

HICKLING PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday, 3rd October 2011 at 7.15 p.m. in the Methodist Hall

Present:

Chairman: S Clarke

Vice Chairman: A Lambard

Councillors: N Baker, P Berrie, T Ellis, D Scott, V Tallowin and P Deane

7.15 p.m. – Public Participation

There were 29 members of the public present. Matters raised included an update from Eric Lindo on the report to North Norfolk District Council Standards Committee. A resident asked Cllr Tallowin some questions on the decisions made by the previous parish councillors. There was some discussion about the decisions made concerning the building of the new village hall. Cllr Baker then read out a personal statement, resigned as a parish councillor and left the room.

A resident requested a copy of the report on the footpaths in the village.

7.40 p.m. The Parish Council meeting commenced:

The meeting commenced with a minute's silence in memory of Mrs Tate who died recently.

Mrs Pat Deane was welcomed as a parish councillor.

1. Apologies Cllrs Elliott, K Scott and West, County Councillor Paul Rice.

2. Declaration of interests in items on the agenda

Cllr Tallowin declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the village hall project as she is a trustee of the Hickling Playing Field or Recreation Ground charity. Cllr Lambard declared a personal interest in the village hall because of the close proximity to her house.

Cllr Tallowin declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the planning application for her son's property.

3. Minutes of Last Meetings

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd August 2011 were considered. The Minutes were agreed to be accurate, with one abstention, and were signed as correct by Cllr Clarke, as Chairman of the Parish Council.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2011 were considered. The Minutes were agreed to be accurate, and were signed as correct by Cllr Clarke.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th September 2011 were considered. The Minutes were agreed to be accurate, and were signed as correct by Cllr Clarke.

4. Matters arising

4.1 The Police confirmed that positive action was taken regarding a call from Barnfield Close.

4.2 The mower was repaired but broke again after a week. It was agreed that Cllr Clarke should speak to the repair company and let the other councillors know what was agreed.

- 4.3 Cllr Clarke reported on the Broads Authority Parish Planning Forum; there had been discussion on the Localism Bill and the changes to planning law.
- 4.4 The Hickling Playing Field or Recreation Ground Charity has chosen the name “Tate Loke” for the new road off Mallard Way.
- 4.5 The clerk has sent additional paperwork to the external auditors, Mazars, as required.
- 4.6 The map boards were installed; one at the staithe, in memory of Mr Buesnel and the other one at Chapel Pit. The former is to be paid for by the Buesnel family and the latter by Norfolk County Council.
- 4.7 Maggie Prettyman has said that the village is registered for The Big Lunch on Sunday, 3rd June 2012, for a community event. This will be on the agenda for 7th November.
- 4.8 The clerk presented a draft notice for the noticeboard, listing councillors’ names and the composition of the committees. The councillors agreed to let the clerk know if they wanted their telephone numbers or email addresses published.
- 4.9 It was reported that the constitution of the HPFRG Charity does not contain a provision to return the assets to the village in the event of its dissolution.

5. Planning

- 5.1 PF/11/0697 - [.....] **Rosedale Cottage [.....]** - Erection of two-storey/single-storey rear extension. The councillors had no objections to the plans.
- 5.2 PF/11/1133 - [.....] **Willow Farm [.....]** - Installation of photovoltaic solar panels to agricultural building. (Cllr Tallowin declared a personal and prejudicial interest, left the room and took no part in the discussion or voting.) There were no objections to the plans.
- 5.3 Planning results from **NNDC**:
Former Community Centre – installation of air source heat pump – full approval.

6. Correspondence

- 6.1 The AGM of the Stalham with Happening Partnership will be held on Wednesday, 26th October at 7.00 p.m.
- 6.2 Norfolk County Council’s Trading Standards Service is looking for volunteer Consumer Champions to help people in communities get information they need about their consumer rights. This will be sent to the newsletter.
- 6.3 The Norfolk Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (2010-2026) was adopted by Norfolk County Council on 26 September 2011. The Norfolk Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies DPD (2010-2026) replaces the ‘saved’ policies of the Norfolk Minerals Local Plan (2004) and the Norfolk Waste Local Plan (2000). This was noted.
- 6.4 The Broads Authority sent details of the draft National Planning Policy Framework (dNPPF) which has been prepared by the Coalition Government and which is subject to consultation from 25 July – 17 October. This was circulated to all councillors.
- 6.5 The Police have sent a report of one recorded crime.

