

Earsham Parish Council Minutes

of a meeting of Earsham Parish Council held at the Village Hall,
on Wednesday 31st January 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Richard Randlesome (Chair), Tony Leech (Vice-Chair), Dave Clark, Richard Naunton and Keith Reeve

Also present: District Councillor Chris Brown, 1 member of the public and Lynda Ling (Clerk)

1. Welcome – The chairman welcomed those present at the meeting, and informed members that sadly a former councillor and prominent member of the community, John Meade, had passed away. In addition, one of the long-standing allotment holders had also passed away recently, Roger Newton. Condolences have been passed on to families of both men. The Chairman would like to attend John Meades funeral the following day on behalf of the Parish Council if members agreed. Unanimously agreed.

2. To receive and accept apologies from members unable to attend – Apologies were received and accepted by Cllr. N. Meade, District Cllr. Brendon Bernard and County Councillor Barry Stone

3. To receive any 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 9a and Cllr. Clark declared an interest in item 6a
- To consider any dispensation requests - None

4. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10th January 2024 - Agreement was proposed by Councillor Leech and seconded by Councillor Randlesome **ALL AGREED**

5. Reports/Protocols/Consultations -

Police, District and County Councillors –

County Councillor Barry Stone had submitted a report previously which was noted by members.

District Cllr. Brown submitted the following report :-

- The Village Clusters consultation is currently open, until 5th February. This includes 13 potential new development sites, including sites in Earsham, Broome and Ditchingham. **The Earsham site is for up to 25 dwellings on Land north of The Street.**
See: <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/news/article/386/south-norfolk-s-village-clusters-consultation-opens>
- The council is currently in its budget setting process. There was a consultation on this which closed on 17 January.
- Recycling: In November the Government responded to their 2021 consultation on recycling. The main point to come out from this is that Councils will be expected to provide food waste recycling. The council is seeking further advice on this and the timescale is to be determined, but we are hopeful that in 2025 a food waste collection service of some description will commence.
- Significant progress has been made in tackling the Nutrient Neutrality issue, which is holding back new housing planning permissions.
- At the Council's December meeting a Community Nature Recovery motion was adopted. This is based on a model developed by Redenhall with Harleston Town Council and seeks to encourage communities and Parishes to identify opportunities for nature recovery. Motion available here: <https://democracy.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/documents/s5184/Community%20Nature%20Recovery%20motion%20-%20final.pdf>
- I proposed a Climate Emergency motion in December, which was voted down, but the Council is now making significant progress on carbon reduction measures and other policies to tackle climate change.
- There is still some funding available in our Member Ward Funds for local groups, for use by the end of February.

Chairman and Parish Councillors

Chairman's Report –

- The Chairman has been invited to attend the Bungay Civic Service in March
- The Emergency Plan will be revisited at the next meeting, so members were asked to look again at the Plan because a way forward to implement it will need to be discussed.

Clerk's report

- **S137** - This is a discretionary power which enables parish councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory power. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has notified the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) that the appropriate sum for section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for local (parish and town) councils in England for 2024/25 is £10.81, which gives the Parish Council up to ££7383.23 spending power if no other power can cover potential spending.
- **BikeActive** – I forwarded an email to councillors from Jez Briggs from BikeActive asking if there was anywhere in Earsham that the bikes could be stored. Did anyone have any ideas? They are looking at a shipping container sized storage facility. Cllr. Naunton responded that he had spoken with Jez and suggested that the Old Mill may be a good location and to speak to the owners. Cllr. Naunton will also be volunteering for BikeActive.
- **Earsham Fete** – Will be taking place on Saturday 8th June.
- **Precept request** – I have had confirmation from SNC that the Band D figure will be £61.14 for 24/25.
- **Best decorated house at Christmas** – Keith Penn was contacted as agreed at the last meeting, and his prize of £25 was donated to All Hallows Day Care Centre as he requested. It was reported that Keith raised around £700 for his Christmas Lights display for charity.

