

## Helmingham Parish Council

28-5-25

Present:

Cllr N Hardingham  
Cllr D Penny  
Cllr T Davis (also acting Clerk)  
Cllr L Clark (Chair)  
Cty Cllr M Hicks

### MINUTES

#### 1. Meeting administration

- a) To elect a Chair  
Cllr Clark was happy to continue for this financial year and this was Proposed, Seconded & Unanimously AGREED
- b) To consider & Approve Apologies for absence  
None
- c) To Co-opt a Councillor  
No members of the public were in attendance
- d) To receive Declarations of interest on agenda items  
None

#### 2. To Approve the draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th April 2025 and for the Chairman to sign as a true record - This was Unanimously AGREED

- a) Matters arising from the minutes - no matters were arising

#### 3. Public Participation Session (To hear reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor and Comments from the Public and invited guest speakers)

Cty Cllr Hicks gave a brief account of the report - which would be sent to Councillors.

#### 4. Planning & Governance Consultations

None

#### 5. To Discuss & Approve arrangements for the recruitment of a Parish Clerk & RFO

It was confirmed that SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils) would put forward advertising for this post on their mailing and website once agreed and a formal panel could be created to carry out the recruitment process SALC would be able to provide template documentation for recommended policies, job description and contract.

#### 6. To confirm the General Power of Competence (GPC) does not apply

noted

#### 7. Chair Report, reports from other Councillors not requiring a decision

Nothing to report since the last meeting

#### 8. To discuss and agree proposed dates for Parish Council meetings up to May 2026 and the APM for 2026

The dates given below were accepted, May 2026 dates to be confirmed nearer the time.

Wednesday 9th July 2025

Wednesday 8th October 2025

Wednesday 7th January 2026

Wednesday 6th or 13th May 2026 for Annual Council and APM

#### 9. To review & adopt or Re-adopt or Create Recommended policies:-

- i) SALC Internal Control policy review
- ii) SALC Risk Assessment & Management Policy
- iii) NALC Financial Orders to include the updates to Procurement
- iv) NALC Standing Orders to include the updates to Procurement
- v) Suffolk Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- vi) SALC Equality and Diversity Policy
- vii) Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities
- viii) ICO Model Publication Scheme & Information Publication Policy and fees
- ix) SALC Data Policies, Cookie, Retention & Privacy
- x) SALC Grants and Donations Policy



**xi) SALC Safeguarding Policy**

**xii) SALC employment Policies**

It was Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED to adopt these policies and for the new Clerk when they were recruited to review them for the Council.

**10. To discuss forming or keeping committees, panels or working groups for 2025-2026 eg: Employment Panel**

It was at this point that the Councillors discussed the flexibility of having an employment panel to ensure timely recruitment. The panel could agree advertising, set job description with SALC guidance as well as pay and policies. The Panel could undertake interviews with a recommendation to the next appropriate council meeting. This was Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED

**11. To (re)appoint new councillor(s) / Volunteers to maintain the Parish Council Speed Equipment**

The Chair confirmed the current volunteer was happy to continue.

**12. To review training needs for Councillors**

None

**13. Finance**

**a) Current Bank Balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025:-**

**Current Account = ££6,623.69**

Noted

**b) To approve payments for authorisation (Resolution required)**

**i. SALC Membership - £110.00**

**ii. Heelis & Lodge (Internal Auditor) - £85.00**

**iii. Donation to the Church for meeting venue for year ending March 2026 - £100**

The payments were discussed, Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED to be paid

**c) To review, approve and for the Chair and RFO to sign the CIL expenditure for year end 31st March 2025**

This was reviewed, Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED for the Chair & acting RFO to sign

**d) To Review and Approve the Year Accounts ending 31st March 2025**

These were reviewed, Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED for the Chair to sign

**14. To appoint a Councillor to review financial accounts prepared by the RFO each quarter**

This was discussed, Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED and Cllr Hardingham appointed to review the prepared accounts on a quarterly basis

**15. To approve the Asset Register**

The Asset Register was reviewed and Unanimously AGREED

**16. To discuss & approve Bankers for 2025-26 (RFO recommends moving to Unity Bank Online)**

Once the difficulties with the existing bank were complete it was Unanimously AGREED for the new Clerk to switch banking provider to Unity Bank

**17. To discuss & approve Internal Auditor for 2025-26 (RFO Recommends keeping Heelis & Lodge)**

Councillor agreed that Heelis and Lodge has carried out a good internal audit. It was Unanimously AGREED to keep them for the upcoming financial year.

**18. To discuss & approve Workplace Pension Scheme for 2025-2026**

It was noted that the level of hours and pay will not meet the threshold for a workplace pension scheme

**19. To review & approve Internal Auditor Report for 2024-2025 accounts**

Councillors had reviewed the report and AGAR and were happy with the recommendations. The report was Unanimously AGREED to be accepted.

**20. To implement the recommendations from the internal auditor following review of the council over the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025**

Recommendation 1 - To ensure that VAT is reclaimed back from HMRC and minute the action taken  
It was AGREED that the new clerk will undertake this.

Recommendation 2 - The council to review and adopt standing orders and financial regulations and minute the action taken. This has been carried out at this meeting in item 9

Recommendation 3 - To include reference to GDPR in the councils Risk Assessment, it was AGREED at this meeting under item 9 to adopt NALC policy and therefore complete and for the clerk to carry out

Recommendation 4 - To comply with the requirement of the Transparency Code in accordance with the guidance referenced, the Council had AGREED to adopt the Transparency Code and adhere to this code under item 9 of this meeting

Recommendation 5 - It is a requirement to appoint the internal auditor and record the decision in the minutes of the meeting. This has been done at item 17 of this meeting.

- 21. To review & approve the Annual Governance & Accountability Return Section 1 (Resolution required)**  
The councillors had reviewed this section and were happy with the contents. It was Proposed, Seconded, and Unanimously AGREED for Section 1 to be signed.
- 22. To review & approve the Annual Governance & Accountability Return Section 2 (Resolution required)**  
The Councillors had reviewed this section and were again happy with the contents. It was Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED for Section 2 to be Signed
- 23. To review & approve the Certificate of Exemption (Resolution required)**  
The Councillors were happy to confirm the Exemption applied to this council. It was Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED and this was signed.
- 24. To confirm regular payments that will be made over £100 during 2025-2026:-**
  - i. Clerk Monthly Wages £TBC**
  - ii. SALC Annual Membership Fees up to £130**
  - iii. Suffolk Cloud up to £250**
  - iv. Insurance up to £390**

The expected payments were noted and it was AGREED for them to be paid as an when they arose in the year ahead.
- 25. To discuss & approve approaching Framsdon Parish Council to work jointly as one council**  
This was discussed at some length. It was Unanimously AGREED that the Clerk would approach the Framsdon Clerk for the Chair CLlr Clark and CLlr Hardingham to attend their next meeting and ask for the joint working to be placed on their agenda
- 26. Next meeting date: Wednesday 9th July 2025 at 7:30pm**
- 27. Any matters for the next meeting to be noted**

Meeting Closed 8:28pm



LESLEY J. CLARK  
CHAIRMAN

