

HICKLING PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held on Monday, 7th November 2011 at 7.15 p.m. in the Methodist Hall

Present:

Chairman: S Clarke
Vice Chairman: A Lambard
Councillors: P Berrie, T Ellis, D Scott
District Councillor: Simon Partridge

7.15 p.m. – Public Participation

There were thirty seven residents present. There was a question about the current location of the bin at the staithe and it was explained that the bin was moved to try to resolve a litter problem. A resident asked if a letter from [.....] would be read out during the meeting. The clerk confirmed that [.....]'s letter had been received, as well as three letters of resignation from parish councillors, but suggested that it would be inappropriate to read out the letters, especially as two councillors were the subject of an upcoming standards committee meeting at North Norfolk District Council. The councillors agreed that this correspondence would not be read out. In reply to a question about co-option, the clerk confirmed that four councillors could be co-opted at one time.

The Parish Council meeting commenced:

1. Apologies Cllrs K Scott and Deane.

2. Declaration of interests in items on the agenda

Cllr Lambard declared a personal interest in the village hall because of the close proximity to her house. Cllr Clarke declared a personal interest in the Dial-a-Ride donation and in the cheque payable to herself. Cllr Berrie declared a personal interest in the staithe as a berth holder, in the allotments as he is close to someone who has an allotment, and in the cheque payable to himself.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2011 were agreed to be accurate, and were signed as correct by Cllr Clarke, as Chairman of the Parish Council. It was agreed that Council minutes would be posted on the website each month as soon as they were approved by the Council.

4. Matters arising

- 4.1 The disabled access path has been laid to the Methodist Chapel. The original donation to the Methodist Chapel was returned and the money used to fund the paving.
- 4.2 Angela Buesnel sent her thanks for the new footpath map board at the staithe. She is paying for the board in memory of her father.
- 4.3 Noticeboards: the list of contact details for the councillors and the committees will be left until the new councillors have been co-opted.
- 4.4 The mower has been repaired again.

5. Planning

- 5.1 **PF/11/1228 [.....] Plummer's Farm Barn**, conversion of barn to residential dwelling. The councillors had no objections to the plans.
- 5.2 **BA/2011/0337/FUL Environment Agency, land adjacent to Hill Common** – provision of access for boats and people following the installation of first time flood defences. The councillors had no objections to the plans.

5.3 Decisions from **North Norfolk District Council**:

- i) **PF/11/0871 1 Lilac Cottages, The Street**- erection of double garage with store - approved
- ii) **PF/11/0854 Old Manor House, Sutton Road** – conversion of barn to residential dwelling with detached garage and relocation of stables – approved.
- iii) **Former Community Centre** – installation of air source heat pump – approved.
- iv) **PF/11/1133 [.....], Willow Farm, Stubb Road** – installation of photovoltaic solar panels to agricultural building – approved.

6. Correspondence

- 6.1 NNDC explained that the public toilets at the staithe had to be closed over the August bank holiday because of repeated vandalism.
- 6.2 Norfolk County Council sent an update on its Better Broadband project; residents will be encouraged to register their interest in an improved service in the New Year.
- 6.3 The Police have sent notification that the new non-urgent phone number to contact the police is 101.
- 6.4 There will be a Norfolk Association of Local Councils Autumn Seminar on 17th November at Sandringham Visitor Centre.
- 6.5 The Police sent notice that there have been no recorded crimes since the last meeting. They sent details of the recent Safer Neighbourhood Area Panel (SNAP) meeting.
- 6.6 Details were received of topics at the recent meeting of the Broads Forum; the BA governance review, Norwich Yacht Station and the European Charter.
- 6.7 The Annual Return has been completed by Mazars, the external auditors, with several comments, which were noted. The relevant notice will be posted on the boards. Copies can be obtained from the clerk.
- 6.8 There was a complaint about some spikes placed alongside the road frontage in Stubb Road – this has been passed on to NCC.
- 6.9 The Public Works Loan Board has sent notice that it had overcalculated the amount of the first instalment of the loan; a refund will be made.
- 6.10 The Police have sent notice that parking enforcement is no longer a police responsibility; this will be managed by the county councils.
- 6.11 A consultation on the Community Infrastructure Levy has been received. This was noted but it is believed that it will have little effect on the village as no market housing is planned for the parish.
- 6.12 Residents were encouraged to send their views on the proposed electoral boundary changes.
- 6.13 Correspondence has been received from a resident raising various issues concerning the village hall. The clerk will send a reply shortly.

7. Treasurer's Report

£

Community Account:

Balance b/f 3rd October 2011 10,084.26

Receipts:

Allotment rentals 149.45

Interest on consolidated stock 0.30

Sale of two winches 80.00

Return of donation to Methodists 150.00

Cheques cancelled:

A Squared	(732.00)
Cyril Sweet	(3,576.00)
Cyril Sweet	(1,800.00)
Cheque issued: HPFRG Charity	5,090.00
Payments:	
Unique Building Supplies	180.00
P James – clerk’s fee	440.00
P James – exps	26.94
Methodist Hall – room hire	24.00
S Clarke – reimb. redirection fee	54.45
Mazars – external audit	1,284.00
Acle PC – share of stationery	15.00
P Berrie – reimb. copying	<u>2.40</u>
Balance c/f 7 th November 2011	9,455.22
No: 2 Account (+ berth)	16,825.45
Savings Account	<u>90,171.09</u>
Total monies at 7th November 2011	<u>116,451.76</u>

(NB 3rd payment to Charity due is £89,000)

The above payments were approved.

