

Rockland St Mary with Hellington Parish Council

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4th October at 7.30pm in The Parish Room,
Rockland St Mary**

(Subject to amendment until signed by the Chair at the next meeting)

Parish Councillors present	Janet Rogers (Chair), Joanne Norris (Vice Chair), John Sayles, Paul Francis, Juliette Harkin, Anthony Wright, Jayme Forbes
County Councillor	None
District Councillor	None
Also in attendance	Charlotte Rust – Parish Clerk and Steve Gildersleeve – Caretaker
Members of the public (MOP)	Four (Two of whom were co-opted onto the Parish Council)

23.64 Welcome from the Vice Chair.

Vice Chair, Cllr J Rogers welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23.65 To receive and approve apologies for absence.

District Councillor Vic Thomson sent his apologies.

23.66 To appoint a Chair and Vice Chair (if appropriate).

Cllr J Harkin proposed to appoint Cllr J Rogers as Chair, this was seconded by Cllr J Sayles. All approved.
Cllr J Rogers proposed to appoint Cllr J Norris as Vice Chair, this was seconded by Cllr P Francis. All approved.

23.67 To receive signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Clerk received the signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms from the newly appointed Chair and Vice Chair.

23.68 To consider the co-option of a new councillor(s) to fill vacancies.

Cllr J Rogers read the application received from Anthony Wright and asked Jayme Forbes to provide information of his background. Both applicants were co-opted.

23.69 To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensation. None

23.70 To approve minutes of Parish meeting of 6th September 2023.

Cllr P Francis proposed Cllr J Rogers signed the approved minutes, this was seconded by Cllr J Harkin. All agreed.

23.71 Matters arising from September's meeting:

23.71.01 Parish Council website.

The Parish Council's existing website provider is waiving the monthly fee until April 2024. The Parish Council will decide who its website provider will be after April 2024 over the coming months.

23.71.02 Spare defibrillator pads.

The Clerk had ordered these and passed them on to the Caretaker.

23.71.03 Maintenance of public footpaths on farming land.

Cllr P Francis has been chasing and is waiting for a definitive answer on who's responsibility it is.

23.71.04 Low Common flooding.

The Clerk has chased this and is waiting for a response.

23.71.05 SAM2/Speed watch.

The Clerk updated the Parish Council that no expressions of interest had been received. The Clerk will put out another request. Cllr J Forbes volunteered to download the data from the SAM2 and forward it to the Clerk. The Clerk will provide details on how to do this.

23.71.06 Reflective posts.

Cllr V Thomson is looking into this, and the Clerk is to obtain updated prices.

23.72 Reports from:

23.72.01 District Councillor, Cllr Vic Thomson.

Cllr V Thomson full report is available on the Parish Council website.

23.72.02 County Councillor, Cllr Kay Mason-Billig. None.

23.72.03 Parish Clerk.

The Clerk provided her report:

- Dog bins upped to nine to include the one at Green Lane Playing Field.
- VAT claim for July – September 2023 submitted totalling three hundred and ten pounds and thirty-six pence.
- Minutes posting – Minutes are to be posted within two weeks of the Parish Council meeting. Cllr J Rogers and Cllr P Francis will post the minutes on the noticeboards.
- Audit – The Clerk contacted the auditor who completed the Parish Council's 2022/23 audit, and confirmed costs of £16 an hour, approx. £65-£75 in total. The Clerk is to book the auditor.
- Wherrymans way overgrown – This had been cut back.
- Parking on pavements email – The Clerk is to compose a response for the Councillors to approve.
- Bramerton Clerk email – The Clerk is to compose a response for the Councillors to approve.
- Play area inspection – The Clerk contacted the gentleman who completed the play area inspection last year and confirmed costs are £105 plus VAT. The Clerk is to book the inspection.

23.72.03.01 Missed pothole on The Street.

The Clerk has contacted Highways and works are planned.

23.72.03.02 Renewal of lease for the UK power substation.

The Clerk contacted UK Power and has been given a contact number to chase.

23.72.04 Green Lane Playing Field.

No update. The decision was taken to remove this item from the agenda as the Caretaker provided an update if there are any issues.

23.72.05 Footpaths.

Cllr P Francis volunteered to take responsibility for this.

23.72.06 Cllr J Harkin – Environmental and Wildlife matters.

Hedgehog protection – let's champion our hedgehogs in the village! Many of you sad to see so many killed on our roads. Provide safe havens for our prickly friends as they prepare to hibernate this winter. You can find out more at:

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/hedgehogs/garden>

Did you know that the Royal Horticultural Society has announced its #RHSBigFoodShare. Organise your own recipe or harvest swap, donate to local food organisations, share recipes and advice. Find out more at www.rhs.org.uk and download the toolkit which includes poster and menu templates and practical help and support.

Please contact Juliette.harkin@rocklandstmarywithhellington-pc.gov.uk if you have any ideas of what we can do in the village to help wildlife and respond to climate change.

23.72.07 Cllr J Sayles and Steven Gildersleeve (SG), Caretaker – Blackhorse Dyke and Staithe Car Parks, defibrillators.

The Caretaker informed the Parish Council there has been overnight parking at the Staithe Car Park. The Clerk is to obtain a price for a larger sign to be added.

23.72.07.01 Blackhorse Dyke Pond Clearance.

Cllrs P Francis, J Norris and J Sayles and Steve Gildersleeve are to discuss works required for the pond clearance and update the Parish Council at November's meeting.

