



ROCKLAND ST MARY WITH HELLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 13th July 2022 at 7.30 pm

Public Participation and reports of County and District Councillors

There was no public participation at this point.

Present: Councillors: Kate Bevington (Chair); Paul Francis, Mike Hayward, Joanne Norris. Nikki Stone, Jack Trutch. E. Green (Parish Clerk).

The Village Caretaker and five parishioners attended.

District Councillor Vic Thomson presented his report which included information on the following:

Orders for trees – are still available as are trees from the Million Tree initiative

Love Your Local encourages people to spend £5 weekly in local businesses which raises £1million monthly for the local economy

SNDC new premises open at the Business Park by 2023 bringing all staff together in one place

Maps have been issues on nutrient neutrality relating to building planning restrictions

Various grants are available to community groups via SNDC including the community infrastructure fund

Electric Vehicle Charging Points expressions of interest have been requested of Councils

Fibre broadband installation is awaiting the final procurement from government for bigger exchanges before the roll out to smaller villages

SNDC has proposed making a Public Space Protection Order regarding dog -fouling which Councils may respond to.

As the District Councillor had to attend another meeting the Chair asked Councillors if they would permit an alteration to the order of the agenda to enable Vic to share his ideas regarding possible ways forward for funding a new bird hide. Councillors agreed. The Chair gave a brief background to the demise of the bird hide and Councillor Norris (Councillor link member on the Rockland Bird Hide Action Group) provided an update to Councillors following a recent meeting of the RBH Group with Tim Strudwick (and Naomi Charles Rural Surveyor) of the RSPB. The RSPB had put forward 3 options: a) to offer to lease the ground for example at 25 years for a peppercorn rent, b) for the Group to raise funds and gift a completed hide to the RSPB or c) for the Group to raise funds which are given to the RSPB to rebuild the hide completed under a works licence. Councillors commented that these options did not give the Parish Council any control over the bird hide as it would not own the asset. Councillors asked Councillor Norris what quotes had been given for the work. She reported that so far two similar quotes had been received both at around £60K including VAT for the pilings, new hide and walkway with additional costs to include project management and other costs making an approximate total of £100K. Councillors commented that these costs appeared excessively high and asked what contribution the RSPB had offered towards the project. Councillor Norris said no figure or percentage had been given- only an indication that that the RSPB would offer some funding.

District Councillor Thomson said that having a bird hide could be a wonderful community asset. He said that there are a number of community/eco grants available which he would explore. He suggested another option to consider which was that if the Group was able to raise funds (to replace and install the hide) and if the Parish Council was able to buy the hide from the RSPB for a nominal sum e.g. £1, the hide could then become a Parish Council asset. Councillors were amenable to the group exploring this option but pointed out that there would still be major issues to consider such as maintenance and insurance which would have financial implications for the Council. The Chair commented that if the Parish Council was to agree to hold funds for the group it would also involve the need for annual external audits which would incur additional costs to the Council. The Chair suggested that the Group would need to arrange a meeting (to include District Councillor Vic Thomson) to explore Vic's suggested option with Tim Strudwick (RSPB) and to ask further questions about costings. She thought it might be useful to the Group if Councillor Trutch would agree to attend that meeting as he has knowledge of building and construction work. Councillor Trutch said he was willing to attend. Councillors indicated their agreement that the Action Group would need to meet with the RSPB to discuss Vic's suggested option. Action Point: **Councillor Norris will liaise between the Action Group, District Councillor Vic Thomson, Councillor Trutch and Tim Strudwick to arrange a meeting.** The Chair suggested for consistency of message and communication that Councillor Norris join the Rockland Broad Management Group which is attended by Tim Strudwick. Councillors agreed with this suggestion and Councillor Norris agreed to attend the twice -yearly meetings (March and October).

District Councillor Thomson then left the meeting and the agenda resumed.

1. **Apologies:** received from Councillor John Sayles
2. **Declaration of interest:** Councillor Trutch declared an interest in item 5.2
3. **Confirmation of Minutes of meeting May 11th 2022 and 8th June 2022**

Minutes of the meeting May 11th 2022 were accepted with some amendments to include information on the co-option of two new Councillors and were signed by the Chair.

