

Earsham Parish Council Minutes

of a meeting of Earsham Parish Council held at the Village Hall,
on Wednesday 29th May 2024 at 7.45pm

Present: Councillors: Tony Leech (Vice-Chair), Jim Bennett, and Nicholas Meade

Also present: District Councillor Brendon Bernard, 4 members of the public and Lynda Ling (Clerk)

Welcome – The vice- chairman welcomed those present at the meeting.

1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman – Cllr. Leech proposed Cllr. Randlesome continue as Chairman which was seconded by Cllr. Meade. Cllr. Leech was also happy to continue as Vice-Chairman, agreement proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Meade.

2. To receive and accept apologies from members unable to attend – Apologies were received and accepted by Cllrs. R. Randlesome, Naunton, Clark and Reeve, District Cllr. Chris Brown 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 – None
- To consider any dispensation requests - None

4. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27th March 2024 - Agreement was proposed by Councillor Meade and seconded by Councillor Bennett **ALL AGREED**

The meeting was adjourned at 19.47 and reconvened at 19.50 for public participation

A member of the public commented that he had noticed an increase in dog mess around Church Path and asked if anything more could be done about it. Cllr. Leech commented that some editorial has been included in the Parish Council page in the Village Magazine, but perhaps posters could be made reminding people to clear up after their dogs.

5. Reports/Protocols/Consultations -

Police, District and County Councillors –.

District Cllr. Bernard submitted the following report on South Norfolk Council's current activities:-

- The Leader of the Council, John Fuller, is standing down from this position after 17 years, having become Lord Fuller of Gorleston-on-Sea. A new leader will be chosen next week, at our AGM on 20th May.
- The Council is now in No Overall Control, following a by-election on 2nd May, where the first Green councillor was elected. There are now 23 Conservative councillors and 23 from other groups.
- The Communities Action Fund for this year is £150,000, having been increased from the usual £50,000

Chairman and Parish Councillors

Chairman's Report – None

Cllr. Bennett – reported that he had received several comments on overgrown verges at road junctions recently which has subsequently been reported by the Clerk to NCC Highways (ENQ900268620)

Clerk's report –

Encampment site on Earsham Dam - NSGRTS arrived on site at Earsham Dam, Earsham on Tuesday 14th May to serve section 77 paperwork on the unauthorised encampment that has been present at this location, the team were happy to find that the occupant has vacated the site. No evidence of any belongings or waste left behind and the site is now clear.

Email from Cllr Naunton – confirmed that the broken swing on the playing field had been repaired by him, much appreciated – thank you Richard. This had been reported by a member of the public, Cllr. Bennett and Peter Goodfellow.

Email from Julie from SNC – I have received a very nice email from Julie Ringer from SNC and would like your comments or suggestions on what she says regarding funding providers – do you want me to make enquiries on the criteria for applying to the suggested funders? *Councillors agreed that the Clerk should make enquiries on the understanding that projects cannot be started before applying for funds (see item 6d)*

6. Village Items – Update on all village items, including the WW1 Commemorative Plaque, Signpost, etc. plus: - Cllr. Meade informed the members that he had not received a reply from Highways regarding the fingerpost placement – an investigative trench would need to be dug in the proposed new position to ensure there are no service cables below ground which would have to be undertaken by Highways.

a) Report from the Speed Watch group – None received for this meeting, although there has been a report submitted for the Annual Parish Meeting which is available for anyone wishing to view it.

b) Discussion on Emergency Action Plan, agree any changes and how to progress the Plan – deferred

d) Drainage channel and car park resurfacing update and to discuss and consider new quotes provided by Waterfields for surface redressing. Should agreement be reached on project costs of £12,010, to agree which reserve headings the monies will come from – The Clerk reminded members that it had already been agreed to proceed with the drainage works and the cost is covered in earmarked reserves. This work will be done by the agreed contractor towards the end of June. If resurfacing is to be done at the same time, the funds would have to come from other reserves or the general fund. After some discussion, members agreed to investigate the possibility of obtaining some funding as discussed during the Clerks report, for the resurfacing alone.

ACTION – CLERK

e) A143 speeding and any other actions relating to same – No update

f) Discussion on D-Day 80th Anniversary 2024 – It was agreed that rather than spending money on any commemorative items, to get the War Memorial cleaned and the surrounding area tidied up. This has already been booked in and will be done in time for June 6th.

ACTION – CLERK

g) Go for It Grant – An application for £300 for some plants has been successful and the money received from SNC. After some discussion, it was agreed that a small group of the members of public in attendance, and Cllr. Leech would go to a local garden centre to ask advice on the best plants to purchase for low maintenance for the village centre.

ACTION – CLLR LEECH

7. Planning Applications –

Application Number : 2024/1420

App Type : Cert. Lawfulness Existing

Parish : Earsham

Location : 6 Station Road, Earsham, Norfolk

Proposal : Certificate of lawfulness (existing) – Use of annexe as a single dwelling house separate to 4 Station Road.

The Parish Council had no comment to make on this application.

