

Earsham Parish Council

Minutes

of a meeting of Earsham Parish Council held at the Village Hall,
on Wednesday 27th November 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Richard Randlesome (Chair) Keith Reeve, Jim Bennett, Dave Clark, Stephen Revell and Nicholas Meade (arrived at 19.46 by prior arrangement)

Also present: 3 members of the public, District Councillor Brendon Bernard and Lynda Ling (Clerk)

1. **Welcome** – The Chairman welcomed those present at the meeting
2. **To receive and accept apologies from members unable to attend** – Apologies were received and accepted from Tony Leech (Vice-Chair)
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 – The following interests were declared: -
Cllr. Dave Clark – Item 6a
Cllr. Stephen Revell – Item 7i
Cllr. Richard Randlesome – Item 9
 - To consider any dispensation requests - None
4. **Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25th September 2024 -**
Agreement proposed by Councillor Clark and seconded by Councillor Randlesome **ALL AGREED**

No public participation

5. Reports/Protocols/Consultations -

Police – No police report however the Clerk has contacted the police on behalf of a resident regarding inconsiderate parking

District and County Councillors –

County Councillor Barry Stone has submitted a report for November which had been forwarded to Councillors and is on the Parish Council website

District Councillor Brendon Bernard –

- South Norfolk has received government funding to help respond to the significant increase in demand for Temporary Accommodation, enabling the purchase of homes so that more and better accommodation can be provided.
- The Council is setting up an Enforcement Oversight Board, to monitor and improve planning enforcement activity.
- The Council is expecting to deliver more housing in future years, following the government's housing proposals.
- I currently have some funds available in my Member ward funding.
- East Pye solar farm proposals are being opposed at this early stage. This is for a seven mile stretch of solar panels from Long Stratton to Wooton.

Chairman and Parish Councillors

Chairman's report –

- Recently attended the Town & Parish Summit with Cllr Clark and the Parish Clerk
- Village sign plinth has a loose brick, and the nearby road sign legs have been bent, the Chairman to send photographs to the Clerk to report to appropriate authorities.

Clerk's report – The full report has been included in the Councillor agenda pack and included items below: -

Defibrillator at Village Hall –

- Following my report last month that the defibrillator has no guarantee left on it because it is now approximately 10 years old, and that the EEAS are no longer supplying pads or batteries for the defibrillators, another issue has arisen with the battery which is showing as power is nearly discharged. For safety reasons, the defibrillator has now been taken offline on The Circuit. The Parish Council agreed to budget for a replacement next financial year, however, the matter is now more pressing because of the above issues. This item is on the agenda for discussion.

Nature Recovery –

- This item is on the agenda for discussion and adoption if you think this an innovative idea. The principle is quite simple; the parish council passes a resolution that formally declares the parish to be a **Local Nature Recovery Area**. This initiative gives an enduring focus to the importance of the matter and a 'label' or 'badge' around which anyone who does anything to help can feel a part. This is important because the Parish Council is the only local body or group which can speak for the whole community, so the next step is to encourage those in the community to pick up the reins, *(some members of Earsham community are already doing this by looking after a part of The Green and tenants working the allotments)*. There are no catches, no financial obligation, and no organisational requirements. It is then up to the community to make the most of it with communications via the Parish Magazine, word of mouth etc.

6. Village Items – Update on all village items plus: -

- a) Report from the Speed Watch group** – Cllr. Clark reported that the Group had originally arranged 6 sessions, with 4 having been undertaken. Two were on Church Road (no speeding) and two were on The Street (10 speeding). Due to a volunteer's ill-health, some sessions may have to be curtailed.
- b) Speed Machines** - Cllrs Clark and Randlesome have been working on extracting the speed data from the SAM2 machines and may be able to use the figures from The Street to show incidences of speeding to the Police. If the numbers are high enough, the Police may come to the village themselves to record speeding motorists.
- b) Discussion on Emergency Action Plan, agree any changes and how to progress the Plan** – Deferred
- c) Drainage channel on The Green update** – The work has been completed and the new drain seems to be working well. There is no standing water in the corner of the car park despite recent rain, and the whole of the car park can now be used. Some flooding has been reported on Church Road opposite the allotments which needs to be investigated, the Clerk to contact Highways regarding clearing out the soakaways **ACTION - CLERK**
- d) Discussion on basalt stone recently excavated and possibility of its placement in the centre of the Village, also discussion on the purchase of a Christmas Tree (discussed last year)** – It was agreed that everyone is happy for the stone to be placed on the land which houses the village sign. Cllr. Meade commented that it should not be part of the planned flower bed as it would be preferable if people could access it – it was also suggested that a plaque be considered to document the stones origins. Cllr. Meade agreed to find out some costs. **ACTION – CLLR MEADE**
A brief discussion was held on the idea of a Christmas tree near the village sign, and after some consideration, it was agreed not to proceed with the idea due to logistics for electricity/lights. **ALL AGREED**
- e) WW1 Commemorative Plaque – confirmation of placement (subject to Highways approval), signage and placement of commemorative bench on The Green** – Cllr. Meade informed members that the Area Engineer has emailed to say that he would like to check the location of the proposed site of the plaque again which ideally should be some 13/14 metres from the edge of the highway. This to be arranged with NCC.
- f) Grant Funding – discussion on securing monies for car park resurfacing, to include Parish Partnership Bid, funding from SNC, plus update on Winter Pressure Grant and Armed Forces Covenant** –

Car Park resurfacing – The Chairman had spoken with an Officer from SNC the previous week, regarding funding for the car park and learnt that potentially there may be some funds available for this. A SNC email was received today asking for information on the status of the village hall/parish council; the Chairman will respond to this shortly and provide an update at the next meeting.

