

**Earsham Parish Council**  
**Minutes**  
**of a meeting of Earsham Parish Council held in Earsham Village Hall on**  
**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

**Present:** Councillors: Stephen Wood (Chair), Richard Randlesome, Jim Bennett, Peter Goodfellow, Tony Leech, Nicholas Meade and Keith Reeve

**Also present:** District Councillors Brendon Bernard and Chris Brown, one member of the public and Lynda Ling (Clerk)

**1. Welcome by the Chairman** – Cllr Wood welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

**2. Apologies from members unable to attend** – Apologies were received and accepted from County Councillor Barry Stone

**3. Declarations of interest, in particular matters to be raised at this meeting**

To note any declarations of members pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary/other interests pertaining to items on the agenda – Councillors Randlesome and Goodfellow declared interests in Item 9 and Councillor Meade declared an interest in Item 7.

a) To consider any dispensation requests – None

**4. Resolution to approve the Minutes of previous meeting**

- Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 – Agreement was proposed by Cllr. Reeve and seconded by Cllr. Meade

**ALL AGREED**

**The meeting was adjourned at 7.36pm and reconvened at 7.37pm to allow members of the public to speak**

A member of the public raised a question regarding the fence on the football pitch which will be responded to under item 9.

**5. Reports – Police, District and County Councillors**

**Police** – None

**District Councillor Report** – Cllrs Bernard's and Brown's report was read out as follows:-

- The refurbishment of the new HQ for South Norfolk District Council and Broadlands Council in Broadlands Business Park is underway and it is projected that the two councils will move into the building on the 10<sup>th</sup> May.
- A balanced budget for 23/24 has been agreed by the council, without any major cuts or changes in direction.
- There will be no increase in the South Norfolk District Council rates this year, taking into account the present cost of living challenges and balanced budget.
- Village Cluster review and consultation is due to end soon. Mainly affects Ditchingham and objections have been made to the proposed new development for 35 houses.
- Consultation on the Norfolk County Deal has ended on the 20<sup>th</sup> March. SNDC thinks this is a very poor deal, have lodged objections and voted against. The main problem is the questions are loaded for you to say 'We agree' with no alternative Deal being presented. District Councils have been cut out of any contribution or decision making, new elected leader, and money promised is a drop in the ocean as it is spread over 30 years with no inflation proofing.

**County Councillor Report** – Councillor Barry Stone submitted the following report:-

- County Deal – Consultation runs until 20<sup>th</sup> March on the proposed £600 million+ County Deal for Norfolk.
- Fire Service Safety proposals considered – Councillors were asked to endorse a three-year fire and rescue plan for keeping communities safe across Norfolk.

A Norfolk Fire & Rescue Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) has been produced following public consultation with residents and organisations across the county. The draft plan included seven proposals around areas including strengthening prevention work with vulnerable residents, trialling more work to support emergency medical response and aligning how it measures its response to emergencies to other fire services.

- £1.5m boost for 12 pioneering jobs and skills projects – To support its work as the types of emergency incidents it faces in the county continue to change and evolve, consideration is being given to investing in more 4 x 4 agile vehicles, alongside a review of the challenging summer heat conditions. From commercial use of seaweed to improving home insulation – 12 projects to boost Norfolk's economy are set to receive £1.5m from the county council.
- Norfolk County Council budget approved – the latest budget has been set which tackles spending pressures and protects key services and includes a number of measures (see full report on website)
- Ready to Change – your way to better health – A new online platform has been launched Ready to Change. It focuses on the four key healthy lifestyle behaviours – smoking, alcohol use, healthy weight and diet and physical activity.

#### **Chairman's and Parish Councillors reports –**

- **Cllr. Reeve** – Reported that there are overgrown trees near the speed camera which need trimming plus a broken tree. The member of the public commented that this had been dealt with earlier in the day.
- **Clerks Report** – The Clerk reported the following:-

**Norfolk Lieutenancy** – Information has been circulated in the form of a newsletter from the Norfolk Lieutenancy office regarding celebratory arrangements over the Coronation Weekend between Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> and Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Army Covenant** – Email received asking for support for an event happening to raise awareness – see attached letter

**Big Litter Pick** - The Big South Norfolk Litter Pick scheme is returning for 2023, running parallel to the Great British Spring Clean scheme ran by Keep Britain Tidy. The scheme will commence on **13<sup>th</sup> March and run until 31<sup>st</sup> June 2023.**

