

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council held remotely on 19th August 2020 via Zoom

The Chair opened the meeting at 6.06pm

19/156. Present/Apologies for absence

Parish Councillors: Akshay Morye, James Fallon, John Peters (Vice-Chair), Madhvi Saini (Chair) and Mandy Rigault.

19/157. Internal Auditor's Report 2019-20

The Council **noted** the Internal Auditor's Report for page 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

The Clerk reminded the Council that bank reconciliations had not been carried out during 2020-21 as the Council's bank had refused to send him bank statements until January 2020, two years after he was appointed, and he had only been able to obtain copies of the bank statements for April to December 2019 after the end of the financial year and at the third attempt.

The Council **accepted** the Internal Auditor's full report and discussed its four recommendations in turn.

- a) The Clerk explained that the first recommendation was prompted by the fact the Council's bank never made the payment to HMRC in respect of the final quarter of 2018-19.

But the Council was unaware of it until after the end of the financial year due to the bank's refusal to send the Clerk bank statements and the fact HMRC has never treated the sum as outstanding.

The Council **instructed** the Clerk to ring HMRC and obtain confirmation that the Council owed HMRC nothing. **Action: Clerk**

- b) The Clerk said a review of the Standing Orders would usually take place at the Annual Council Meeting but this meeting had not taken place in May 2020 due to Covid 19.

The Council **instructed** the Clerk to bring forward a review of its Standing Orders to a meeting before the end of March 2021. **Action: Clerk**

- c) The Clerk said a review of the tender limit could take place at the same time as the review of the Standing Orders but reducing the tender limit to £10,000 would have made no difference in 2019-20 as the Council has not entered into any contracts covered by the tendering provisions because these provisions exclude electricity, telephones and legal advice. **Action: Clerk**

Signed:

Madhvi Saini

Date:

1/9/2020

- d) The Clerk reminded the Council that he had been unable to post documents on its website until the Chair made it possible in January 2020. The Council had therefore been non-compliant with the transparency requirements for most of 2019-20.

The Clerk advised the Council that it might be pressed next year to change to a gov.uk domain name for its website and its email addresses. The Council **instructed** the Clerk to place the matter on the agenda of its next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

19/158. Annual Governance Statement 2019-20

The Clerk explained that the Internal Auditor's finding that the Council had failed to carry out appropriate bank reconciliations during 2019-20 meant it was impossible for the Council to answer Yes to statement 1 as the conditions for answering Yes to this statement included the Council carrying out regular bank reconciliations.

The Clerk therefore advised the Council that it must answer No to statement 1 and publish an explanation on its website. The Council **agreed**.

The Council **agreed** to answer Yes to statements 2 to 8 and "N/A" to statement 9. The Chair then signed Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019-20 Part 2.

Actions:

- **Chair to send signed Annual Governance Statement to Clerk**
- **Clerk to publish signed Annual Governance Statement on Council's website**
- **Clerk to publish explanation on Council's website of why the Council had not carried out bank reconciliations**

19/159. Statement of Accounts 2019-20

The Council **unanimously approved** the Accounting Statements 2019-20 presented by the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer. The Chair then signed Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019-20 Part 2.

Actions:

- **Chair to send signed Statement of Accounts to Clerk**
- **Clerk to publish signed Statement of Accounts on Council's website**

19/160. Certificate of Exemption from External Audit for 2019-20

The Council **agreed unanimously** to certify the Council as exempt from a limited assurance review and from the duty to submit the Annual

Signed:

Madhur Jain

Date:

1/9/2020

Governance and Accountability Return 2019-20 to the external auditor, Moore Stephens. The Chair then signed the Certificate of Exemption.

Actions:

- **Chair to send signed Certificate of Exemption to Clerk**
- **Clerk to send signed Certificate of Exemption to External Auditor and publish it on Council's website**

19/161. Approval of payment of Internal Auditor's fee

The Council agreed unanimously to pay Auditing Solutions Ltd's fee of £312 (including VAT) for carrying out the 2019-20 Internal Audit. The Chair then signed the cheque and initialled the stub and a copy of the invoice.

Actions:

- **James Fallon to countersign cheque, initial stub and copy of invoice**
- **Chair to send cheque to internal auditor in stamped addressed envelope provided by Clerk**

The meeting closed at 6.38pm.

Signed:

Madhu Jain

Date:

1/9/2020