

Minutes of the Billingford Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 1st August at 7.00 p.m. in Billingford Village Hall

Councillors Present:- Cllr A Lake, Cllr K Crudginton, Cllr S Wilson and Cllr A Cutcher

Other Members Present:- 1 Elector and Mrs G Hubbard, Clerk

1. Welcome and to consider accepting apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed those present. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr P Richardson, due to work commitments and these were accepted.

2. To declare any Interests re items on the Agenda.

There were no items declared.

3. To confirm and accept the minutes of the Annual meeting held on 3rd June 2024.

The minutes had been circulated. Cllr Cutcher proposed that the minutes of the meeting be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Crudginton, and carried. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the minutes.

4. To discuss any matters arising from the minutes of June (not on the Agenda).

Regarding the request from Mr Freeman, M.P. to visit the Parish Council, he had been informed that the Parish Council would be happy to have this meeting but nothing has been arranged. So the Clerk will contact him, now that the elections have finished, and see if a meeting can be set up.

Matters Raised by The Public.

A resident reported that coming from North Elmham into the village the sign saying Billingford and the 30 m.p.h. sign cannot be seen because they are covered by overgrowth. The Clerk will inform Highways of this.

5. To discuss any necessary correspondence received.

Cllr Cutcher had sent and received some emails from the Highways Dept. regarding some trees that had become some concern to residents. Trees had been marked with dots, with an expectation these are to be felled. Apparently the environment team were responsible for carrying out the work and reports are being processed, along with land searches to determine necessary owners and then letters will be sent to relevant land owners for action on the trees. If any trees are found to be on council land, then action will be programmed. This will go on the September agenda.

6 To authorise any necessary Financial Payments.

Cllr Cutcher proposed the following financial transactions be authorised for payment, seconded by Cllr Wilson and carried.

Clerk's net salary for June-July £242.36 HMRC tax for June-July £1.00

Clerk's expenses for June-July "£47.10

Gressenhall Parish Council £43.87. A fifth cost of the new SAM2 batteries from Westcotec

7. To discuss the Financial Update and raise any queries.

No one had any questions regarding the document which had been circulated.

8. To receive an update on the bank signatory situation.

Nothing to report on this situation.

9. To discuss any Planning Issues.

3PL/2023/1058/F Change of use of land for the standing of 2 residential static caravans and 2 touring caravans to meet the accommodation needs of a local Gypsy/Traveller family to include ancillary works. Planning Application Refused.

3PL/2022/1208/D land south of Old Bells Farm, Elmham Rd. Reserved matters application for the erection of one two-storey detached dwelling and garage (plot 2) following outline application 3PL/2018/1254/O. Planning permission has been approved.

3PL/2022/0272/D land south of Old Bells Farm, Elmham Road, Reserved matters application for the erection of one two-storey detached dwelling and garage (plot 1) following outline application 3PL/2018/1254/O. Planning permission has been approved.

10. Update on the situation regarding the Parish Council's complaint to Breckland Council re the sale of land at Festival Road and the idea of contacting the Ombudsman.

A letter will eventually be sent to the Ombudsman but not for a while. Cllr Crudgington will be compiling the letter as soon as he can.

11. To discuss the Breckland Open Spaces Assessment (Smaller Villages)

Cllr Cutcher stated that he thought the survey should be completed by someone from the Parish Council. He and Cllr Crudgington are going to respond with a view to registering the land at the bottom of Festival Road and the Parish Charity Land.

12. To discuss the Parish Council's response to the Breckland Local Plan Consultation and New Town Option.

Cllr Cutcher has responded regarding the Swanton Morley Robertson Barracks. He gave the rest of the Parish Councillors full comments regarding the rest of the options. We have, in line with CPRE, objected to the idea of removing settlement boundaries. Cllr Crudgington wished for it to be minuted that the Parish Council thanks Cllr Cutcher for all his hard work on this matter.

13. To receive an update regarding the trees to be purchased using the Community grant and to receive information as to whether it has been sent to the Parish Council yet and to discuss the quote from Blackrow Nurseries, if available.