6.6 Correspondence was received concerning the proposal for a community shop; Councillor Lambard explained that she was working on this as an individual and not as a parish councillor and was investigating the possibility of a mobile shop and post office for the village.

6.7 NNDC has sent information on changes to waste collection rounds, starting from 3rd October.

7. Treasurer's Report

	£	
Community Account:		
Balance b/f 5 th September 2011	166,787.21	
Receipts:		
Allotment rentals	26.70	
VAT refund	1,263.59	
NNDC – 2 nd half precept	3,981.07	
Payments:		
Transfer to Staithe Account	8,500.00	
Transfer to Savings Account	70,000.00	
HPFRG Charity	79,252.00)	- VAT of £230 = total £80,402
Larking & Gowen – re village hall	1,380.00)	as meeting of 5.9.11
Brown & Co – allotment rent	245.00	
D Crabtree – refund of mooring fee	108.75	
P James – clerk's fee	990.00	
P James – exps	45.24	
Methodist Hall – room hire	24.00	
Woodbastwick PC – share of training	16.50	
Acle PC – share of stationery	15.00	
Anglia Mower Service	1,337.82	
Century Printing – leaflets	<u>60.00</u>	
Balance c/f 3 rd October 2011	10,084.26	
No: 2 Account (+ berth+ transfer)	16,688.43	
Savings Account (+transfer)	<u>90,171.09</u>	
Total monies at 3 rd October 2011	<u>116,943.78</u>	

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

The above payments were approved.

A letter will be sent to Barclays Bank to change the Parish Council's correspondence address to that of the Chairman.

It was also agreed to change the correspondence address for the 2 ½% Consolidated Stock to that of the Chairman and to apply to revert to the gross payment of interest.

8. Village Hall

8.1 Deduction of professional fees

Following the Parish Council meeting of 5th September, the clerk received an email from the HPFRG Charity asking for clarification of the amount of the second grant payment agreed at that meeting, including details of the professional fees deducted from that payment.

The clerk wrote to the Charity to explain which professional fees were deemed to be part of the new build cost and had therefore been deducted from the amount of the second stage payment. She had also explained that, if the Charity wished, some money could be kept back to enable future professional fees

to be paid by the Parish Council, thereby maximising the value of the Council's donation since the Council is able to reclaim the VAT on these payments.

Harry Purnell, Vice-Chairman of the Charity, had replied dated 8th September stating that it was never intended that historical fees should be deducted from the stage payments and that these payments were considered to be part of the Council's contribution to the project and part of the interest earned on the Charity's permanent endowment held by the Council for many years. He wrote that the Charity now considered that "the payment of these fees will not now be financially advantageous to the project.." and asked the Council to pay the full second stage payment of £110,000, instead of the £80,402 as agreed by the Council. (The reduction from £110,000 to £80,402 consists of previous professional fees paid by the Parish Council of £21,883, current professional fees of £5,090 and the professional costs to be reimbursed for the sale of the old community hall of £2,625.)

Mr Purnell had also stated that the Charity had also paid these current, professional fees totalling £5,090, payment of which was authorised at the Council's meeting on 5th September.

The clerk sent an email on 12th September reminding the Charity trustees that by paying these recent professional fees itself, it had cost the Charity an additional £1,018 in VAT which would have been recovered by the Council and asking for confirmation that this was indeed the preferred action by the Charity and asking for details of the amount to be withheld by the Council to pay future professional fees.

As no reply was received to this email, the clerk was asked to send the Charity the second stage payment of £80,402, as agreed by the Council. However, at this point, a new invoice for professional advice to the Charity was received, from Larking & Gowen, and the Charity asked the Council to pay this. It was agreed that this should be paid by the Council as part of its donation, to save the £230 VAT, and deducted from the payment of £80,402, resulting in a second stage payment of £79,252, which was sent to the Charity.