Minutes of June 8th 2022 were discussed and accepted with a small amendment and signed by the Chair.
4. **Matters arising from the previous minutes**
 - 4.1 Appointment of two new Councillors- done via the amendment to the minutes of May 11th 2022.
 - 4.2 Low Common, Hellington flood alleviation – Councillors Hayward and Francis updated the meeting on progress. A meeting had taken place between landowners, County Councillor Mason-Billig, Highways Officer Gary Overland and the two Councillors. It was suggested that Grips be installed from the roadside into the field and that the placings for these have been marked out on the road surface. One landowner has indicated that he is not happy to have multiple Grips but would accept three. **Action points: Councillor Francis agreed to ask the landowner to email the Clerk to confirm his permission for Grips to be installed. The Clerk will contact Mr Mack the other landowner to inform him that Highways will undertake the work to re-instate the ditch to alleviate flooding.**
 - 4.3 SAM2 post and finger post- the finger post is on -going. Gary Overland had said he would look at the siting of the SAM2 post. **Action the Clerk will contact him to ask if he has done this.**
 - 4.4 Cast iron post restoration update- Clerk is waiting for a reply from District Councillor Mason- Billig.
 - 4.5 Bird Hide at Rockland Broad- update and next steps – refer to the earlier section of minutes.
 - 4.6 White's waste paper bank Black Horse Dyke- clerk reported the administration is ongoing.
 - 4.7 Rangers' Tasks – there has been no response yet to suggestions for work to be done.
 - 4.8 Plaques for Memorial benches at Blackhorse Dyke- Councillor Stone reported that the two plaques including the one to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee have been fitted. Three requests have been received for memorial plaques so far and the Clerk has written to applicants asking for confirmation by a deadline date.
 - 4.9 Post box at Hellington- The clerk has had a response that the site has been inspected and a replacement may be installed in 3-4 months' time.
 - 4.10 New batteries for SAM2 monitor – Councillor Hayward reported that new batteries had been installed. **Action Point: The Clerk will contact Westcotec regarding the disposal of old batteries.**
 - 4.11 Dog fouling- the Clerk had placed two notices about dog-fouling on the parish Council website.
 - 4.12 Green Lane - road status update: The clerk had contacted District Councillor Thomson who had informed him that the relevant contact was absent and that he would follow this up.
 - 4.13 Poor's Trust appointee. The Chair informed Councillors that the recent appointee was no longer able to take up the role and that the Chair of the Poor's Trust had requested that Councillors give their approval to ratify the appointment of Adam Peel as their new Trustee. Councillors agreed to ratify the appointment. **Noted**
5. **Planning matters**
 - 5.1 Current applications:- there were no new applications
 - 5.2 Reports on decisions:- one decision was approved- for the erection of a Gazebo at a property in Bee Orchid Way.
6. **Finance matters:**
 - 6.1 Orders for payment: Cheque payment £36 for Parish Room rental; £208.20 for replacement SAM2 batteries; training course for new Councillor £46.40; purchase of new Parish Council Manual £141.80; Village Caretaker invoice for work: £372.75 and payment to Clerk for purchase of goal-keeping net spikes of £179.84. Proposed for payment by Councillor Hayward and seconded by Councillor Norris. Agreed. Paid via BACS.

Receipts: £29.80 from Salvation Army for clothes bank
 - 6.2 Current balance of end of year accounts – the Clerk will email copies to Councillors as these were not available for the meeting.
 - 6.3 Norfolk Community Foundation grant- the Chair explained the history of the grant applied for and received by the Parish Council to support parishioners as needed during the Covid lockdown crisis. The Parish Council had used some of the grant for this and had agreed to set aside the unspent sum in case a further crisis required similar support but this had not been necessary. The intention had been to refund the grant to the Foundation at some point. The Chair suggested that even though Covid infections were increasing the situation was unlikely to invoke a lockdown and that therefore the Parish Council should return the remaining funds of £698.80 to the Foundation. Councillors agreed to the refund. **The Clerk will arrange this through BACS.**
 - 6.4 **CIL funding proposals-** Councillor Bevington had sent Councillors information about adult outdoor gym equipment to consider for Green Lane. Following discussion Councillors agreed that a more suitable item would be the provision of an outdoor table tennis table. Councillor Stone agreed to

