

Earsham Parish Council
Minutes
of a meeting of Earsham Parish Council held by way of video conferencing on
Wednesday 31st March 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Stephen Wood (Chair), Keith Reeve, Jim Bennett, Tony Leech and Nick Meade

Also present: District Councillors Brendon Bernard and Chris Brown, County Councillor Margaret Stone, 5 members of the public (Geoff Hall, Edwin Sayer, Peter Goodfellow, Gill Stone, Richard Randlesome and John Gore) and Lynda Ling (Clerk)

1. Welcome – Cllr. Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed those present that tonight would be slightly different in that a co-option would be taking place, and for this, members of the public would be removed from the meeting and put in the waiting room by the clerk until the decision has been made on who the new councillor will be. There were four applications.

2. To receive and accept apologies from members unable to attend – Cllr. Gunton (work commitments)

3. To receive any declarations of interest, in particular matters to be raised at this meeting – None

4. Resolution to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27th January 2021
- Agreement was proposed by Councillor Reeve and seconded by Councillor Leech **ALL AGREED**

Standing Orders were suspended at 19.46 and reconvened at 19.57 for comments from members of public:-

5. Co-option of interested candidates –

- To consider co-opting candidates who have come forward in response to a casual vacancy on the council, and if appropriate, to appoint a councillor by co-option. If an appointment is made, the new councillor, if present, should then sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

All members of the public were informed they would be put in the waiting room and the candidates would be brought back into the meeting one by one to answer questions from councillors. Once a decision had been reached on a new councillor, all members of the public would be allowed back into the meeting. After this process had taken place, Cllr. Wood commented that it had been a difficult decision to make as the candidates were all good, however, a decision had been reached on what someone can bring in skills to the parish councillor, and the decision was to co-opt Richard Randlesome. Agreement to the co-option of Richard was proposed by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Cllr. Bennett. **ALL AGREED**

As this co-option has taken place by Zoom and the new councillor is unable to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, the Clerk advised that Richard would be able to discuss matters during this meeting only, but cannot vote until the document was signed. The clerk will send this to him.

Standing Orders were suspended at 20.00 and reconvened at 20.07 for comments from members of public:-

Geoff Hall asked if the parish council had discussed the planning application for a dropped kerb in Princess Way and mentioned that teenage boys were seen putting their bikes against the new football structures and climbing on the roof.

6. Reports

Police – No report

County Councillor report – Cllr Margaret Stone informed councillors that this was her last meeting as a County Councillor as she was stepping down from NCC. A number of reports had been sent from her to the parish council which had been received by the parish councillors. Margaret was thanked for all her help in getting the footbridge reinstated and for all her work over the years.

District Councillor Report – District Cllr. Brown reported:-

- **COVID19 Update** – South Norfolk Council continue to support businesses and the economy generally as the restrictions are starting to be lifted
- **Budget** – The budget has been agreed at 3.25%
- **Leisure Services** – South Norfolk Council's Leisure Facilities will be opening in the middle of April if Government restrictions allow
- **Consultation on local development plan** – A consultation will be held in May or June, to agree a development scheme with the key aspect being village clusters in South Norfolk. 1200 homes will be spread across villages with 400 sites having been put forward.
- **Voting in the May Election** – It is still possible to register to vote, 19th April is the deadline for online voting, with the postal voting deadline being the 20th April.
- **Online Meetings** – The legislation has not yet been extended to enable councils to hold their meetings online, so unless this happens, a return to face to face meetings will be required after May 7th 2021.

Chairman's and Parish Councillor Reports–

- **Chairman's Report** – Thanks to Bryan, John and Phillip for litter picking on Wednesday, Bryan has sent some photographs of fly tipping to the clerk for reporting to South Norfolk Council. It was noted that the playing field is looking good.
- **Cllr. Meade** – Three tree's have been planted on the playing field to replace the ones that died since the last meeting, two field ash and one beech tree.

Clerk's Report – None

7. Village Items – Update on all village items, sign on School Road, WW1 Commemorative Plaque, signpost, millennium film, flooding and parish partnership –

SAM2 – Richard Randlesome commented that the speeding on Church Road is still bad. The Clerk informed the meeting, that it had been hoped by this meeting, that confirmation on whether the bid for 50/50 funding had been agreed by the Parish Partnership Initiative, however, an email had been received to say that a decision had been delayed due to the current restrictions, and it was hoped that councils would be notified by August.

WW1 Commemorative Plaque - Cllr. Meade commented that he had not heard from the stonemasons as yet. The Clerk commented that Kenneth Bannerman from the Airfields of Great Britain Conservation Trust had been in touch that morning to ask if the plaque had been installed yet as he has to give a report to the funders of the plaques, stating where they are sited.

Signpost – Cllr. Meade is awaiting for costings to come back from the company that does the recycled plastic version (as discussed at the last meeting). Cllr. Wood commented that the original discussions on a cast iron post was around £1700 and felt that the cast iron post would last longer. Cllr. Meade said that he would get the figures in time for the next meeting.

Millennium Film – Cllr. Meade commented that he has made some copies on DVD and is hoping to make more.

