

Earsham Parish Council
Minutes
of a meeting of Earsham Parish Council held in Earsham Village Hall on
Wednesday 10th May 2023

Present: Councillors: Richard Randlesome, Jim Bennett, Tony Leech and Keith Reeve

Also present: District Councillor Chris Brown, three members of the public and Lynda Ling (Clerk)

It was agreed that Cllr. Bennett would open the meeting in order to elect a Chairman for the forthcoming term of office.

1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

a) To elect a Chairman for the coming year – Cllr Reeve proposed the election of Cllr Randlesome as chair which was seconded by Cllr. Leech. Cllr. Randlesome accepted the position of Chair **ALL AGREED**

b) To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed by Cllr. Randlesome and countersigned by the Parish Clerk

c) To elect a Vice Chairman for the coming year - Cllr. Leech was proposed as Vice Chairman by Cllr. Bennett which was seconded by Cllr. Randlesome **ALL AGREED**

2. Apologies from members unable to attend – Apologies were received from District Cllr Brendan Bernard and County Cllr 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 following agenda** – Cllr. Randlesome declared an interest in Item 9 - allotments.

a) To consider any dispensation requests - None

4. Co-option of potential 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.**

Mr. Nicholas Meade was present as a member of the public and prior to the start of the meeting, had completed an application form to re-join the Parish Council. Agreement was proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Bennett **ALL AGREED**

5. Resolution to approve the Minutes of previous meetings

- Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 29th March 2023 – Agreement proposed by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Cllr. Bennett. **ALL AGREED**

**The meeting will be adjourned for public participation for items to be discussed on the Agenda only
(maximum 10 minutes)**

A member of the public raised a complaint about the handling of an item on last month's agenda regarding the football fence. After some debate, councillors clarified the situation i.e. any fence plans would be required to come back to the Parish Council for approval and the fence could **not** be started until:-

- a) There was a legal requirement from the FA for this to be installed dependant on the Football Club's promotion to a higher league and,
- b) The Parish Council had seen the plans of the fence provided by the Football Club if it becomes necessary as detailed in a) above and have given their approval. Under no circumstances can the installation of the fence be started until the above requirements are met.

6. Reports/Protocols/Consultations

- a) **Police, District and County Councillors** – No Police report

District Councillor Chris Brown gave the following report:-

- A final decision on the sale of the South Norfolk Council offices in Long Stratton will be made by July, Long Stratton Town Council have expressed an interest.
- Following the elections last Thursday, the make up of the District Council has changed radically, it was a very close election. Results were 24 Conservative, 11 Liberal Democrats, 9 Labour and 2 Independents. There was a 35% turnout to vote.

b) Parish Councillors –

Cllr Bennett reported water running continuously down a road in Hedenham, this will be reported by Cllr. Meade to the Hedenham Parish Meeting for discussion when they next meet.

Cllr Randlesome reported that at the South Norfolk Council Forum he attended, Officers had reported that there was a major problem in getting people to join parish councils as councillors.

Cllr Leech – Informed members that there was a wooden signpost for Angles Way had appeared at the back of The Queen's Head. Clerk to inform the Trails Team of this information **ACTION – CLERK**

Cllr. Meade – After meeting the Area Engineer from Norfolk County Council, Cllr Meade now had permission to remove the old milestone for repair. The chicane which was reported to NCC (Station Road/A143) late last year, did not confirm to H & S requirements and has since been brought up to standard. The unclaimed strip of land at The Sidings will be checked by the Area Engineer to try and find out ownership.

- c) Clerks Report** – As requested at the March meeting, the clerk provided members with a breakdown of costs for the allotments for the 2022-23 financial year plus the number of plots. On arriving to the Village Hall this evening, the Clerk had noticed that the defibrillator door was open and someone had taped it up. Cllr. Randlesome arrived and mended the door so it was closed properly, however, it was noticed that the door hinge had dropped, the new defibrillator box is less than a year old. After the meeting, it was looked at again and noted that there is no visible means to read the instructions on the box in the dark, this needs further discussion and agreement to install a light (next meeting's agenda).

6. Village Items –

a) Update on all village items, including the WW1 Commemorative Plaque, Signpost, email from Highways, grit bins etc.

