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## BILLINGFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Billingford Parish Council meeting held on  
Tuesday 23rd August 2022 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall

Present:- Cllr M Davies, Cllr A Lake, Cllr R Thorneley, Cllr K Crudginton and  
Cllr M Reeve

Others Present: - 7 members of the Public, Dist. Cllr Gordon Bambridge and Mrs G Hubbard, Clerk

### 1. Welcome and to accept Apologies for Absence

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. There were apologies for absence received from Cllr P Payne and these were accepted.

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

There were no Interests declared.

### 3. To confirm and accept the minutes of the Annual meeting held on May 10<sup>th</sup> 2022

The minutes had been circulated. Cllr Thorneley proposed that the minutes of the meeting be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr Crudginton and carried, so the Chairman signed them as a true record.

### 4. To discuss any matters arising from the minutes of May 10<sup>th</sup> (not on the Agenda)

There were no matters arising.

### 5. To discuss any correspondence received

Donation request from Norfolk Accident Rescue Service. Cllr Davies proposed a £50.00 donation be sent, seconded by Cllr Thorneley and carried.

RoSPA Play Safety – Safety Inspection Report on the Billingford Play Area. As Cllr Lake thought there were a few items that needed addressing, it will be discussed at the next meeting.

### 6. To discuss further the idea of planting 70 more trees

Some trees had already been planted but sadly 6 trees had been stolen. It was possible to obtain more trees through Norfolk County Council because they are making various tree packs available for sale and these can be placed in public places and individual people can buy them. Some wildlife packs could be purchased and the cost for 60 trees, including protection would be £75.80. Cllr Lake spoke about his idea of asking residents to bring a tree of their own and plant it. He would mark out where the trees could be planted. The residents could then take on ownership of the tree. It was thought it would be possible to obtain a tree for everyone willing to plant one, as some residents have spare saplings growing. They would need to be planted at the end of October. An information leaflet would be distributed explaining the idea.

### 7. To discuss the arson/vandalism that occurred down Holl Lane and the waste problem

Cllr Crudginton explained in detail this problem. There has been a marked increase in activity since June. Not only targeting Billingford Lakes where various fencing has been driven/rammed at by a truck (caught on mobile phone) and wooden fence poles torched, but fires have also been set alight on the common By-Way, which on one occasion caused a widespread fire and extensive damage to hedging and woodland. This happened the day after Ashill!!! Luckily the wind was blowing south easterly and the fire brigade were very quick to react, otherwise it could have potentially impacted on the houses in Holl Lane given how dry and parched the fields and hedges are at present. It has been mentioned that the alleged perpetrator has threatened fishermen fishing on the lakes and on one occasion was wielding a machete.

Incident reports have been filed with the Police, which do not make Billingford's crime figures look good. As a result of on-going concerns, Cllr Crudgington met with Mrs Debbie Bales, owner of Billingford Lakes, and the Police at Holl Lane to discuss the issue. Following those discussions, the Police Officer, P.C. Jade Blandchard and Cllr Crudgington called on some residents living in Holl Lane for more feedback and to reassure them as they too expressed their ongoing concerns regarding the fire and vandalism that takes place along this By-Way. The Police have said that if any resident sees any vehicle travelling up Holl Lane that they believe may be involved in any illegal activity to call 999 as this is a serious enough threat and warrants the call. The Police do currently have an active dossier on the alleged perpetrator and they advise people NOT to approach them. Mrs Bales has purchased a security camera and a resident in Holl Lane has agreed to have the camera installed on their premises so that it can monitor activity/traffic passing through Holl Lane. Although the camera itself will not be close enough to where the vandalism is being committed, it will nonetheless place the vehicle/person (car registration) at the scene and time of any crime/vandalism/arson being committed.

#### **8. To receive an update on the Village Defibrillator**

A grant was obtained and the total package was applied for. Cllr Crudgington has the casing/security box and the defibrillator should arrive at the end of September. The shortage of micro chips in China is the reason for the delay. The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Mr Peter Walker for his help and experience in researching the most suitable defibrillator. At the moment there is a two hour wait for an ambulance to arrive at a destination where one is needed. When the defibrillator is in place, Mr Peter Walker will carry out any necessary training.

#### **9. To receive an update on St. Peter's Church**

Cllr Davies has spoken to the Rector and she is still waiting for information on costings. When the Church has decided what it can and cannot do, she would be pleased to receive some help letting residents know the situation. Grants are being applied for and one of the first jobs is to remove the trees around the wall. Members of the Church have visited Mr and Mrs Smith to explain the situation. The Rector further advised that the process is unfortunately going to be long but the Church is committed to resolving the situation. A comprehensive report on the structural condition of the wall and remedial work needed was undertaken by The Morton Partnership Structural Engineers and Cllr Crudgington has distributed this report to all Councillors and Mr and Mrs Smith back in early June.