Flooding – The ground is still very wet at the new bridge, with the area between the two bridges being very muddy.

- **Agree a date for the Annual Parish Meeting (to be held via Zoom)** – The clerk reiterated an earlier comment made by District Councillor Brown and suggested organising the date of the Annual Parish Meeting before the potential ending of the legislation for online meetings. After some discussion it was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 28th April and the AGM on Wednesday 5th May.
- **Discussion on the design and cost of a bench to replace the Pheasants Walk stolen one** – The clerk had asked councillors after the last meeting to look at some online choices and comments had been forthcoming, from those comments that clerk had put together a report. After some discussion it was agreed to investigate designs of more benches that had arms, made of recycled material and had no metal. **ACTION – CLERK**
- **Discussion on the planting of new trees in the village** – An email had been received from a resident asking if some tree's could be planted at the Harleston end of the village, on the triangle of land from the A143 to Church Road. Cllr. Meade asked for clarification on the exact location, but if it was the piece of land where The Street meets the A143 underpass, Earsham Estate would be happy to see trees planted there. The clerk mentioned an email regarding the 1 million trees initiative from NCC, that was recently sent to councillors which quoted:-

Opening in May, Norfolk County Council will be welcoming applications and offers of support to help achieve our ambitious plan to plant 1 million trees across the County, as part of our wider aims to deliver lasting environmental benefits throughout Norfolk.

By giving each County Councillor a budget to spend, we believe this will provide a strong local approach to best establish, nurture and maintain trees and hedges, working alongside our partners to ensure this is best delivered for each individual areas across Norfolk, not just adopting a one size fits all model, but a locally tailored approach.

It was agreed to discuss this again at the next meeting when the initiative would be open for applications.

- **Agreement to purchase 2 x tonne bags of bark for the work recently completed on The Green** – The Chairman said he was recently approached by Bryan Lowe who has tidied up the area on The Green considerably, and asked if the Parish Council would fund the purchase. The clerk said that she had looked at the price of it and it was around £50 per tonne, the clerk was then asked to find out the delivery charge on it. **ACTION - CLERK**

8. Planning Applications – A comment was made on Application 2021/0262 –

Conversion of outbuilding to dwelling

Location: Outbuilding West Of 1 Church Path Earsham Norfolk – Generally the Parish Council thought it was a reasonable application although it was commented on that vehicle access may be an issue.

9. Finance – Approval of items of expenditure invoiced since the January 2021 meeting and note balances –

Payments already made – Parish Council - £402.19 – Playing Field - £97.36 (payments are excluding VAT)

Payments for approval at this meeting – Parish Council - £1207.54 (excluding payment to Parish Magazine to be agreed at this meeting and VAT). Agreement proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Leech **ALL AGREED**

Balances in bank accounts as at 28th March 2021 – Parish Council £41,378.48, Playing Field £6,659.91 and Allotments £98.78.

The Parish Council accounts include £6714.09 CIL monies and the Playing Field accounts includes £2,087.13 ring-fenced money for the repair and replacement of play equipment.

10. Playing Field/Play Equipment/Bowls Club/Allotments –

- **Review of allotment rules and regulations to include a discussion on structures currently on the allotments** - The clerk had brought to the parish council's attention the fact that the allotment accounts were looking particularly low last month, which has decreased even further with the recent payment to Wave. The allotment accounts now stand at just £98.78, however, the annual invoices for rents will be sent out within the next couple of weeks. After a short discussion it was decided that the rules and regulations need to be reviewed and should perhaps be tightened up, after that task has been done, further discussion could be taken on any outstanding matters. The clerk to send to councillors an updated version of potential changes to the rules. **ACTION - CLERK**
- Consideration of a request to install raised planters on an allotment plot - deferred

11. Significant correspondence – The clerk commented that all correspondence had been forwarded to councillors and had been dealt with or replied to.

12. Business for next meeting – Speed sign on School Road, Commemorative Plaque, Signpost, Structures on the allotments, Millennium Film, Flooding, Village Hall needing work to the exterior, the ramp at the back of the Village Hall, Pheasants Walk bench and information regarding tree planting. Cllr. Leech and Cllr. Wood suggested that the Village Hall would benefit from having a survey done to ascertain potential problems, Cllr. Wood thought that there may be woodworm in the loft area. Cllr. Leech confirmed that the Village Hall Management Committee has the funds to pay for it and the clerk was asked to look into getting reasonable quotes.

The meeting was adjourned at 21.20pm and reconvened at 21.29pm for public comment

Geoff Hall empties the litter bin at Marston Moor and has noticed that people are putting dog waste in it. He has to sort out the litter from the recyclables and ultimately the dog mess and requested that the council purchase a dog bin to avoid this as it is unpleasant. Everyone agreed that it should be purchased as Geoff should not have to be doing this, the clerk commented that dog bins are normally around £125.

13. Date of the next meeting – Annual Parish Meeting – Wednesday 28th April and AGM – Wednesday 5th May 2021

Cllr. Wood thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 21.31pm.

Signed ... S. Wood

Dated5th May 2021