

WINFARTHING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2nd April 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

In attendance: Karen Rix (Clerk), District Councillor James Easter

Members of the Public: 5

1. **To receive and consider apologies for absence**
Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Jim Collins and Cllr Jono Smith.
Apologies also received from County Cllr Catherine Rowett.
2. **To receive or update any declarations of pecuniary interest**
None received.
3. **To approve minutes of previous meeting held on 5th March 2024**
Minutes unanimously approved.
4. **To consider any matters arising from minutes (not covered by an agenda item)**
No matters arising.
5. **To receive an update on actions from previous minutes**
Item 8 – March - Tickets for CPRE Flooding Conference were chargeable so the event was not attended.

Item 13 – March - The Clerk emailed the school asking if they would like to be involved in creating litter signs. There has been no response.

Item 17 – March - A Community Speed Watch will be taking place imminently.

Item 8.5 – November 2023 – Clerk to purchase Microsoft Office 365 in the new financial year once the audit completed.

Item 9.5 – November 2023 – Cllr Rogers to query the charge for hiring the village hall to the parish council remains ongoing.

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 to contact solicitors regarding the land registration remains ongoing.

All other actions were completed

6. To receive questions or comments from parishioners

None received as Annual Parish Meeting was held before the Parish Council Meeting.

7. To receive a report from County and District Councillors

- County Councillor Rowett provided a report prior to meeting. This can be found with these minutes
- District Councillor read his report which had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. This can be found with these minutes.

A MOP asked how many exits there would be onto the road from the proposed housing developments. District Cllr Easter confirmed there would be one.

MOP's were encouraged to voice their comments on planning applications through SNC's planning website or by emailing the parish council.

District Cllr Easter reported that attendance to the Mental Health Awareness training event on 21st March 2024 was disappointing.

8. To receive the Clerk's report

- The parish council report was successfully published in the Cockcrow magazine.
- The parish council's internal audit has been booked for 7.30 pm on 1st May 2024.
- The new Barclays Bank card and card reader has been delivered.
- Village litter pick on 21st April 2024 has been registered with SNC's Big Litter Pick scheme
- The parish council has a credit of £124.30 on their PAYE account. Investigation as to why this has occurred (as far as parish council records allow) points to missing returns and failure to send 'Nil' returns when a Clerk was not in post. The 'Nil' returns have now been submitted. The Clerk advised that no further payments would be made to HMRC until the credit had been used.
- The amended NCC template letter for ditch/water course riparian owners had been circulated to councillors. Cllr Frost felt it inappropriate to amend the NCC letter. It was agreed that in light of the efforts already undertaken by the owners of the property in question to clear their ditch, Cllr Steel and Cllr Rix would have an in-person discussion with the property owners in the first instance.

Action: Cllr Steel and Cllr Rix to speak with riparian owners of ditch in Mill Road

9. FINANCE

9.1. To approve payments (C)

Payment Type/ Cheque No	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT
100256	Karen Rix	Website hosting 3 years	180.00	36.00
100257	Karen Rix	Salary March 2024	156.16	
100258	Norfolk PTS	24/25 Subscription	55.00	
		Total	391.16	36.00

Payments were unanimously approved.

9.2. Receipts (B)

DATE	RECEIVED FROM	DETAILS	AMOUNT
			0.00

9.3. To receive a report from the Responsible Finance Officer

DETAILS	CR	DR	BALANCE
Cash book balance brought forward: A	4087.76		
Receipts this month (listed above): B	0.00		
Payments this month (listed above): C		427.16	
Cash book balance carried forward (A+B-C) Community Account Balance			3660.60

9.4. To approve 2023/24 bank reconciliation

Approval of the bank reconciliation was proposed by Cllr Rogers, seconded by Cllr Frost and unanimously agreed.

