

Minutes of Scarning Parish Council Meeting held in Scarning Village Hall on 21 November 2022

Present: F Bradford (Chair), T Abel, M Blackburn, S Bunn, C Farnham, C Geary, C Hewson, T Mallard, M Steward. In attendance: N Hartley (Parish Clerk). Three members of the public.

Public Participation

The Council was asked if the road signs in the parish could be cleaned. It was noted that the road signs are the responsibility of Norfolk County Council. The Parish Council will contact Norfolk County Council to see when the Rangers are next visiting Scarning and ask for cleaning the road signs to be added to the list of tasks carried out.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs P Hewett and L Turner (Breckland Council) and Cllr W Richmond (Norfolk County Council)

2 Report from Norfolk County Councillor

Cllr Richmond (Norfolk County Council) sent a report as he was unable to attend the meeting. His report noted that the missing 40 and 50mph speed roundel road markings near the Draytonhall Lane junction with Dereham Road and to the west of the village on Dereham Road have been installed. The carriageway patching works near the junction of the A47 and Draytonhall Lane are scheduled for 29 and 30 November 2022. His understanding is that the section of footway outside the old Black Horse Close on Dereham Road is included in the resurfacing/slurry scheme works currently scheduled for the 2023/24 financial year.

Cllr Abel asked if the owner of the old Black Horse can be asked to cut back his hedge next to Chapel Lane to improve road safety. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council will ask Norfolk County Council to write to the owner with this request. It was further **RESOLVED** that a member of the Parish Council will photograph the line of the verge and the newly planted hedge of the same property as evidence, for safety reasons, in case the line of the hedge crosses the boundary line at a later date.

3 Update on Meeting of Parish Councillors with Norfolk County Council

Members of the Parish Council had met Cllr Richmond and members of Norfolk County Council Highways. It was noted that the County Council has scheduled resurfacing the footway from Podmore Lane to the church lay by in the financial year 2023/24. It was noted that if a new car park is added to the Shipdham Lane Playing Field, Norfolk County Council will provide a directions sign to it. The County Council will monitor the Fen Road junction with the Broadway.

With regard to the 'dips' in the Dereham Road, near the junction with Chestnut Road, the County Council had noted that the cost of repairing these would be prohibitive. The Parish Council noted that the 'dips' had been programmed for repair and that the County Council had said the work was complete. It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council will obtain clarification regarding this.

Norfolk County Council suggested a regular meeting with councillors. It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council will keep a list of ongoing matters for discussion at each meeting if these matters have not already been resolved.

4 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Farnham in the grant application Scarning PCC (item 17) as his brother is a churchwarden.

5 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October, 2022, as a true and accurate record. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

6 Matters Arising

It was noted that the hedge next to Draytonhall Lane, near the junction with the A47, has been cut.

7 Planning

7.1 Breckland Council decisions:-

Berm House, Dereham Road	3PL/2022/0131/F
Detached retirement bungalow and garage infill plot, on garden at side of existing property	Refused

7.2 Applications considered:-

2 Scarning Fen	3PL/2022/1237/HOU
Two storey front & side extension and first floor side & rear extension	No objection

Tilco, land east of Draytonhall Lane	3PL/2022/1220/O
Outline planning application for erection of care home (Use Class C2) with all matters reserved apart from access	

The Parish Council strongly objected to this application for the following reasons:-

The proposed property is outside the Settlement Boundary and appears to be a cramped form of development. In view of the location, it is thought that most visitors

would travel by car and not via public transport or on foot. 25 car parking spaces is not sufficient for staff and visitors. There is no separate place for deliveries/departures.

The Council does not consider this is a suitable location for a care home, particularly with dementia patients. It is not unheard of for dementia patients to wander off, and due to the location, it is thought this could end in tragedy.

The Council felt that this piece of land was originally left over when the Scarning estate was built as it is too noisy to develop.

The Draytonhall Lane junction with the A47 is well known as a dangerous junction. The Council believes that no development should take place that risks adding additional traffic to this junction.

8 Finance

8.1 The Council approved the following payments in accordance with the Budget:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £851.30

Jemco, sign for outdoor fitness equipment (Shipdham Road), £114.79

N Hartley, reimbursement of expenses, £131.10

Scarning PCC, refreshments for litter pickers on litter pick day, £35

N Hartley, reimbursement for photocopier ink, £31.86

Vuelt Training, training in Excel, £40

8.2 The Council received a report of Actual Expenditure to Budgeted Expenditure

8.3 Cllr Farnham (Internal Control Officer) noted that he had carried out the regular checks and that everything was in order.

9 Clerk's Report

The Council received the Clerk's report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

10 Scarning Fuel Allotment Charity Grant Application

The Council considered a grant application for £1,050 to cover the cost of a site map, which will enable the charity to accurately record the boundaries of its land. The Parish Council noted that it is the Sole Trustee of the Fuel Allotment Charity. It was **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £1,050.

11 Tree Preservation Orders

The Council had submitted its comments from the October meeting to Breckland Council on two proposed Tree Preservation Orders on the Shipdham Lane Playing Field. The Council had not as yet received a reply. An update will be carried forward to the next Council meeting.

12 Tree and Hedgerow Management Policy

The Council considered a draft Tree and Hedgerow Management policy. Two amendments were made to the draft document.

