

Minutes of Scarning Parish Council Meeting held in Scarning Village Hall on 13 February 2023

Present: F Bradford (Chair), T Abel, M Blackburn, S Bunn, C Farnham, C Geary, C Hewson, T Mallard, M Steward. In attendance: Cllr P Hewett (Breckland Council) N Hartley (Parish Clerk), three members of Breckland Council's Asset Management team, four members of the public

Public Participation

It was noted that there are Environmental Initiative grants available through Breckland Council. It was suggested the Council apply for a £250 grant for its flower boxes and to plant flowers around the base of the beacon.

The residents of 1 Hall Cottages noted the problems with flooding on the footpath outside their property and requested that cars be prevented from using the footpath outside 1 and 2 Hall Cottages, both for parking and as cut through. The Council had previously expressed concerns about a soil heap outside 1 Hall Cottages in terms of seepage of the soil into the drains. The residents assured the Council that there has been no seepage and that the heap of soil will be removed. The Parish Council noted that Norfolk County Council is investigating the ongoing problem with the drain. The residents were asked if the Village Hall Trust could ask hirers of the hall not to park in this area. They said that this is included in the conditions of hiring the hall and that the caretaker had received verbal abuse when asking some hirers not to park in this area.

The Council was asked about the grit bin which formerly was at the top of the Chapel Lane/Dereham Road junction. The Council noted the bin had been moved several years ago to the junction of Chapel Lane and Soames Place.

1 Meadows Lease

The Council had received answers to a number of questions sent to Asset Management regarding the new proposed lease of the play areas at Blackthorn Drive and Ted Ellis Way. The Council asked about reference in the lease to the two trees next to the Ted Ellis Way play area and were informed that the wording for this will be amended so that it is clear these trees are outside and not inside the play area.

It was **RESOLVED** to ask Breckland Council who will pay the Land Registry fee to register the lease.

2 Apologies for Absence

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

3 Report from Norfolk County and Breckland Councillors

Cllr Hewett (Breckland Council) noted that Breckland Council has agreed its Council Tax figures.

Cllr Richmond (Norfolk County Council) supplied details of the Parish Partnership Scheme re item 20 (below).

4 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Abel declared an interest in item 7.2 (below).

5 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2023, as a true and accurate record. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

6 Matters Arising

It was noted that Norfolk County Council had made an assessment of the speed awareness sign on Draytonhall Lane and that it was working correctly. The sign only comes on when drivers are speeding.

It was noted that one of the solar lights over the bus shelters at Dereham Road/Chestnut Road is not working and the other is only working intermittently.

7 Planning

7.1 Breckland Council decisions:-

27 Hawthorn Drive
Timber structure/pergola to rear elevation and inc rear decking area (retrospective)
3PL/2022/1174/HOU
Approved

7.2 Application withdrawn:-

Pennymeadow Nursery, Podmore Lane
Erection of new dwelling and detached garage with ancillary accommodation above and external staircase
3PL/2022/0251/F

8 Finance

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

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £780.85
Ravencroft Tree Services Ltd, tree survey, £390

T T Jones Electrical Ltd, maintenance and new LED (the Watlings) £478.52
Glasdon UK Ltd, new bin (Ted Ellis Way) £268.95
Vuelt Training, Excel training, £40
Logic Red Web Design, parish website costs, £99
Glasdon UK Ltd, new grit bin (Mayfair), £230.66
Glasdon UK Ltd, new bin post (cut through Draytonhall Lane-Allwood Av) £129.61
Wensum Valley Electrical, installation of Christmas lights, £90
N Hartley, reimbursement for photocopier ink, £151.65
PKF Littlejohn, external audit fee, £240

The Council will monitor the ink usage in its photocopier.

8.2 The meeting received a report of Actual to Budgeted Expenditure

9 External Auditors Report 2021/22

The Council had received the Auditors final report. The report stated that PAYE payments to HMRC had been incorrectly included in Section 2, Box 6 rather than Box 4 for the current and prior years, and that these figures should be amended. The balance brought forward from the previous year of £28,909 (Section 2, Box 1) did not agree to the prior year balance carried forward of £29,572 (Section 2, Box 7). This was due to an adjustment made in the prior year relating to 2019/20 where the auditor incorrectly made reference to changes to be made to Boxes 7 and 8 in the external auditor report when the required adjustment was presentational only. Section 2, Boxes 7 and 8 for the prior year should both read £28,909.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the stated amendments.

10 Internal Control Policy

The Council's reviewed its Internal Control policy. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the policy without amendment.