9.5. Spend against budget 01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024

BUDGET 01/04/23 TO 31/03/24				
INCOME DETAILS	BUDGET Ex VAT	CR TO DATE EX VAT	BALANCE	COMMENTS
Land rent	640.00	0.00	-640.00	Budget transferred to Winfarthing Parish Trust Account
Litter Pick	20.00	20.00	0	
HMRC Refund	0	173.49	173.49	Additional income not budgeted
SNC Clean Up and Bloom Grant	0	300.00	300.00	Additional income not budgeted
Total Income	660.00	493.49	-166.51	
EXPENDITURE DETAILS	BUDGET Ex VAT	DR TO DATE Ex VAT		
Insurance	300.00	214.00	86.00	
Clerk Salary & Expenses	2745.00	2810.60	-65.60	
Training	100.00	230.00	-130	£130 additional expenditure not budgeted
Rent - Glebe Land	10.00	10.00	0	
Hire of Village Hall	150.00	110.00	40.00	
Memberships	150.00	248.98	-98.98	
Dog bins	285.00	297.29	-12.29	
Defibrillator	100.00	117.00	-17.00	
Stationery	100.00	26.12	73.88	

Litter pick equipment	100.00	268.14	-168.14	£168.14 additional expenditure not budgeted
Donation – Royal British Legion, EAAA	50.00	100.00	-50.00	£100 additional expenditure not budgeted
Churchyard maintenance	600.00	0	600.00	
Audit	0	302.32	-302.32	Additional expenditure not budgeted
Website Development and Support, Hosting	0	385.00	-385.00	Additional expenditure budgeted in 2024/25
Total Expenditure	4590.00	5119.45	-429.45	

10. To comment on any planning applications:

Cllr's commented that a footpath ran through the property in question however this was inaccessible and needed to be reinstated. Cllr Steel also agreed to report this online.

Action: Clerk to respond to SNC Planning Department that footpath needs reinstating and Cllr Steel to report inaccessible footpath online.

11. To consider the training requirements of councillors

Councillors agreed the following whole council training topics:

- Background to Local Councils (including all tiers of local government)
- Roles and responsibilities – Clerk/RFO, Councillors, The Corporate Body, Chairperson, the Council as an employer
- Powers and duties
- Meetings (including voting and public participation), minutes and agendas
- The two annual meetings, elections and co-option
- Governance and financial management (including transparency rules if relevant)

The Clerk to obtain a quotation from Norfolk Parish Training and Support

Action: Clerk to obtain quote for whole council training on selected topics

12. To receive an update on the Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Scheme

Nothing to report. Cllr R advised that she was a member of the Norfolk and Lincolnshire 'anti-pylon' groups and would alert councillors to any updates.

13. To receive an update on All Saints Primary School

Councillors raised concerns over the number of staff leaving the school and how this was impacting on children leaving the school. The Clerk and Cllr Frost to draft a letter to the school's Interim Executive Board (IEB) on behalf of the parish council expressing concerns in relation to the future of the school.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Frost to draft a letter to the school's Interim Executive Board (IEB) expressing concerns in relation to the future of the school.

14. To receive an update on Community Speed Watch

An event will take place imminently.

15. To receive an update on parish footpaths

Nothing to report.

16. To consider any update on correspondence received

- An email had been circulated to all councillors detailing the service level from the new subscription to Norfolk Training and Support.
- An email had been circulated to all councillors from the new Parish Fields Practice Manager. The Clerk to respond requesting receipt of the monthly newsletter.
- An email had been circulated to all councillors from Transport East regarding a travel survey. Cllr Rogers and Cllr Steel advised that they had completed the survey.
- A parishioner copied the parish council into an email to the Water Management Team at NCC regarding ongoing flooding issues. This was circulated to all councillors.

Action: Clerk to respond to Parish Fields Practice Manager requesting a monthly copy of their Newsletter.

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

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Nomination of councillor roles

To consider and approve the Internal Auditors report

To Approve and sign Section 1 of the AGAR – Annual Governance Statement

To approve and sign Section 2 of AGAR – Annual Accounting Statements

To agree the publish dates of the Notice of Certificate of Exemption.

Next meeting of the Parish Council will be Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 7.30 pm.

Due to the Clerk's absence, the June meeting would take place on 17th June 2024, there would be no meeting in July, however a meeting would take place on 5th August 2024.

Meeting closed at: 9.23 pm

Action List

April 2024

- Item 8 - **Cllr Steel** and **Cllr Rix** to speak with riparian owners of ditch in Mill Road
- Item 10 - **Clerk** to respond to SNC Planning Department advising that footpath is inaccessible needs reinstating and **Cllr Steel** to report inaccessible footpath online.
- Item 11 - **Clerk** to obtain quote for whole council training on selected topics
- Item 13 - **Clerk** and **Cllr Frost** to draft a letter to the school's Interim Executive Board (IEB) expressing concerns in relation to the future of the school.
- Item 16 - **Clerk** to respond to Parish Fields Practice Manager requesting a monthly copy of their Newsletter.