The Big South Norfolk Litter Pick aims to encourage community groups to take part in maintaining and improving the appearance of their local area. South Norfolk Council will provide the necessary equipment (litter pickers, hi-vis vests and rubbish sacks), guidance on health and safety, and promotional material for the event. There will also be a £20 reward to groups that take part, as well as entry into a prize draw for the chance to win £200! **Details and forms are available from me**

**New Tree on The Green** – This has been planted by South Norfolk Council as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

**Overgrown hedge on Queensway** – There has been no response or action since I sent a letter to the resident, so I have emailed Saffron Housing to ask if the property is one of theirs and if so, could they help. Response is still awaited.

#### **6. Village items –**

**a) Update on all village items** - As had been mentioned earlier in the meeting, Cllr. Meade was in conversation with the Area Highways engineer and is in the process of arranging to meeting him in the Village to visit all areas where queries have been raised. Hopefully more information will be available at the next meeting.

**b) Report from the Speed Watch Group** – Cllr. Goodfellow informed members that following on from the data from the speed machine, the Clerk had contacted the Police Beat Manager for the area to ask if he could monitor speed in the village. This has been done via a black speed box but no report of the outcome has been received yet.

Cllr. Goodfellow informed the meeting that the Speed Watch Group had been out on The Street on 16<sup>th</sup> March and four motorists had been found to be driving too fast, 2 x 36mph, 1 x 50 mph and 1 x 51mph.

**c) Earsham Emergency Plan Update** –No update. This will be discussed at the next meeting regarding any changes that need to be made/added.

**d) Village Hall report** – None

**e) Best decorated house at Christmas competition** – Congratulations to the winners this year - they are the residents at 22 Queensway. They have requested that their £20 winnings to be donated to Cancer Research.

**f) To note consultation on the bus service 581 – a review of outsourced services and procurement for September with the deadline for comment being April 17<sup>th</sup> 2023** – Information on this consultation had been circulated to members previously, and it was noted that the proposed changes were:-

*Retimed 0700 from Harleston-Diss to 0745, and withdrawn the 1830 from Diss due to low usage  
Now 0810-1725 option into Diss for passengers doing typical work hours in Diss  
Majority of journeys remain unchanged, small retiming of some journeys to secure connections at Beccles  
Harleston area to Bungay School no longer possible as Bungay School have changed their PM finish time  
1520 from Beccles withdrawn, influenced by Bungay School decision*

Councillors commented that this would not only make it difficult for people generally but they wouldn't be able to get back from Beccles later in the afternoon.

**g) Discussion on any Coronation plans and agree any action** – Some discussion followed on whether people would have made their own plans already and in addition, taking into account the low attendance numbers for the Queen's Jubilee event last year, members felt that although the Coronation should be marked in some way, an event was not the way to go. Suggestions included wildflower seeds for schoolchildren or the placement of a bench on The Green. The Clerk said that there were some nice bespoke benches available and she would source some information for Councillors. **ACTION – CLERK**

**h) Email received from resident living on Station Road regarding the strip of land next to property** – This has been discussed a few years ago, with apparently no-one taking ownership of the land. The Clerk will make further enquiries to see if some information can be sought from Land Registry because no-one in attendance had any information.

## **7. Planning Applications – The following was noted:-**

**a) Application Number** – 2023/0136

**Application Type** – Approval of Condition Details

**Location** – Agricultural Building at Church Farm, Church Road, Earsham

**Proposal** – Details for Condition 3 and 10 of 2022/1242 – (3) Contaminated Lane – Investigation (10) Boundary treatment to be agreed

**Decision** – Approval of details

**Date of Decision** – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

## **8. Finance and Governance -**

- **Approval of items of expenditure invoiced since the January 2023 meeting and note balances** – Agreement proposed by Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr. Randlesome **ALL AGREED**

