

WINFARTHING PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on
Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 7.30 pm at
Winfarthing Village Hall, Hall Road, Winfarthing IP22 2EJ

Councillors Present: Cllr Eric Cole (Chair), Cllr Lynne Rogers, Cllr Peter Frost, Cllr Richard Steel, Cllr David Rix, Cllr Jono Smith Cllr Jim Collins

In attendance: Karen Rix (Clerk), County Cllr Catherine Rowett, District Cllr James Easter (from item 10.

Members of the Public: 3

1. **To elect a chairperson**
Cllr Steel proposed Cllr Cole. Cllr Cole agreed to act as Chair for one more year only. Seconded by Cllr Rix and unanimously agreed.
2. **To elect a Vice Chairperson**
Cllr Steel advised that in the interest of succession planning he would be prepared to stand as Vice Chair. Cllr Smith Proposed, Cllr Frost seconded and unanimously agreed.
3. **To agree and appoint councillor roles**
 - 3.1. **Finance scrutineer (s)**
Cllr Cole proposed Cllr Frost and Cllr Steel continue in the role. Seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously agreed.
 - 3.2. **Footpath Officer**
Cllr Cole proposed Cllr Steel, seconded by Cllr Rix and unanimously agreed.
 - 3.3. **Maintenance Officer**
Cllr Steel proposed Cllr Rix, seconded by Cllr Frost and unanimously agreed.
4. **To receive and consider apologies for absence**
None Received.
5. **To receive or update any declarations of pecuniary interest**
None received.
6. **To approve minutes of previous meeting held on 2nd April 2024**
Minutes unanimously approved.
7. **To consider any matters arising from minutes (not covered by an agenda item)**
No matters arising.
8. **To receive an update on actions from previous minutes**
Item 8 – April – Cllr Steel confirmed that a positive discussion had taken place with the riparian owner of ditch in Mill Road. Further digging in the ditch revealed the pipe that goes under the road. Cllr Steel advised the ditch would benefit from being deeper and agreed to speak with the riparian owner about addressing this.

Signed Chair

Action: Cllr Steel to discuss the necessary further maintenance on the ditch in Mill Road with riparian owner.

Item 11 – April - Clerk reported a quotation had been received from Norfolk PTS for £295 covering a 2 - 2.5 hour whole council training session. Cllr's unanimously agreed and accepted the quotation. Clerk to forward potential dates for whole council training to all Cllr's to establish a convenient date.

Action: Clerk to forward training dates to all councillors.

Item 9.5 – November 2023 – Cllr Rogers to query the charge for hiring the village hall at next meeting on 14th May 2024.

Item 16 - July 2023 – Cllr Cole to provide information to Cllr Frost and Cllr Steel on the ID required remains ongoing.

Item 16 – July 2023 – Cllr Cole reported no further progress with solicitors. The Clerk suggested contacting Community Action Norfolk to discuss a subscription so they can support the parish council with registration of the land and potentially the village hall.

Action: Clerk to contact Community Action Norfolk regarding subscription.

All other actions were completed

9. To receive questions or comments from parishioners

A parishioner reported that they were pleased to see the police in the village monitoring speeding traffic.

10. To receive a report from County and District Councillors

- County Councillor Rowett discussed items from her report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. A copy can be found with these minutes. District Cllr Rowett left at 8.19 pm following this item.
- District Councillor discussed items from his report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. A copy can be found with these minutes.

Cllr Collins asked why Poll Clerks were being employed to work outside of their residential area as this must be impacting costs associated with mileage claims. District Cllr Easter agreed to make a comment to the organiser.

Cllr Cole asked District Cllr Easter to provide a copy of the Anti-Social Legislation.

Cllr Rix asked why a Saffron Housing property in Hall Road had remained empty for so long. District Cllr Easter agreed to ask Saffron Housing how many of their properties in Winfarthing remained empty.

District Cllr Easter left the meeting at 8.44 pm following item 10.