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 - **Cllr Cole** to provide information to Cllr Frost and Cllr Steel on the ID required.
- Item 16 – **Cllr Cole** to contact solicitors regarding the land registration.

DRAFT

Work in Progress

In theory we have progress on a number of things I've been trying to get done, though sadly you may not yet have seen the results in reality. We've got speed limits approved (but no sign of them implemented yet, of course) for Bressingham and Fersfield. I asked for speed limits for Bunwell but it was refused, so I have commissioned a feasibility study for making a safer crossing on the Turnpike. I've been chasing and got promises for action on the speed limit (long approved but never installed) on Pottergate Street in Aslacton. 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. I've also commissioned the designers to come up with signs to stop long lorries from using Tabernacle Lane in Forncett.

I believe we have some work going on to solve drainage problems in the Street in Bunwell. There's also been a lot of work going on at the environment agency to come up with natural flooding solutions for the feeder tributaries for the Tas and for the area around Shelfanger. I'm also looking into better signage at the very steep and deep Ford in Forncett where vehicles regularly get into trouble.

Several parishes have been concerned that the grips to let water run into the ditch are not cut right through but only part way. In other cases they are allowing water to flow from the ditch to the road. These cases are hard to deal with because the water level in the ditch should be lower than the road, not higher, and if this is not so, there is sometimes something more fundamentally wrong with the capacity of the ditches and ponds, due to silting up of pipes or ponds, or run off from the fields.

I've been pestering the footpaths officers with various issues, particularly cases where enforcement is not happening, such as in Gissing. I know there is limited funding and officers are overstretched, especially because of the wet weather problems. I very much appreciate the work that parishes do to help by using their own teams of volunteers to keep footpaths and drainage in good order, and to help residents with issues they have locally. I am also seeking to get better responses from the officer in charge of buses to address our issues relating to bus timetables.

Norfolk County Council Climate Change Strategy

Troublesome wet weather and coastal erosion/rising river levels are among the growing consequences of global climate change. On 13 March 2024 the Infrastructure and Development Committee discussed the third tranche of Norfolk County Council's strategy for actions to deliver the climate change strategy. The actions will support low carbon transport, climate adaptation, and decarbonisation of local business and industry. Initiatives include:

- A pilot to develop a sustainable and viable seaweed industry in Norfolk - the project will work with partners in the Netherlands, already implementing sea farms.
- Supporting the development of nature-based solutions to help secure Norfolk's long term water resilience.
- Further walking and cycling improvements in places including King's Lynn, Norwich, Great Yarmouth, and Dereham.

Read the Infrastructure and Development Committee report [here](#) or watch the meeting [here](#).

County Council in March

The Full County Council met on 26th March. During the time for questions to the leader and cabinet, I was able to ask the Leader of the Council about how we might combat the government's planning regime for strategic infrastructure projects which silences the voice of local people and imposes unsuitable infrastructure instead of seeking agreement. I raised the example of the Norwich to Tilbury Pylons. Aside

from this issue, we also asked some searching questions about the financial risks incurred from the likely cancellation of the Norwich Western Link.

Council then passed and approved the usual array of reports from the committees covering routine business and decisions.

We also reviewed the Climate Policy. In June 2023, Norfolk County Council launched its Climate Strategy (see previous entry in this report: the third tranche of this came to committee in March). The strategy sets out how the council can address its own carbon footprint as well as its role in supporting Norfolk's low carbon development and green growth. The paper brought to Council in March encapsulates the climate strategy into a more concise policy format. It also adjusts the council's countywide commitment, to align with the UK's 2050 net-zero target and the ambitious trajectory set out in the national carbon budgets. Previously the Council had set a target of 2030 for making its own estates net zero but had only a vague ambition to "work with partners towards carbon neutrality county-wide".

The climate strategy is focused on the following key areas:

- Reducing our estate emissions
- Reducing our indirect emissions
- Addressing Norfolk's county-wide emissions
- Promoting a green economy for Norfolk
- Climate adaptation
- Ensure nature has space to recover and grow
- Engage and collaborate.

The policy was approved by Council.

Besides the designated business above, motions were brought for discussion, as follows:

Two motions proposing improvements to the information pack for parishes concerning public footpaths (one from the Conservatives and one from the Liberal Democrats). Only the Conservative motion was heard.

Motions from the Liberal Democrat group on opposing the Wisbech Incinerator and on Experiential Tourism. Only the one on the Wisbech Incinerator got time for discussion.

