

**Minutes of a meeting of Scarning Parish Council held in
Scarning Village Hall on 18 March 2024 at 7pm**

Councillors present: F Bradford (Chair) T Abel, M Blackburn, S Bunn, C Hewson, M Steward.

In attendance: N Hartley (Parish Clerk), W Richmond (Norfolk County Council). Six members of the public.

Public Participation

Members of the public objected to the revised plans for the Planning Application at 15 Blackthorn Drive. The reasons for objection included increased traffic; noise; congestion; and the possible effect on the resale value of their properties. The residents indicated that their deeds contained a covenant which states no business can be run from the properties. They were advised to submit this to the Planning department. It was noted that the dates of planning meetings are published on Breckland Council's website.

Cllr Richmond (Norfolk County Council) was asked about the proposed reduction of the speed limit on Dereham Road to 40mph. He confirmed that he had put this forward in the Road Safety Community Fund and is anticipating an answer in the new financial year.

Cllr Richmond said he will investigate the condition of Fen Road, which is in need of repair near the junction with the Broadway.

The Council confirmed that it will be weedkilling the bottom of the hedge between Black Horse Close and Hill Rise in April/May.

The meeting went into session.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs P Hewett & L Turner (Breckland Council).

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Hewson declared an interest in any matter relating to Shipdham Lane Playing Field.

Cllr Abel declared an interest in any matter relating to Scarning United Charities.

3 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2024 as a true and accurate record. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising

None.

5 Report of Norfolk County Councillor

Cllr W Richmond confirmed that a decision regarding the Parish Council's request for a SAM2 should be received soon and that the other two bids have been successful.

6 Planning

6.1 The Council noted the withdrawal of the following Planning Application:-

Field adjacent to Scarning Allotment and Fairfield House 3PL/2024/0124/F

Change of use of field from agricultural use to a secure dog exercise field. Minor works to the existing vehicular access to increase visibility. Installation of 'stock' fencing with some screening as detailed on the drawings. Installation of access gate and parking/turning area.

6.2 The Council considered Consultation Amendments for the following application:-

15 Blackthorn Drive 3PL/2024/0063/F
Proposed change of use of domestic outbuilding to use Class E (Dog Grooming Salon)

It was **RESOLVED** to reiterate the Council's objection. The Council felt that as this is a commercial venture it should be run from commercial premises. The Council note there were plenty of premises in Dereham from which the business could be run.

6.3 The Council considered the following Planning Applications:-

Hope Springs, Dereham Road 3PL/2024/0170/F
Proposed change of use of land from paddock to residential curtilage (garden space)

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no objection.

Honeysuckle Cottage, Scarning Dale, Dale Road 3PL/2024/0168/F
Change of use from holiday let to residential let

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no objection.

7 Finance

7.1 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following payments in accordance with the Council's budget:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £947.39

HMRC, clerk's Paye, £19.40

N Hartley, reimbursement of expenses, £155.85

N Hartley, reimbursement re Wix costs for Parish Council website, £116.86

N Hartley, reimbursement for office supplies, £15.50
Dereham Cancer Care, donation to running costs, £100 (Section 137)
T T Jones Ltd, street light maintenance contract, £71.20
Scarning Village Hall, hire of hall for Council meetings, £50

7.2 The Council had received the following payment:-

Scarning Playing Field Committee, annual peppercorn rent, £0.05

7.3 The Council received a copy of the report of Actual to Budgeted expenditure (a copy of the report is attached to the Minutes).

8 Reserves Policy

The Council considered a Reserves Policy. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy.

9 Grant application from Scarning Fuel Allotment Charity

The Council considered a grant application for £255 from the Fuel Allotment Charity for a tree survey. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the grant.

10 Parish Partnership Scheme

The Parish Council made the following Parish Partnership Scheme bids and agreed (December 2023) to make a final decision once the estimated costs have been received. Norfolk County Council has to date come back with agreement to two of the bids. The bid for a moveable SAM2 is awaiting a decision:-

- A Moveable SAM2 with data collection (battery run). Estimated cost to Parish Council (£1,777)
- Move the Children's Play Area sign from Dereham Road to Shipdham Lane. (Cost as put forward by Norfolk County Council totalling £1,392.63; cost to the Parish Council £696.32)
- Install a sign to Village Hall parking on Shipdham Lane Playing Field at Dereham Road. (Cost as put forward by Norfolk County Council £1,459.31. Cost to the Parish Council £729.66)

The Council was awaiting confirmation from Norfolk County Council that they realise the playground sign is to move an existing sign from one place to another. The Council is also questioning the amount of £1,459.31 to install what the Council considers to be a standard sign pointing to Village Hall car parking.

