

LANGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 5th September, 2023 in the Village Hall at 7.00 p.m.

Present:

Paul Godfrey (Chair)
Patrick Allen
Alan Smith
Kevin Walker
Anne-Marie Coe
Louise Goodenough (co-opted at the meeting)
James Priest (co-opted at the meeting)
The Clerk
Sarah Butikofer (District Councillor)
Michael Dalby (County Councillor)
Fourteen parishioners

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr. Allen stated that he owns the land mentioned in item 7. As such, he would leave the meeting whilst this matter is discussed.

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 4th July, 2023 – were approved by all members.

4. Co-option of new members

- (i) James Priest was proposed by Alan Smith and seconded by Patrick Allen. All in favour.
- (ii) Louise Goodenough was proposed by Kevin Walker and seconded by Anne-Marie Coe. All in favour except Alan Smith who opposed and Patrick Allen who abstained.

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

- a) Mr. Smith reported that the Community Speed Watch team had held 44 sessions of which 23 had been in North Street (20 mph zone). In total, 241 speeding vehicles had been reported. On 14th September, there is to be a joint action day for all Speed Watch groups across both Norfolk and Suffolk.
- b) Locks need to be attended to on the notice board which has been refurbished.

- c) A decision has not yet been made regarding the defibrillator to be bought. Mrs. Butikofer is to speak with the Community Connectors team with a view to establishing a preferred option. The Chairman reminded members that only Mr. Smith had responded to his email dated 5th July, 2023 regarding defibrillator options.
- d) An estimated cost in respect of a suggestion for a possible new pavement has been obtained. This would be in the region of £150 per square metre and for the length needed would amount to a sum of about £30K. It was considered by all that this is not affordable without a sizeable increase in the Precept.
- e) The grounds maintenance service provided by CGM has been of a fair standard but has declined from previous years. Other companies will be contacted with a view to tendering for the work in 2024. Jason Glasspoole, Operations Director of Norse Group, has already been approached.
- f) It is acknowledged that some more posts are needed opposite the public house, near the Village Green. The Chairman and Mr. Allen will assess the situation.
- g) A request had previously made for volunteers to assist with cutting some grass areas in the village. Some help had already come forward which resulted in the main item previously mentioned being dealt with but there remain other parts requiring attention.

6. Finance

Income

26/7/23 Drax (partial refund re charge made on 22/5/23) £149.44

Expenditure

18/7/22	J. E. Cooke (decorating the village telephone box)	£1,290.00
21/8/23	K. Webb (quarterly computer allowance – standing order)	£20.00
5/9/23	K & M Lighting Services (street lighting maintenance – July)	£21.36
5/9/23	K & M Lighting Services (street lighting maintenance – August)	£21.36
5/9/23	SCS Accounting Solutions (quarterly payroll)	£12.00
5/9/23	D. M. Bracey (annual play inspection at playing field)	£120.00
5/9/23	CGM Group (two visits on 12/7 and 26/7 – grass cutting)	£198.00
5/9/23	CGM Group (14/6 – apply herbicide to the gravelled car park area)	£19.80
5/9/23	Norfolk Parish Training and Support (Councillor Guides + postage)	£38.29

Acceptance of expenditure approved by all members.

Balances of Bank accounts:- Current - £2,057.94 credit, Business Saver- £10,075.28 credit (as at 24th August, 2023)

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council is being subjected to Barclays Bank's "Know Your Customers" (KYC) procedures. This involves investigation into money laundering activities supporting crimes such as drug running. Requested information has already been provided but a note states that further questions need to be answered and these can be obtained by ringing a given number. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to contact anyone on this number as it is never answered. The local Barclays branch and Business Centre have been advised although it is unlikely that either will be able to assist.

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

Mr. Walker reported on the responses to the survey sheet which had been issued to every parishioner and thanked all who had contributed. There are 308 electors on the register and there had been 144 returns, representing 47%.

