

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF WOLSTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY 25th MARCH 2021 AT 6.00 PM**

**All Parish Council meetings will be held virtually via Zoom until further notice, in accordance with
Government Regulations.**

PRESENT Cllr T Harvey-Smith (Chair), Cllr G Fewkes (Vice-Chair), Cllr Miss T Ball, Cllr D Cross, Cllr Miss S Dobinson, Cllr R Grainger, Cllr J Milne, Cllr A Parker, Cllr L Wright, and Mrs M Meede (Clerk).

Plus: 1 member of the public.

After members of the public and Councillors had been given the opportunity to raise any issues, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending, and the Parish Council meeting commenced at 6.05pm.

211. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The apologies of Cty Cllr Mrs Timms and Borough Cllrs A Bearne, Mrs S Bragg and Cllr Poole were noted.

212. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (existence and nature) for items on the Agenda

No declarations of interest for any item on the agenda were made. The Chairman advised that Councillors could declare an interest later in the meeting should this become apparent for any agenda item.

213. NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

Cllr Wright proposed that the Parish Council should consider no longer using contractors who are not VAT registered if it is not cost efficient to do so.

Cllr Fewkes stated that the Parish Council currently review all quotes when received, and compare the quotes based of the NET (pre-tax) figures, and so Councillors always make decisions on a like-for-like basis and the decision is based on the amount the Parish Council will pay.

Cllr Wright was concerned the Parish Council would lose out, but Cllr Miss Ball stated she felt that the Parish Council is not losing anything and the quotes are compared based on the NET quote so Councillors know what they will be paying.

It was noted that companies/contractors have to register for VAT when their income reached £85,000, and so Councillors generally felt it would be unfair and discriminatory to exclude smaller local contractors who are not registered, and that the Parish Council should take advantage of local knowledge and support local people where possible. It was noted that local contractors (like bigger companies) are not given the work if they are not the best person for the job or their quotes are not competitive.

Following a discussion, the Chair asked if Cllr Wright wished to progress with his proposal, and he confirmed his proposal had not changed. There was no seconder for Cllr Wright's proposal.

Cllr Fewkes then proposed that the Notice of Motion be rejected and that the Parish Council continue to compare quotes based on the NET figure, and also compare quotes on their own merit (taking into account the best qualified to carry out the work and value for money). This was seconded by Cllr Parker and the motion was passed.

Cllr Parker also noted that the fencing recently installed in the playing fields was an asset and other Councillors agreed it was a job well done.

RESOLVED: For Councillors to continue comparing and making decisions on quotes based on their NET value.

214. STREETLIGHT LUMINAIRES

Cllr Grainger have a brief report and update on the current situation in relation to the replacement of the village streetlight luminaires. The formal loan application to Salix had now been made, and if the Parish Council wish to progress with the work, then a loan agreement will have to be signed at the relevant time. A discussion took place, and it was confirmed that 150 out of 159 luminaires are not currently LED, and the interest free loan, repayable over a five year period, would be for a total value of £32,670. Councillors had already budgeted to top up the loan if required, and it was estimated that about £7000 will be needed from the budget to complete the work (which is less than the budgeted amount). The work will be completed on or after the 1st October 2021, so the first loan repayment would not be taken until the 2022-23 financial year.

Cllr Grainger proposed that the Parish Council endorse the decision to accept the loan offer from Salix and approve signing up to the loan if and when the Parish Council decide to progress with the work. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Miss Dobinson and the motion was passed.

RESOLVED: For the Parish Council to take/sign the loan agreement should they take the decision to progress with the work.

Thanks were given to Cllr Grainger for all his work on this project.

215. DATE OF NEXT MEETING/S

The Chairman confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will take place on Thursday 1st April 2021 at 6.30pm via zoom.

As there were no further items on the Agenda the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 6.35 pm.

Signed:..... Chairman

Date:

Notes on the Public Forum and Parish Matters held during the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on 25th March 2021.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited representations from all who were present. The Chairman explained that the meeting would be recorded for the use of the Parish Council Clerk only, and the recording would be deleted once the minutes of this meeting were approved.

Cllr Wright highlighted a new Government Community Ownership Fund he had read about, and felt it would be useful to look into the fund further. Councillors agreed it was something to be considered.

As there were no further comments or questions, the Chairman declared the public forum part of the meeting closed at 6.05pm