Re the Village Hall car parking sign, it was agreed (December 2023) that the Village Hall Trust will fund up to 30% of the cost of a sign, final approval subject to receipt of an estimate of expenditure.

11 Former Broadway Allotment site

The Council reviewed the annual rent of the site. It was **RESOLVED** to increase the rent to £400pa. It was suggested that if the application for a dog exercise field adjacent to Scarning Allotment and Fairfield House does not proceed, the Council might consider the former Broadway Allotment site or part of it for use as a dog exercise field. It was **RESOLVED** to agree to this.

Cllr Steward noted that the land containing the former Highway Surveyors land at Daffy Green is for sale. The Clerk will contact the selling agent re the Council owned part of the land.

12 Social Media Policy

The Council reviewed its Social Media Policy. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the amended policy.

13 Flower Boxes 2024

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a request for £75 for flowers for the Council's flower boxes.

14 Repair Village Sign

Cllr Abel advised the cost to repair the sign will be no more than £100. The work will be carried out by Bunnings.

15 Blackthorn Drive play area Working Group

Cllr Bradford noted that a Monkey Survey has been sent to the school and pre school. The link to the survey is on the Council's website and the parish website.

16 Small Grants Scheme

The Council had received a proposal for a Small Grants Scheme 'to encourage a sense pride in the community.' As examples, the Council can contribute toward projects which:-

- Demonstrate a degree of community development/public involvement
- Provide services for youth/the elderly
- Provide or improve sport or cultural activities
- Address problems of climate change/promote a carbon neutral community
- Record parish heritage, such as the publication costs of a book or heritage event

The Council cannot:

- Contribute toward the ongoing running costs of a group/organisation

- Fund individuals for such items as sponsorship for charitable purposes, travel grants or for educational purposes
- Contribute toward curriculum based school activities
- Contribute toward activities which are of a political or religious nature
- Contribute toward local or national appeals
- Contribute to organisations whose main objective is to raise funds for other charitable organisations
- Contribute to organisations requesting funding for purposes that are the responsibility of statutory agencies

As guidance, the Clerk suggested the following basic outline:-

- Projects must benefit the whole community or a significant number of residents
 - Applications can only be considered from 'not for profit' organisations
 - Grants cannot be made to individuals or businesses
 - The group/organisation must have a bank account in its name
 - A maximum grant of £500
 - Grants will not be made retrospectively
 - The group/organisation must submit a schedule of proposed or actual expenditure
 - Any grant monies not spent by the applicant within 12 months of the grant must be repaid to the Parish Council
 - Evidence of expenditure must be submitted to the Parish Council
- The Council should set aside a separate item in its Budget towards Small Grants

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would like to carry this scheme forward. The Clerk will prepare a policy document for consideration at the April meeting and the Council will set aside funds toward the scheme.

17 D-day Beacon Lighting

This was carried forward from the Council's March meeting. The Council noted that 6 and 7 June are working/school days in terms of lighting the beacon at 9.15pm. It was thought that some sort of event could be held before this, with the beacon lit in advance of 9.15pm. Cllr Bradford will contact Chris Farnham to see if he will make his teleporter available to help lighting the beacon.

18 Solar Light (Dereham Road near Chestnut Road)

The Council noted the light has not been working properly for some time. The Clerk said the contractor is checking the light again. It was noted the Council had paid for a new battery and questioned what the contractor will do if the light continues not to work. It was noted that the light was installed in 2017 and had only been working intermittently since October 2022 and has not worked at all since the end of 2023.

19 Representatives' Reports

Cllr Abel was asked if he is a representative of the Playing Field Committee or a member of the Committee. Cllr Hewson said Cllr Abel had been elected a member of the Committee.

