

Pre-Meeting Business: None

Public Participation: None

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

held in the Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 6th March, 2024

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301 Those Councillors Present Were:

Mrs. J. Borgnis (Chairman), Mr. M. Phillips, Miss A. Ferris, Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. B. Gee, Mr. P. Grainger, Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. J. Labouchere, Mr. N. Markwell, Mr. M. Rayner and Mr. C. Smith.

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk) and Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor).

302 Apologies for absence:

None

303 To Receive Declarations of Interest:

The Chairman reminded the meeting that, should the occasion arise, interests should be declared by Councillors as soon as this was realised, and the interest should be minuted.

304 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 7th February, 2024:

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. Agreed by all. (Proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Smith).

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

305 Land Management Matters (item 276)

(a) Village Green The cutting of trees had not yet commenced because of the recent poor weather. The safe route to school has been flooded and is currently in a wet and muddy condition. Mr. Grainger is to liaise with Highways regarding this situation.

(b) Cathedral Ruins The tree that fell has been chopped, with the wood and brash piled up. Mrs. Keeble has asked for information as to what is to happen with this.

(c) Cathedral Meadows Hedges down the lane have been cut with others to be done. The map that had been wrenched off its base is relatively undamaged but the supporting bracket has been twisted. Mr. Fitzalan Howard is to obtain a quotation for the required work from Ruth Murray and Signs Express.

(d) Broom Green Nothing to report.

(e) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) Ben Darby has provided a quotation for £380 + VAT to repair the fence around the pit. All in favour of accepting it.

(f) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters Nothing to report.

(g) Prince William Wood Nothing to report.

(h) Church Meadow A letter has been received from the Vice Chair of North Elmham Parochial Church Council requesting an easement for the drainage pipe from Church Meadow to Jubilee Wood. All in favour.

306 Allotments (item 277)

An offer was made to purchase a mirror, which is not currently being used, from Fulmodeston and Barney Parish Council. To date, there has not been a response. The Clerk will chase.

307 Street Lights (item 278)

Mr. Markwell reported that T.T. Jones have fitted the interim light at the Eastgate Centre. No progress has yet been made with the light at 28 Eastgate Street.

308 Highway Matters (item 279)

Mr. Grainger said that an increasing number of reports have been received regarding potholes in the village. One in Station Road has been fixed but is already beginning to show signs of failure. It has been confirmed that potholes in the telephone kiosk area near to Elmham Hall Farm are the responsibility of Highways. There is a large pothole near the station in the middle of the road. There is also one in Eastgate Street. Mr. Gee is to take a picture of this and will forward to Mr. Grainger. A parishioner has asked for some cutting back to be carried out at the Great Heath Road exit on to Pump Street. An inspection has been carried out and it is felt that this would not have much effect although some minor trimming back of branches could help a little. It was suggested that the bus shelter should be cleared and refurbished. It was agreed to form a working party to address this when the weather improves. Mr. Phillips asked if the District sweeper could visit to clear leaves, mud and general debris off the roads (see item 324).

309 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 280)

The Football Club has asked for the field to be cut although it is currently too wet for this to happen. The Clerk will contact Nurture to request the first cut of the year to be done later this month.

The Clerk had engaged in discussions with Biffa with a view to renegotiating the current waste services contract for which the Parish Council pays £135.32 per month. This runs until 31st August, 2024 at which time a notice period of three months has to be given to exit the agreement. Lee Hart, Business Improvement Manager, has offered to reduce the monthly charge to £65.16. After appropriate consideration, this has been rejected. A further period of negotiation has followed, resulting in a lower monthly payment of £51.02 being agreed. This will produce an annual saving of £1,011.60.

The Chairman of the Tennis Club had advised the intention to hold a 24 hour event from 12 noon to 12 noon covering the 15th and 16th July. The aim is to raise money for Brisley Church and local tennis initiatives. All members were agreeable to the event proceeding.

310 Eastgate Centre (item 281)

Nothing to report.

