

TINTAGEL PARISH COUNCIL



'Tintagel's Great Seal'

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Minutes of the Extra Meeting of Tintagel Parish Council **Friday 12th February 2021**

Present: Cllr Flower (Chairman), Cllr Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Goward, Cllr Harper, Cllr Pearse, Cllr Coshall

Members of the Public: three

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Vice Chairman read out the notice relating to the recording/ filming of the meeting. Other than the Clerk, no persons declared an intent to film/ record the meeting.

Apologies: Cllr. Dale, Cllr Tremain (7.08 hrs)

Declarations of Interest: None

Invitation to members of the public to speak prior to the meeting: None

AGENDA

EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

Cllr Brooks advised the meeting that the Annual Audit Report for 2019/20 was to be discussed. The report had been received on the 9th instant.

Cllr Brooks highlighted the fact that the Parish Council's AGAR submission and accounts had now been audited on no less than four occasions, with the last Audit amounting to a forensic audit by PFK Littlejohn. The reason for the extensive auditing of the accounts arose from false challenge being raised in respect of the Parish Council Accounts. The conduct of certain individuals has cost the Parishioners of Tintagel, in excess of £3,600 (auditing costs only plus VAT). No anomalies, in respect of the accounts submitted by the Clerk, had been found during any audit.

Cllr Brooks advised the meeting that it was unfair that the burden of the cost, incurred by the conduct of the small group of people, should be borne by the Parishioners of Tintagel and that action would be taken in order to attempt to recover those costs.

The Vice Chairman asked the Clerk to address the report received.

The Clerk commenced by advising the meeting that the Parish Council's Solicitor had been instructed to institute legal proceedings, in order to recover the additional costs incurred.

The External Auditors Report for 2019/20 states that on 26th November 2020, the external auditor issued a report detailing the findings of their limited assurance review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Parish Council's Annual Accountability Return, for the year ending 31st March 2020.

It was explained that completion of the same could not be certified at that time but that they (PFK Littlejohn) were now in a position to certify such completion of the review.

The External Auditor Report states that Section 3 of the document requires amendment in order to properly reflect the loan provided by the Clerk. However, it is noted that the said amendment is merely administrative and does not, in any way change the figures submitted on the Report.

With the exception of the amendment to Section 3, on the basis of the auditors' review, Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the proper practice and no other matters have come to the attention of the auditors giving cause or concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The sums set out in the AGAR were correct at all times. Despite allegations, made publicly, there were no monies missing.

The Clerk added that, during her tenure, she had always appointed a separate Internal Auditor for process and (except on the occasion when instructed not to) an accountant to audit accounts. However, prior to her appointment, it had been the custom of the Clerk to appoint the same person to audit the accounts and to undertake the internal audit. Therefore, the precedent which had been set by previous Chairmen and Clerks was adopted on the extant occasion, following allegations and innuendo from the group responsible for the additional audits. It has now been pointed out by the External Auditor that the previous practice was wrong. It therefore shows that the people who have criticised the current Clerk/ Councillors the most, were responsible for setting a precedent which compromised the integrity of the Internal Audit.

The Clerk also alluded to the fact that our IT systems needed an overhaul and that the task is being undertaken at present. It was noted by the External Auditor that the information was on the Parish Council's website but that it was not all in the same place.

MINUTE 95 – 2020/21

It was **proposed** by Cllr Brooks, **seconded** by Cllr Pearce and RESOLVED that the audit conclusion and advisories would be accepted. UNANIMOUS. **Carried.**

MINUTE 96 – 2020/21

It was **proposed** by Cllr Brooks, **seconded** by Cllr Pearce, and RESOLVED that the Meeting should enter Committee, due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed. UNANIMOUS. **Carried.**

PART II DELIBERATIONS

The Members entered into discussions relating to a communication received from a service provider.

MINUTE 97 – 2020/21

It was **proposed** by Cllr Brooks, **seconded** by Cllr Flower, and RESOLVED that the matter would be pursued. Five in favour and one abstention. **Carried.**

Carolyn Y. May

Clerk to Tintagel Parish Council