It was agreed to appoint Peter Berrie as the new third cheque signatory.

It was agreed to make donations to the following organisations:

- i) Churchyard grasscutting £325
- ii) Citizens Advice Bureau £100
- iii) Dial-a-Ride £100
- iv) Newssheet £100
- v) A donation for First Responders will be considered at the next meeting

It was agreed to consider additional donations at a later date.

8. Parish Council Property Reports

8.1 Chapel Pit

It was reported that the walnut and plane trees at the rear of the pond are too large for the location. Various options were considered but it was agreed finally to remove the trees. Stuart J Tree Surgery was appointed to do the work for £600.

Pest control companies have inspected the pond, after sightings of rats, but it was reported that there is no evidence of excessive rat populations. This will be reviewed again at a later date.

It was agreed to purchase a life belt for the pond and to consider where it could be located.

8.2 Staithe

The second winch was sold for £35.

It was reported that a boat caught its keel on the lip of the slipway, causing the winch post to be ripped out. The post will be re-concreted.

8.3 Allotments

Only one invoice remains unpaid.

8.4 Health and Safety

It was agreed to consider the storage of the lawn mower fuel at the next meeting. The football club is currently cutting the grass weekly on the playing field.

8.5 Website

Cllr Berrie explained the process for increasing the settings for the searchability of the Hickling website. It was agreed to leave the settings as they are for now.

9 Budget

A revised estimated cashflow forecast was presented for the current year together with a budget for the year to 31st March 2013. After some discussion it was agreed to set the precept at £8,376, an increase of 5.2%.

10 Reports

10.1 Parish surgery

Cllr D Scott gave a report on the recent parish surgery; matters raised included council donations, fishing at the staithe and adding a further entrance to the play area (which will be passed on to the village hall charity).

10.2 Mobile post office/ village shop

Cllr Lambard gave a report; Sea Palling Post Office has agreed to visit the village once a week to run a full post office service in the Methodist Hall. The councillors expressed their full support for this scheme. Cllr Lambard was thanked for her efforts to secure this service.

Cllr Lambard then explained that the questionnaire for the village shop had resulted in a poor response, but with some residents offering to help raise money for the project, but no one wanted to join a working party.

10.3 Small schools

Cllr Scott reported on a meeting she attended; the higher cost of smaller schools was highlighted. It was agreed that the Council should monitor the situation.

10.4 Stalham with Happing Partnership

Cllr Clarke reported on a meeting with the partnership; the project represents Stalham and the surrounding villages and offers accommodation to the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Credit Union.

10.5 Big Lunch – 3rd June 2012

Discussion of this project was deferred until a later meeting.

11. New Parish Clerk

It was agreed to advertise the vacancy at 7 hours per week for £11 per hour.

12. Co-option

NNDC has confirmed that there has been no request for an election. The Parish Council must therefore seek to co-opt four new councillors. The vacancy has been advertised in the newsletter.

13. Date of next meeting:

Monday, 5th December 2011 at 7.15 p.m.

14. Village Hall

The Parish Council emailed the HPFRC Charity Chairman, [.....], to say that it would like to meet to discuss the matter without pre-conditions. The Charity Trustees responded by saying that they would be happy to meet but that the £25,000 withheld for professional fees had to be paid over first, otherwise there would be no meeting. The Parish Council then heard from Paul Rice, County Councillor, who agreed to chair a meeting with private discussions.

Two representatives of the Parish Council met with two representatives of the Charity on 1st November. It was requested by the Charity that the contents of the meeting should be private and therefore there could be no report made to the public.

It was therefore proposed under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude members of the public and press in order to consider items in a confidential session. This was agreed.

The Parish Council apologised to the residents for excluding them from discussions and confirmed that details would be made available as soon as possible.

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Confidential minutes:

After some discussion, it was agreed to cancel the next meeting which had been arranged with the Trustees. The councillors were unhappy that the Trustees refused to publish their last accounts and their current cashflow forecasts for the completion of the village hall.

It was agreed unanimously that the Council needed legal advice on the treatment of the £21,883 professional fees. It was agreed to appoint [.....] as solicitor. Cllr Berrie offered to prepare the briefing document.

The councillors agreed that the Council would pay professional fees or equipment invoices for the village hall, as part of the remaining donation of £89,000, so that the VAT could be reclaimed by the Council and the donation therefore maximised. It was not agreed that the VAT on these future payments should be deducted from the disputed amount, as had been suggested by the Trustees.

The clerk was asked to reply to the letter from [.....], chairman of the Trustees, and to request accounts, cashflow forecast and a copy of the new constitution. The councillors also repeated their request that a member of the Council should be appointed as a Trustee.

There was some discussion about the legal situation if the hall were sold. Cllr Berrie offered to draft a letter to the Charity Commission to ask for a scheme to protect the Charity's assets for the village.

There was no further business and the meeting was closed.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date