

HEMPNALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 20 February 2024 at 7:00pm in the Mill Centre

Present

Chairman Mr David Hook, Mr Phil Bates, Mrs Joan Cann, Mr Richard Delf, Mr Robert Elliott, Mr Hamish Rose, Mr Peter Workman and the Clerk Mr Ian Nelson.

Members of the public present

There were none.

Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Alison Thomas, District Councillor Martyn Hooton and Mr Mike Turner.

Declaration of interests

Messrs Bates and Hook declared an interest in the Support for The Hempnall Trust matter.

Mr Delf declared an interest in the planning application matter 2024/0204.

Minutes of the previous meeting

Mr Elliot proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was unanimously agreed the minutes of the meeting on 16 January 2024 be approved.

Public Participation

There was none.

County Councillor Update

County Councillor Alison Thomas provided the following report:

Re the B1527 reclassification review: NCC Highways has liaised with their network Safety Team, who in turn liaised with the Network Team, which unfortunately confirmed that even if both councillors, Highways and the teams use all of their combined budgets for the current financial year, it will still not cover the cost of carrying out the review. The review for a potential route reclassification would require extensive public consultation over a wide geographical area, and with legal costs and construction costs factored in, would cost a substantial amount of money, which is not something that is available for this type of project at this time.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk write to Mrs Thomas and Gary Overland to say how disappointed councillors are and ask their advice as to what traffic calming measures are available, reinviting NCC Highways to a site meeting.

IN

District Councillor Update

District Councillor Mr Martyn Hooton reported that he had not had any contact from parishioners since the last meeting.

Planning Applications

New applications since the last meeting:

2024/0151 - Mr S Carver, Pear Tree Farm, Alburgh Road Hempnall - Variation of condition 2 of 2022/1197 - Amendment to garage design – Mr Delf proposed, Mr Hook seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the application be approved.

IN

2024/0204 - Berries Direct Farming Ltd, Spring Farm, Spring Lane, Hempnall - Details of condition 5 and 11 of 2022/1803 - (5) Visibility Sight Line Improvements (11) Landscape Management Plan (L13) – Mr Bates proposed, Mr Workman seconded, and it was unanimously, with the exception of Mr Delf who abstained, agreed that the application be approved.

IN

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Applications approved since the last meeting:

2023/3589 - Mr & Mrs D. P. Scott, Ford End, Bungay Road Hempnall - First floor extension over existing extension

2023/2318 - Mr & Mrs J Fagg, Homeleigh Field Lane Hempnall - Conversion of outbuilding to form annexe.

Applications withdrawn since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications refused since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications outside the parish boundary since the last meeting

There were none.

Millfields Exception Site / Affordable Housing

The Clerk had written to Saffron to indicate that the parish council's preference was to proceed via the Rural Exception Site route and to offer help with publicising the survey. The Clerk had published an article in the March HPC Newsletter (awaiting distribution).

Wheels 4 Less planning issues

The Clerk had sent emails to SNC planning enforcement re the external lighting, mobile homes and number of cars on site and the burger business as instructed. We await SNC action.

It was noted that further lighting had been erected which does not appear to be in accordance with the planning consent given and that the mobile homes remain on the site.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that Mr Hook will review the various planning consents in detail and list all the suspected non-compliance issues and will then send these details to the SNC enforcement officer.

DH

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – for discussion.

Slow Ways national walking network

Mr Bates wished to carry this matter forward.

PB

The Late Queen Elizabeth II commemoration

The Clerk had received the following response from the Lord Chamberlain's office: "*we are not able to make a favourable recommendation to His Majesty the King for your use of "Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field", we would however have no objection to the use of "Queen Elizabeth Memorial Playing Field".*

Due to the above and general lack of interest from parishioners, it was agreed to withdraw proposals to rename the playing field.

Road Calming/signage for The Krons & Fairstead Lane

Mr Bates suggested there should be signage warning of the ford across the Krons as it was a foot deep last week. He also requested that signs warning that there were no pavements should be erected along the Krons and Fairsted lane.

Mr Bates proposed, Mr Rose seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk ask NCC Highways for the signage detailed above.

IN

Completion of footpath works for the 20/30 MPH sign on The Street

Mr Bates pointed out that the repair of the pavement had not been completed since the new signpost had been erected, causing difficulty for those with prams and mobility scooters.

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Mr Bates proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk contact NCC to finish the job. IN

Flood management

Mr Hook will represent the parish council on 22 May at the CPRE Flood Management conference.

East end of the village.

Natural flood management actions are in progress via the Environment Agency (“EA”). The Clerk to monitor. IN

West end of the village

Mr Rose said that he had been informed by a parish councillor of Fritton and Morningthorpe that they had recently cleared all their ditches. This, however, results in a greater flow of water into Hempnall, increasing the flood risk. He suggested leaky dams between Hempnall and Fritton should be sought via the Environment Agency.

