

**Minutes of the Meeting of Hellesdon Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7pm  
in The Council Chamber, Diamond Jubilee Lodge**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr B Johnson (Chairman)  
Cllr G Britton  
Cllr R. Forder  
Cllr A Lock  
Cllr S Smith

Cllr N Barker  
Cllr I Duckett  
Cllr S Gurney  
Cllr R Sear

**In attendance:** Mrs F LeBon (Clerk) and four members of the public.

**Welcome by the Chairman** – Cllr Johnson opened the meeting at 7pm and welcomed all in attendance.

**1. Apologies and Acceptance for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Douglass, Cllr Fahy, Cllr Holland and Cllr Maidstone.

**2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

Cllr Gurney declared a non-pecuniary interest in the allotment hut, in that she had helped HAHA obtain funding for their proposed temporary building from Broadland Council. There is no financial benefit to her.

**3. Minutes from Full Council meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 had been previously circulated. It was **RESOLVED TO ACCEPT** these Minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**4. Public Participation**

A member of the public gave the meeting an update on the traffic and highway safety on Low Road. Cllr Britton was thanked for attending their drop in meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> January. It was enquired that if Low Road is to be used as a diversion route for when the Ring Road is closed, then could Low Road not be maintained to the standard of the Ring Road? Concerns were also raised about the level of money spent for multiple crossing points on Middletons Lane, but only one is being requested for the Low Road.

Cllr Gurney, in capacity of County Councillor, advised that a proportion of her Ward Member's grant would be allocated to renew the illuminated signs along Low Road within the Hellesdon parish. Further funding may then be considered for 30mph roundels on the road.

The member for the Wensum Ward (Norwich City Council) would like to arrange a footfall count to see if a crossing would be justified. A discussion occurred as to the number of crossing points on Middletons Lane and their associated cost, compared to the lack of crossings on Low Road. Cllr Gurney advised that the number of schools along Middletons Lane attracts funding for crossing points, not only from the local authority but from developers.

Approved.....

Date.....

A meeting onsite is to be arranged with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport.

**5. Council Reports**

**a) To Receive Clerk's Written Report**

This had been previously circulated. After a query, it was noted that there had been no update from Norfolk County Council highways about extra 30mph repeater signs on Reepham Road when exiting the parish.

The Clerk is to follow up with Norfolk County Council as to a proposed date for the library bollard scheme to commence.

The Clerk is meeting with representatives from the parish hall to discuss the defibrillator installation.

The Clerk's report was **ACCEPTED**.

**b) To Receive Reports from District and County Councillors (verbal reports due to Christmas Period)**

Cllr Gurney, in her capacity as county councillor reported that:

- She had reported the pot holes on the Westgate roundabout.
- Norfolk County Council had voted to proceed with devolution (the County Deal).
- From 31<sup>st</sup> December Norfolk County Council has relinquished the charges for domestic household waste at recycling centres, with conditions on reasonable use.
- Adult education had received a 'good' rating from Ofsted. Cllr Duckett queried where the adult education centres were. Cllr Gurney clarified, with the nearest one being in Sprowston.
- Money has been released to refurbish fire stations to accommodate more female fire fighters.
- Norfolk County Council's emergency team had been very busy over the Christmas period taking urgent calls.

In her capacity as District Councillor she had reported six damaged street signs to Broadland Council, and had been contacted by numerous residents about the planning proposals for the former snooker centre. Cllr Britton advised that that Planning Committee had considered the application and decided that there should be no objections to the application subject to the highways authority being satisfied that there was sufficient parking within the curtilage of the site.

**c) Verbal Update from Chairman**

There were no further updates.

**6. Financial Matters**

**a) Bank Reconciliation – December 2023**

It was **AGREED** to accept this reconciliation.

**b) Earmarked reserves summary**

This report was **ACCEPTED**.

**c) Approval of Payments – December 2023**

The payments detailed in the written report were **AGREED**.

**d) Receipts – December 2023**

The receipts detailed in the written report were **AGREED**.

**e) Detailed Income and Expenditure 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

This report was **NOTED**.

**f) To Consider Movements between General and Earmarked Reserves and Amend Reserves Management Policy to Accommodate**

Approved.....

Date.....

The Clerk reported that the PP&R committee had reviewed the level of general reserves which were anticipated as at financial year end and move some of these to earmarked reserves to either increase sinking funds or utilise for projects. It was **AGREED** to move £223,915.36 from general reserves to earmarked reserves as detailed in the report circulated to members. It was further **AGREED** to amend section 6.2 of the Parish Council's reserves management policy to read 'The current level of general reserves to be held by the Council is no less than £150,000.00 as this is considered to be adequate for 3 months running costs of the council'. This reflects an increase of £20,000 as previously detailed in the policy.