Seven questions had been asked with four different alternative answers to each being provided. Mr. Walker read out the results with concern being expressed in respect of each question asked – a possible increase in the number of houses in the proposed development, not having a guarantee in respect of any new builds, safe entry and exit to the development, not having permanent residents but becoming holiday rentals, not having legal protection that the houses cannot be used as second or holiday homes, not enough affordable homes being provided and the difficulty of younger people from indigenous families being able to remain in the village. Most additional comments were made on affordable housing (15%), highways issues (26%), the area of outstanding natural beauty (17%), the actual survey questions (13%) and infrastructure (10%).

Full details are available on the website.

(Mr. Allen left the meeting whilst this item was being discussed).

8. Group training session

The training from Norfolk Parish Training & Support, primarily aimed at new members, has been confirmed and will take place on 5th October with a 7.00 pm start. The 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. Langham Parish Council will provide refreshments and NPT&S will bring their projector and screen.

9. Drax decision to terminate our deemed rate electricity contract

The sum of £149.44 has been refunded by Drax although a further amount is due. The matter has been chased. The third party (Consultiv Utilities) attempting to locate an alternative supplier on our behalf have requested an unmetered certificate from Drax. The deadline for resolving this matter was 31st August, 2023 and it has been confirmed that no penalty will be applied for the current situation continuing past this date.

10. Playing Field Association (PFA) developments

There are now five members of the new Langham Village Recreation Ground Committee (LVRGC). The long term aim, supported by the Parish Council, is to become a Charity. There is a general aim to raise funds (it will not be possible to claim back VAT on expenditure). In the short to medium term, the group will retain close links with the Parish Council. Mrs. Goodenough has been co-opted on to the Parish Council (please refer to item 4 (ii)). Suggestions for utilising sponsorship opportunities will be examined. It has been confirmed that independent quarterly inspections of the play area and equipment are not required but the mandatory annual inspections will be continued, together with regular internal inspections being carried out, as required. The Langham Playing Field accounts are to be closed with the monies transferred to the Parish Council Bank account. These funds will be clearly annotated in the financial records and earmarked accordingly.

11. Planning applications and determinations.

Applications

- a) NP/23/1490 - Erection of steel framed agricultural store – New Barn Farm, Saxlingham Road, Blakeney – Mrs. Butikofer to investigate.
- b) PF/23/1694 – change of use of building to dwelling (Class C3) and associated land to garden to serve the dwelling; erection of a shed and means of enclosure with gated access between existing brick piers; associated operational development – Stable Court Barn, Langham Road, Holt Road, Langham – the following comments were passed to the District Council:-
"The Parish Council accepts that the curtilage of the Grade 2 listed building, which is Langham Hall, has been broken up by the splitting of various elements of the property, into separate entities. However, Stable Court Barn lies separately, to the north of the Hall and is not integral to the reason that the Hall is listed. That being the south facing facade, which the Parish Council notes has undergone several alterations in recent years, which do not, exactly, sit comfortably with its Grade 2 listing. The vision to the Stable Block Barn site from North Street was only opened up in the early 2000s; before that it had been hidden behind solid black gates hung between the brick piers off the street, which were in position long before the listing in the late 1970s. Looking further inside the property, there is clearly evidence that internal gates had been hung, at some stage, on the heavy brick piers that the applicant now wishes to attach modest gates to in order to separate the property from the Hotel activities. The Parish Council find this quite understandable and acceptable. For these reasons the Parish Council supports this application."

Mr. Smith raised the situation with application AP/23/0012 (caravan and boat storage site) on which an appeal was lodged on 30th March, 2023. Mrs. Butikofer will make enquiries.

Determinations

- a) 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 – approved 11/7/23 and 16/8/23.
- b) PF/23/1074 – Erection of timber gates and 2m high close boarded timber fence along eastern boundary – Stable Court Barn, North Street – withdrawn.