#### **10. To receive an update on the Community Speed Watch**

Quite a large proportion of drivers breaking the speed limit have been recorded. The SAM2 sign is not in place again in the village. Data from the SAM2 in operation in January/February recorded a speed of 80 m.p.h. on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Every day a top speed(s) was recorded in excess of either 60MPH, 65MPH, 70MPH or 75MPH. There are between 27% to 31% of speeders in any given day. A Community Speed Watch took place between 8.00 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. on 27<sup>th</sup> June. 10 vehicles were caught speeding. 9 people received a 1<sup>st</sup> caution letter from Norfolk Police. The other vehicle was a hire car and unfortunately, the police do not follow up on these. The police carried out a speed check in the village themselves on 9<sup>th</sup> July. The Police have requested, through Cllr Crudgington, that they would like to co-ordinate a county wide Community Speed Watch in November as part of its National Road Safety Week. They would like to arrange for officers to attend and assist if possible. It is hoped that officers will also be able to enforce the speed limit with issuing on the spot tickets/fines. National Road Safety Week is taking place from 14<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr Davies thinks the village needs to have some parts of it with a lower speed limit and he asked Cllr Bambridge to look into the possibility of this being possible. Cllr Crudgington reminded everyone that the village has already been approved for "consideration" as part of the County's new major rural safety initiative. Cllr Crudgington also reported that sadly just a few days ago there was a fatal accident in North Elmham. It involved a collision between a motor cyclist and a van. Tragically, the motorcyclist, a man in his 20's was died.

**11. To discuss the celebrations for Queen's Jubilee that took place and other Village events**

It was a very enjoyable day. The Parish Council wished to express thanks to Louis Smith for her help in organising the event and with providing and decorating the village hall and outside with bunting, etc. Some commemorative mugs were distributed. Fourteen were delivered to appropriate addresses.

The village had a Rounders Match but it was badly represented. Cllr Lake thought the 'turn out' was disappointing.

**12. To discuss any Planning Issues**

3PL/2022/0272/D Pennells, Land South of Old Bells Farm, Elmham Road, reserved matters application of erection of 2 storey dwelling and cartlodge following outline approval 3PL/2018/1254/O The P. C. had already submitted its comments on this application and did not support it.

**13. To discuss the Public Pathway**

This was discussed under item. 7.

Mrs Bales has been advised by Norfolk County Council that the field gate on footpath FP4 bordering Billingford Lakes and Billingford Hall has to be taken out. This is despite a requirement of Breckland Council's planning approval under Condition 18, which states that there must be a field gate and it is to be locked. The gate was stolen a day before Mrs Bales received the order from N.C.C. This is concerning as it opens the footpath up to possible fly tipping and possible illegal traveller settlement.

Cllr Crudginton asked Mrs Bales on progress on the fencing that is obstructing the common land alongside Restricted By-Way RB3 (Holl Lane). Mrs Bales informed Cllr Crudginton that she cannot simply take the fencing down as it requires a Discharge Order/Notice from Breckland Council and that there is paperwork to complete before this can be done. District Cllr Gordon Bambridge, who attended the meeting, confirmed that this is the case. Furthermore, N.C.C. has informed Mrs Bales that there needs to be a minimum of 19 metres (just over 62 feet) width bordering her land and the Restricted By-Way, which potentially opens the area up to even more larger vehicles. Only last week a car was seen parked up and a jet ski was seen out on the Norfolk Fly Fishing Lakes, which is not permitted. Again, by widening this By-Way there is potential for fly tipping and other unwanted visitors. The other concern that requires urgent attention is that this may potentially impact on the whole Restricted By-Way. By N.C.C. insisting that the area bordering Billingford Lakes is widened by 19 metres, this ruling would by definition apply to all properties and residents.

**14. To authorise any necessary Financial Payments and receive Financial Update Statement**

There were no questions regarding the Financial Update Statement.

Cllr Crudginton proposed the following financial transactions be authorised for payment, seconded by Cllr Thorneley and carried:-

Clerk's net salary June to August £545.84 HMRC tax June to August £84.20 Clerk's expenses for March to August £118.45 Playsafety Limited (Play Area Inspection) £84.00  
Mr Downs (Village Sign Work) £650.00 Norfolk Accident Rescue Service (donation) £50.00

Since the May meeting, 2 cheques for T D Gardens for £85.00 were issued and a cheque for Cllr Crudginton for £1,788.00 was issued.

**15. To receive items for next agenda**

To discuss the RoSPA report on the playing field equipment.

**16. To confirm date and time of next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 22nd November 2022 at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

**Matters Raised By The Public**

A resident requested that meetings do not take place in August and the Chairman said this will be considered. Cllr Davies asked the Clerk to report to the Highways Rangers that there are pot holes in the village that need attention.

There being no other business to discuss, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

*M Davies* ..... 22/11/2022  
Chairman ..... Date

*G Hubbard* ..... 22/11/2022  
Clerk ..... Date