

Foul登 Parish Council
Monday 11th January 2021

Parish Council Clerk report

1. Relating to agenda item 9 –No applications received.
2. Relating to agenda item 10e – Quote comparison table provided separately.
3. Relating to agenda item 14 – Budget has been revised and circulated separately. Precept of £8400 proposed, same as previous year and following discussions at November meeting.
4. Relating to agenda item 14 – Internal auditor. The gentleman who has done the last two internal audits has retired from his employment role in the Parish and will no longer conduct the internal audits F.O.C. However, he is happy to continue to do audits at a cost of £25 p/h plus travel expenses. It is believed he is moving towards Kings Lynn area (approx.. 17 miles each way).

I have also contacted Norfolk ALC who have provided details for nine people who already conduct internal audits, however Norfolk ALC accept no responsibilities if the council choose any of them and there is nothing to say these people will take on additional audits. Also, none are particularly local. Norfolk ALC suggest a benchmark fee around £60 for the audit but this will vary for a number of reasons.

1. Based in Woodbridge (55 miles)
2. Based in Rendlesham (58 miles)
3. Based in Mulbarton (37 miles)
4. Based in Hellesdon (41 miles)
5. Based in Harleston (40 miles)
6. Based in Flegburgh (56 miles)
7. Based in Acle (52 miles)
8. Based in Reepham (33miles)
9. Based in Docking (30miles)

Failing that it may be worth contacting local clerks to see who their councils use.

The AGAR usually needs to be completed and returned by end of June. Paperwork needs to be approved at a formal meeting, (which would be the annual meeting held in May, however the council could call an extraordinary meeting if felt necessary). This would mean the council appointing the auditor at it's March meeting, allowing the audit to be conducted in April, ready for approval in May.

5. Relating to agenda item 17 – County Broadband. A parishioner has made me aware of this company which is working with communities to rollout hyperfast fibre (upto 1000Mbps) rather than superfast (part fibre, part copper upto 70Mbps) It works by getting people to sign up/ pre-order then when there is enough interest, they install it. Packages start at £28p/m, fibre connection is free from exchange to property when signed up at the initial stage and anyone completing an existing broadband contract can get the service free for upto 12 months. Also if there is enough interest and it is rolled out they provide a free service to a village hub such as a village hall. More info. Can be found at www.countybroadband.co.uk. Would the council like to take this matter further?

6. Relating to agenda item 18 – Signpost contribution. Please see the following request:-

“This year our expenditure on printing and distribution to the villages has exceeded our income from advertisers. At the present time we decided that it was best not to increase the cost of advertising. So that we can continue with the publication we would ask Parish councils if they would be willing to make an annual donation to this community based venture that has now been running for over 10 years. It was decided that this should be an all-or nothing contribution i.e. unless all the Parish Councils did not wish to contribute then we would have to find an alternative solution. We hope you see the newsletter as playing a helpful role and would wish to support the volunteers who make it possible. We would ask for a donation of £60 from the villages with a larger number of residents and £30 from the smaller ones. For Foul登 it would be £60.”

Under LGA 1972 s142 the council has the power to publish info. about the council, its services and the services provided in the area..... In turn I feel this is a reasonable and justifiable expense should the council agree.

7. Relating to agenda item 19 – removal of contact forms from website. I would be grateful if the council would consider my request to remove the contact forms from the website. Spam continues to be an issue with a more recent threatening one in broken/poor English. In my time as Clerk I have received no genuine communication via this route and feel stated e-mail addresses are more than sufficient at this time.
8. Relating to agenda item 21a -FHS account payment and interest. Cllr Christian is still working remotely from home for her Trustee work due to covid and this is unlikely to change anytime soon. With this in mind she has been unable to get the interest added and get a cheque of £1714.00 to pay the council for part of the SAM2. She has suggested sending a signed letter along with the passbook being sent by registered post to address these issues if the council are happy to do so.
9. Relating to agenda item 21b -FHS account. With the previous mentioned issue it has made Cllr Christian realise that the Council should consider investing closer to home. Maybe Swaffham or Thetford, both towns she (or in future other Councillors) can access easily alongside shopping for food or to visit bank. As a reminder the current account is now only achieving 0.15% interest. The council may wish to consider having two accounts 1) for the permanent endowment 2) money which can be spent with easy access.
10. Relating to agenda item 25 – Payroll provider. Quote comparison table and further information provided separately.
11. Other items since last meeting
 - a. 3PL/2020/1109/HOU loft conversion for Woodcroft, Tallons End has been granted permission.
 - b. Breckland booking of Village Hall for elections on Thursday 6th May 2021
 - c. I have circulated my timesheets to councillors for the period of Jul-Dec 2020
 - d. The sewerage pipes overflowed in the dip vicinity during Christmas Day and Boxing Day. It was reported to Anglian water who responded that nothing could be done until the water subsided and it was put on a 48hr response time. Several days later they rang to see if there was still an issue. By then it had cleared I am unsure whether this was natural or if an engineer had been out.