311 Brookside Development update (item 282)

Mr. Phillips had attended a meeting with the developers. The new gate has not yet had wire attached at the bottom to prevent dogs going underneath. There are concerns over drainage issues and another meeting is to be arranged to discuss this matter.

312 Risk Management – considerations and updates (item 283)

Nothing to report.

313 Overview of Parish Council financial situation (item 284)

Notification had been received from The Cambridge Building Society of the addition of £197.04 to the Parish Council account which is interest earned for the month of December, 2023.

314 Defibrillators (item 285)

New pads have been received.

315 Call for Sites update – Breckland Council (item 286)

Nothing to report..

316 Archive Group records (item 287)

Two quotations are still awaited and will be chased.

317 Annual Budget (item 289)

Nothing to report.

318 CGM Group and grounds maintenance for 2024 (item 290)

The contract with CGM (Nurture) has been agreed and a copy, to be signed by both parties, is to be chased. Notice of dates of cutting is to be requested from the contractors to assist the Football Club with marking out the white lines.

319 North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) Group (item 291)

An open drop-in meeting had been held. A suggestion has been made that the open space near the pond at the bottom of Boars Hill could be utilised at some stage in the future.

320 S106 monies (£15.1K) received from Breckland Council (item 292)

A quotation had been received from Daren Brown to provide a base for an outdoor table tennis table between Spencer's Close and the Play Area (see item 325). Acceptance was proposed by Mr. Fitzalan Howard and seconded by Mr. Smith. All in favour. A quotation from NGF Play Ltd to carry out essential work to the Play Area was also discussed. The amount involved is £4,916.90 + VAT and, in addition, the replacement of a nest seat costing £664.17. Mr. Fitzalan Howard wondered whether we could, as a loyal customer, obtain a discount. Mr. Rayner suggested installing an additional area of new matting (exact dimensions to be considered). Miss Ferris proposed that the above action be commenced, subject to requesting some form of discount together with an extra area of matting. This was seconded by Mr. Rayner. All in favour.

321 CCTV Policy (item 293)

A policy for the Eastgate Centre Trustees has been completed and duly approved.

322 Reorganisation of the Parish Charities

Mr. Phillips said that there are currently six charities and he strongly felt that some streamlining was needed. The suggestion is to merge the North Elmham United Charity with the Church and Townlands Charity. A decision will need to be made on a name for the merged charity. The Annie Mary Smith Charity is to remain as it is. The Diamond Jubilee Green Support Trust Charity has been dormant for three years and perhaps should be closed. The funds would be transferred to the main Parish Council account to be used to assist with projects to improve the village green. This policy was proposed, in principle, by Mrs. Keeble and seconded by Mr. Fitzalan Howard. All in favour but time is to be given for further contemplation with a view to finally confirming the courses of action at the next meeting.

323 Maintenance of Churchyards

An e-mail had been received from Mrs. Catherine Newey, treasurer of St. Mary's Church, North Elmham. The Parish Council has previously made annual contributions of £1,000 for the maintenance of the churchyards. There are additional costs this year as the parishioner who cut the old churchyard for some years on a voluntary basis is no longer able to do so.

The quoted price for this year between May and September (11 cuts on a fortnightly basis) is just under £3K (£2,750, represented by 11x £75 for the old churchyard and 11x £175 for the new churchyard). A request has been made for the Parish Council to provide increased funding of £3K. It is understood that mention was also previously made of the possibility of assisting financially with the church larder.

The matter was discussed at length with a variety of views expressed. Last year it was agreed that the Parish Council was unable to commit funds to the church larder. This decision has been reiterated for the current year. Mr. Rayner mentioned that the Bishop of Norwich had recently urged that churchyards should be rewilded to increase biodiversity. He wondered if consideration had been given to developing a “land action plan” as recommended by the Bishop. Mr. Grainger proposed that the Parish Council should provide a grant of £1.5K but for it to be reviewed next year in conjunction with a request for wildlife and ecological options to be considered. This was seconded by Mr. Smith. Seven members were in favour of the proposal, with one member against and three members abstaining.