**Payments already made since last meeting (inc. VAT) – Parish Council - £573.64**

**Playing Field - £459.78**

**Allotments - £131.87**

**Payments for approval at this meeting (inc. VAT) – Parish Council - £1,753.89**

**Playing Field - £120.00**

**Account Balances** – Parish Council Savings - £39,050.91 – Parish Council Current Account - £227.23

Playing Field Savings - £5,276.53 – Playing Field Current Account - £277.47

Allotment Savings - £90.20 – Allotment Current Account - £2.38

- Approval for action taken to reduce monthly payment for electricity for the Pavilion (email sent to councillors 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023) - Agreement was proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Wood. **ALL AGREED**
- To resolve to agree Jackie Ellis as the internal auditor for 2023 at a cost of £65.00 – Agreement proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Randlesome **ALL AGREED**
- To resolve to agree on the date of the first meeting of the new council in May following the election – suggested date of Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (to comply with governance) – Agreement proposed by Cllr. Meade and seconded by Cllr. Leech **ALL AGREED**
- Resolution to agree the following –
  1. Risk Assessment for Litter Picking
  2. Scheme of Delegation Policy
  3. System of Internal Control Statement (updated)

Agreement proposed by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Cllr. Randlesome

**ALL AGREED**

**The Clerk will compose a letter of thanks to accompany a copy of the Risk Assessment for Litter Picking for the three residents who currently carry this out.**

## **9. Playing Field/Play Equipment/Bowls Club/Allotments –**

**a) Request from Earsham Football Club to install a post and rail fence around the pitch (1 metre high) –** A long debate was held on this request with many questions and answers being given.

**Standing Orders were suspended at 21.02 and reconvened at 21.19 to allow the member of the public to speak**

The comment from the member of the public regarding the post and rail fence was to say that he was happy for the fence to be installed if the Football Club got to the stage of where it was required, but not happy if the fence was to be installed if not required by FA rules.

At the end of the discussion, it was agreed that the post and fail fence can go ahead in principle and subject to the final design being agreed by the Parish Council. A recorded vote was called for as follows:-

**Cllr Wood – Agreed  
Cllr Leech – Abstain  
Cllr. Meade – Agreed  
Cllr. Bennett – Agreed  
Cllr. Randlesome – Agreed  
Cllr. Reeve – Agreed**

**b) Play equipment repair (swing) update –** A new shackle had been purchased from Sovereign Playgrounds and needed to be put on the swing. Cllr. Wood agreed to do the job.

**ACTION – CLLR WOOD**

The Clerk also mentioned that the Annual Playground Inspection had been completed and the report sent to councillors for their information. One or two items were highlighted as needing some attention but there were no concerns raised overall. This was deferred for discussion to another meeting later in the year.

**c) Allotment items discussion –** As the growing season is nearly here, the Clerk brought up the subject of the increased water costs on the allotments and the fact that the Parish Council has had to subsidise the Allotments by £306 this year in order to pay water invoices. It had been agreed previously to separate the rent from the water costs on the invoices for the coming year and the Clerk was asked to send Councillors a breakdown of total costs and number of plots to look at ways to cover the water costs for this year which amount to over £1,000.

**ACTION – CLERK**

**10. Correspondence –** forwarded to Councillors before the meeting.

An email had been received by the Clerk since the agenda pack had been sent out, from a local fitness instructor asking for permission to use the Playing Field for outdoor fitness sessions. After some discussion all agreed that this is good for the health and wellbeing of the community and gave their approval for sessions to take place on the field provided they don't clash with any other clubs who may be using the field.

Cllr. Goodfellow asked if they would require use of the toilet at the pavilion and if they did to contact him. A further suggestion was to ask the instructor if he would consider a reduced rate for residents taking part as the playing field is an amenity of the Village.

**ACTION - CLERK**

**11. Business for the next meeting** – Election of chairman and vice-chairman, parish accounts, external audit accounting statements, works around the village, update on emergency plan, Coronation bench and policies

**Public Forum - The meeting was adjourned at 22.14pm and reconvened at 22.23pm**

Items raised by member of the public:-

- After a discussion with Cllr. Meade, a donated tree had been planted on the Playing Field
- Marston Moor – from The Mill to the Scout Hut, rubble has been dumped to fill potholes but are not working effectively
- Dog Bin and Litter Bin on Marston Moor – Still not being emptied by South Norfolk Council and Clerk has not heard any more about them being added to the servicing list – Clerk to chase SNC
- Footpath from humpback bridge towards Earsham Dam – will get overgrown again as not being given more than a narrow cut by machine

**12. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting** – The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and confirmed the next meeting date as Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.30pm

Signed .....R. Randlesome

Meeting ended: 22.24pm

Date ..... 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023