Parish Partnership Fund - The Parish Council have until 6th December to submit a parish partnership application to NCC requesting assistance with the funding of the resurfacing costs. The Clerk will work with the Chairman to complete an application form for this purpose within the allotted time.

Winter Pressures Grant – The Parish Council has received £500 grant funding to help the most vulnerable residents in the village over the winter. Sherpa fleece rugs, hats, gloves and neck warmers were considered suitable items to help residents stay warm over the winter months. The parish magazine article in which this information appeared, has asked people to contact the Clerk or Councillors to register their interest in receiving these items free of charge, however, there has been no uptake so far regarding this initiative.

Armed Forces Covenant – A fund has been established to enable community organisations to apply for up to £500 to commemorate the 80th anniversaries of VE and VJ Day next year. The Clerk asked members if they would like to apply and what event could be arranged to commemorate these important dates. After a lengthy discussion, it was thought that exhibiting photographs of Earsham during the Second World War years, may be an idea, with links to any events which happened in the area which were commended/noted. A parish magazine editorial to be written asking residents for suggestions and/or help with information and photographs was agreed. **ACTION - CLERK**

g) **Speeding issues on A143** – The LED bollard should be installed this month (November), to date the work is yet to start. No update from NCC on speeding issues on A143

h) **Signpost in The Street** – Cllr. Meade gave an update on recent events regarding the signpost at The Street/School Road junction. Although the post was erected in the agreed location with Highways, the resident nearby has contested that the land belongs to him and has removed the post, which has since gone missing. This will be discussed again pending further investigation.

i) **Nature Recovery Initiative and discussion on an idea for the allotments (wildflower meadow) –**

Allotment Wildflower area - After a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of creating a wildflower meadow at the allotments, it was agreed not to proceed with the idea, due to the amount of work needed to establish it. Instead, it was suggested to revisit options on the overgrown allotments in the Spring, when spraying and rotavating could be done, which would enhance the appeal of the plots for new tenants.

Nature Recovery - The Clerk read out more information on Nature Recovery (after being briefly mentioned during the Clerk's report) and after a short discussion Cllr. Clark proposed agreement to becoming a Nature Recovery parish which was seconded by Cllr. Bennett

ALL AGREED

7. Planning Applications – NONE

8. Finance, Governance and Training –

a) **Approval of items of expenditure invoiced since the September 2024 meeting and note balances: -**

Parish Council payments made since last meeting – £523.60 (streetlighting electricity, HMRC, refuse sacks and lanyards)

Playing Field payments made since last meeting - £223.97 (pavilion electricity for October and November)

Allotments payments made since last meeting – None

Payments for approval at this meeting –

Parish Council - £3812.72 (Drainage works, stationery, stamps and face masks for defib)

Playing Field - £ 670.00 (tree surgeon)

Bank Balances – PC - £52,226.06 PF - £3,720.98 and Allotments - £1,710.79

Agreement proposed by Cllr. Randlesome, seconded by Cllr. Revell

ALL AGREED

- c) **To consider the purchase of a new defibrillator, battery, pads and box at a cost of £1500** – Based on a previous discussion during the Clerk's report, agreement was proposed by Cllr. Clark and seconded by Cllr. Bennett **ALL AGREED**
- d) **To consider subscribing to the Norfolk PTS (Norfolk Parish Training and Support) and any training requirements for Earsham Parish Councillors** – Deferred
- e) **To consider and agree the renewal of the streetlighting maintenance contract due to expire on 31st December 2024** – After a short discussion on the reliability and excellent service from TT Jones Electrical Ltd, it was agreed to renew the 3-year contract with this company. There was no increase in the current cost and despite trying to get three quotes, only TT Jones had responded. Agreement proposed by Cllr. Reeve, seconded by Cllr. Bennett **ALL AGREED**
- f) **2025-26 draft budget for consideration** – Deferred until January 2025

9. Playing Field/Play Equipment/Bowls and Football Clubs/Allotments -

- a) **Update on allotments – consideration of how to progress unused plots, consideration of reduced rates, and update on costs to get the overgrown plots cleared** –

This item was briefly discussed during Item 6(i) and will be discussed again in January 2025

- b) **Play equipment – Update and to discuss further repairs needed (play inspection report March 2024)** – Deferred until Spring however, some signs needed for the play equipment area (no dogs allowed) and litterbin signs can be ordered by the Clerk at a cost of under £5 per sign. **ACTION – CLERK**

- c) **Football Club – early stages of looking for sponsorship, thoughts towards sponsorship boards and to note half costs of insurance and service of grass cutting tractor** – No update

10. Significant Correspondence – Forwarded to Councillors but included the following: -

- Letter from Baroness Taylor of Stevenage (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – re improving local council standards
- Broads Authority – Call for Sites for the Local Plan
- Norfolk ALC – Letter from resigning President

Cllr. Randlesome asked members at 9.36pm if they would be happy to continue the meeting for another 10 minutes as Standing Order 3(x) resolution had now been reached. All agreed to continue.

11. Business for the next meeting –

Basalt Stone, Emergency Action Plan, 2025-26 budget considerations and precept. Village items (including signposts, WW1 Commemorative Plaque, Car Park funding, bench and flowerbed)

The meeting was adjourned at 9.38pm for public participation and reconvened at 9.46pm

Members of the public commented: -

- if there was any update on a footpath being installed on Church Road and if the bench on Marston Moor could be relocated – no update
- still against any permanent boards being installed on the playing field by the football club

12. To resolve to exclude the press and public [Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Sec 1 (2)] due to the confidential nature of the following item:

- To note the pay award for Clerks by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services backdated to 1st April 2024 – Noted and agreed.

13. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 29th January 2025 in the Village Hall, Earsham at 7.30pm

Meeting ended at 21.55pm

Signed ...R. Randlesome

Date8th January 2025