12. Correspondence

- 1) North Norfolk Triathlon – 17th September, 2023
- 2) Norfolk PFA – present position and future of the Charity.
- 3) NNDC – confirmation of the listing of the Blue Bell Public House as an Asset of Community Value.
- 4) Chaser to NCC Highways regarding the situation of the Hollow Lane bridle path and adjoining properties. (Mr. Allen is to advise the resident who he has been consulting with on this matter).

- 5) Update from the Save Blakeney Surgery Campaign together with request for support against closure. (A leaflet drop for parishioners is to be organised on this very important issue. The level of feeling is to be conveyed to the appropriate bodies as requested by Dr. Holliday).

13. Parishioners' Participation

- a) The LVRGC produced a proposal and quotation from NGF Play Ltd of Gressenhall, near Dereham, dated 2nd September, 2023 together with a questionnaire. The quotation is to be forwarded to members electronically. It is the intention for the tractor, which is in a poor state, to be sold for scrap. Views were requested on the pedestrian entry to the play area and the ramp. The Chairman said that a change to the ramp would result in it being subject to new building regulations and, as such, should not be considered.
- b) A parishioner requested that the members of the Parish Council obtain as many signatures as possible to the Save Blakeney Surgery petition contained within the Glaven Valley newsletter.

14. Reports from County and/or District Councillors

Mr. Dalby's report is as follows:-

Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance

With bird nesting season over, people across Norfolk have a chance to do their bit to stop flooding and keep water flowing across their properties.

Small, simple steps that ensure water can drain away from your home can cut down the likelihood of flooding, starting with tasks as simple as keeping drains, ditches and watercourses clear and able to flow freely. After a year's growth, many ditches and watercourses will benefit from clearing branches, and cutting back new undergrowth. Now bird nesting season is over, early autumn is the prime time for property owners to put in a little work to keep their properties safe.

A build-up of flood water with nowhere to drain can quickly turn a minor incident into a disaster for the home. By starting off small, and checking drains for any blockages such as mud, leaves and stones, residents can take the first step towards mitigating the impact of flooding.

Outside the home, if residents spot any blocked or broken drains on Norfolk's highways, they can report it via www.norfolk.gov.uk/flooding, allowing Norfolk's Highways Team to clear them and keep our roads open.

Bid to boost Norfolk's 3bn tourism economy

A new drive to boost Norfolk's £3 billion per year tourism economy will be considered by cabinet.

Norfolk County Council is considering increasing its investment in Visit East England's tourism work from £10,000 to £110,000 per year, under proposed changes to how tourism is supported nationally.

Congratulations and signposting to further support for GCSE and VTQ students

This year's GCSE and Level 2 Vocation and Technology Qualification (VTQ) students are being congratulated for their efforts and signposted to further advice and support on results day.

Young people sitting GCSE exams in schools, academies, and colleges across the county and adults studying with Norfolk Adult Learning have achieved their grades through formal exams this year rather than teacher assessments for the first time since 2019.

All are being recognised for their tenacity and commitment following the disruption in their education due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Cllr Michael Dalby

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Mrs. Butikofer's report is as follows:-

Please find below my second report to the Parishes of the Priory Ward which covers August an extremely quiet month, and the first few days of September.

At Full Council last month, it was agreed:-

The Council's new Corporate Plan – this is the paper that sets out what the Council will be seeking to achieve and deliver over the next four years.

The Outturn Report – The report provides a final budget monitoring position for the 2022/23 financial year. The report makes recommendations that provide funding for ongoing commitments and future projects.

The Treasury Management Report - This report sets out the Treasury Management activities undertaken during 2022/23 compared with the Treasury Management Strategy for the year.

A report to purchase new housing stock - This report recommends purchase of a 4-bed home partly funded from government Local Authority Housing Fund grant. Initially the home will be used to help meet the resettlement needs of Afghan households but in the longer term the Council will be able to use the home as temporary accommodation for homeless households. This is part of central Governments drive to cease the use of temporary accommodation.