6. Village Items – Update on all village items, including the WW1 Commemorative Plaque, Signpost, etc. plus: -

a) Report from the Speed Watch group – Due to inclement weather and H & S regulations, there has been no Speed Watch for two months, and the group is now down to three members. Cllr. Leech commented that he would be happy to join, Cllr. Clark suggested he contact Peter Goodfellow who is the lead person for the group.

b) Update on commemorative bench to mark King Charles III coronation – Delivery has been delayed due to the current issues in the Red Sea, the ship has been rerouted around the Cape.

c) Update on the purchase of a new noticeboard for the Village Hall – This has been ordered as agreed at the last meeting and will be paid for out of earmarked reserves. A discussion was held regarding the header and the preferred choice of an arch shape. Noticeboards Online have suggested that the arch shape is visually more pleasing with a parish council logo above the wording but as the Parish Council do not have an official logo, it was agreed to use the Earsham village sign instead. Cllr. Naunton suggested asking residents and children to come up with a logo for the Parish Council to use and the idea of a competition was put forward.

ACTION – CLERK

d) To agree a potential date for defibrillator training with Bungay First Responders – A date in March was the preferred choice for the training on a Tuesday evening at around 7.30pm, the date put forward was 19th March. The clerk will contact Bungay First Responders to see if that date is agreeable to them. Various ways of promoting it was discussed.

ACTION - CLERK

e) Discussion on engaging a self-employed handyman for works around the village and consider any action – Cllrs. Randlesome and Leech met with Simon Chater to discuss the possibility of his undertaking some jobs around the village on a self-employed basis as and when required. Simon produced his insurance certificate and supporting paperwork, and both Councillors recommended that Simon's skills be utilised for the purposes of tidying up areas around the War Memorial and Village Hall and any other small jobs that arose.

ALL AGREED

f) Update on Pride in Place funding and to resolve to decide which contractor will be appointed to undertake the works – The PIP application was submitted along with supporting paperwork by the deadline set by SNC, but a contractor for the works needs to be chosen at tonight's meeting.

Cllr. Naunton has led on this project and met with the contractors to discuss job specifications, so with this background knowledge proposed giving Waterfield & Son Ltd the contract for the following reasons:-

1. Localism, therefore better for the Council's Carbon Footprint (and re-attendance if required!)
2. Most professional attitude at initial meeting, reputation and feel-good factor
3. Comprehensive quotation, and best understanding of the works
4. Availability
5. Price – quoted the best price

After further discussion, it was resolved to agree that Waterfield & Son Ltd be chosen for the village car park work and the Clerk to inform Andy Sexton at SNC of the Council's decision.

Proposed by Cllr. Randlesome and seconded by Cllr. Naunton

ALL AGREED

g) To agree a date for the Annual Parish Meeting – It was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on May 29th immediately before the Parish Council meeting.

ALL AGREED

h) Update on discussions with Harleston Town Council regarding A143 speeding and any other actions relating to same – The Chairman gave some background information on how this potential discussion came about, which was briefly mentioned at the last meeting. Since then, it was suggested that Redenhall with Harleston Town Council and Earsham Parish Council work together to try and lobby Norfolk County Council to make some changes on the A143 to deal with speeding issues. A Councillor from Harleston TC had already written to NCC regarding the speeding on the A143 stretch between the Needham and Redenhall roundabouts, but unfortunately the response from NCC had not been positive and dismissed the idea of lowering of the speed limit to 50mph, quoting a low accident rate and the relatively high standard of the road itself.

Cllr. Randlesome suggested continuing with the lobbying of NCC for the A143 speed reduction in the Earsham area and quoted a variety of reasons why it was a different scenario than that of the Harleston stretch of road. Cllr. Naunton pointed out the Angles Way crosses the A143 within the village and also questioned whether the signage was up to current standards and that some signs have deteriorated. It was agreed that the NCC Area Engineer, Gary Overland should be contacted to arrange a meeting on the sites in question where members feel there are problems, nearby parishes should also be contacted to hear their concerns. Cllrs. Naunton, Randlesome and Clark wish to attend a site meeting if arranged on a suitable day.

