**MINUTES OF SANTON DOWNHAM PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**HELD ON MONDAY, 15th MAY 2023 AT 7.00 PM**

Present: Mr Michael Mackender (Chairman)

 Mrs Sylvia East (Parish Clerk) Mrs Debbie Cock (Parish Councillor)

 Mr Paul Brown (Parish Councillor) Mrs Ann Landells[Parish Councillor]

 Mr Kim Daplyn, [Parish Councillor] Mr Adrian Baugh (Parish Councillor).

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and before proceeding wished to give his personal thanks to all who were involved with the Coronation Tea Party on the 7th April 2023.

1. Proposals for the election of a new Chairman were requested and it was unanimously agreed things should continue as exists. Mrs Cock therefore proposed Mr Mackender as Chairman and this was seconded by Mr Daplyn.
2. Proposals for the election of a new Vice Chairman were requested and it was unanimously agreed things should again be continued as exists. However, since Mr Butcher was not in attendance it will need to be held in abeyance until the next meeting to fully confirm this.
3. Apologies were received from Cllr Lukanuik and Cllr Wittam
4. There were no declarations of interest put forward
5. The declaration of acceptance of all Councillors elected were signed
6. The re-adoption of the Councillors Code of Conduct was signed
7. The re-adoption of the Standing Orders was signed
8. The Re-adoption of the Financial Regulations was signed
9. The Re-adoption of the Constitution was signed
10. The Chairman asked if there were any comments on the Minutes of the previous meeting, there being none the Minutes were signed as a true record.
11. **Parish Clerk’s Report**

**Finances**

* The Parish Clerk handed the Councillors a hard copy of the latest Bank Statement showing a balance of £16,441.28 and it was acknowledged the precept payment of £7,698.00 had been paid into the Bank. The Clerk apologised for the fact she was unable to clarify payments made during this period due to the fact all cheque books and other financial details are currently lodged with the Internal Auditor, there had been payments made amounting to £863.93 during the month of April and a further £24.00 payment had been received from the Company handling the clothing bank. The outgoing cheques would be clarified at the next meeting along with any further income or payments.
* The accounts are with the Internal Auditor but should be completed very soon at which point the Clerk will deal with the Exemption Certificate and details required by the External Auditor.
* The Renewal of Miss Sayer’s lease for the small plot of land she rents was discussed and it was agreed the rent should remain at £110.00 for this year. A letter will in due course be sent to

Miss Sayer.

* An update was given regarding the Norway Maple on the small triangle at the top of the road leading to the paddocks. The Clerk advised a quotation had been received to quite severely pollard in an effort to save the tree. The quotation was for £1.050 plus VAT with the removal of the wood chip or £995 plus VAT leaving the woodchip. It was agreed the slightly higher quotation seemed the better option and of course we have prior experience with this Companies work. However, it was questioned we cannot really know how far the Oystercap fungi has penetrated until work begins and should the tree be more diseased than believed, we would need to have the this

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* removed at another time at an extra cost. Following discussion it was agreed we should do two things:
1. Ask for a further quotation to take into account the possibility the tree would be so diseased it needs to come fully down. It was agreed we are all laymen on this matter so must take advice.
2. To also seek a second opinion and quotation

The Clerk will therefore undertake to do this.

* Income received from King Charles III’s Coronation Tea Party. The Clerk reported £503.50 had been raised. £500 had been input by the Parish Council for this but unfortunately we had overrun the budget by well over £200.00. The Clerk proposed £400.00 be banked into the Parish Councils account which means the cost was £100.00 to produce a magnificent and well received event. The overrun on the budget would be met by the Village Hall. It should be clarified that no monies were taken from the Precept.
* The half year payment of the Clerk’s salary and expenses were due and a cheque for £826.56 was duly raised and signed.