A report to work with one of our partners on providing new housing for local residents. The delivery of new affordable housing is a key priority for the Council. This is an opportunity to support the delivery of two affordable homes and support the work of a partner community-led housing organisation. The support takes the form of a loan of £110,000 at commercial rates and at minimal risk to the Council.

The Council's Disabled Facilities Grant was reviewed. The current mandatory Discretionary Facilities Grant (DFG) service delivered by the Integrated Housing Adaptations Team (IHAT) is valued, effective and efficient. Demand for mandatory DFGs is increasing due to an increasing older population and the desire by many people with disabilities and long term health conditions to remain in their own home rather than in residential or nursing care. A Discretionary DFG Policy is needed to widen the scope and services available through the DFG process. It will offer an early intervention service and contribute to the resolution of cases that require works outside the scope of the current DFG fund. A Discretionary DFG Policy will reduce the formal process and enable adaptations to be progressed more quickly for those with life limiting conditions. Overall the Discretionary DFG Policy will widen the DFG offer, improve customer service, reduce DFG process wait times and support the promotion of independent living. If your residents need help to access this service please don't hesitate to get in touch.

The Cabinet decided to approve funding to support the work of the Information Advice and Advocacy Service known to many as the CAB but now the service is provided to North Norfolk by the (Norfolk CA).

At Cabinet this month papers were brought forward regarding:-

The Local Plan, it is moving forwards and delegated authority was given to the Planning Policy Manager in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder and Chairman of the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party to respond to the Inspectors questions prior to and during the Examination hearings.

That having been subject to successful local referendum.

The Holt Neighbourhood Plan be made (brought into force) as part of the statutory Development Plan for North Norfolk in accordance with section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) on the 25th August 2023;

That, as soon as reasonably practical, weight is given to the emerging Plan policies in line with para 48 of the NPPF.

The Budget Monitoring report was shared and shows that the overall position at the end of July 2023 shows a £3,905,574 underspend for the current financial year on the revenue account, this is however currently expected to deliver a full year overspend of £25,000.

- A couple of further points from within the report that may be of interest, funding has been requested and approved for repairs to the Marrams footpath in Cromer and the Public Conveniences in Holt.

The Cromer Phase 2 and Mundesley Coastal Development Scheme.

The detailed design for the Schemes is now completed, the consenting process and further funding is progressing. We are in the process of reviewing the Construction Phase Proposal.

A report on the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund was considered, and further work for continuing this work into the future is being prepared.

The Cedars in North Walsham is ready to reopen and is holding an open day for members of the public on Thursday the 7th.

Rocket House Cromer

The Rocket House building is a multi-let property with community facilities on Cromer East Promenade that now requires substantial repairs, maintenance and energy improvement works to ensure a sustainable future for the building. Officers have considered a range of options seeking to provide best value to the Council and to continue providing accommodation to the existing tenants, along with retention of the public toilets and lift.

As you will no doubt be aware there are many Parish Councils in Priory, so I may not always be able to make all your Parish Council meetings. However, if you have a specific item on the agenda, you would like me there to discuss please let me know and I will do my best to join you. Likewise, should an item arise during the meeting that you would like me to investigate or assist with please do not hesitate to contact me.

Planning and housing is often the subject of much debate and I am always happy to hear your views and considerations on applications. You know your villages better than anyone and your thoughts are important to me when representing you.

15. Any other matters (for information)

Mr. Smith made the following points regarding speeding by vehicles passing through the village which continues to be a matter generating significant concern:-

- a) From the beginning of September, the SAM2 camera is being rotated through 180% at three of the four locations. A monthly summary of the data will be placed on the website and the Facebook page.
- b) Speeding continues on North Street, (thought to be a motorbike or motorbikes), in early mornings and late at night. The highest speed recorded has been 75 mph. It was agreed by all that this matter should again be brought to the attention of the local Police Beat Officer, P. C. Blakelock.

16. Agenda items for next meeting

None

17. Date of next meeting : Tuesday, 7th November 2023 at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall

The meeting closed at 8.48 p.m.

DRAFT