Motions from the Labour Group on parking permits for carers, on flood responses, on malnutrition and on the Norwich Western Link Road. Only the one on parking permits got time for discussion.

A motion from the Green Group on proper funding for childcare. For the first time this Council year, our motion got time for discussion and a vote. Next month I will bring back the speed limits for rural roads motion, and hope that we get a motion debated again.

Watch the meeting [here](#) . (NB the opening statement from the Leader is quite something).

A new station for South Norfolk?

You may have seen the report in the newspaper about my proposal to get the old Fornsett station (near Long Stratton) reopened. I'm keen that communities that have a railway running nearby should have easy local access to speedy travel to Norwich and London. I was unsuccessful in February with my suggestion that the County should invest in the land for this station. However, there are many campaign groups who are keen to rebuild a good railway system, so I shall continue to push for this, and a parkway station at Cringleford for the research park, having sown the seeds of the idea in my budget proposals for 2024.

UK government initiatives

Ofsted Consultation – the Big Listen launched

Ofsted's Chief Inspector has promised transparency and openness as they work to rebuild and strengthen the confidence of professionals and the public. As part of Ofsted's wish to improve, they have launched the Big Listen Consultation. The consultation seeks views across their work, from schools and children's social care to teacher training and early years. They are seeking views about Ofsted's work from the full range of professionals and providers with whom they work, as well as from parents, carers, children and learners. The adult survey is available [here](#). (There's going to be other consultations to get the views of children).

Norfolk things:

Big Indie Read has started

The Big Indie Read at Norfolk libraries aims to celebrate exceptional writing from independent publishers. The read runs for two months and features 26 publishers, almost 200 books and 17 author chats. Further information about Big Indie events at Norfolk libraries is available [here](#). Browse the full list of Big Indie Read books [here](#).

Autism Acceptance Week (2-8 April)

Norfolk Libraries have selected some books from their catalogue to create an Autism Acceptance Week 2024 booklist. There are books suitable for children and adults, including stories and information books.

Browse the booklist [here](#).

There are also autism friendly sessions running in some of our libraries, find out more [here](#).

Contact me on

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

Catherine Rowett
27th March 2024

District Councillors Report April 2024

The Greater Norwich Local Plan, this incorporates South Norfolk, Broadland and Norwich City Council and future planning and building for the next 5 years. This was agreed at the Council meeting on 25th March and the other 2 Councils had agreed at their March meetings.

The plan has gone through rigorous checking by the planning inspectorate who made some minor changes to the original plan.

This plan outlines the new homes to be built over the next 5 years. It anticipates that there is enough land available to build 45,050 homes and has a jobs target of 33000 and employment land of 360 hectares. It will ensure that the Greater Norwich's housing and jobs needs will be fully met in a sustainable manner, supporting the growth of the post carbon economy, assisting in tackling climate change and protecting and enhancing the many environment assets of the area.

It includes making land available for gypsy and travellers sites.

It also includes South Norfolk's Village Cluster approach to housing allocations to villages that will account for some 3200 new homes. The Village Cluster program has not yet been finally passed by the Council as some minor changes were made by the inspectorate.

Diss Pool

The work on Diss swimming pool continues and is now believed to be complete by December 24.

AD Plant

New documentation is now available on the planning application for all to view. This information was asked for by the Inspector looking into the appeal to try to bring both sides together to enable the Appeal to progress forward. She was aware of the distance between the 2 sides and made it clear that work had to be done to get things to a point where it can proceed purposefully.

Pylons

Nothing new here at the moment except to say that they are making a lot of noise about getting access to the land where the proposed line of pylons will run. Pointing out that wilful obstruction could lead to fines. We should have another consultation later this year unless they are waiting for a new government who will give them a green light to do whatever they want. Remember we will in the long run be paying for this with higher electricity bills so we should be consulted.

Cost of Living

The cost of living does not seem to be coming down and as such SNC continue to pour money in to support those in need. Homelessness seems to be on the decline with fewer people and families coming forward for help.

Flooding

Nothing new here except to say that there appears to be a plan for Winfarthing and Shelfanger f to carry out work from The Environment, I have no firm details. I have heard of a Parish Council who realise that there is no new money coming forward to carry out remedial work, who are putting aside a small amount of money each month from their precept. When there is enough they hire a man with a digger to clear obstructions not perfect but it seems to work.