8. Finance and Governance—

a) **Approval of items of expenditure invoiced since the March 2024 meeting and note balances** - Agreement proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Meade **ALL AGREED**

Parish Council payments made since last meeting – £515.22 (streetlighting electricity and HMRC)
Playing Field payments made since last meeting - £307.30 (pavilion electricity)

Payments for approval at this meeting –

Parish Council - £1736.60 (clerk's salary, HMRC for April, May and June, internal auditor fee, cleaning of village sign/war memorial and noticeboard installation, mileage claim)

Bank Balances – PC £50,831.54, PF - £4,492.26 and Allotments £1,890.91

- b) **To resolve to agree the 2023/24 parish accounts** – No questions were forthcoming on the 2023/24 accounts which had been circulated at the end of March 2024 so agreement was proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Meade
- c) **To resolve to note the Internal Auditors Report 2023/24** – No questions arose - report noted
- d) **To resolve to agree to sign off Section 1 of the AGAR Annual Return – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24** – Agreement proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Meade
- e) **To resolve to agree to sign off Section 2 of the AGAR Annual Return – Accounting Statements 2023/24** - Agreement proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Meade
- 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 3rd June 2024 to Friday 13th July 2024** - Agreement proposed by Cllr. Meade and seconded by Cllr. Leech
- g) **To resolve to consider and agree recommendations from the Finance and Staffing Working Group for the following:-**
 - Agreement on new signatories for Parish bank accounts
 - Agreement to start using online banking
 - Agreement to apply for a debit card in Earsham Parish Council's name

It was agreed that as local bank branches were closing everywhere, it was becoming more difficult to pay for invoices by cheque and to purchase items online. Agreement was proposed to proceed with item 8g by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Cllr. Bennett

- h) **Review and agree Model Standing Orders**
- i) **Review and agree Model Financial Regulations**
- j) **Review and agree Risk Assessments – General, Financial and Management**

Resolution to adopt items 8h, i, and j was proposed by Cllr. Leech and seconded by Cllr. Bennett

- k) **Discussion to agree quotes received for village works to include the cleaning of the war memorial and tidying up of war memorial area** – As previously mentioned in the meeting during item 6f, councillors were in favour of getting the War Memorial cleaned and the area tidied up, so a quote had been sought from the agreed contractor which was for £250 including the removal of waste, £200 if someone else could dispose of the cuttings. Cllr. Leech commented that he would be able to dispose of the grass/weed waste, so it was agreed to proceed with the quote of £200. Proposed by Cllr. Meade and seconded by Cllr. Bennett

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

a) Update on allotments – discussion on clearer division and numbering plus tidying of allotment plots – The Clerk reported that there were 5 vacant plots still, even though 7 plots had recently been reallocated. The vacant plots are now looking overgrown and may be difficult to reallocate. Cllr. Leech suggested that Cllr. Randlesome, himself and the Clerk should meet at the allotments with a view to measuring and marking the plots.

ACTION – CLLRS RANGLESOME, LEECH, CLERK

b) Playing Field – Play equipment – to consider a quote for repairing the damage to the vandalised rotunda at a basic cost of £384.43 or £554.43 for better quality plywood – It was agreed this was a Health and Safety issue and the marine quality plywood would be more durable. Agreement to spend £554.43 was proposed by Cllr. Bennett and seconded by Cllr. Meade

c) Football Club – New management personnel and may be looking for sponsorship – The Clerk read out an email from the new Chairman of Earsham Football Club, Jack Scrivens, who expressed regret at being unable to attend the meeting this evening to introduce himself. Proposed plans were mentioned to take the football club forward. Councillors agreed that any proposals would be discussed in detail when they were submitted to the Parish Council. It was also reported that an attempted burglary at the football club's container had been made recently, fortunately nothing was stolen.

10. Significant Correspondence – Forwarded to Councillors but included the Annual Bungay Pride event, and an email received that day from a resident living at The Sidings

11. Business for the next meeting – Speeding issues on A143, Emergency Action Plan, Village items (including signposts, WW1 Commemorative Plaque, Village Car Park and drainage, Bollard for A143 and purchase of plants for village centre

The meeting was adjourned at 8.50pm for public participation and reconvened at 8.59pm (maximum 10 minutes)

A member of the public mentioned that the litter picking volunteers had entered the SNC competition for the Big Litter Pick and if successful could win £200 but may be given £20 for entering. Monies would be deposited in the Parish Council account. Additionally, during a recent clean up behind the Village Hall, there is a large pile of debris which needs removing. Cllr. Bennett said he would investigate getting the debris removed.

It was also mentioned that there would be a Yard Sale taking place in the village on Saturday 10th August, the Village Hall will be open to serve refreshments.

Another member of the public asked if a tree branch could be removed from one of the trees on the Playing Field as full fibre wi-fi is being installed and the branch is directly in the path of the signal. Cllr. Leech said he would look and report back to the Parish Council. Finally, thanks were expressed for getting the footpath cut (near Minns Bridge) after the Clerk reported how overgrown it was.

12. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 31st July 2024 in the Village Hall, Earsham at 7.30pm

The meeting ended at 21.00pm

Signed

Date