**g) To Approve the Budget and Associated Precept for 2024/2025**

Cllr Gurney reported that the PP&R committee had carefully considered the proposed budget, which had been previously circulated to members. There was a certain amount of growth within the budget and the provision of services. The committee was acutely aware of the cost of living crisis and was therefore proposing to use earmarked reserves for projects in the next financial year, which was good fiscal management. The committee recommends an increase of 4.96% on the parishes portion of the council tax to £152.37 per annum for a Band D property, which represents an increase of £7.20 per annum. This is reflective of a precept of £598,826.67. Councillor Gurney proposed that this be accepted by the council, seconded by Cllr Britton and carried. It was noted that most properties in Hellesdon are bands B and C so will therefore pay less.

Cllr Gurney thanked the Clerk and the Finance Officer for their assistance in setting the budget.

**7. Planning Committee**

**a) To Note the Decisions made by the Planning Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

The minutes and decisions arising from the Planning Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 had been circulated. It was **AGREED** to note the minutes and the decisions made.

**8. Events Committee**

**a) To note decisions made by the Events Committee on 8th January 2024 (verbal report)**

Cllr Smith reported that the tickets for the Through the Ages event on 27<sup>th</sup> January had started to be sold online today. The drinks for this event had also been agreed.

The different events throughout the year had also been discussed.

It was **AGREED** to accept the verbal report.

**9. Community Centre**

**a) To Receive Update report on WC Improvement Project**

The Clerk reported that a site meeting was held between the Parish Council's Project Manager, the Contractor, their plumbing sub contractor and the Parish Council's Facilities Manager to discuss a resolution to the drainage problem with the new WCs. A resolution was proposed involving further works to the corridor outside the changing rooms.

**10. Neighbourhood Plan**

**a) Receive Update on the Neighbourhood Plan**

The Clerk reported a grant from Locality for £7,425 has been approved for works likely to take place up until the end of the financial year. Technical assistance from AECOM has also been approved. Broadland Council had been in touch and would like to meet to discuss the Parish Council's broad aspirations for the Neighbourhood Plan, to help reduce any tensions that may be caused between the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies and any planning applications currently in the system.

A discussion occurred about the necessity of the plan policies to be unambiguous and prescriptive.

Approved.....

Date.....

**11. Allotments**

**a) To Consider Request for new Community Shed and Ancillary Storage at Allotment Site**

It was reported that HAHA has now successfully raised enough money to purchase a shed, the purpose of which is for holding meetings, workshops and to provide a social space to improve wellbeing. They now seek formal permission to install the structure which, as a shed, is deemed as a temporary structure. This would be placed on the existing concrete pad. The existing shed, donated to HAHA has been refurbished and will be useful to HAHA to retain for storage. A site plan and pictures of the proposed structure were circulated to members.

Discussions occurred as to the use of the word 'community' within the project name as it suggests that the structure would be open to all, whereas it would primarily be used by allotment holders.

Cllr Gurney proposed that the meeting be suspended to allow a representative from HAHA to speak. This was seconded by Cllr Sear and carried.

*The meeting was suspended*

A member of the public clarified the purpose of the structure, to be multifunctional including:

- Facilitating a tool loaning scheme.
- To show residents what the allotment holders do
- For demonstrations and talks
- Seed swaps
- Adult learning and clubs such as Mankind
- To hold regular meetings to save money on room hire
- To hold open days.

Other names could be considered, such as the Bush Road Allotments Community Shed.

*The meeting went back into session.*

It was **AGREED** that the new shed could be sited on the concrete pad and the refurbished shed being re-sited by HAHA. Cllr Gurney abstained from the vote.

**12. Community Car**

**a) To Receive Report into Community Car Schemes**

A report was provided to members on the operation of local community car schemes. After due consideration it was **AGREED** to note the report, after a proposal from Cllr Britton and a second from Cllr Gurney.

**13. To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public for the duration of the items 14 and 15 in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. This was AGREED.**

*The Meeting was Closed to the Press and Public*

**14. Community Centre Outstanding Matters**

**a) To Consider Further Action to Bring Contract Works to a Close**

The Clerk reported that she will be meeting with the Project Manager tomorrow to discuss the latest proposals. An **AGREED** time limit was set for the contractor to respond with a remediation plan.

Approved.....

Date.....

**15. Land Matter**

**a) To Receive Correspondence and Agree Meeting Date**

Correspondence had been previously circulated to members. A response was **AGREED** which the Clerk will relay.

*The Meeting was Re-Opened to the Press and Public*

**16. Matters for the Next Agenda**

A grant application for the Pride in Place scheme for the refurbishment of the west WCs in the community centre. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should have delegated authority to make this grant application.

**17. Time and Venue of Next Council meeting.**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024, 7pm at Diamond Jubilee Lodge

The meeting closed at 9pm

DRAFT

Approved.....

Date.....