

**St James South Elmham
Parish Meeting Conference
Held by email and telephone and concluded 14 August 2020**

Participating Committee Members: Mr C J Bradley Chairman
Mrs M Henry Clerk
Mrs J Chappell
Mr B Crockford
Mrs A Dinsdale
Mr A Hadingham
Mr R Hadingham

Also participating: Mrs B Crockford

1 Welcome and introduction

The Chairman began by reminding participants by email that a decision had been taken, in accordance with the Corona Virus Act 2020, to cancel the spring public St James Parish Meeting and that he, with the support of committee members, would take steps to ensure that the essential business and papers of that meeting were dealt with and the operational needs of the parish and residents were met. All matters dealt with in the interim would be reviewed at an extraordinary Parish Meeting or the autumn Precept meeting to be arranged later in the year depending on how the epidemic proceeded.

A notice to this effect had been placed on the Public Notices Board in the centre of the village.

2 Apologies

None

3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2019

As a precursor to identifying matters for discussion and action the Clerk had circulated copies of these minutes to committee members by email and the Chairman had invited the committee members to agree the minutes. They were agreed by all.

4 Matters Arising

The Chairman said that any other matters than those essential at the time would be dealt with separately or at the next public Parish Meeting as described above.

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman summarised the basis for the conduct of the meeting given the constraints imposed by the corona virus lockdown, which prevented us

holding public meetings of any size, and by related legislation. In developing this, he had considered advice published by SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils) and NALC (the national association), and been guided by his correspondence with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government via Peter Aldous MP.

The first relevant point was that the 1972 Local Government Act Section 108 enables a parish meeting to set up a committee of electors to discharge its business, which the St James Parish Meeting had done. Initially, the Corona Virus Act 2020 had not provided for parish meetings to hold remote (electronic) meetings. However, the Ministry has advised the Chairman that Section 15(10) of the 1972 Act provides that while in office, and until a successor is elected, the chairman of a parish meeting is empowered to act on behalf of the meeting. Further, how the chairman chooses to act on behalf of local electors is a matter for him to decide, including whether and how best to involve committee members in any part of his decision-making process in the current circumstances. An amendment to regulations had now been made to allow Parish Meetings to hold remote meetings.

The Chairman has decided that he should seek the assistance of the committee in matters to be decided at this time, including in item 3 above, by sharing necessary information and seeking their views via email and telephone thus ensuring compliance with personal separation and safety regulations.

6 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and St James Parish Meeting Accounts

6a The Chairman introduced the Annual Internal Audit Report which the participants received and noted.

6b The Chairman had distributed the AGAR Governance Return and invited participants to vote their agreement that this should be signed. This was proposed by Mrs J Chappell, seconded by Mr A Hadingham and agreed.

6c The Accounting Statement (how money had been spent and where) was signed by the Chairman on behalf of the meeting and presented to the participants for acceptance. This was proposed by Mr R Hadingham seconded by Mrs A Dinsdale and agreed.

6d The Chairman said that, as a small Parish Meeting with receipts and payments below £25,000, the Meeting was entitled to claim exemption from an Assurance Review by the external auditors. He had received the Certificate of Exemption from Mrs B Crockford and would be signing this after the conference; the participants agreed.

6e The Chairman had distributed the Accounts for the Parish Meeting for the year ended 31 March 2020, with thanks to Mrs B Crockford for preparing them. He invited participants to agree the accounts. This was proposed by Mr C Bradley, seconded by Mrs M Henry and agreed.

6f The Chairman announced the dates for exercising Public Rights of Inspection of available records. Contacts will be Mrs B Crockford 01986 782347 or Mr C Bradley 01986 782582.

7 Spending 2020/2011

In his email of 13 March 2020, the Chairman had proposed the principle that, in order to keep the parish functioning, interim provision be made for expenses to be incurred and donations made in 2020/2021 using the amounts shown in the Accounts approved for 2019/2020 as a guide. Previous one-off items for the past year would be omitted, and other legitimate costs as incurred would be paid as billed.

The Chairman invited participants to consider each heading in turn:

1. **Parish Meeting expenses:** £102.80 to be paid, proposed by Mrs J Chappell, seconded by Mr A Hadingham, agreed
2. **Donation - Community News:** £150.00 to be paid, proposed by Mr B Crockford seconded by Mr R Hadingham, agreed
3. **Donation - St James PCC (church):** £300.00 to be paid, proposed by Mrs J Chappell seconded by Mr R Hadingham, agreed
4. **Donation - Village hall:** £500.00 to be paid, proposed by Mr A Hadingham seconded by Mrs A Dinsdale, agreed
5. **Donation - Village Orchard:** £200.00 to be paid, proposed by Mr A Hadingham seconded by Mr R Hadingham, agreed

8 Elections

No elections were due. However, the Chairman was pleased to record the earlier co-option of Mrs A Dinsdale to the Meeting committee pending formal election at the next public meeting.

9 Other Business

No other business.

10 Close

The Chairman thanked The Clerk, committee members and Brenda Crockford for their support and contributions and closed the discussions at 5.00 p.m. on 14 August 2020. Subsequently, by 17 August 2020, all committee members recorded their agreement to the contents of these meeting notes and the decisions therein.

ADDENDUM TO PARISH MEETING CONFERENCE
Held by email and telephone and concluded 17 August 2020

Greshaw Green Enclosure Trustees Charity

The Chairman reminded participants of the purpose of the Greshaw Green Trust and how the funds were used. The fund currently stood at £1,930.09. During the course of the year three payments had been made as noted in the attached receipts and payments accounts. The Chairman asked the meeting to accept the accounts as presented: the Trustees agreed unanimously.