**DRAFT POULTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9th DECEMBER 2024**

**AT 7 PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr. Simon Collyer-Bristow (Chair)

Cllr. Chris Davies

Cllr. Tom Gillibrand

Mrs. Heather Harris (Clerk)

Two members of the public attended the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Hyslop and Cllr. Spivey and accepted by the Council.

1. **Approval of Minutes.**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th July 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair.

1. **County Councillor’s Report.**

No further reported items.

1. **District Councillor’s Report.**

No further reported items.

1. **Village Summer Fete.**

Mr Piggott attended the meeting to update the Council on the plans for a Strawberry Fayre to be held on the playground and in the village Hall on Saturday 28th June.

The Council agreed to the use of the playground facilities for the event and confirmed that Mr Piggott had the backing of the Council.

A discussion regarding insurance had previously been held via email. The Council’s insurers were unable to insure the event as the Council was not running it, however, the insurers had suggested a cost-effective policy for Mr Piggott which would cover liabilities from £56. Mr Piggott asked the Council to enquire from the insurers about the use of static play equipment. The Clerk will enquire on the Council’s behalf. The Village Hall has been booked as a private event and will therefore be covered by their insurance. The Chair said that both parties were going through good governance procedures.

Mr Piggott estimated that visitor numbers will be 250-300 over 3 hours. He said that they will manage numbers through publicity. The Chair said that residents surrounding the playground would need to be consulted; Mr Piggott said he would take this on.

1. **Financial Report including account balances.**

Payments made from the Current account:

Royal British Legion (wreaths) £65.00

Village Hall (rental) 132.00

Sovereign Design Play Systems (playground refurbishment) 30,472.24

Willow Gardening Services (grass & hedge cutting) £3,150.00

Balances as at 9/12/24:

Current account £38,380.73 (£4,758.49 after cheques issued have cleared)

Deposit #1 £4,876.86

Deposit #2 £2,687.39

1. **Council Banking Arrangements.**

The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council would be more financially efficient if it was to move to online banking. Previous requests for this had been turned down as the Council needs two signatures to authorize payments, however, the slowness of payments had been an issue, and the Clerk suggested a change to the current standing orders to allow this improvement. The Councillors discussed recent difficulties with the banking arrangements and decided to proceed with the change. The Clerk to apply for online banking and will also look at other banks as Lloyds Bank will be starting charges to the account shortly.

1. **Setting of Precept and Budget for 2025/26.**

Cllr. Gillibrand presented the Council with a draft budget for 2025/26 which the Councillors discussed. 5% had been incorporated for inflation. After consideration, the Council approved the Budget and resolved to set the Precept at £10,000 (no change on 2024/25).

1. **Amendment to Appoint of Trustees.**

Cllr. Davies presented the Council with a draft Appendix to the Standing Orders which simplified the procedure for the Appointment of Trustees.

One of the Trustees, Natalie Baird-Clarke, has resigned and therefore the position will be advertised.

1. **Speeding and Traffic Report.**

Two additional ANPR cameras have been installed in the village, further to the original ANPR camera installed on A417 Eastbound in Ranbury six months previously.  The new cameras are located a) on A417 Eastbound at the Fairford end of the village, just before the end of the 30mph zone, and b) on Cricklade Street Northbound on The Butts.  We are therefore now able to record all speeding vehicles at three important places in the village, and importantly having now one camera at either end of the 30mph stretch of the A417, we can measure average speed along the full length of this stretch.  To support this, average speed signs have been put at the gateway to the village and by the war memorial - these being known to be the strongest deterrent to speeding motorists.

The Chair said that Cllr. Hyslop had done a fantastic job with this project and the Councillors agreed.

Mr. Piggott asked if ‘smiley face’ signs could be installed. Cllr. Davies said that they did not exist when the vehicle activated signs were installed. Mr. Piggott said that the Council should get new cameras. Cllr. Davies said that the costs were prohibitive, and the Chair added that villagers were very much against too much street furniture and the Council needed to get the balance right.

Mr. Piggott asked if the speed cameras were an income stream for the Parish Council. The Chair said that there is no revenue from them for the village, just expenditure. He said that the Parish Council supply the Police with data to use on persistent offenders.

1. **Any Other Business.**

Playground refurbishment and remedial works to the old equipment (e.g. repainting of swings and repair of rocking horse/train) will take place in the spring, when the weather improves.  The grass near the basketball net area has been re-sown.

Café: The Gilbertine have put a message on the village Facebook page to say that they will not be returning to Poulton. It is understood that Relish is also not keen.

Flooding: The current storms have flooded at least two houses. Cllr. Davies said that the bridge would need to be enlarged, and the bund extended to avoid further floods. He said that he had spoken to Cllr. Spivey regarding the issue.

The next meeting will be on Monday 10th March at 7pm in the Village Hall.