ACTION – CLERK

i) Discussion on D-Day 80th Anniversary 2024 – A brief discussion was held if it would be feasible to hold an event on Thursday 6th June to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings. Members were asked to consider this, and the item was deferred to the next meeting.

j) Village Clusters Consultation – District Cllr. Brown explained why some villages were being reconsidered – this was to see if they could accommodate extra housing, Earsham being one of the villages. Two sites have fallen away from the original suggested sites and to meet the target of 1200 dwellings which is required in the Village Cluster Plan, SNC have gone back to other village sites to make up the shortfall. The proposed site at Earsham is to the west of the village, bordering the A143 on one side and The Street on the other. Two questions need answering in the consultation, one is for agreement with the allocation in the first place (this was accepted as a possibility in the Regulation 18 stage in 2021 by the Parish Council) and the second question was if the site was allocated was there any specific requirements that should be set out in the allocation policy. Councillors were asked to look at the link to the website and comment separately if they wished, the Clerk would put together a response document in conjunction with the Chairman. The deadline for comments online is 5pm on 5th February.

ACTION – CLERK

7. Planning Applications –

Application Number : 2023/3290

App Type : Householder

Parish : Earsham

Grid Ref : 632207 288973

Location : 3 Waveney Crescent Earsham Norfolk NR35 2TW

Proposal : Erection of garage to front

Decision by SNC – Refusal of application – **Noted**

8. Finance and Governance–

a) Approval of items of expenditure invoiced since the early January 2024 meeting and note balances - Agreement proposed by Cllr. Clark and seconded by Cllr. Leech **ALL AGREED**

Parish Council payments made since last meeting – £165.85 (streetlighting electricity and donations)
Playing Field payments made since last meeting - £153.65 (pavilion electricity)

Payments for approval at this meeting – PC - £1162.80 (two months clerk's salary)

Balances – PC £46,249.64, PF - £3,909.16 and Allotments £515.69

b) Agreement to engage Jackie Loveday (Ellis) to undertake the internal audit at a cost of £65 for the financial year 2023-24. Agreement proposed by Cllr. Randlesome and seconded by Cllr. Leech

ALL AGREED

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

a) **Update on allotments** – A number of allotment plots have become available, and three others have changed tenant. There is one tenant who is yet to pay rent for two plots despite having been sent reminder letters – members agreed that one more letter should be sent informing the tenant that if the debt is not settled by the end of February, then a Notice to Quit will be issued. **ACTION – CLERK**

Playing Field – The Clerk mentioned that the play equipment on the Playing Field needs to be checked monthly and since Peter Goodfellow left the Parish Council this has not been consistently done. Cllr. Naunton commented that he would be happy to take on this task. The Clerk to forward the checklist to Cllr. Naunton.

ACTION – CLERK

10. Significant Correspondence – Forwarded to Councillors

11. Business for the next meeting – Speeding issues on A143, Emergency Action Plan, Village items (including signposts, WW1 Commemorative Plaque, and Christmas Tree

The Chairman asked members if they were happy to continue with the meeting for a further 15 minutes as the meeting was running over its allocated time. All agreed to continue.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.32pm for public participation and reconvened at 9.46pm (maximum 10 minutes)

The member of the public asked the following question :-

Information in a leaflet published by CPRE, could it not be included in the Village Magazine – the Clerk responded that the Parish Council only has one A5 size page in the magazine to get information out to residents so there is no room for anything other than Parish Council info and any other information from District, County or Police. It was suggested that perhaps the District and County Councillors could have their own page for information.

Cllr. Naunton commented that the two Diamond Jubilee benches at Marston Moor were rarely used, and it may be worth considering moving one of them into a better position for walkers to use within the village itself - discussion for next meeting.

12. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 27th March 2024 in the Village Hall, Earsham

The meeting ended at 21.40pm

Signed ...R. Randlesome

Date27th March 2024