324 Report from District and/or County Councillors (item 288)

Mr. Bambridge stated that flooding and drainage have been major problems. The plans for a new so-called railway village appear to have fallen at the initial stage. It will be possible, however, for those involved to submit a planning application should they wish. The development of Swanton Morley Barracks is still a possibility when the base is no longer needed which could be around 2030. There is room for between 1,000 and 2,000 houses on the site. Appropriate infrastructure would be needed. The draft Breckland Local Plan is to be published between 6th and 8th April. It will then be subject to another round of consultation, which will include the proposed sites for housing, before being sent to the Inspector for approval. It should be in place by the end of the year. The nutrient neutrality issue is likely to have some proposals put in place in the not too distant future. Breckland is having a boundary review. The village’s roads can be swept a few times each year. This should be arranged with District Councillors, preferably to coincide with special events. Mr. Bambridge is to be informed when a sweep of the roads is needed. The other person to contact at Breckland Council is Sarah Simpson. The Clerk mentioned the rave lasting three days which took place at Sennowe Park last year. There had been a number of complaints and full details would be forwarded to Mr. Bambridge.

325 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

19/2/24	Npower (street light electricity from 1/1/24 to 31/1/24)–(d/d)	£626.05
26/2/24	Biffa (wheelie bin service from 27/1/24 to 23/2/24) - (d/d)	£157.34
21/2/24	E-on Next (pavilion from 5/1/24 to 4/2/24) – (d/d)	£287.45
6/3/24	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning for February)	£125.04
6/3/24	Mandrake (December payroll services)	£26.40
6/3/24	Norfolk Parish Training and Support (annual subscription)	£296.25
6/3/24	K. Webb (Clerk’s pay for February)	£826.64
6/3/24	HMRC (Tax and N.I. on Clerk’s pay)	£244.58
6/3/24	J. Bognis (Chairman’s half yearly expenses)	£50.00
6/3/24	M. Phillips (Vice Chairman’s half yearly expenses)	£50.00
6/3/24	Dereham Cancer Care (donation)	£50.00
6/3/24	Community Heartbeat Trust (new pads for defibrillator)	£56.34
6/3/24	T. H. Scott and Son (hedge cutting in Cathedral Meadows)	£210.00
6/3/24	K. Webb (travel expenses from 1/11/23 to 31/3/24)	£52.20

(Expenditure approved by all members)

A quote from Darren Brown for £450.00 in respect of work to be done to provide a base for an outdoor table tennis table was also approved by all members.

b)	Schedule of Income:-	
29/2/24	HSBC Coif Inc Div	£28.89
29/2/24	HSBC Coif Inc Div	£46.74
4/3/24	Bank interest from 4/12/23 to 3/3/24	£158.67

Balances (at 5/3/24):- Current a/c - £63,562.80, Business Premium a/c - £43,071.08

326 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

- a) **Applications**
- i) 3PL/2024/0138/LB and 3PL/2024/0137/F – Nelson House, High Street – Mr. and Mrs. Earle – conversion of outbuilding to create annex accommodation with occasional holiday let use (no objections).
 - ii) TRE/2024/0050/TCA – Lyndale, 78 Holt Road – crown reduction of walnut tree.
- b) **Determinations**
None

327 Correspondence

- 1) Clerks and Councils Direct magazine for March, 2004.
- 2) Mid Norfolk Flooding Partnership – progress report update from George Freeman M.P.
- 3) Email from parishioner regarding an “eyesore along Eastgate Street” (Mr. Rayner is to draft a reply).

328 Any Other Matters (for information only)

Mr. Fitzalan Howard said that the Village Fete is to take place on 19th May. The District Council’s road sweeper is to visit before this event.

329 Agenda items for next meeting:

None

330 Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 3rd April, 2024 at 7.30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.51 p.m.

Chairman

Date