Signed Chair

Action: District Cllr Easter to:

- **Make comment to organiser of polling day regarding Poll Clerks**
- **Provide copy of Anti-Social Legislation to Cllr Cole**
- **Ask Saffron Housing how many properties in Winfarthing remained empty**

11. To receive the Clerk's report

- The Clerk advised that the annual Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) report had been submitted. Cllr Cole suggested this money could be used to complete maintenance work on the village noticeboard. Cllr Smith agreed to obtain a quotation for the steel sheet to replace the existing warped pin board.
- The Clerk advised that an email had been received inviting them to submit an application to SNDC's Electric Vehicle Charging Point grant funding. This had been circulated to Cllr's prior to the meeting. A detailed discussion took place resulting in the unanimous decision to not submit an application as it would not be beneficial or cost effective in the long term.
- The Clerk Advised that

Action: Cllr Smith agreed to provide a quote for a steel sheet for noticeboard

12. FINANCE

12.1. To approve payments (C)

Payment Type/ Cheque No	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT
100259	Karen Rix	Reimbursement of expenses	53.35	3.26
100259	Karen Rix	Salary April 2024	156.36	
100260	Robin Goreham	Internal Audit	60.00	
		Total	269.71	3.26

Payments were unanimously approved.

Cllr Rogers advised it would be good practice to appoint a fourth signatory on the bank account. Cllr Cole proposed Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Collins and unanimously agreed. Clerk to send Barclays form to Cllr Smith for completion.

Action: Clerk to provide Cllr Smith with Barclays signatory form.

12.2. Receipts (B)

DATE	RECEIVED FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
			0.00

12.3. To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

DETAILS	CR	DR	BALANCE
Cash book balance brought forward: A	3660.60		

Signed Chair

Receipts this month (listed above): B	0.00		
Payments this month (listed above): C		269.71	
Adjustment due to keying error in March 2024: C		0.20	
Cash book balance carried forward (A+B-C)			3390.69
Community Account Balance			

12.4. To consider the Internal Auditor's report for year ending 31st March 2024

The Internal Auditor's report was received and reviewed, the recommendations and observations were noted and alterations for the future were agreed.

12.5. To consider whether to exempt from an external audit and if so to authorise the Clerk and Chair to sign the form

It was noted that as the Council's income and expenditure for the year was under £25,000, the Council would exempt itself from External Audit. This was considered and agreed and the Clerk and Chair were authorised to sign the form.

12.6. To consider the assertions on, and complete, the Annual Governance Statement and to authorise the Clerk and Chair to sign the form

The Council considered the assertions on the Annual Governance Statement, completed the form and authorised the Chair and Clerk to sign on their behalf.

12.7. To consider and approve the accounting statements 2023/24 and to authorise the Chair to sign

The Council considered and agreed the Accounting Statement and authorised the Chair to sign on their behalf.

13. To comment on any planning applications

None Received.

14. To receive an update on the Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Scheme and discuss response to consultation

Cllrs discussed the Council's response and asked the Clerk to submit letter.

Action: Clerk to submit letter to National Grid Consultation

15. To receive an update on All Saints Primary School

The Clerk advised that a response had been received late that afternoon from the Chair Interim Executive Board (IEB). A response was discussed and Cllr's asked the Clerk to respond.

Action: Clerk to respond to Chair of IEB extending a further invitation to attend the parish council meeting and provide a monthly update.

16. To receive an update on Community Speed Watch

Cllr Frost reported that a Speed Watch would take place on 8th May 2024.

17. To receive an update on parish footpaths

Cllr Steel reported that FP11 had been walked and that he had written to NCC regarding FP1.

Signed Chair

18. To consider any update on correspondence received

Discussed under item 15

19. To receive items for the next Agenda and confirm date of next meeting

Safeguarding Policy

Next Meeting 17th June 2024

Meeting was closed to the public at 10.34 pm

20. To discuss and approve Clerk's salary grade, payment of said salary and conditions of employment

The Clerk's salary grade, payment of salary and conditions of employment were discussed and agreed. Details recorded in a confidential minute.

