

HEMPNALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 19 March 2024 at 7:45pm in the Mill Centre

Present

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

Members of the public present

Mr Barrie Masterson, Mrs Yvonne Davy and Mr Peter Rogers.

Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Alison Thomas, District Councillor Martyn Hooton and Mr Richard Delf.

Declaration of interests

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

Minutes of the previous meeting

Mr Elliott proposed, Mrs Cann seconded, and it was unanimously agreed the minutes of the meeting on 20 February 2024 be approved.

Public Participation

There was none.

County Councillor Update

County Councillor Alison Thomas did not provide a report.

Flood Barriers

The Clerk had circulated initial details of a scheme to supply mobile flood barriers, provided by District Councillor Thomas. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

District Councillor Update

District Councillor Mr Martyn Hooton did not provide a report.

Matters arising from the Parish Meeting

Footpaths

It was agreed that the Clerk publish the footpath table produced by Mr Bates and maps on the parish council website.

IN

Increase in traffic volume and speeds

It was agreed to agenda this for the next parish council meeting with statistical info provided by the Clerk from SAM2 data.

IN

Hempnall Primary School

Hempnall Primary School are to be invited to collaborate on a rewilding scheme if the parish council's efforts to secure land for the project are successful.

DH

Planning Applications

New applications since the last meeting:

There were none.

Applications approved 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.

2024/0096 - Doctor Rosemary Smith, Veterinary Surgery, Broaden Lane Hempnall - Variation of condition 5 of 2021/0060 - original (Leylandi) hedge to removed & replaced with native species hedging.

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Applications withdrawn since the last meeting: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

We await the outcome of the survey. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Mr Hook noted that the wording of the questions on the Saffron questionnaire do not enable the need for more bungalows for senior citizens to be identified.

Mr Hook proposed, Mrs Cann seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk write to Saffron to explain the original intention when Millfields Phase one was built (i.e. the existing developed site) which was to have the same type of properties built in Phase two on the land that is currently the subject of the Saffron survey. The Parish Council considers the provision of more Millfields type bungalows for assisted housing and for senior citizens to be a priority. It was felt that the way the survey was designed may not lead to this need being identified, so Saffron should take this into account.

IN

Wheels 4 Less planning issues

Mr Hook had reviewed the various planning consents in detail and listed all the suspected non-compliance issues in a 7-page letter to SNC enforcement officer. We await a response.

IN

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – completed

Play equipment inspection/maintenance

Mr Delf had replaced the missing brackets.

Dead branches on playing field trees

The dead branches had been removed.

Resumption of rubbish tipping in the meadow on Field Lane

The Clerk had reported this to the Environment Agency who responded as follows: “
I have visited the site in question and taken a look at the waste. It is predominantly green waste with what appears to be a panel from a Horse transport trailer, along with some other household items. Having looked at the location of the waste, there is an internal fence which creates a boundary to the waste, from the rest of the field, which is intact. There are no reports from the landowner complaining of fly tipping. I am of the opinion that the landowner has deposited the waste their themselves, which is not an offence. In these circumstances, I will be taking no further action in this case.”

Football pitch cutting

The Clerk had written to the contractor to instruct him to cut south/north and east/west on alternate visits so as to minimise grass waste clumping and wheel tram lines on the pitch. The contractor had confirmed he would do this, and the Clerk had informed Mr Shurmer.

The village sign area / raising the river bank

The Clerk had written to Mr Rust to inform him that councillors had 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.

Garden flooding at the rear of Connaught Place

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The Clerk had responded 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 and also supplied a copy of the flood management report.

Surface water of B1527 on corner dip near Boyland Hall.

The Clerk had asked NCC regularly maintain the ditch/drainage channels.

Willow Drive earth mound

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

Dog bin – The Greens

Mr Delf had erected this.

Unfinished works - Junction of Broaden Lane and Old Market Way

The Clerk had arranged for the works to be completed.

GigaClear

The Clerk had contacted GigaClear resulting in restoration of the area on Broaden Lane and other areas of road in the village being marked up for restoration.

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – awaiting others

Nobbs Lane Spur

Further forms are required to be completed. Mr Hook will co-ordinate ASAP. Names of users are being collated. It was noted that the path is already shown on the Sustrans cycle map.

DH

Removal of footpath 24 kissing gate

Frances Selway the Countryside Access Officer is liaising with the landowner. The Clerk last chased 16/02/24, to monitor.

IN

B1527 Declassification

This can't be considered until after the result of the safety audit being carried out funded by County Councillor Thomas. The Clerk last chased 16/02/24, to monitor.

IN

Caravan encampment at Spring Wood

The SNC planning enforcement officer had visited the site and is awaiting more information from the owners. The Clerk last chased 16/02/24, to monitor.