**General Issues**

* The Clerk gave an update following a meeting with Highways regarding the problems experienced with traffic on the road leading to the bridge. We await written clarification however, have been advised the new signage and the expenditure for this has been approved. There are also two potholes in the area that hopefully will be attended to.
* The Clerk wished to offer her own vote of thanks to all those who volunteered their help with the Coronation Tea Party. This had without doubt been a fantastic event and all involved should be praised for their input.

**12. Parish Councillors Reports**

* Mr Brown reported on an issue of concern that he believed to be fly tipping on the grass verge at the rear of the properties behind his house. The Chairman agreed he would look into this matter.
* The Chairman agreed we would need to go back to the original decision on the cutting of the hedge at Edgewater, ie the Parish Council to undertake a further cut this year for free but to charge in future years. A working party will be organised but in the meantime the Chairman would get in touch with the Agents.
* The concerns about dog fouling was once more brought to the table to be discussed as there have been some disagreement with signage. It was agreed by all that the last thing our village needs are more signs but the issues of dog fouling are serious not least of all because of Toxocarius which is an infection caused by small worms and can be found in the discharge of some dogs.. It is rare but can cause serious problems, not least of all blindness. The Council agreed this should not be a reason for people to take this out of proportion however, It is the responsibility of any Parish Council to take such issues seriously and since posters have little to no effect then signage has to be tried. The issue of dog litter bins was once again raised and discussed and although accepted as a justifiable possibility , once again it was asked – “who will take on the responsibility of emptying these bins”?
* We continue to receive concerns of speeding on our village roads and also on the main road coming through our village. The question asked is what can we do? The Parish Council agreed we have signs and people living in the village are fully aware, or should be, of children and pets. It was

once again commented that our residents should take care and we can only hope visitors will be sensible. With regard the main road, the Parish Council are fully aware traffic speeds through our village and once again we must ask the question, what can we do? Asking Highways for a lower

speed limit or to move signs to maybe better positions is a possibility but given responses received in the past we highly doubt we would be successful. The Chairman suggested raising this with

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Cllr Lukanuik when he next comes to one of our meetings. Flashing signs were once again raised,but these cost quite a lot of money and we would need one at each end. This has been looked into before but we could take another look at this possibility. It was again suggested we could do what many villages have done or are doing and have volunteers sitting by the edge of the road with speed guns. We are once again back to the volunteer situation.

* The Chairman raised the issue of a request received from No 7 Marks Lane to bring their fencing to the edge of the road,and thus over the boundary of their property.. It was unanimously agreed we cannot allow this as it would set a precedent and make the road far too narrow. There is already a problem when vehicles are parked on either side and it is obvious any emergency vehicle given this scenario would find it impossible to pass as things stand now. A letter will be sent to the householders at No. 7 Marks Lane, which should also re-affirm the situation regarding an existing drain being marked for future reference.

**Any Other Matters**

* The Clerk brought to the attention of the Parish Council two emails she had received after the Agenda had been published.
1. An email from Openreach regarding the reason we are seeing so many of their vehicles and personnel in the village. They are proving and testing our duct network in preparation for network upgrade. We have been offered the opportunity of discussions and this will be followed on with.
2. An email from Forestry England appertaining to the parking on roads issues with visitors to St Helen’s picnic site. Unfortunately it seems there is some misunderstanding in thinking Santon Downham Parish Council has any responsibility for the road referred to as Church road, presumably that which leads to the picnic area. The request will be answered to the best of the Parish Councils ability. The Council are all too aware of the problems in this area but are not quite sure what pressure they could bring to bear.
* The Chairman asked if he could purchase 500 litres of diesel for the Green cuts to eliminate the need for him to keep on purchasing smaller amounts. It was agreed he should do this.
* A query was raised relating to the pollarding of the Norway Maple as to whether the wood was to remain. It was advised this had been agreed within the quotation and would be chopped up and available for villagers. However, the Parish Council has decided given its need to find avenues for funding, it will be asking for a donation.
* **NEXT MEETING DATES**
* **Tuesday, 27th June**
* **Monday, 4th September**
* **Monday 6th November**

The meeting closed at 8.32pm.

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