officer, but the Officer is currently on annual leave until the end of January.

The member of the Public outlined concerns he has in respect of potential dangers to individuals from damaging any existing buried utility apparatus in the vicinity of these ditches, that any persons working on the highway needs to be registered under the appropriate legislation as well as being fully insured for costs of repair to any damaged apparatus. Overall the member of the public was of the view that County Highways themselves should take complete ownership and cost of all the work rather than local landowners become involved.

The member of the public was thanked for his input.

The Parish Council will arrange a further meeting with the Highways Officer on her return from leave.

**9. To review correspondence received and consider items of business for the next meeting.**

* **Civic Amenity Skip dates offered as 22 March, 5 July and 25 October 2025**. Each 10.30-12.30. March and July at Village Hall Car Park, October at Holly Bush Inn car park. These dates were confirmed and *Clerk to respond to the Borough Council advising the same and returning the necessary agreement form.*
* All other items of note had been circulated to all prior to the meeting.

**10. To inform attendees of dates of future meetings**

Dates of future meetings at Salt Village Hall during **2025** as follows: Wednesdays at 7.30pm.

5 March, 7 May (Annuals), 2 July, 3 Sept, 5 Nov

Councillor Clancy thanked for arranging the bookings with the Village Hall.

**11. Meeting closed at 20.30 hrs**

Signed .......................................... .........................................

Chair Cncllr B Clancy Clerk DWCroxford

Date...................................

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