

**DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Duston Parish Council
Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road
Duston
Northampton
NN5 6DT

Full Council Minutes
Thursday 7th December 2023 7PM

Chair: Cllr P Enright-King

Councillors Present:

Barnes, Craven, Ennis-Clark, Ingram, Liddon, Littlewood, Maitland, Roper

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Youens – Clerk

Ryan Ikavnieks – Assistant Clerk

103/23. To receive apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Cllrs Golby and Mumford.

**104/23. To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2023
(APPENDIX A)**

- **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2th November 2023 were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

105/23. To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct related to business on the agenda

- Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests in the items on this agenda, whether pecuniary or otherwise. There were no interests declared.

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106/23. Public Participation Session

- Two officers were present at the meeting from the local neighbourhood policing team. They gave update on their activities and took questions from Councillors.

107/23. To receive any information update on Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy

- There was a discussion about the importance of obtaining the S106 monies and ensuring it was spent for the good of the community. The Clerk has previously submitted requests for information. Cllr Matt Golby is making enquiries.

108/23. Councillor Reports – Information Only

- Councillors gave an update on their various activities relating to their role as members of Duston Parish Council.

109/23. Committee Updates

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the report in the form of the minutes of the Planning Committee was received and noted (APPENDIX B)
 - b) That the report in the form of the minutes of the Environment Committee was received and noted (APPENDIX C)
 - c) That the report in the form of the minutes of the Community Services Committee was received and noted (APPENDIX D, APPENDIX E)

110/23. Standing Committee Membership

- **RESOLVED:** That the following changes to Committee Membership were approved:
 - a) That Cllr Craven was appointed to the Community Services Committee as a member for the remaining municipal year of 2023/24
 - b) That Cllr Littlewood was appointed to the Planning Committee as a member for the remaining municipal year of 2023/24
 - c) That Cllrs Dickinson and Craven were appointed to the Environment Committee as members for the remaining municipal year of 2023/24

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- d) Cllr Littlewood was appointed as a member of Resources & General Purposes Committee for the remaining municipal year of 2023/24.

111/23. Recommendation from the Environment Committee

- **RESOLVED:** That the recommendation from the Environment Committee to install a new litter bin at Duston Gardens, located near the electrical sub-station and funded via Community Infrastructure Levy monies, discussed and approved. Cost is £300 + VAT for the next financial year (APPENDIX G).

112/23. Recommendation from the Community Services Committee

- Councillors received a handout from members of the Community Services Committee which outlined how Wooton Parish Council produced and distributed their newsletter.
- Councillors discussed multiple options of distribution methods, content creation options and magazine style. No clear consensus was found around specific methods or style.
- The Clerk advised that it is possible but could be staff intensive depending on the format Council wish to take.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the Council agrees, in principle, that a newsletter would be a good addition for the Councils communication with its residents.
 - b) That the Clerk will work with the Community Services Committee to provide options with some costings.
 - c) Council will approve the final draft.

113/23. Draft Budget 2024/25

- The Clerk said the biggest challenge this year is the Environmental costs. The Parish Council is now taking on play ground repairs and tree maintenance which is a substantial commitment. A contingency fund is being built up to take on park maintenance in mid-2028. Energy costs are not the issue as much as they were last year.
- **RESOLVED:** That the draft budget for the financial year 2024/25 was received, discussed and approved. (APPENDIX H)

114/23. Flexible Working Policy

- The Clerk advised that this may need to change again in the near future as in 2024 the law could change in that employees will have the right to request flexible working from day one of employment.

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- **RESOVLED:** That the revised Flexible Working Policy (APPENDIX I) was received and approved.

115/23. Amendments to Scheme of Delegation

- **RESOVLED:** That the amendments to the Scheme of Delegation (APPENDIX J) were received and approved.

116/23. Unity Bank

- The Clerk &RFO provided Council with information regarding the current banking situation, the precept income is currently locked in Unity Bank and cannot be moved or used bank due to a lack of signatory's being setup on the Account. The Clerk advised the situation was reaching a critical point and action either way was now necessary.
- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That nominated councillor signatories are given one last opportunity to register with Unity Bank. The Clerk will again provide the details in how to do this. However, if this is not done by the new year then the Clerk will begin the process of closing the Unity accounts down and moving the funds to the existing Barclays account. The Clerk will do this in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council.
 - b) No Councillor was nominated to become a signatory for the Barclays account. However, anyone interested please contact the Clerk directly.
 - c) The Council was satisfied that if Unity Bank was closed down that it still had robust internal controls in managing public funds.

117/23. Annual External Audit Report

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the Annual External Audit Report (APPENDIX L) was received, discussed and noted.
 - b) That the comments provided in the External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2022/23 were noted.

118/23. Commemorative Bench for Duston Gardens

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- **RESOLVED:** That the commemorative bench to be located in Duston Gardens / Telstar Way Open Space for £1,395.00 + VAT to be funded via Community Infrastructure Levy monies was approved (APPENDIX M).

119/23. Internal Controls Councillor Report

- **RESOLVED:**
 - a) That the Internal Controls Councillor Report for the second quarter of the municipal year 2023/24 was received and noted. (APPENDIX N)
 - b) That the Internal Controls Councillor Report for the third quarter of the municipal year 2023/24 was received and noted. (APPENDIX O)

120/23. Youth Provision SLA

- The Clerk advised that the Council has already taken the decision to commence the contract with Free2Talk for a year. Members of the Community Services Committee oversaw and agreed the details of the Service Level Agreement before it was signed.
- **RESOLVED:** To discuss the progress of the Service Level Agreement at a future meeting when the Council is given an interim report.

The meeting finished at 8:51pm