IN

On 06/07/23 Andy Baines said “A *further joint visit will be carried for Springwood and Lundy Green. I was hoping to do those with my line manager before she left but unfortunately that didn't happen. I will prioritise these and update list accordingly.*”

NCC re parish council undertaking highways work directly

The Clerk had asked NCC if it was possible for the parish council to contract directly for highways work to be undertaken rather than via NCC in order to save costs. A response is awaited. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Roberts Close / The Street footpath safety

The dropped pedestrian crossing point had been completed but we await NCC to paint the H white lines. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Bollard to protect pavement near Willow Drive

The Clerk had written to NCC Highways and awaits a response.

IN

Roadside nature reserves / rewilding verges

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Mr Driver had passed on an email from the NCC Ecologist, Sonia Seaton in which she states she will be visiting this locations as part of her verge visits between May and July this year. Mr Driver assumes she is referring to a verge in Silver Green on the road between Wodehouse Farm and Corner Cottage and one in Bussey's Loke. The Clerk to monitor. IN

Alburgh Rd resurfacing

The poor road condition of the road surface at Alburgh Rd / B1527 junction and Villa Farm entrance, had received temporary repairs recently but the repairs have already disintegrated. NCC said on 11/08/22 that the road is on the schedule for resurfacing, prior to which any additional minor or new defects will be repaired. The Clerk to monitor. IN

Willow Drive 20mph signs

The Clerk had written to NCC Highways to ask them to rectify the 20mph signs on the Willow Drive/B1527 junction. The Clerk to monitor. IN

Villa farm industries

On 30/11/23 Andy Baines, the SNC enforcement officer, said *“By way of update on Villa Farm the only unauthorised use is Harvey Lane Garage. I have written to them to encourage the submission of an application but if this is not received we will then have to consider whether it is expedient to take any further action. Should an application not be received I will update you further what action the council will take.”* The Clerk to Monitor. IN

Traffic calming on B1527 West

The Clerk had left a message for Gary Overland again to ask for a site visit at around 8am asap but had not received a response. The Clerk to chase. IN

Policy for use of chemicals

Mr Bates reported he is running a trial at home to determine the best options. He asked for the item to be deferred until April 2024. PB

Streetlight timers

Mr Hook to speak to his lighting contact with a view to fitting new timers dusk to midnight up to a cost of £500 + VAT. DH

Items o/s with NCC

The Clerk to send the details again to NCC Highways and copy in Mrs Thomas who will liaise with Gary Overland re a site visit. IN

Hempnall Natural Flood Management

The Clerk reported that the Environment Agency had said that work is to be undertaken as part of the Hempnall Natural Flood Management scoping report is due to start on Allen Farms land in Summer 2024 and it is hoped as a result other landowners will follow. The Clerk to monitor. IN

The Clerk had asked Helen George if the pond on Back Lane should be dredged. The Clerk to monitor. IN

Bench on Play area

District Councillor Hooton is in the process of exploring funding for the accessible bench for Hempnall play area and will liaise with the Clerk in due course. IN

Road Calming/signage for The Krons & Fairstead Lane

The Clerk had asked NCC Highways for signage re the ford across the Krons and no pavement signs along the Krons and Fairsted lane. The Clerk to monitor. IN

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

The Clerk had asked NCC Highways to complete the reparation of the pavement which had not been completed since the new signpost had been erected, causing difficulty for those with prams and mobility scooters. The Clerk to monitor. IN

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Flood management

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

DH

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

The Clerk had contacted Fritton & Morningthorpe parish council three times with a view to meeting to discuss matters further, with a view to involving the EA later. Unfortunately they had not replied, the Clerk will persist.

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. Recently it appeared the culvert was blocked as the water did not appear to be moving when the pit was full. The Clerk had raised concern with AWA to investigate.

Eastern boundary of Old Market Way

The Clerk had written and spoken to Mr Allen to ask his advice for a solution to the problem of water flowing into resident’s gardens due to the bank of the ditch at the edge of the field being 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. We await a reply. The Clerk to Monitor.

IN

Zip Line

The Clerk had asked the supplier, NGF to adjust the Zip wire to run smoother and to make the steps non-slip. We await a reply, the Clerk to monitor

IN

Free portrait of His Majesty the King

The Clerk had ordered the free portrait with a view to it being offered to the Village Hall or Mill Centre. We await its delivery.

IN

Matters arising from previous Parish Council meetings – for discussion.

Proposed Woodland on Playingfield / Hedging

Copses

The planting had been completed. The fencing should be erected by the end of this week. The Clerk to monitor.

