

Minutes of the Billingford Parish Council meeting held on
Tuesday September 3rd 2019 at 7.30 p.m. at Billingford Village Hall

Present:- Cllr Arthur Lake, Cllr Michel Davies (Chairman), Cllr Val Wilson and
Cllr Mary Reeve

Other Members Present: - 6 members of the Public

Matters raised under time allocated to the Public.

Cllr Davies reported the sad death of Mrs Alison Grant and said he had passed on condolences from the Parish Council. There was some discussion regarding poor visibility when driving through the village, due to hedges overgrown. Norfolk County Council Highways will be asked to cut back the hedge.

1. Welcome and to consider accepting apologies for absence

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. There were apologies for absence received from Cllr Philippa Payne and these were accepted. Dist. Cllr Gordon Bambridge had also sent apologies.

2. To Co-opt onto the Parish Council Mr Roger Thorneley

Cllr Lake expressed concern that there may be residents who did actually live in the village who might wish to join the Parish Council. He raised this concern as Mr Thorneley does not actually live in Billingford. Cllr Lake was assured that notices regarding the vacancy had been displayed. Cllr Reeve proposed that Mr Roger Thorneley be co-opted onto the Parish Council seconded by Cllr Wilson. Three Councillors voted in favour of this proposal and one against, so it was carried. Mr Thorneley outlined his involvement with Worthing Parish Meeting, which included working with Billingford residents to reinstate public access to Billingford Common and he is Chairman of the local surgery patient participation group.

3. To receive signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office from Mr Thorneley

The Clerk received the signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office from Mr Thorneley and he joined the meeting.

4. To declare any Interests re items on the agenda

There were no Interests declared.

5. To confirm minutes of the meetings held on 14th May 2019

The minutes had been circulated. Cllr Lake requested an amendment be made to item 16 regarding the playing field situation and then he proposed that the minutes of 14th May be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Davies and carried, so the Chairman signed them as a true copy.

6. To discuss any matters from the minutes of 14th May (not on the agenda)

There were no matters arising.

7. Questions for the Parish Councillors

Cllr Lake asked Cllr Davies where the boundary is between Billingford and Upper Billingford because he once claimed to live in the latter, but he denied any knowledge of ever saying this.

Cllr Lake asked Cllr Davies about the fact that at an earlier meeting, Cllr Davies spoke under the Public Participation Period, and he proposed that the Parish Council consider replacement with a Village Meeting as the Billingford Parish population is less than that requiring a Parish Council. He then left the meeting. It is not within any individual's power to close a Parish Council and the Parish Council should continue as long as it gives residents and tax payers value for money.

There was some discussion regarding the Common Land in Billingford and Cllr Davies stated that Norfolk County Council deals with this subject but they cannot mark out the land. In answer to a matter raised by a member of the public at the May meeting, Cllr Davies had contacted Norfolk County Council, who maintain and keep records of common land. They state they have no power to mark them on the site. The map location of Billingford Common was shown to the meeting and is attached.

8. Election of Trustees for the Fuel Allotment Charity

Cllr Reeve proposed that the following people be elected as Trustees:-

Mrs Mary Croft, Mr Colin Mackay, Mr Richard Oak and Mr Ian Warren

Cllr Davies seconded this proposal. Cllr Lake then counter proposed that the existing Trustees are re-appointed at the moment and the residents of the village are asked who they want have as Trustees of the Charity. There was no seconder for this proposal because the previous Trustees have served their term and cannot be re-appointed according to Charity rules. So the Chairman asked the Parish Council to vote on the first proposal. Cllr Wilson voted in favour of it, Cllr Lake voted against it, so the first proposal was carried.

9. To discuss Correspondence received

There was no correspondence received that needed in-depth discussion. Several letters of interest will be placed on the notice board. The Clerk had received some information from a company asking if they could be allowed to try to obtain a lower electricity price for the Parish Council. The Chairman agreed to allow them to investigate on behalf of the Parish Council, so the Clerk will send them the authorisation letter.

10. To discuss any Planning Issues

3P/2019/0471/O Holl Lane, Development of 9 2 bedroom bungalows for persons over 55 years of age, planning permission Refused.

3P/2019/0427/HOU 2 Festival Road, extension & conversion to detached garage for ancillary accommodation, planning permission Received.

11. To discuss Highways Matters

The Clerk was asked to contact the Highways Department and ask them to come to the village and deal with some hedge obstruction. When exiting Bintree Road onto the B1145 visibility to the right is being obstructed by overgrown hedges. She was also asked to enquire from Highways what impact on traffic the Northern Relief Road will have in the future.

12. To receive a report from the Community Speedwatch organisers

Some more work will be done possibly in October, Cllr Davies asked Cllr Wilson to compile a list of dates and these dates can be given to any volunteers.

13. To receive a report from the SAM2 speed sign organisers

A meeting with some other Parish Councils of villages along the B1145 had taken place at the home of Cllr Payne. It was noted that speed has definitely increased and the new Northern Route probably contributed to the increase in traffic. A joint list of traffic problems and suggestions was drawn up and sent to all other relevant Councils to make a combined approach to the County and the Police. Cllr Reeve thought some more training would be useful as the training originally given was not very intense.

Cllr Reeve commented that she had seen roads on the outskirts of Norwich with a speed limit of only 20 m.p.h. and felt it was unfair that Billingford was unable to achieve this. Cllr Reeve and Cllr Payne had spoken to people in authority in the past about this problem and were told to be persistent.

14. To discuss the need for SAM2 sign volunteers

There is still a need for more volunteers and the problem is ongoing.

15. To authorize financial payments

Cllr Thorneley proposed the following payments be made, seconded by Cllr Davies and carried.
Clerk's net salary for June/September £707.40 HMRC tax for June/September £124.60
Clerk's expenses March/September £114.26 Breckland Council Uncontested election fee £75.00
Wix £86.40 and ££8.25

16. To receive an update on the playing field situation

There is nothing specific to report about the playing field at the moment.

17. To discuss the idea of purchasing Bird Spikes for the playing field equipment

The Parish Council had received a quote from the play equipment installers for Bird Spikes and it was for £295.80 inclusive of V.A.T. The situation was discussed and it was decided not to proceed with the purchase at the moment, basically because of the high price. It is hoped that families will deal with the bird mess themselves and the problem will be discussed again at a later date if it is felt it is necessary to do so.

18. To discuss the playing field equipment inspection situation

This will take place next year.

19. To receive items for the next agenda

Report on the progress regarding the involvement with other Parish Councillors and the SAM2 sign

20. To confirm date and time of next meeting

The date of the next Parish Council meeting will take place on Tuesday 26th November 2019 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending. The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

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