

Slaley Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Slaley Parish Council Held on Tuesday 13th May 2024 at 7.00pm in Slaley Commemoration Hall

Present: Councillor Ian Stevens, Councillor Stella Douglas and Councillor Debra Taylor.

1. Election of Chair

Councillor Stevens was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Douglas. There being no further nominations, Councillor Stevens was duly elected Chair and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.

2. Election of Vice Chair

There were no nominations for this position.

Action – Councillor Stevens to bring this issue forward as an agenda item to the Parish Council meeting of June 2024.

3. Apologies for Absence

County Councillor Colin Horncastle and Councillor Lynda Sale.

4. Members Disclosure of Interests

The Parish Councillors present each submitted their '*Members' and co-opted members' disclosable pecuniary and other interests*' forms.

5. Agreement of the Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

Councillor Taylor proposed the minutes, dated 09/05/23 as a true record and Councillor Douglas seconded them.

a. Actions from the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council of May 2023

- i. **Action.** Parish Clerk to progress guardianship of the defibrillator with Councillor Storey.
COMPLETE.
- ii. **Action.** Parish Clerk to raise this issue of chairmanship of the Slaley Parish Grass Cutting Committee at the June 2023 meeting of the Parish Council.
COMPLETE. The issue was raised but no Chairman was identified. Subsequently this committee did not meet during 2023/24
- iii. **Action.** Parish Clerk to update 'Year Planner'.
COMPLETE.

- iv. **Action.** Parish Clerk to be added to the list of bank signatories.
COMPLETE.
- v. **Action.** Councillor Taylor to establish the whereabouts of the Councils cheque book and paying in book.
COMPLETE. Both books accounted for.
- vi. **Action.** Councillor Stevens and Parish Clerk to progress the Annual Governance and Accounting Return requirements.
COMPLETE.

6. Adopt Code of Conduct

Councillor Douglas proposed the adoption of the Code of Conduct for the current year and this was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

7. Adopt Standing Orders

Councillor Douglas proposed the adoption of the Standing Orders for the current year and this was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

8. Adopt Data Protection Policy

Councillor Douglas proposed the adoption of the Data Protection Policy and this was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

9. Adopt Grants Policy

Councillor Douglas proposed the adoption of the Grants Policy and this was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

10. Adopt Advertising Policy

Councillor Douglas proposed to adopt the Advertising Policy and this was seconded by Councillor Taylor.

11. Fulfilling Volunteer Roles

- a. Volunteer Councillor to represent the Parish Council on the Commemoration Hall Committee - Councillor Taylor.
- b. Volunteer Councillor to prepare brief for Slaley News of Parish Council business - Councillor Stevens.
- c. Volunteer Councillor to be custodian of the Defibrillator - Councillor Stevens.
- d. Volunteer Councillor to manage social media activity - Councillor Taylor (who will seek assistance from Councillors as required).
- e. Volunteer Councillor to manage Parish website - Councillor Douglas (with a view to the Parish Clerk assuming this responsibility in due course).

- f. Volunteer Councillor to act as emergency contact for Community Play Area - Councillor Stevens.

12. Formation of Sub-Committees

At the Parish Councils AGM of 2023, three sub-committees were proposed, one to review the grass cutting arrangements within the Parish, another to establish how the Council could gain greater insights into the needs of the community and the third to manage stewardship of the Community Play Area.

With only a limited number of Councillors on the Council throughout the year and other demands upon their time, together with the absence of a Parish Clerk, none of these sub-committees were convened. Councillors therefore discussed whether an attempt should be made in 2024/25 to progress them. They concluded that with the dynamics of the Council remaining as they were in 2023/24 this was still not the time to progress these sub-committees.

Emerging from the discussion however was an identified pressing need to progress the Neighbourhood Plan. To this end, Councillor Stevens agreed that he would move the issue along until September 2024, by which time Councillor Douglas believed she would be in a position to take the Plan forward.

Action – Councillor Stevens to ‘reignite’ the Councils delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan.

13. Review & Approve Annual Risk Assessment

The risk assessment was approved at the Parish Council meeting of 8th April 2024, under minuted item 9 d..

14. Review & Approve the “Yearly Planner”

The Yearly Planner was reviewed and updated to reflect a need to progress the Neighbourhood Plan (see minuted item 12 of this meeting also).

15. Review of Banking Arrangements and Confirm Authorised Signatories

At present there are three signatories for the Parish Councils bank account, those being Councillors Stevens, Douglas and Taylor.

16. To Receive Year End Accounts

The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024 were received and approved.

17. The Annual Governance and Accounting Return (AGAR) for 31st March 2024

a. Annual Internal Audit Report

The internal audit was conducted by Mrs. M. Weatherley. It was received and Councillors noted the Councils full compliance with the audit criteria.

Note: Mrs. M. Weatherley has agreed to continue her internal audit role during 2024/25.

b. The Annual Governance Statement

The Annual Governance Statement was approved by Councillors.

c. Accounting Statements

The Accounting Statements were considered and approved before being signed.

d. Exercise of Public Rights

It was agreed that the Public Rights period would run from 03/06/24 to 12/07/24 allowing compliance with the 30 consecutive days and the first 10 working days of July requirement.

e. Declaration of Exemption

Councillors took the decision to declare the Council exempt from sending the completed Annual Governance and Accounting Return to the external auditor given that its gross annual income and gross annual expenditure did not exceed £25,000 and that it met the qualifying criteria set out in the Certificate of Exemption.

Action – Councillor Stevens to progress the administration and delivery of the Annual Governance and Accounting Return.

18. To Determine Dates, Time and Place of Council Meetings 2024/25

Councillors deferred a decision on diarising future meetings until all Councillors were present. Until that time the current schedule will remain, i.e. the second Monday of each month at 7.30 pm, in the Community Room at Slaley Commemoration Hall.

The date of the next Monthly Parish Meeting will therefore be Monday 10th June 2024.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.41 pm.