IN

Mr Hook is liaising with the Geoff Moulton’s family re the dedication and planting ceremony. They wished for a simple plaque with the following wording “This oak tree was planted in memory of Geoff Moulton”. Mr Hook proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk order the plaque.

IN

Hedging in play area.

Mr Workman reported he had been asked for assurances from some users of the play area that there were no sharp bushes in the hedge that had been planted to shield the gas building. Mr Hook explained that the hedge consisted of the same countryside mix of plants as the existing eastern boundary hedge of the playing field that extends southwards from the gas building alongside play equipment up to and beyond the zip line and that this hedging has not caused any problems or adverse comments. Mr Hook reminded the meeting of the research that he and Mr Bates had undertaken in June 2023 in to the benefits of including natural features, including hedging, in play areas. This research involved a study of documents produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), and Play England (whose work is endorsed by HSE, ROSPA and Natural England). Play England is very keen on incorporating nature and new planting in play areas and stresses the importance of encouraging children to be involved in what it calls Nature Play.

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Their research also revealed the following guidance from the Health and Safety Executive:

- “HSE wants to make sure that mistaken health and safety concerns do not create sterile play environments that lack challenge and so prevent children from expanding their learning and stretching their abilities.”
- “HSE fully supports the provision of play for all children in a variety of environments. HSE understands and accepts that this means children will often be exposed to play environments which, whilst well-managed, carry a degree of risk and sometimes potential danger.”

There was much discussion on this matter during which the following points were made:

- The new hedging is outside the fenced off small children’s play area.
- The new hedge is more children friendly than the previous Blackthorn hedge it replaced.
- The former hedge which shielded the gas building had been removed without the consent of the parish council and the aim of the new hedge is simply to restore the shielding that the previous hedge provided.
- The position of the new hedging was agreed at an on site meeting to which all interested parties were invited
- A further stretch of hedging and shrubs to the north of the gas building had also been removed without the approval of the parish council
- The 2 sections of hedging and shrubs that had been removed had been in place for several decades close to the old play area without causing injury to any child

If people still had concerns, Mr Workman was advised to ask them write to the Clerk clearly setting out their views.

Slow Ways national walking network

Mr Bates wished to carry this matter forward.

PB

Football pitch cutting

The Clerk had written to the contractor to instruct him to cut south/north and east/west on alternate visits so as to minimise grass waste clumping and wheel tram lines on the pitch. The contractor had confirmed he would do this and the Clerk had informed Mr Shurmer.

The Clerk had telephoned the contractor 3 times and emailed him twice in the last 2 weeks to try and get confirmation of when they intended to make the first cut of the season but had not received any response. The Clerk was concerned as the grass was now too long for football matches and wished to make contingency plans in case the contractor failed to honour the grass cutting contract. Mr Workman proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should have the power to pursue this matter vigorously and, if necessary, arrange for an alternative contractor to undertake the work up to a maximum of £2500 + VAT.

IN

Parish Partnership 2024/25

The Clerk reported that the application for funding to help cut maintain the PROWs had been successful and we could receive £775 if we spent £1,550. This pays for 3 extra cuts per annum of footpaths 6, 8, 9 and 12. The Clerk and Mr Hook to sign and return the acceptance certificate.

DH/IN

Flood risk maps

The Clerk to chase NCC regarding the inaccurate data on the Environment Agency maps.

IN

Horses using Lower Lane

The Clerk had asked the NCC PROW officer to erect “No Horses” signs at either end of the footpath and was told that PROW would not do so but they gave the parish council authority to erect the signs. The Clerk had purchased 3 such signs.

Mr Turner proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk ask Mr Whiting for a quote to purchase the poles and erect the signs.

IN

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Willow Drive southern hedge

The Clerk reported that FW Properties had responded to SNC to state that the planting on the southern boundary of the site (field side of the fence) would be carried out on the 2nd March 2024. This had not been done as far as councillors were aware, so Mr Hook proposed, Mr Turner seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk write to the enforcement officer of SNC again to ask that he compels FW Properties to comply with the planning application forthwith during the planting season.

IN

Support for The Hempnall Trust

Mr Bates reported that the business plan was being drafted and the matter was carried forward.

PB

Items given directly to Councillors or representatives since the last main meeting were:

Various police crime summaries

Various planning applications

Relevant notices/agenda and minutes

Various SNC Planning Monthly Enforcement Reports

Update re Willow Drive southern boundary hedging.

Update re waste in meadow off Field Lane

Update report - Contact Norwich to Tilbury pylons

Receipt of Greater Norwich Local Plan Inspectors' Report

Norwich City Council Adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan

No further matters were raised from the above.

Items placed directly onto the Parish notice boards were:

Relevant notices/agenda

No further matters were raised from the above.

