

LANGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 4th July, 2023 in the Village Hall at 7.00 p.m.

Present:

Paul Godfrey (Chair)
Alan Smith
Kevin Walker
The Clerk
Fourteen parishioners

1. Apologies for Absence

Patrick Allen
Anne-Marie Coe
Michael Dalby (County Council)
Sarah Butikofer (District Council)

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr. Smith reminded the meeting that he is a resident in Rippingall Yard and continues to represent the concerns and views of the other householders in the cul-de-sac.

3. Minutes of last meeting held on 9th May, 2023 – were approved by all members.

4. Updated information and matters arising from the previous meeting:

- a) Mr. Smith reported that the Community Speed Watch team, having been formed in July last year, has been in action for one hour per week at several locations. The 37th session has recently been carried out and this recorded 57 cars with 9 having been reported for qualified speeding. There are currently eight volunteers with two of this number living in Blakeney. On 14th September, there is to be a joint Norfolk and Suffolk action day. 107 Groups across Norfolk are to be involved. The period from 16th to 29th October is to be classified as a road safety initiative and Langham is to take part.
- b) The old notice board is to be taken down. Mr. Schofield is to be asked for a progress report.
- c) The revised Asset Register has been completed by the Chairman.
- e) The refurbishment of the telephone box has been completed and it looks absolutely splendid. Funding is to be coordinated in respect of the defibrillator. Research appears to indicate that the Heartbeat Community Trust route is the best course of action with B.T. providing a free supply of electricity for seven years.
- f) Messrs Smith and Walker and Ms. Coe are to be provided with copies of The Good Councillor's Guide.

5. Finance

Income

16/5/23	North Norfolk District Council (Rental)	£50.00
5/6/23	Bank Interest (from 6/3/23 to 4/6/23)	£20.96

Expenditure

22/5/23	Drax (streetlights electricity – April) – direct debit	£550.02*
22/5/23	K. Webb (quarterly computer allowance – standing order)	£20.00
4/7/23	K & M Lighting Services (street lighting maintenance – March)	£21.36
4/7/23	K & M Lighting Services (street lighting maintenance – June)	£21.36
4/7/23	Norfolk Parish Training & Support (Internal Audit)	£40.00
4/7/23	Langham PCC (annual grant)	£600.00
4/7/23	S. Rutt (online poll fee for survey)	£7.18
4/7/23	K. Webb (pay for April, May and June)	£1,148.98
4/7/23	HMRC (tax on Clerk's pay)	£287.00
4/7/23	Paper-Klip (photocopies for survey)	£58.80

*

To be refunded – credit notes received.

Acceptance of expenditure approved by all members.

Balances of Bank accounts:- Current - £5,408.00 credit, Business Saver- £10,075.28 credit (as at 2nd July, 2023)

6. **Update on meeting with Councillor Sarah Butikofer**

The Chairman, Mr. Allen and Ms. Coe had met our new District Councillor, Sarah Butikofer, on 23rd June, to discuss general housing and development matters. Notes from this meeting are given below for information.

- As with all councils, North Norfolk District Council has housing growth targets to meet and is always on the look-out for developments to support this.
- Developments would be looked on favourably if they have a good degree of affordable housing (the required level is about to go to 40%) and are supported by a range of consultees including Highways, Anglian Water and so on.

- Pledges by developers are taken with scepticism by the planners as these are regularly breached, as we've seen ourselves in Langham with repeated backtracking on promises over the hotel development over the years. Councillor Butikofer said that she fears having reviewed their website that Landpro is one of the developers particularly known for this. It is almost impossible to enforce a covenant stating that a property must be a primary residence. Enforcement generally is difficult as it's costly and resource intensive, however the current enforcement in Cley of the property built without proper planning permission sends a message that should make developers think carefully before going back on their commitments.
- The NNDC District plan has been submitted for approval but it's impossible to say how long this will take. Under the plan Langham is not classed as a 'small growth village' and this would make it more difficult to get developments approved. Criteria for being a small growth village is based on having a number of assets to support community life including a pub, shop, church, school etc. A village doesn't necessarily have to have all of these to gain small growth village status so, for example, it's not essential to have a shop.
- There is a need to balance growth with the protection of areas of outstanding natural beauty such as ours. Councillor Butikofer would challenge any Langham proposals on these grounds, as she believes strongly that Councillors have a duty in protecting the AONB as an integral part of what makes North Norfolk so special.
- The views of villagers are taken into account but they are one stakeholder group among many others. Cllr Butikofer will listen and take note of any concerns raised by members of the community. However, she personally believes that concerns raised by longstanding members of the community may hold greater significance, as they will have seen the impact of previous developments on the village and its surroundings. (At all times only material planning considerations can be taken into account). When raising concerns individual submissions rather than 'copy and paste' letters that have obviously been provided by an organising group are more beneficial.

