

Minutes of the Billingford Parish Council meeting held on Monday 23rd October at 7.00 p.m. in Billingford Village Hall

Councillors Present:- Cllr A Lake, Cllr K Crudgington, Cllr S Wilson, Cllr P Richardson and Cllr A Cutcher

Other Members Present:- Dist. Cllr G Bambridge, 3 Electors and Mrs G Hubbard, Clerk

1. Welcome and to receive apologies for absence for consideration

The Chairman welcomed those present. There were no apologies received.

2. To declare any Interests re items on the Agenda

Cllr Lake declared a Personal Interest in item 13 on the agenda.

3. To confirm and accept the minutes of the meeting held on 9th August 2023

The minutes had been circulated. Cllr Cutcher proposed the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Wilson and carried.

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

There were no matters arising.

Matters Raised by The Public

There were no matters raised by the electors present nor by Cllr Bambridge.

5. To discuss any necessary correspondence received

The Parish Council had written to Philippa Challen regarding her non-attendance at the May meeting and subsequently the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form not being signed, so she was not able to become a Parish Councillor. This situation has caused another vacancy on the Parish Council and the relevant notice will be displayed.

6. To discuss the RoSPA Play Safety Report

Playsafety Ltd carried out an inspection of the play equipment for insurance purposes. The main problem is the slide, which needs some maintenance carried out on it. There is some corrosion which needs to be dealt with. On the small climbing frame there is a low-level risk problem. The company also suggested that some safety matting was laid down. So, there are some medium level risks, not high-level risks. A quote for the necessary work will be sought from NGF Play Ltd who installed the new swing. The Chairman will make some enquiries about the work needed.

7. To authorise any necessary Financial Payments

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

Cllr Cutcher (mileage for training) £17.10 T T Jones Electrical Ltd. £153.78 T D Gardens £85.00

G Hubbard, expenses £58.75 G Hubbard net salary £468.17 HMRC Tax £57.00

8. To discuss the Financial Update and raise any queries

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

9. To receive an update on the bank signatory situation

Cllr Lake will be getting in contact with Barclays Bank soon.

10. To appoint Trustees for the Fuel Allotment Charity

The position of a Trustee lasts for 4 years so the time period has now ended. Cllr Crudgington proposed that Mr Richard Oake, Mr James Dawson, Mrs Carolyn Lake and Mr Andrew Skinn become Trustees for the next 4 years, seconded by Cllr Cutcher and carried. The position will be held for 4 years from the date of this meeting.

11. To receive an update on forthcoming events at the V. Hall and events that have taken place. (A Carol Concert for this year)

Since the last Parish Council meeting, a Table Top Sale has taken place. It was disappointing because there were more sellers than buyers. It had been publicised well. The room was full of sellers but the number of people coming to buy was minimal. There was also the Harvest Festival with refreshments and a Scarecrow Competition. This event was very well attended, and the village hall decorated in autumnal decorations. Produce was donated by various people and was auctioned off raising £234.00. The next event in the Village Hall will be the Quiz Night on December 2nd. A flyer will be created and given to a few people. The Carol Service will take place, similar to last year. It may take place on 21st or 23rd December, but 21st December is more likely. A Working Party will get the Old School House in good shape for the event.

12. To receive an update on St. Peter's Church

Cllr Lake has started cutting the grass. The Church restoration is going through very well. A quote had originally been received for cleaning the inside but the company who had quoted for the work had not been inside the Church to see what needed to be done. Subsequently, it transpires they had grossly underestimated on the costs. A small band of people have been working very hard on this project. A great deal of help has been forthcoming. Another quote from a new company was received and it was between £10,000.00-£20,000.00 for the cleaning. The variance in price reflects whether scaffolding is required. Grants will be sought from the Norfolk Churches Trust to pay for the cleaning. All the windows over time need replacing. An anonymous donation has been received and this will pay for one window to be replaced and another anonymous person has offered to pay for a second window, possibly a third. The cleaning is to be carried out and the Church is applying for grants to help cover the costs. The £10,000, which was donated anonymously to pay for the repair of the wall will continue to remain ring-fenced for this project. Some money from this fund has been spent as a result of the wall issue requiring a tree survey but the fund still stands at £9,202.00. More grants will be applied for and it is hoped that the church might be open within the next 9 months. Birds have now been removed and will no longer be able to get in because the windows, whilst temporarily boarded up, will shortly be more robustly re-boarded/secured and some repaired. The water tank will be moved down to the Old School House, so it can continue collecting water.

13. To receive an update on the New Town Proposal

Cllr Cutcher reported that it is in a second consultation stage. A London based company is being used for this. He attended a meeting on 13th September. The remit is to amplify the consultation process, so it will reach young people. Cllr Bambridge spoke about the New Town project and said that, in his recent campaign, he found no desire for a New Town in the area, nor is he aware of any enthusiasm at Breckland Council either. However, every proposal has to be fully and properly assessed and he feels it is likely that the potential developers will keep trying. Cllr Bambridge and Cllr Borrett are not supporting it. Cllr Cutcher gave a very full report of what he heard at the meeting he attended and also the drop-in consultation in Dereham Market Place a month later and was thanked for delivering the report to those present.

14. To discuss any Planning Issues

There were no planning issues to discuss.

15. To receive an update on the land sold behind Festival Road

Cllr Bambridge has not had a reply yet regarding the sale. The person who bought it from Breckland

Council has sold it on to someone else. This matter will be carried forward onto the December agenda.

16. To discuss the Road Narrow Signs for North Elmham Road

The Parish Council have not been invoiced for these yet. There are 4 altogether but the Councillors thought that 3 were in the wrong place.

17. To discuss the SAM2 sign and Community Speed Watch

The SAM2 sign should have been put in Billingford today but there is a problem with it and the Parish that had it previously had the same problem. The Clerk at Gressenhall has spoken to Westcotec, so it is being investigated. At the moment Billingford will not be getting it for a while.

Karen Wilson and Cllr Wilson have now been approved for the Speed Watch team. Prior to August there had been no Speed Watch since much earlier in the year. There were two sessions carried out in August.

18. To receive an update on the Dog Fouling and Fly Tipping Signs and possible siting of them

Currently the Clerk has not received any updates from Breckland Council regarding these, so she will try to find out if there is any update.

19. To discuss an Autumn/Winter Village Litter Pick

The Litter Pick will take place in January or February. A date will be set at the next meeting. Equipment is available from Breckland Council to carry out a litter pick.

20. To discuss the Restricted By Way Sign, which has toppled over

Serco have said they will reinstate this sign. It is at the bottom of Holl Lane.

21. To discuss the hedge down Holl Lane, which has birds' nests in it

The hedge will be cut later, after the berries have gone. There is one on the other side and it may be cut in due course.

22. To receive items for next agenda

To discuss the appointment of a Tree Warden

To discuss the budget and set the precept for 2024-2025

23. To set date and time of next Parish Council meeting.

The next meeting will take place on Monday 18th December at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.50 p.m. and thanked everyone for their attendance.

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Chairman

..... 18-12-2023
Date

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Clerk

..... 18-12-2023
Date