Meeting closed at: 10.45 pm

Action List

May 2024

- Item 10 - **District Cllr Easter** to:
 - Make comment to organiser of polling day regarding Poll Clerks
 - Provide copy of Anti-Social Legislation to Cllr Cole
 - Ask Saffron Housing how many properties in Winfarthing remained empty
- Item 11 - **Cllr Smith** agreed to provide a quote for a steel sheet for noticeboard
- Item 12.1 – **Clerk** to provide Cllr Smith with Barclays signatory form.
- Item 14 - **Clerk** to submit letter to National Grid Consultation

April 2024

- Item 8 - **Cllr Steel** to discuss the necessary further maintenance on the ditch in Mill Road with riparian owner.
- Item - **Clerk** to forward training dates to all councillors.

November 2023

- Item 8.5 – **Clerk** to purchase Microsoft Office 365 in the new financial year once the audit completed.
- Item 9.5 – **Cllr Rogers** to query the charge for hiring the village hall to the parish council.

July 2023

- Item 16 - **Clerk** to contact Community Action Norfolk regarding subscription

Signed Chair

Work in Progress

In theory we have progress on several things I've been trying to get done, though sadly you may not have seen the results yet. I've now had the official results letter for my applications for the Road Safety Community Fund, which have turned out to be rather puzzling since what they say in the letter doesn't match what I understood I'd been awarded nor what I thought I had requested! It appears that we're getting all or some of the speed limit improvements in Bressingham and Fersfield (not 20 mph but 30, since 20 wasn't an option under this scheme), and perhaps they have indeed discovered that one can get a collection of speed limits done under one (costly) Traffic Regulation Order, which, if true, is a very good precedent. These will be implemented within the next 12 months, God willing. I also asked for a 30mph speed limit on the Turnpike in Bunwell. That was refused, so I believed we had got nothing, but they now say they have awarded a Vehicle Activated Sign for Bunwell (which I didn't think I had ever asked for, or even considered). I am trying to find out what exactly this is and where it is to be installed. I trust it is something that the Parish had asked for. Meanwhile, believing I had nothing to assist with the dangerous crossing point on the Turnpike, I have commissioned a feasibility study for making a safer crossing there, using part of my 2023 highways budget. In Aslacton, I've been chasing and got promises for action on the speed limit (long approved but never installed) on Pottergate Street, which should be done by June this year. I've ordered, and will fund or partially fund, various signs, paint and chevrons for some of the roads with problems of dangerous bends and misleading junctions, and I'm co-funding with Councillor Wilby a solution for the unmarked and neglected Furze Green Hamlet that crosses two parishes/divisions and highways officers. This is now in progress. I've also commissioned the designers to come up with signs to stop long lorries from using Tabernacle Lane in Fornsett. I'd like to get a UK-wide solution to change the way Sat Navs work, when it comes to tiny single track lanes to eliminate the problem of delivery vans and lorries taking short cuts at speed due to delivery targets and carbon reduction targets.

In addition to work to solve drainage problems in the Street in Bunwell, the Environment Agency has been researching natural flooding solutions for the feeder tributaries for the Tas and for the area around Shelfanger. They're reporting to Shelfanger in May. I've been looking into better signage at the steep and deep Ford in Fornsett, and I'm told that the Council is undertaking a review of all the County's fords, to improve safety. This is promising, but I fear it will take a long time before we get action.

I've been pestering footpaths officers, particularly with cases where enforcement is lacking, such as in Gissing. The new route for the FP6 in Gissing is now official so we can put pressure on to get it opened up. In some places we have problems with irresponsible dog-owners. There's no one-size-fits-all solution to this, so we need to work out what might help in each case.

Norwich to Tilbury Pylons

My input to the County's response to the Statutory consultation must go in by Wednesday so I'll be preparing it today and tomorrow. Many thanks to residents who have sent local information about effects in their area. I have attended some important briefings with other councils/councillors from Suffolk and Essex, and I'm working on a response that reflects the fact that we need a better solution, and a better way of ensuring that government planning systems work with local people to place important infrastructure in appropriate places, without destroying the environment in the process. I attended the fantastic art exhibition in Fornsett, highlighting the beauty of the local area. I am concerned about the damage that preparing for and erecting the pylons will cause, not just their long term presence. Undergrounding would also damage local ecologies, roads and hedges. Local consultation information events are in Ashwellthorpe (Thursday 9th May), Tibenham (Friday 10th May), Diss Town Football club (Wednesday 15th May), all afternoon-early evening.