Cllr Farnham questioned who is responsible for the maintenance of the trees on Shipdham Lane Playing Field. It was noted that under the agreed Terms of Reference Scarning Playing Field Committee is responsible for the trees. It was **RESOLVED** that the Playing Field Committee will meet and Cllr Hewson, as Chair of the Committee, will come back to the Parish Council regarding the maintenance of the trees at the next meeting.

13 Tree Survey Contractor

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Ravencroft Trees, which carried out the previous report for the Parish Council, to survey the trees on the Shipdham Lane Playing Field, the former Highway Surveyors land at Chapel Lane.

14 Daffy Green Highway Surveyors Land

The Council had been in contact with the solicitors of its former tenant. The Council was not clear if the former tenant still had an interest in the land. The Council considered the appointment of solicitors to carry out a Land Registry search, but noted that as the rent of the land is £5pa this may be a disproportionate expense. It was **RESOLVED** to take no further action at this time.

15 Appointment of Solicitors re Water Meadows Lease

The Council agreed that it needed legal representation in connection with the proposed new lease of the two play areas at Scarning Water Meadows. It was **RESOLVED** to wait until Breckland Council had addressed the various points raised by the Council (see item 16, below) before appointing a solicitor.

16 Water Meadows Play Area Lease

The Council considered a proposed new lease from Breckland Council of the two play areas on the Water Meadows site. It was noted that many parts of the lease were not relevant to the land which the Parish Council is trying to rent.

It was **RESOLVED** to request a lease that is made more relevant to the land which the Parish Council is to rent. Ie to remove or amend the clauses which are designed for a house or other property.

In addition, the Council agreed the following:-

To request the removal of the clause in the lease requesting payment of £250pa from the Parish Council, being the cost incurred by the landlord in monitoring two trees outside the Ted Ellis play area. The trees are not the responsibility of the Parish Council.

To request the addition of a clause in the lease outlining how the Parish Council approaches Breckland Council with requests for new assets/play equipment on one or both sites.

To request the addition of a clause in the lease outlining how the Parish Council approaches the landlord for permission to hold events. The Parish Council has previously hosted a biodiversity day and would like to be able to hold similar or other events on the site.

To request an extension of the term of the lease from 7 to 10 years. The Parish Council is wishing to replace much of the play equipment on the site and feels it would be beneficial both in terms of approaching funders for grants if the lease term was longer, but also to the Parish Council in terms of spending public money on the installation of new play equipment.

With regard to the 6 month break clause, the Parish Council is concerned that if the break clause is invoked, the Parish Council may have invested significant sums of public money in play equipment/other assets. The Parish Council would like therefore to request that a clause be added to the lease that Breckland Council will compensate the Parish Council the market value of its assets/play equipment on the site.

17 Grass Cutting Scarning Churchyard

The Council considered a request from Scarning PCC to cut the grass in the churchyard in 2023. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the funding of the cutting.

18 Draft Budget 2023/24

The Council considered a draft Budget. An amendment was made to £100 for the parish website costs. It was suggested that monies should be set aside for the proposed car park on the Shipdham Lane Playing Field. Cllr Hewson will seek an estimate for the next Parish Council meeting.

19 Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to approve an Anti Bullying and Harassment policy.

20 Whistleblowing Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a Whistleblowing policy.

21 Disciplinary and Grievance Policy

The Council reviewed its Disciplinary and Grievance policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no changes were necessary.

22 Request for 40mph Speed Limit

Cllr Abel asked if the Parish Council could request a uniform 40mph speed limit on the Dereham Road to the school. It was **RESOLVED** to request this.

23 Items for Inclusion in Next Agenda

Draft Budget 2023/24

Proposed lease of Scarning Water Meadows play areas

Appointment of solicitors regarding the lease of Scarning Water Meadows play areas

Draft Tree and Hedgerow Management policy

An update on the Scarning Community boxes

An update on the Speed Watch Group

24 Next Meeting

The next Council meeting will be on December 12 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting was closed to the public. Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 160, it was RESOLVED that, because of the confidential nature of the business transacted, the public were asked to leave the meeting so that the Council could discuss the clerk's salary.

25 Clerk's Salary

It was noted that a Local Government pay award has been agreed which on the clerk's salary scale equates to around £1 an hour. The pay award is backdated to April 2022.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.10pm.

Clerk's Report

The Broadway

Norfolk County Council has programmed to have the offlets cleaned and jetted (Job 222542). The Give Way sign will be repaired (222537). The Council is adding gabions under a Scheme, due to the cost. (Advised by William Richmond August 2022).

Dereham Road 'Dips'

The 'dips' were programmed (Job 222556 and 222555). Highways said at the meeting with councillors that it is not possible to carry out these works due to the expense.

Hedge Cutting Draytonhall Lane

Taylor Wimpey to obtain quotes re a request to cut back the hedge near the junction of Draytonhall Lane and the A47.

Litter Bin Chestnut Road/Dereham Road Bus Shelter

A new bin is to be installed.

Outdoor Fitness Sign

Replacement sign to be fitted at Shipdham Lane playing field.

WATER MEADOWS

Play Report Works

The Mansfields have carried out some of the works recommended in the annual report. The Parish Council has accepted the quote of NGF Play Ltd to carry out the remainder of the works.