

WYKEHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at 6:00pm on Monday 18th May 2015
at the St John Office, Wykeham Business Centre.**

Present:

Cllr Lady Downe (Chairman), Cllr. R Sword, Cllr. L S Day, Cllr Ashman, Cllr Colley and Mr G Parkin (Clerk).

No members of the public were in attendance.

Before the start of the meeting, Lady Downe made reference to the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 and the Council's policy in respect of these obligations was displayed at the entrance to the venue.

No request to film or record was received or conducted and a designated area was not required.

1. Election of Chairman for 2015/16

Cllr Sword PROPOSED that Lady Downe be elected as Chairman and this was SECONDED by Cllr Ashman. The proposal was unanimously agreed by all members.

2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Lady Downe completed the Declaration of Office, which was duly received and witnessed by the Clerk.

3. Appointment of Parish Councilors

The Clerk confirmed that the recent Parish Council election for Wykeham resulted in an Uncontested Election. Lady Downe welcomed newly appointed Cllr Colley to the meeting.

4. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Declarations of Office were received from Cllrs Sword, Day, Ashman and Colley and were duly witnessed by the Clerk.

5. Election of Vice Chairman for 2015/6

The members considered the merits of appointing a Vice Chairman taking into account the frequency of meetings, overall size of the council and the fact that it was not a mandatory requirement. It was AGREED that the council would not formally elect a Vice

Chair and maintain the flexibility of allowing any of the members to deputise if required due to the enforced absence of Lady Downe.

6. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were recorded for Borough Cllr Jeffels.

7. Declaration of Interests

In accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct, the Clerk may grant dispensation to any Member to allow them to contribute to the discussion of any agenda item should the meeting not be quorate as a result of a declaration of interest. This decision is in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will facilitate effective consideration of the business. Voting dispensations will therefore be considered as and when they become necessary.

8. Finance

Members received the latest financial statement dated 18th May (Appendix 1) and noted Receipts and Payments made since the last meeting on 23 March 2015 and a request for payment for the annual insurance premium. The Clerk reported that the renewal premium represented the second year of the long term agreement that the council had entered into last year and whilst the premium had increased slightly, it was consistent with the insured asset base being index linked and the sum assured increasing on a 'new for old' basis. The underlying premium rate remained unchanged per the agreement.

A cheque was duly authorized for the requested amount £423.76.

Members received a copy of the Audit of Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2015 (Appendix 2).

The Clerk reported that Mrs J Stockdale had conducted the Annual Internal Audit required under Section 4 of the Annual Return and confirmed that all of the internal control objectives had been met.

The Clerk explained that the figures included in **Section 1 Accounting Statement 2014/15** of the Annual Return were derived from the Summary Receipts and Payment Account and were reconciled to the Bank Reconciliation in the format required and that this was the supporting basis of the **Section 2 Annual Governance Statement**.

It was AGREED that the Section 1 statements are approved and that all of the Section 2 requirements have been met. Accordingly, Lady Downe and the Clerk signed off Section 1 and 2 of the Annual Return.

Cllr Colley stated that she had been asked by a resident of Ruston to enquire about the precept increase and related grass-cutting situation. The Clerk explained that the precept had risen to make up the shortfall in funding created by the loss of NYCC grant and SBC transitional relief. It was noted that everything had been considered to limit the increase but still maintain a reasonable level of ambience to the community. It was also noted that NYCC had not cut the grass identified as their statutory liability ("the Ruston

red dot cluster“) and that Wykeham Estate had in the meantime intervened and cut the area.

The Clerk advised the members that a further meeting had taken place with the contractor J Harrison before the 1st cut and that it had been made clear that the final cost of this years contract must be inline with provisions of the 2015/16 budget. Joe Harrison committed to review the charging criteria based on the actual data derived from the first cut.

The members also noted that the cutting of the Ruston “red dot cluster” was contrary to the decision of the council to make NYCC accountable in the discharge of their liability.

It was AGREED to receive feedback from J Harrison, re-evaluate the situation and then write to NYCC to ensure that they do discharge their responsibility in future and try to synchronise future cuts of NYCC & Harrisons such that the area looks more presentable.

Cllr Sword made the members aware that a tenant had been found for Quarry Field and that a rent of £600 p.a had been provisionally muted for a 3 year term. It was noted the state of the land and fencing was not of a standard consistent of the proposed rental figure but the remaining members wanted to ensure that a decision to grant the lease was based at market value and that its availability had been appropriately disclosed. Cllr Sword made members aware that the approach to lease the field had been unsolicited and was a very fair commercial figure given the overall state of the field and potential cost to the Parish Council of bringing the field and fencing to a state consistent to this rental figure.

It was AGREED to grant a one-year lease with 50% payable on assignment of the lease and the remainder at the end and to re-appraise the commercial aspects in 1 year.

9. Public Question Time

Nothing to record.

10. Date and Time of next meeting

Confirmed : Annual Meeting
Monday 27th July 2015 at 6:00 pm
St John's Office, Wykeham

Duly signed by Lady Downe (Chairman) 27th July 2015