The attempt to silence local voices is not a good look on the part of the current government, nor is the blithe assumption that we can just build more and more and never ask whether less would be better—less demand, less consumption, more economical ways of living, more nature, more happiness.

Norfolk County Council Full Council meeting, Tuesday May 7th .

This meeting is the AGM so we'll be appointing the leader and cabinet etc for the coming year. There will also be motions. I've submitted my motion about rural speed limits and hope it will be discussed and voted on. I've also submitted a motion about the National Grid Pylons scheme. The Conservatives have tabled an amendment to my Pylons motion, which will probably pass, but I don't know whether they will support or oppose the motion. The

Signed Chair

amendment will remove some key points I wanted to make to protect us for the future. There are also motions on NHS Dentistry and on the Norwich Western Link road. I shall speak on the one about dentistry.

Norfolk things:

Long Stratton Bypass

Construction of the bypass has begun and we now have road closed signs on all side routes that the road will cross. For further details on the closures [view the Long Stratton Bypass works public information notice \(PDF\) \[173KB\]](#). Further information and updates relating to the Long Stratton Bypass, plus a link for those wishing to subscribe to Long Stratton Bypass e-news, are available on the county council website [here](#).

National Government things

Prime Minister's "moral mission" to reform disability benefits

Mr Sunak is proposing reforms to disability benefits. He wants to solve the fact that the number of people claiming disability benefits for mental health conditions has doubled since 2020. The plan is to change the eligibility criteria, assessment process and types of support, and remove the cash that people are allowed to spend on what they need on a regular basis, including things that they might enjoy. helping people on benefits to stay in or return to work. The government say that they will consult on proposed reforms to disability benefits system to ensure benefits are targeted at those who need it most.

The information about the proposed changes can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/modernising-support-for-independent-living-the-health-and-disability-green-paper/modernising-support-for-independent-living-the-health-and-disability-greenpaper> I would strongly encourage anyone who is concerned about the well-being of people they know who struggle with their disabilities or mental health or receive these PIP payments to respond to this consultation, if you care about the values that this country has lived by over the last century, in trying to care with compassion for those who have received a hard lot in life and for those who are waiting for non-existent NHS treatment or other kinds of help.

Fit Note Reform: government call for evidence

Another related issue is this call for evidence to inform a programme of work announced at the autumn statement in 2023, to explore reforming the "fit note" process. The government says this is "to support those with long term health conditions to access timely work and health support". What they mean is that they don't want doctors to assess whether a person is fit to go back to work, and they want a system that allows them to set targets for cutting people off from getting sick notes, remove their access to sick pay and force them back into work (or starvation), as they do with other benefits. They are looking for "enhancements that stakeholders would require for the fit note to better support people to start, stay and succeed in work". Please consider contributing to this evidence-gathering process. They want to hear from employers, healthcare professionals, patients, carers and those who access fit notes, representatives of local systems or local system partners (e.g, local authority, community social enterprise), interested academics and stakeholder organisations

To participate in this call for evidence use this [online form](#). Further information about the call for evidence is available [here](#)

Contact me on

Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk for Council-related business. See also my facebook page [here](#).

Catherine Rowett
6th May 2024

Signed Chair

District Councillor report

Waste depot Ketteringham

SNC are still having difficulties finding appropriate premises to house the enlarged fleet of vehicles caused by the Government's insistence that we collect food waste from all properties in South Norfolk.

A new diesel vehicle to collect food waste will cost £210K, a fully electric vehicle will cost £500K (with a much shorter life than the diesel) and a hybrid vehicle will cost £750K.

We will also need to provide every premises with 2 bins to collect food waste at a cost of £1m.

Anti Social Legislation

The legislation has been approved and passed which will help Police deal with boy racers and gatherings of cars.

Clare House Diss

This old care home was bought by SNC and is being converted into temporary accommodation. It previously housed 46 residents but has now been redesigned to accommodate 26 families. It should be ready to take new people at the end of May.

Statistics

South Norfolk District Council has been ranked in the top 25 councils in England out of 318 which means that 94% of councils are performing worse than us. We are 7th for financial strength which puts SNC in the top 2%. Which all in all means we are doing it right for the people South Norfolk and in strong position to continue to provide essential services