Cllr. Meade reported:-

- **WW1 Plaque** – Permission has been given by NCC to site the plaque on the grass verge just off the A143 on the Old Harleston Road. Cllr. Meade reiterated the costs from the quotes received and asked that a decision be made this evening. After further discussion about the design, strength of structure etc, it was agreed to go ahead with the quote of £2580 + VAT. Agreement proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Randlesome **ALL AGREED**
- **Signpost** – The Area Engineer will dig a trial trench to ensure that there are no utility cables underneath.
- **Grit Bins** – It was suggested to put the new grit bins out in September and weigh them down with grit/salt purchased by the Parish Council. The Clerk will contact the Area Engineer to remind him of the locations which were agreed 18 months ago. Cllr. Bennett agreed to purchase the salt and invoice the Parish Council. **ACTION – CLERK**

CLLR. BENNETT

b) Report from the Speed Watch group - None

7. Planning Applications – Recent applications and decisions made by South Norfolk Council – None

8. Finance and Governance–

- a) Approval of items of expenditure invoiced since the March 2023 meeting and note balances** **ALL AGREED**
- b) Agreement to transfer funds from Parish Council account to Allotment Account for Wave (water) payment due June 2023** **ALL AGREED**
- c) To resolve to agree the 2022/23 parish accounts**
Resolution to agree put forward by Cllr Leech and seconded by Cllr. Bennett **ALL AGREED**
- d) To resolve to agree to sign off Section 1 of the AGAR Annual Return – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23** – Resolution to agree put forward by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Randlesome **ALL AGREED**

- e) **To resolve to agree to sign off Section 2 of the AGAR Annual Return – Accounting Statements 2022/23**
Resolution to agree put forward by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Cllr. Randlesome
ALL AGREED
- f) **To resolve to agree to the dates for the publication of the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return – Monday 5th June 2023 to Friday 14th July 2023**
Resolution to agree put forward by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Cllr. Randlesome
ALL AGREED
- g) **To discuss and agree to pay the parish insurance of £1145.74**
Agreement proposed by Cllr Leech and seconded by Cllr. Randlesome
ALL AGREED
- h) **To discuss and agree more signatories for the Parish Council bank accounts**
Item postponed to the next meeting

Resolution to agree the following:-

1. **Records Management Policy**
2. **Community Engagement Policy**
3. **Standing Orders**
4. **Financial Regulations**
5. **Risk Assessments - Financial, General and Management**

Members confirmed that all policies and risk assessments had been read and approved - Cllr. Leech proposed agreement which was seconded by Cllr. Randlesome.
ALL AGREED

9. Playing Field/Play Equipment/Bowls Club/Allotments

- a) **Update on request from Earsham Football Club to install a post and rail fence around the pitch (1 metre high)** – No update but it was agreed that the Clerk confirm in a letter to the Chairman of the Football Club that no works were allowed to start without the implicit approval of the Parish Council.
- b) **Agreement to itemise water and rent separately on allotment invoices and to agree both annual costs** – In previous meetings, it had been agreed to separate the rent from the water, and it was agreed that as the water costs had risen so much, that as much as possible should be recouped. It was agreed by members that a separate charge for water of £15 per plot should be implemented, which although still wouldn't cover the last financial year's water bill, it would help replenish the allotment accounts as the Parish Council could not go on year after year subsidising the allotments to over £1,000 per year. It was agreed to hold an Allotment Tenants meeting on Thursday 8th June at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, to discuss this, give 12 months' notice of a rent increase, give out the new rules/regulations packs and try to address any issues that may have come up this year.

10. Significant Correspondence – Forwarded to Councillors

11. Business for the next meeting – Policies and Village items

The meeting will be adjourned for public participation (maximum 10 minutes)

A member of the public commented that both bins on Marston Moor are still not being emptied by South Norfolk Council. The Clerk has asked on a couple of occasions that these be added to the list for collection but will chase up again. It was also reported that Marston Moor verges are overgrown – the Clerk to enquire if this can be cut properly rather than by a machine which doesn't cut the full width of the verge. Flowers around the signpost – this had been discussed by members a few years ago and needs revisiting.

12. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 26th July 2023

Meeting ended at 21.40
Signed ...R. Randlesome
Date ... 26th July 2023