The clerk's letter to the Charity also listed the following as evidence in the decision to deduct the previous fees:

- the Council's accounts for the year ended 31st March 2011 which stated that costs of £30,575.18 had been incurred on the new building, with invoices totalling £4,130 received since the year end. There is a note in the accounts that "some of the amounts..are recoverable from HPFRG Charity".
- The May 2011 Financial Statement states that, "The Parish Council have paid professional fees relevant to the new hall build costs when it is (sic) been advantageous to the project, these costs will be deducted from the stage payments, to date these total £29,892.18".
- The Capital Budget for the Charity in June states that "PC to hold back £25k and procure professional fees to enable VAT reclaim - £5000 – as part of contract with charity."

8.2 Confirmation that the three invoices are not to be paid by the Council

Those trustees present at the meeting confirmed that the Charity had indeed paid the current professional fees totalling £5,090 net of VAT, and did not want the Council to pay them. The clerk reminded the trustees that this course of action would cost the Charity £1,018.

8.3 Payment to the Charity of £5,090 for the three current invoices

Since the Charity did not want the Council to pay the current invoices, the Council agreed to pay the Charity £5,090 as part of its second stage donation.

At this point there was some discussion about the deduction of the past professional fees, the Charity's financial situation and the Council's financial situation. The Council's current cash flow forecast shows a year end balance at 31st March 2011 of £19,371. This means that if the past professional fees were not deducted from the Council's grant to the Charity then the Council would not have enough money to pay the grant in full. A meeting was suggested to discuss this further but no decision was made.

8.4 The Charity's AGM and Constitution

Cllr Tallwin, speaking as a trustee of the Charity confirmed that the AGM would be held at the end of October or early November and that the Charity's Accounts would be available at that meeting. She also confirmed that the Charity had been using advice from the Norfolk Rural Community Council with regard to changes to the constitution.

8.5 Village Hall Building Project

It was reported that the building was expected to be completed in December.

9. Parish Council Property Reports

9.1 Chapel Pit

NNDC's Tree Preservation Department officer agreed to do a site inspection at the pond shortly and suggested that it is unlikely that the trees are causing the damage to the adjacent house.

9.2 Staithe

A wet berth mooring has been offered to the next person on the waiting list.

Cllrs Berrie and Deane carried out an audit of the dry berths. It was agreed that new marker posts were needed as it was not easy to distinguish the berths.

Mesh has been fitted to the slipways and the new winches have been installed. One of the old winches was sold for £45.

9.3 Allotments

Allotment invoices have been sent out for the six months to 25th March 2012.

9.4 Village sign

The clerk sent a letter to thanks to the WI for maintaining the planting around the village sign.

9.5 Other

There was a report on the current storage of diesel for the mower and it was agreed to discuss this at the next meeting.

10 Budget

The clerk asked the councillors to give some consideration to village assets and their future maintenance or replacement so as to draw up a budget which takes these costs into consideration. It was agreed that the finance committee should meet to produce recommendations for the next Council meeting.

11 Support for Elderly and Vulnerable Residents

There was a discussion of support for elderly residents in the village, a resilience workshop run by NNDC, a good neighbour scheme and the local First Responders. An information sheet was received from Maggie Prettyman on Community Wellbeing and Support.

12 Parish Council Surgery

Cllr D Scott gave a report on the surgery held on 22nd September, which was well supported.

13 Advertisement for new parish clerk

It was agreed to consider this at the next Council meeting. Cllr Tallowin was appointed to the HR committee to replace Cllr Baker.

14 Website

Cllr Berrie presented a discussion paper on a policy as to what documents should be published on the website. This was adopted in full.

15 Date of the next meeting:

Parish Council: 7th November at 7.15 p.m. in the Methodist Hall

Parish surgery on Thursday, 20th October from 10 – 12 noon in the Methodist Hall

There was no further business and the meeting was closed at 9.20 p.m.

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Signature

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Date