Cllr Abel said he had attended the most recent meeting of the Playing Field Committee and noted the tennis courts are to be treated with a chemical to kill the moss. With regard to the proposals for car parking, Norfolk County Council has not approved the visibility splay on leaving the car park. This will necessitate removing the hedge on one side and lowering the bank on the other. Norfolk County Council has to carry out any works.

Cllr Blackburn noted there had been positive comments regarding the Council's Survey for new play equipment at Blackthorn Drive.

Cllr Steward advised that as far as he was aware Civil Parking Enforcement had recently visited the school and issued no fines to drivers. It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council will seek the reason/s no fines were issued as it was felt this may act as a deterrent.

The Clerk noted that the school had advised four/five cars are being parked on the road opposite the school.

20 Items for the Next Agenda

Cleaning bus shelters. Cllr Hewson offered to clean the Black Horse Close/Dereham Road shelter. The others will be considered as part of the Annual Asset Report.

21 Next Meetings

The next meetings of the Parish Council will be the Annual Parish Council meeting and the usual Parish Council meeting in the Village Hall on 15 April from 7pm.

The meeting was closed to the public.

Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, 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 annual appraisal.

22 Clerk's Appraisal

The Staff Committee advised the Council of the results of the Clerk's annual appraisal. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the content of the appraisal and to agree the objectives set for the 2024/25 working year. The Clerk's health and safety issues raised in the appraisal were discussed and it was **RESOLVED** to award up to £50 for the Clerk to purchase a laptop riser, together with a wireless mouse and keyboard. It was noted the Clerk will approach his other Parish Council employer for a suitable office chair.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.25pm.

Scarning Parish Council Actual to Budgeted Expenditure

	Budgeted Expenditure	Actual Expenditure	Over/under spent
Administration			
Insurance	750	708.10	41.90
Clerk's salary & Paye	10,500	10,624.36	842.43
Clerk's expenses	500	312.20	187.80
Council phone	50	30.00	20.00
Payroll services	100	72.00	28.00
Office supplies & repairs (photocopier)	250	152.28	97.72
Internal Auditor	150	120.00	30.00
External Auditor	550	252.00	298.00
Norfolk Parish Training Subscription	400	420.00	20.00
Information Commissioner	35	35.00	-
Microsoft subscription – Council laptop	60	59.99	0.01
Council website - Wix	120		
Parish website Costs	100	124.00	75.00
Hire of Village Hall	275	218.75	56.25
Council Training	250	140.00	110.00
Maintenance			
Cutting roadside verges/meadows play areas (see below)	4,500	4,897.92	397.92
Street lighting	2,500	1,346.80	1,153.20
Street light maintenance	300	1,967.40	1,667.40
Tree survey	500		
Tree works	1,000		
Solar lights – repairs	100	295.20	195.20
Church clock maintenance	100	100.00	-
Defibrillator costs	450	298.00	152.00

SAM2	100		
Flower boxes	150	58.05	91.98
General repairs	500		
Grit/dog bins	-	290.00	290.00
Noticeboard spare keys	-	9.27	9.27
Blackthorn Drive Play Area			
Grass cutting	Included in verges figure above		
New play equipment	5,000		
Repairs to play equipment	1,000	311.00	689.00
Play Safety Reports	250	240.00	10.00
Maintenance of Outdoor Fitness equipment	500		
Ted Ellis Play Area			
Fence/gates	300		
Shipdham Lane Playing Field			
Outdoor Fitness equipment maintenance	250	198.00	52.00
Zip wire maintenance	200	164.70	35.30
Grants and Donations			
Grants	5,000	3,100.00	1,900.00
Payment for Mower to Scarning Playing Field Committee		4,800.00	
Grass cutting in churchyard	1,500	1,512.00	12.00
Remembrance Day wreath (Section 137)	50	50.00	-
Other			
Christmas tree	300	276.00	24.00
Litter picking	75	23.50	51.50
Elections	2,085	75.00	2,010.00

Events (Coronation)		1,000		
TOTAL		£42,000	£33,281.52	
Bank reconciliation as at 29 February 2024				
Barclays Current Account £26,984.57				
Scottish Widows £22,084.20		£49,068.77 less unpaid cheque £19.40 = £49,049.37		
Balance c/f £37,660.26				
Add receipts £44,670.63				
Less payments £33,281.52		£49,047.37		