

Ormesby St Margaret with Scratby Parish Council

Minutes of an Extraordinary meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday 5th October 2021

at the Village Centre. Station Road, Ormesby St Margaret NR29 3PU

Issued 10 October 2021

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs C Lee (Chair) M Cheetham, J Beaumont, S Bigg, G Freeman, J Green, A Grant, R Hill, P Holley, J Rundle, J Shrimplin, D Troy, K Wendt,

In attendance: Borough Cllrs R Hanton, G Freeman

Mr P Stone, Clerk and 10 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs N Lee and R Hirst.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Wendt & Holley items 7 (committees and working parties) 8 (extending time of council meetings),9 (documents for meetings) and 10 (financial regulations).

3 Agenda

Cllrs Holley and Wendt both expressed dissatisfaction with the additional agenda items 3 (minutes of previous meeting) 4 (NALC update on matters arising) 5 Correspondence and 6 (Public participation) added to the agenda by the clerk, and requested that these items not be discussed. The Chair and clerk both confirmed that the Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) had provided full advice prior to service of the agenda that it was entirely acceptable for the clerk to add additional items if he saw fit, and in relation to item 4 in particular the content was relevant to the issues raised by both councillors.

Cllr Holley presented the Chair with a copy of the extraordinary meeting request which had been signed by the clerk. The Chair confirmed that the document presented was in fact an acknowledgement of receipt of service on the clerk.

It was proposed by the Chair (seconded J Green) that the most equitable means of proceeding would be to vote on whether to continue in respect of the additional agenda items. For : 8 against: 4. Motion carried.

3. Minutes of the previous Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting of the council on 13th September 2021: Proposal to adopt the minutes as a true record by Cllr J Green, seconded by Cllr M Cheetham.

Voting amongst those councillors who attended the meeting to the end: 4 in favour and 4 against. The Chair exercised her casting vote in favour on accordance with Standing Order 3R and the minutes were duly approved.

4. Matters Arising-to receive clerk update

The Clerk confirmed advice received from NALC in respect of items 8 & 9 of the Agenda. Item 8 as per standing order 3X and item 9 Standing Order 3B that the 3 day notice period only applied to notice of the meeting and not the documentation for the meeting.

5. Correspondence

Reporting in accordance with Standing Order 14 the Clerk confirmed receipt of a letter of complaint from a member of the public relating to a councillor's conduct at the meeting held on 13 September and that it was initially being dealt with by the personnel committee.

6. Public Participation

6.1 Request for hard copy of minutes of previous meeting to be made available at the meeting request noted.

6.2 Dumping of garden rubbish over cliff at Rottenstone Lane car park: the Chair confirmed that this is classified as fly tipping and that this had been confirmed in the past by Great Yarmouth Borough Council when an enquiry had been made concerning the possibility of using garden waste to prevent cliff erosion.

7. Committees and working parties

As per revised list circulated to councillors, the Chair asked each councillor in turn for their comments allowing 3 minutes per councillor in accordance with standing order 1(t).

During the debate the following points were made:

- All councillors were content with their appointments with the exception of Cllrs Holley and Wendt, who had requested the convening to the meeting, inter alia, to discuss this point.
- Cllr Holley claimed discrimination and victimisation in respect of the proposed appointments because Ormesby Councillors outnumbered those from Scratby on all committees and working parties and that he was not part of a committee.
- The need for new councillors to take appropriate training prior to being appointed was confirmed particularly with regard to committees which make certain delegated decisions on behalf of council, as also, as formally agreed at the last meeting.
- The point was made that in terms of ward size and consequent councillor allocation Ormesby outnumbered Scratby 2:1 so that outnumbering on any committees was inevitable; however every committee was represented by both wards.
- Concern as to the apparent divisive dialogue concerning Ormesby and Scratby which was offensive to those councillors who would willingly deal with issues equally in any part of the parish.
- Cllr Wendt queried why her proposed appointment to the personnel committee had been removed, the chair confirmed that this decision had been made in consultation with the vice chair, clerk and members of the personnel committee to properly enforce the rules around the operation of the committee and unfortunately she could not disclose these facts/points in public meeting without breaching confidentiality.
- The "In bloom" working party would cover both villages. Notwithstanding the specific "In bloom" categories such as "Best Village", the purpose of "In Bloom" was to bring communities together and as such the working party had deliberately been comprised of councillors from both villages to work together in each others' wards.
- Cllr Troy made a personal statement of how sad he was by the obvious division being shown by certain councillors at the meeting between Scratby and Ormesby and emphasised the insignia of "Three communities one parish" and that we should all work together to achieve it.
- The duty for all councillors to work together and share the burden work in all parts of the parish, for the benefit of parishioners, irrespective of personal preferences.
- To give experience to new councillors in working parties and promote new initiatives such as environmental awareness.

In accordance with Standing Order 2a the Chair gave Cllr Holley a formal conduct warning for aggressive behaviour whilst addressing council during the debate.

Cllr Shrimplin proposed voting in on the proposed appointments en block, which was seconded by Cllr Grant.

The motion to vote en block was carried unanimously.

Moving to the vote to approve the constitution of committees and working parties as per the document presented to the meeting Proposed: Cllr Green seconded Cllr Grant: passed unanimously.

8. Extending time of Council meetings

It was noted that the time for meetings should only be extended in exceptional circumstances. It was suggested by Cllr Wendt that after 2 hours the council should vote to extend in 30-minute periods. Clerk to check standing order 3x and confirm ability to change them to extend in 30-minute periods, and it was agreed that this matter be added to the next agenda.

9. Documentation for parish monthly meetings

With reference to item 4 above it was confirmed that the statutory 3 clear days' notice period related to the notice/agenda for the meeting and not the papers; however it was acknowledged that the earlier papers could be circulated the better, and that in all cases they were circulated upon receipt. A member of the public was disturbed by the use of the gavel used to restore order to the meeting. The Chair paused the meeting and continued only when the member of the public confirmed they were happy to do so.

An ancillary point was made by Cllr Holley that the placement of minutes on the board at Scratby steps made them difficult to read: the Chair noted that she was unaware of this, not having visited the board this week, but noted comment and confirmed it would be addressed forthwith.

10. Financial and contractual regulations of the Parish Council

The Chair confirmed that these were conducted in accordance with standing Orders and the Financial Regulations 2019 previously recirculated to all councillors. Cllr Holley asked for the finance section to appear earlier on the agenda chair noted point and confirmed that clerk would enable this change.

The meeting was closed 19.53pm

Philip Stone

Clerk@Ormesby.org

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