7. Village survey regarding proposed development of land off North Street

The survey sheet has been issued to all parishioners and is also available on the website. Responses are awaited.

8. Group training session

It had been agreed to accept whole council training from Norfolk Parish Training & Support. This covers a range of topics and is primarily aimed at new members, although it can be useful to provide updates and advice of changes to others. The training session is also to be provided to members of Fulmodeston and Barney Parish Council. The cost is £295 and is to be split on a 50/50 basis between the two Councils. Due to the demands on the services of the provider, this training is likely to take place in October.

9. Possible provision of new pavements

It was agreed to assess this proposition in conjunction with the Parish Partnership scheme for local highways improvements in 2024/2025. Approved schemes are funded on a 50/50 basis (Norfolk Parish Council and Parish Council). Applications have to be made before the closing date which is 8th December, 2023. Schemes which can be considered include small lengths of formal footways, trods (a simplified and low-cost footway), improved crossing facilities and improvements to Public Rights of Way. Parishioners were reminded that if a suitable project is agreed, it may be necessary to raise the Parish Council portion of the expenditure by increasing the Precept.

10. Grounds maintenance service and takeover of CGM Group

The Chair felt that the service provided by the CGM Group was generally of a reasonable standard but would continue to be monitored. We have been advised that CGM has been taken over by the Nurture Group with more details to be given later this year. It was agreed that the Parish Council would investigate alternative contractors and it was noted that Mr. Patrick Allen uses a company from Briston. The Chair is to contact the school who has different contractors and the Clerk is to speak with the District Council to establish if they have an approved list of maintenance contractors.

11. Drax decision to terminate our deemed rate electricity contract

We have been informed by Drax that our contract has been terminated. They have said that they will provide assistance to enable us to locate another provider. Our monthly direct debit is in the region of £60 per month so it was very surprising to note that a sum of £550.02 had been taken from the Parish Council's Bank account on 22nd May. This has been queried and a refund requested.

12. Planning applications and determinations.

Applications

- a) PF/23/0725 - Erection of greenhouse in the garden – The Old House, 21 North Street.
- b) PF/23/0916 and LA/23/0917 – Demolition of existing greenhouse and erection of single-storey ancillary outbuilding (games room/family room) – Orchard House, Field Dalling Road.
- c) PF/23/1074 – Erection of timber gates and 2m high close boarded timber fence along eastern boundary – Stable Court Barn, North Street

Harper Hotel (RV22/3256) re Condition 5 (24/3/23) – Condition 3 should be implemented by 24/9/23. The Chairman is to check the current position. There is concern regarding the situation at the District Council with an apparent lack of consultation with the Parish Council. New signs are due to be installed on North Street but no information regarding the type has been received. In total, eleven conditions have to be met.

Determinations

- a) PF/23/0725 and LA/23/0726 - Erection of greenhouse in the garden – The Old House, 21 North Street – approved.

13. Correspondence

- 1) Clerks and Councils magazine for July, 2023.
- 2) Norfolk County Council confirmation of Parish Partnership Scheme for 2024/2025.
- 3) BHIB – hard copy of the Parish Council’s insurance policy together with public liability and employers liability certificates.
- 4) Npower advising of the importance of the electricity EBRs discount.

14. Reports from County and/or District Councillors

None

15. Parishioners’ Participation

- a) It was confirmed that the development/housing survey is to be completed by parishioners anonymously. There is one vote per person, with only those on the Electoral Register being eligible to vote.
- b) The Village Green posts are all rotten and need attention.
- c) People are needed to assist with work on the Village Green, e.g. cutting grass, weeding, etc. Help is required and volunteers are asked to come forward.
- d) There have been incidents of fly tipping in the village and these have been reported to the District Council.
- e) It was stated that the website is easy to find but it is recommended that the words “Langham, Norfolk” are inserted into browsing bars when searching.
- f) The cost of refurbishment of the telephone box is in the region of £1,300. The bill is yet to be received.
- g) Local contractors are invited to express an interest in tendering for the grounds maintenance work in the village for 2024. Details will be given on request.
- h) The draft minutes for each meeting are placed on the website when completed.

16. Any other matters (for information)

Mr. Smith addressed the matter of speeding vehicles in the village. The SAM2 unit has four locations in the parish and is moved every month. Mr. Smith took over responsibility for this function in September, 2021. The information produced is sent to the police on a regular basis but it is a source of deep frustration that nothing happens with it, i.e. it is not utilised in any way. As a result, it has been agreed by all to proceed in a different way. Information is to be summarised into a few key points and placed on the website, Facebook page, etc. The camera will also be turned round from time to time.

17. Agenda items for next meeting

None

18. Date of next meeting : Tuesday, 5th September 2023 at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall

The meeting closed at 8.27 p.m.

DRAFT