23.72.08 Cllr J Rogers – Bird Hide Working Group.

Cllr J Rogers read her report:

The group had a site meeting on 28 September 2023 with a representative of the Broads Authority to discuss the possibility of a grant application.

The representative was very enthusiastic about the project. The grants can be up to eighty percent of the total cost of the project. However, as the land is owned by the RSPB, they would be required to make the application. Unfortunately, the RSPB did not attend the meeting.

The group viewed the hide which now has a hole in the side and in the roof, and the signage has been ripped off. Teenagers were seen on the roof over the summer. It is now becoming dangerous and needs to be removed before there is an accident.

Action: The BHWG will report the condition to the RSPB.

The group moved on to the corner of the broad and short dike to consider if an open hide would be a better option. The accessible path ends just before the seat and could easily be extended to the corner. This option may be a cheaper alternative as the hide may not need to be piled. Planning applications would need to be approved which would add to the cost. The lack of the RSPB's presence is hampering progress.

Action: The BHWG will write to the RSPB to voice disappointment that they did not attend the meeting.

While the meeting took place nine people used the footpath. Birds spotted were Hobby, Marsh Harrier, Kingfisher as well as gulls, swans, grebes, and cormorants.

23.73 Adjournment for Public Participation (15 minutes allowed for). This provides an opportunity for members of the public to raise questions about and comment on items on the agenda before the Council make decisions.

A parishioner asked about the change of day of the Parish Council meetings. The Parish Council previously met on the second Wednesday of every month but agreed to change to the first Wednesday of every month with the hope that the County Councillor would join the Parish Meetings. The Parish Council agreed to keep the meetings on the first Wednesday of the month.

23.74 Correspondence:

23.74.01 Overgrown hedges.

The Parish Council has no power to force householders/landowners to maintain hedges/shrubs on their boundaries. That responsibility lies with Norfolk County Council (NCC) Highways Department. Householders do have a responsibility to ensure hedges/shrubs do not encroach footpaths. The first step should always be for the parishioner to approach the householder and explain the problem. If the Parish Council is contacted a polite letter will be sent asking the householder to comply with the request. However, the complainant should consider contacting NCC Highways if the problem persists.

23.74.02 Parking on the footpaths.

Problems with vehicles parking on pavements can be an issue in the village. If a contractor's vehicle is causing an obstruction, the contractor should be approached not the householder. If the situation persists then vehicle parked on footpaths can be reported to the Enforcement Officer South Norfolk District Council Telephone: 01508 533701.

Nationally the Guide Dogs Association is campaigning for parking on footpaths to be made illegal. Which if successful will make it a matter for the Police to enforce. Currently the Police can only act in respect of obstructions on footpaths e.g. Skips, parking on the zig zag lines by crossings etc – more information is available on the [Norfolk Constabulary website](#).

23.74.03 Property auction. The property has been sold.

23.75 Policies:

23.75.01 Policies overview.

The Clerk is to provide Internal Control and Lone Home Worker policies for approval at November's meeting, as these will complete the Parish Council's mandatory policies.

23.76 Finance:

23.76.01 To note the bank balance.

Bank balance - £20,122.78

Bird Hide - £3,457.22

23.76.02 To note any receipts.

TO NOTE INCOME						
Salvation Army	01.09.23	July	BACS	£31.50	£0.00	R13
Salvation Army	26.09.23	August	BACS	£38.43	£0.00	R14
SNDC	29.09.23	Precept 2	BACS	£7,300.00	£0.00	R15

23.76.03 To note any grants. None.

23.76.04 To approve any payments of invoices and other expenses received since last meeting.

23.76.04.01 See Payment Schedule.

Cllr J Norris proposed Cllr J Rogers sign the approved payments, this was seconded by Cllr P Francis. All agreed.

FOR APPROVAL						
	DATE	EXPENDITURE	PAYMENT METHOD	TOTAL	VAT	P/R NO
SNDC	25.09.23	9th dog bin - pro rata 23/24	BACS	£83.76	£13.96	
S.Gildersleeve	25.09.23	September invoice	BACS	£388.50	£0.00	
C. Rust	05.10.23	Clerk Oct Expenses	BACS	£18.64	£0.00	
TO NOTE PAYMENTS MADE OUTSIDE MEETINGS						
Defib4Life	18.09.23	Spare defib pads	DC	£66.00	£11.00	P35
Microsoft	18.09.23	365 subscription	DC	£79.99	£13.33	P36
C.Rust	30.10.23	Clerk Oct Salary & WFH	SO	£395.88	£0.00	

23.77 To discuss items to add to the agenda for next Parish Council meeting. Reserves Budget Policies Training – The Clerk will book training for the newly co-opted Councillors.

23.78 Parishioners final word.

It was asked if the grit bins are topped up as we are coming in to winter, which they are. The Clerk is to update the Emergency Plan to amend who is responsible for checking each grit bin and on vulnerable residents. The Clerk is to obtain costs for another grit bin to be put in at Blackhorse Dyke Car Park.

23.79 To confirm next meeting on Wednesday 1st November at 7.30pm at The Parish Room, Rockland St Mary. Confirmed.

23.80 Resolution to exclude members of the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

23.81 To discuss a confidential item: Contractor's agreement.

Councillors agreed a revised agreement to be provided to the Caretaker.