explore pricing. Councillor Norris suggested a bench and planter for Hellington triangle subsidised by some of Rockland's CIL funds and Councillor Stone said she would explore pricing for this. The grass on this area would need to be cut and the village caretaker offered to include it in his grass-cutting work. Councillors agreed to this if a bench is installed. Councillor Norris had previously contacted the Parish Council with an update from the Action Group to ask if a contribution from CIL money could be used towards funding a new bird hide. The Chair asked Councillors if the proposed ideas for bench and outdoor table tennis are sanctioned from CIL funds, whether Councillors would consent to any remaining CIL funding to be set aside towards the funding of the Bird Hide. Councillors agreed to this.

7. **Correspondence**

7.1 Feedback on previous correspondence- none other than items already noted in these minutes.

7.2 Items sent electronically to Councillors- apart from items noted in the minutes above the additional information received is that the parish room roof will be repaired. The 20 mph Zone for Bee Orchid Way is confirmed. A parishioner had sent information to the Parish Council about peacocks and noise nuisance.

8. **Review of following policies**

8.1 Bullying and Harassment: Councillor Norris suggested a slight amendment which Councillors agreed.

8.2 Data Protection (committee terms of reference) it was agreed to amend the wording regarding the timing of appointment to the group. **Action: The Clerk will put the appointment of the committee on the September agenda.**

8.3 Health and Safety Policy – there was discussion regarding contractor risk assessments (which are always received by this Council prior to engagement) and a query from Councillor Norris about the section on Lone Working in relation to the village caretaker. Councillor Hayward confirmed that Mr Gildersleeve is contracted to do work for the Parish Council but is not an employee and this section does not apply to him. The Caretaker has personal and business insurance and all relevant qualifications and training as per the wording of the policy and Councillors Hayward and Bevington confirmed they had seen these. There was also discussion about the requirements of portable appliance testing. Councillor Hayward confirmed that the Parish Council's systems for testing and checking were compliant and that regular risk assessments of all Council assets took place with Councillors receiving updated excel sheets as and when these were done. Councillors agreed that the Policy stand with amendments to the numbering.

Action: All three Policies dates to be updated with July 2022 date.

9. **Reports from Councillors**

As agreed at the May meeting Councillors were asked to confirm which areas of responsibility they would adopt for the coming year. Cllr Hayward- Blackhorse Dyke and Staithe car park, defibrillators, SAM2 data and general Health and Safety issues; Cllr Stone- Green Lane Playing Field and link with R St Mary School, Cllr Bevington- Footpaths, Cllr Norris- Environment and Wildlife.

9.1 Black Horse Dyke car park- Councillor Hayward noted the willow tree appeared dead and it was agreed that the Village Caretaker would speak to the tree warden volunteer Michael Brett to gain his opinion. A parishioner informed Councillors that usually willows die from sewage spillage or pollution. Councillor Hayward will liaise with Councillor Trutch regarding purchasing gravel to top up the surface.

9.2 Footpath report: Councillor Bevington had nothing to report. A parishioner noted that the latch at a footpath gate off The Street was loose. The Village Caretaker will look at it.

9.3 Rockland St Mary Primary School: Councillor Stone said the school will be recruiting new nursery staff for September.

9.4 Green Lane playing field: Councillor Stone will get a quote for a new slide. The Village Caretaker reported that there are frequent visits from the new Community Police Officer and very little anti-social behaviour.

9.5 Environment and wildlife: Councillor Norris had nothing to report

9.6 Councillor Hayward asked that new pads be bought for the Defibrillators. **The Clerk will email Councillors for approval to purchase when he has checked prices.**

10. **Parish Council Website review:** as the meeting was out of time it was agreed to defer this item until September.

11. **Any other business:** there was no other business.

12. **Parishioners Final Word:** a parishioner asked the Chair to confirm that items regarding the bird hide and CIL would be noted in the minutes.

Ernie Green, Clerk to the Council

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 14th September 2022