11 Risk Management Policy

The Council's reviewed its Risk Management policy. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the policy without amendment.

12 Appointment of Internal Auditor

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint SCS Accounting Solutions as the Council's Internal Auditor.

13 Clerk's Report

A new bin has been installed on Ted Ellis Way. A new grit bin has been installed at Mayfair. The bin on the cut through between Draytonhall Lane and Allwood Avenue will be replaced shortly.

14 Lease of Water Meadows Play Areas

It was **RESOLVED** to agree a new lease of the Water Meadows play areas at Blackthorn Drive and Ted Ellis Way, subject to obtaining legal advice and subject to the final amendments agreed with Asset Management. The updated lease to be sent to councillors.

15 Solicitors

The Council considered two quotes for guidance regarding the proposed new lease of the Water Meadows play areas at Blackthorn Drive and Ted Ellis Way. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint NPlaw to provide guidance/advice at a capped figure of £750. The Council will ask NPlaw how it wishes to conduct this business before accepting the Council as a client. The Clerk will report this back to the Council and the Council will draft a report setting out the background/detail to the lease and the way forward based on NPlaw's requirements.

16 Blackthorn Drive Youth Shelter

It was noted that a tent has been pitched inside one of the Youth Shelters. It was noted that there have been no complaints or problems. It was **RESOLVED** that no action is required at this time. The Council will continue to monitor.

17 Tree Survey

The Council received the Tree Survey. It was **RESOLVED** that in accordance with the lease the tenant of the Chapel Lane former Highway Surveyors land needs to carry out the tree works recommended in the report. With regard to the former Broadway Allotment site, it was **RESOLVED** to add a clause to the lease at renewal making the tenant responsible for trees on the site and to contact the tenant noting there is a dangerous tree on the land. With regard to the trees on the Shipdham Lane playing field, the Council will wait until the Playing Field Committee has met and made a decision regarding the trees on the site.

18 Tree Preservation Orders

The Council was still waiting for an update from Breckland Council. It was agreed to carry this forward to the March meeting.

19 Tree and Hedgerow Management Policy

The Council received a Tree and Hedgerow Management policy. It was agreed to wait until the Playing Field Committee has met and made a decision regarding the trees on the site. The proposed policy will be carried forward to the March meeting.

20 Footpath Outside 1 & 2 Hall Cottages

After its January meeting, the Council notified Norfolk County Council of flooding on the footpath outside 1 Hall Cottages and suggested the drains may need cleaning. Cllr Richmond reported this to Norfolk County Council. The Parish Council had asked if the footpath could be closed off. In response, Norfolk County Council said it would support a bid under the Parish Partnership Scheme to install wooden bollards at either end of the footpath between 1 and 2 Hall Cottages.

The Parish Council does not see why it should have to pay when the land in question is owned by Norfolk County Council. The Parish Council noted an area on Chestnut Road where bollards have been installed on the verge/footpath in front of a property. (The Parish Council did not pay for this.) The Parish Council is mindful of this and does not wish to set a precedent.

The Parish Council believes this is an issue for the residents to resolve. It was **RESOLVED** to suggest the residents contact Norfolk County Council regarding the drains and the parking, copied to William Richmond, as the parish's county councillor.

21 Permanent Speed Awareness Sign

The Council had asked Norfolk County Council if it could have a permanent speed awareness sign. The County Council no longer provides these.

22 Repairs to SAM2

Cllr Steward had taken the Council's SAM2 to Westcotec as it is not working. He had been advised that both batteries need replacing and there is a fault in the camera. The total cost will be around £320. It was **RESOLVED** to have the equipment repaired.

23 King's Coronation

Cllr Blackburn noted that the church coffee morning is to be held on Sunday 7 May. A Big Help Out is to be held on 8 May. The Council noted that lighting the beacon is not a national event. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council will not hold an event.

24 Grant Application from Scarning Pre School

The Preschool applied for a grant of £910 for safety padding to be placed around posts on a new canopy that will give the pre school more outdoor space. The Council had received the Preschool's up to date accounts. It was **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £910.

25 Environmental Initiative Grant

The deadline for applications for Breckland Council's Environmental Initiative grants is 28 February. It was **RESOLVED** to apply for a grant of £250 for pollinating flowers in the Council's three flower boxes and to plant the same around the base of the beacon.

26 Items for Inclusion in the next Agenda

An update from Cllr Richmond (Norfolk County Council) on the Parish Council's request for a uniform 40mph speed limit on Dereham Road.

An assessment of the locations/suitability of the Council's grit bins.

27 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on March 20.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9pm.