Website &/or Facebook

The following changes had been made since the last main meeting:

Added relevant notices/agenda and minutes

Added various planning application details

Added various papers to be tabled at meetings

No further matters were raised from the above.

Correspondence from Parishioners

There was none.

Financial Statements

Movements since last meeting

The Clerk presented the financial statement attached to these minutes showing the movements from 17 January to 16 March 2024. The statement was not materially out of line with the annual budget. Mr Bates proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed the statement be accepted.

Installation of owl sculpture on playingfield

Mr Delf has this in hand, and it will be set on a concrete plinth and will be put in when the weather permits.

RD

Churchyard rewilding

Mr Hook reported that Mrs Jill Turner had requested the parish council consider rewilding an area of the closed churchyard recently cleared of undergrowth.

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It was unanimously agreed that Messrs Hook and Rose meet with Mr Turner to explore this further.

DH/HR

Potentially purchasing land for a re-wilding project

The Clerk and Mr Hook will write to local landowners to ask if they would be willing to offer land or consider selling land to the parish council for a re-wilding scheme. Alternatively, the Clerk to ask if they were willing to work in partnership with the parish council to initiate a rewilding project and obtain subsidies for this kind of project. In particular, three areas in the village had been identified to be of interest and would be specifically followed up.

IN/DH

Footpath 8 – From Bussey’s Loke to bridge over ditch

Mr Bates reported that the farmer has cleared the majority of the brambles, but it really needed a hand clearance to the floor and sides, so it could be maintained with a mower. The Clerk had already obtained a quote of £200 for this work as part of the parish partnership scheme.

Mr Rose proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk ask Mr Whiting to liaise with Mr Bates re the cutting of footpath 8 asap at his quoted price.

IN

Footpath 9

Mr Bates reported that with the recent heavy rains it was a mud bath. He asked if it were possible to put some hardcore similar to that near the widened bridge from the widened bridge to the junction & on the junction to Swan Meadows.

Mr Bates proposed, Mr Workman seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk obtain a quote from Mr Whiting to treat the area with hardcore.

IN

Potholes on B1527 + Alburgh Rd junction B1527

Mr Turner reported that he had received numerous complaints from parishioners about the above.

Mr Turner proposed, Mr Elliott seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk to write to NCC Highways to ask them to carry out repairs in these areas and point out the waste of funds for the numerous ineffective pothole “repairs” undertaken in the last 18 months.

IN

Letter to landowners to keep footpaths clear across fields

Mr Rose proposed, Mr Bates seconded, and it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk send the annual letter reminding landowners to keep the footpaths clear.

IN

Items for next newsletter

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

- Law changes re parking on pavements
- Birds nesting and hedge cutting
- Rewilding scheme and has written to landowners
- Link to chairman’s report
- Speedwatch

IN

Items for next main meeting

- Appointment of Chair and other Officers
- Internal Audit
- Annual Accounts to 31/03/13
- Notice of expenses
- Insurance renewal
- Review of Policies and Procedures
- Standing Orders Review
- Risk Assessment Review
- Declaration of Interests Review

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- Action Plan IN
- Information Audit

Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council planning meeting will take place on 16 April 2024 at 7.00pm in the Mill Centre and the next main meeting on 21 May 2024 at the Mill Centre at 7:00pm. IN

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 21:23

Signed _____ Date 16/04/2024

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Transactions to 16/03/2024

Current Account

(Payments)/Receipts since last meeting:		£
01/02/2024	David Hook - ink	(7.54)
01/02/2024	David Hook - mileage re trees	(12.15)
01/02/2024	VFM - payroll and accounting	(42.56)
05/02/2024	NSIB Interest	30.49
17/02/2024	NPower - streetlight power	(40.27)
10/02/2024	Lucy Hanner - painting playpark	(400.00)
13/02/2024	Hempnall Group - parish Mag	(60.00)
00/01/1900	Delfs - brackets on MUGA	(75.34)
18/03/2024	UK2 - web domain	(17.63)
29/02/2024	Ian Nelson Salary	(434.46)
29/02/2024	Ian Nelson use of home as office	(30.00)
29/02/2024	Ian Nelson broadband	(4.00)
01/03/2024	VFM - payroll and accounting	(42.56)
06/03/2024	Hempnall Mill - room hire	(52.50)
19/03/2024	NPower - streetlight power	(34.78)
05/03/2024	NSIB Interest	28.52
		<u>(1,194.78)</u>
Closing Balance		<u>488.83</u>

Business Premium Account

(Payments)/Receipts since last meeting:		£
04/03/2024	Barclays Int	335.56
		<u>335.56</u>
Closing Balance		<u>89,636.08</u>