Mr Hook proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk liaise with Fritton & Morningthorpe parish council with a view to meeting to discuss matters further, with a view to involving the EA later. IN

Broaden Lane

Water from Saxlingham direction runs into the Allen’s ditch ending up in a small pit leading into a culvert at the corner of the field just before the houses on Broaden Lane at the entrance in to Hempnall. Recently it appeared that the culvert was blocked as the water did not appear to be moving when the pit was full. Mr Hook proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should raise a concern with AWA to investigate. Mr Rose to inspect the area first and report to the Clerk. HR/IN

Eastern boundary of Old Market Way

Mr Workman reported that the bank of the ditch at the edge of the field was much higher on the field side of the ditch than on the housing side. There is no room to build up the ditch bank on the housing side. It seemed the solution was to dig the ditch deeper. Mr Bates proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk to write to Mr Allen to ask his advice for a solution. IN

The village sign area / raising the river bank

Councillors considered the initial response from the EA. Mr Bates proposed, Mr Workman seconded, and it was unanimously agreed to keep a watching brief on the area following the flood management work at the east end of the village as this should slow water flow down, thus reducing the likelihood of breaching the riverbank in this area. The Clerk to inform Mr Rust. IN

Garden flooding at the rear of Connaught Place

A resident had written noting the increase in flooding in this area. After general discussion Mr Bates proposed, Mr Delf seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk respond to inform the resident of the forthcoming work to be undertaken in conjunction with the EA to slow the water flow down, which should result in less flooding in this area. The Clerk to supply a copy of the flood management report. IN

Surface water of B1527 on corner dip near Boyland Hall.

A resident had expressed concern that NCC were not maintaining the gully at this location as the road was still severely flooding. Following the flood the parishioner had dug out the gully himself. Mr Bates proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should ask NCC to attend to this matter and ensure that the gully is regularly maintained. IN

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Mr Delf took the chair.

Support for The Hempnall Trust

Mr Bates made gave a PowerPoint presentation on behalf of The Hempnall Trust. Despite a great deal of work by trustees, employees and volunteers to increase income and reduce costs, the trust was still running at a deficit of circa 8kpa and it had to limit the grants issued to residents of Hempnall.

Messrs Hook and Bates left the room.

Mr Elliott proposed, Mrs Cann seconded, and it was unanimously agreed, with Mr Workman abstaining, that the Clerk write to the trustees stating that in order to consider any form of support towards Mill Centre costs, as stewards of public finance, councillors will need the trustees to supply a business plan demonstrating how they intend to reduce or eliminate the shortfall. This should include exploring how funds received from The Church & Town Estate Property Charity can be enhanced. Mr Elliott will coordinate a list of points to be addressed in the business plan and pass this to the Clerk to include in the letter to trustees.

RE
IN

Messrs Hook and Bates returned to the room.

Mr Hook retook the chair.

Correspondence from Parishioners

Road closure signs

Mr Shurmer had commented upon poor and misleading signage which had been erected at the roundabout on the A140/B1527 intersection, which said 'road ahead closed', with a detour, pointing to Norwich. The Clerk had responded to Mr Shurmer to state that councillors agreed that road closed signs were often inadequate and misleading, and the parish council had on more than one occasion raised this matter with NCC Highways. It was noted that some signs do now state where the road is closed.

Willow Drive earth mound

A parishioner had copied the Clerk in to a letter to SNC requesting action be taken to have this earth mound removed. It was agreed the Clerk should write to the resident to inform them that GH Allen Farms Ltd, on whose land the mound stands, was due to remove the mound by transporting the soil to other areas of their farm.

IN

Horses using Lower Lane

Mrs Cann reported that horse riders were still using the footpath from the B1527 to the bridleway on Lower Lane. Mr Bates proposed, Mrs Cann seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk ask the NCC PROW officer to erect "No Horses" signs at either end of the footpath.

IN

Village Hall bin removed

Mrs Cann reported that SNC had removed one of the bins making it impossible to sort recyclable items from general waste. She also reported that the village hall committee was addressing this so no further action is required by the parish council.

Zip Line

Sarah Batchellor had reported that the zip line needs loosening up as it did not flow freely or as quickly as those at Stratton or Bracon Ash. In addition, she noted that the steps leading up to the launch platform were slippery when wet and suggested slip proof sleeves be added to the ladder.

Mr Delf proposed, Mrs Cann seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk ask the supplier, NGF to attend to the above under guarantee.

IN

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Unfinished works - Junction of Broaden Lane and Old Market Way

Recently work had been carried out to access the BT box, below ground, by some contractors thought to be connected to GigaClear. Photographs of the area before and after the work demonstrate the mess the area had been left in with a dangerous raised manhole cover and no attempt to repair the damage to the grass, with gravel left lying around.

Mr Elliott proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk write to Gigaclear to point out the above and the general poor quality of the road/pavement surface replacement in Roland Drive and other areas of the village. The contractors should be asked to return and make good.

IN

Free portrait of His Majesty the King

To celebrate the new reign of His Majesty the King, the Cabinet Office announced a government funded voluntary scheme throughout the United Kingdom to allow public authorities to apply for a free, framed portrait. The deadline is 28th March 2024.

Mr Delf proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed with 2 abstentions that the Clerk order a portrait with a view to it being offered to the Village Hall or Mill Centre.

IN

Items for next main meeting

- Parish Meeting
- Letter to landowners to keep footpaths clear across fields

IN

Items for next newsletter

The Clerk to draft and publish, when appropriate, articles on the following:

- Changes to the law re parking on pavements
- Birds nesting and hedge cutting

IN

Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on 19 March 2024 at 7.45pm in the Mill Centre following the parish meeting starting at 7pm.

IN

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 10:23

Signed _____ Date 19/03/2024