Cllr Cutcher went to Blackrow Nurseries and he now has a quote. Option 1 is the price for the trees, including guards and stakes, 40 – 60 cm tall. The price would be £5.00 each + VAT. He could supply 140 and the cost would be about £825.00.

Option 2 would be for fruit trees. Cllr Cutcher does not know the height, but he could supply 20 of them at £35.00 + VAT. He thought Option 2 is the better choice as these would be more substantial with a better chance of maturing.

It was decided the fruit trees could go along the top of the playing field on Parish land, leaving room for machinery to cut the northern hedge. The Nursery is Plant Healthy Certificated, as required by Breckland District Council.

We are currently not in receipt of the funds but the most recent Parish Council account statement still needs to be viewed.

14. To discuss the Invitation to bid for the Parish Partnership 2025/2026

As Dist. Cllr Bambridge was not present, this will be an item for the September agenda.

15. To receive an update on forthcoming events at the V. Hall and events that have taken place.

No events are planned for the Village Hall and no events have taken place.

16. To receive an update on St. Peter's Church. and the Notice Board.

On 15th September as Harvest Thanksgiving Service will take place in the Church, with refreshments afterwards in the Village Hall.

The notice board has been repaired and there is no cost. Thanks have been given. Two more of the stained-glass windows have been removed and these will be replaced as and when. Discussion is taking place between the Church and Mr & Mrs Smith and progress is being made regarding the west wall. Funding has been granted from the Church Commissioners for the emergency repairs of the South Porch. The Parish Council wished to thank Ginnie Edgecombe for her hard work on this project.

17. To discuss the grass cutting situation in Billingford i.e, the churchyard and playing field.

Inside the churchyard the grass is still cut and the bank outside. This is done voluntarily. Tidying up around the playing field is done sometimes and Cllr Cutcher deals with the Kissing Gate. Up until now the Village Hall has paid for the grass cutting of the playing field. But it has very little money now and is not making any money from lettings. Paying for the grass cutting will diminish their funds even more. The Village Hall has been responsible for the upkeep of the grass cutting on the playing field and it does not fall under the Parish Council's responsibility. Cllr Lake proposed that the Parish Council pays for the grass cutting of the playing field. The cost of the cuts is from £70.00 to £80.00 per cut. Cllr Lake proposed that the money that was put in the budget for the churchyard grass cutting be transferred to the Village Hall to pay for the playing field grass cutting. So far 6 cuts have been done, leaving another 4 to be done. In principle it makes sense to do this, but it will have to be discussed some more, and voted on, in September. The Precept budget document can be viewed at the meeting. Cllr Wilson discussed the need for additional costs for cutting around the children's play equipment.

18. To receive an update on the application success of the Big Lottery application and the new play equipment project.

The Parish Councillors have seen the quote from NGF. Cllr Lake proposed it be accepted, seconded by Cllr Cutcher and carried. Cllr Lake will arrange for a representative from NGF to come to the playing field and he will meet up with him and hopefully another Parish Councillor, to discuss what is needed.

19. To discuss the SAM2 sign and Community Speed Watch (if any reporting available).

The SAM2 sign is in a poor condition. Ther internal battery has failed and the data is lost. Hopefully this situation will be resolved soon.

20. To receive information on any progress on the idea of moving the 30-m.p.h. limit to the other side of the S bends near the Billingford Lakes.

Cllr Wilson reported that the original case has been closed, so another case will have to be opened. He has sent a detailed email to County Councillor Bill Borrett. Norfolk County Council does not think there is a need to move the 30 m.p.h. limit to the other sider of the S bend.

21. To receive an update on the idea of purchasing 2 new grit bins.

No update was available so it will be a September item.

22. To receive items for next agenda.

To discuss refurbishing the Kissing Gate.

To discuss the Invitation to bid for the Parish Partnership 2025/2026

To discuss the proposed tree clearance along the B1145 on the north side of the road and immediately to the west of Bintree Road junction.

Update on the idea of purchasing 2 new grit bins.

23. To set date and time of September Parish Council meeting,

The next meeting will take place on Monday 30th September at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall and the last meeting of 2024 was set for Monday 25th November.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.12 p.m. and thanked everyone for their attendance.

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Chairman

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Date

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Clerk

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Date