

# Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 from 7.30pm – 10.00pm in Blofield Courthouse.

## **PRESENT**

Stuart Smith, Sarah Dhesi, Paul Culley-Barber, William Crane, Stella Shackle, Yvonne Burton and Eleanor Bannister (Clerk) and Sarah Osbaldeston (Clerk).

1. Welcome and Introduction to the meeting by the Chair, Stuart Smith.
2. **TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
  - 2.1. Mary Moxon was unable to attend in person but did join the meeting via Zoom (however she did not take part in any voting).
  - 2.2. Joesph Scholes sent his apologies which were accepted by the parish council.
3. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Items 7.1, 7.3, 10, 16, 25, 26 and 32 - Paul Culley-Barber declared a pecuniary interest.
4. **OPEN FORUM - FOR PARISHIONERS TO RAISE QUESTIONS ON AND/OR MAKE STATEMENTS ABOUT MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AND TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR**
  - 4.1. County Councillor Andrew Proctor and District Councillor Paul Newstead sent their apologies. County Councillor Andrew Proctor provided a written report which was circulated to the council.
  - 4.2. One parishioner was present and provided the council with an update on the visits from the local speed monitoring officer for the county. Data collection is showing that there are speeding issues along Woodbastwick Road with over 25,000 vehicular movements per week and speed camera checking will start taking place here. The local police have also confirmed they will carry out speed checks too.
5. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024**
  - 5.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 and the minutes were duly signed by the chair.
6. **TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA**
  - 6.1. Eleanor Bannister is working to update the advert on Facebook etc. and hopefully get an advert in Focal Point too.
  - 6.2. Planning Query - Yarmouth Road - Application 20211493 for EV Charging Station, Solar Park and Cafe facility – Broadland District Council has shared further details with us. This application will look to deliver the shared footpath/cycleway to the North of Yarmouth Road should the application go ahead, there may be amendments to the plans.
  - 6.3. A meeting with the Focal Point editor will take place on the 17<sup>th</sup> June.
  - 6.4. The memorial bench for Marty's Marsh (near the new footbridge) is on order.
  - 6.5. Eleanor Bannister will chase Paul Sellick regarding outstanding Highway matters.
  - 6.6. Dog Waste bins - BDC are working with the estate management company who is responsible for the Hopkins Homes site now building is complete. They will see if it is possible to install a dogwaste bin. The 'missing' dog waste bin, along the path parallel to the A47 in Blofield will be reinstated, either in the same location (as BDC say it is regularly used) or at an alternative location further along Globe Lane. BDC will install the bin once we have installed a new post. Clerk (EB) to contact adjacent residents before the bin is installed.
  - 6.7. The existing location for the SAM2 speed sign on a lamp post on Yarmouth Road has been obscured by overgrown hedging. NCC highways will cut back the hedging, but this will take up to 6 weeks. The SAM sign can then be placed here.

## **7. PLANNING**

- 7.1. Application: 2024/1060  
Location: 11 Highview Close, Blofield, NR13 4RA  
Proposal: Single storey rear extension replacing a conservatory Application Type: Householder  
*The Parish Council would like to request that root protection for trees is put in place. It has no further comments except to request it is informed should the plans change.*
- 7.2. Application: 2024/1058  
Location: 69 Yarmouth Road, Blofield, NR13 4LG  
Proposal: Demolition of existing garage and erection of a single storey side & front flat roof extension.  
*The Parish Council had no comments on the application but would like to be kept informed should plans change.*
- 7.3. Application: 2024/1001  
Location: Gaudeamus Villa, Garden Road, Blofield, NR13 4JL  
Proposal: Prior approval for change of use and conversion from existing workshop and chapel to dwelling  
*The Parish Council agreed it does not have sufficient information on which to comment and must submit a holding objection until there are more detailed plans. (Including but not limited to, details on parking, drainage, available open space, parking for existing house, etc.).*
- 7.4. Application: 2024/1274  
Location: 3 Gunns Close, Blofield, NR13 4FL  
Proposal: single storey front porch  
*The Parish Council had no comments on the application but would like to be kept informed should plans change*

## **8. TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA**

- 8.1. No further applications had been received.

## **PROJECTS**

- 9. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE OUTSTANDING ITEMS OF THE MARGARET HARKER HALL PLAYGROUND, OPENING EVENT, SIGNAGE AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 9.1. Three outstanding items remain at Margaret Harker Hall (MHH). The missing cog and steering wheel on the train and a bolt repair required on the log swing. Eleanor is chasing EIBE to see if these matters can be resolved before the planned open day on the 30<sup>th</sup> May.
- 9.2. An opening event is planned for 2-4pm on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May. Tea/coffee/squash and biscuits will be available. Goodie bags will be provided by EIBE together with balloons and an ice-cream van will be on site too. Volunteers from the MHH and the council (Yvonne Burton and Stella Shackle) will help support the event. Andrew Proctor and Paul Newstead will be invited.
- 9.3. The size of the new large signage is incorrect so this will be reprinted by the printing firm free of charge.
- 9.4. Parishioners have raised concerns with the Margaret Harker Hall over the 2 allocated daily hours for the preschool to exclusively use the under 5's play area.
- 10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE 'OLD SCHOOL SITE' (2023/3727) AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 10.1. Broadland District Council are working with NCC Highways regarding their queries. BDC are progressing the application, and it is anticipated that any conditions will be applied to the community hub and car parking enabling the play equipment to be installed this summer.
- 11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE 'OLD SCHOOL SITE' PLAYGROUND FOLLOWING A MEETING WITH THE PRIMARY SCHOOL**
- 11.1. This was a positive meeting informing the primary school of further detail of the play installation. Detailed notes were circulated to the council and the clerk (EB) took various actions away. Key points are as follows:

- 11.2. It was agreed that a safety check meeting would take place in the second week of August once the installation phase is complete to check for safety issues and confirm if any additional play items need to be cordoned-off / excluded from the children.
- 11.3. It was agreed that play equipment inspection training will be organised (once the installation of the equipment is complete) by the Parish Council with a weekly rota needed for weekly checks.
- 11.4. Various pieces of equipment will be fenced off to meet the school's needs.
- 11.5. The Parish Council agreed to pay a small sum to the primary school to contribute towards the cost of the water for mixing cement.
- 12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE FOOTBRIDGE PROJECT AND PLANNING APPLICATION AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 12.1. Planning confirmation for this application is expected by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May. It is then hoped that the contractor can carry out the installation before the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024. A low-key opening can then take place on the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> June (before the orchid day at Cremer's Meadow). It was agreed to invite those who have supported the council with funding towards the project.
- 13. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CHURCHYARD WALL REPAIRS FOLLOWING A SITE MEETING WITH THE CONTRACTORS AND AN UPDATE ON FUNDING REQUESTS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 13.1. A site visit with the contractors took place in May. It was agreed to work on a section of the wall making sure that it is sound (rather than patching-up small areas which will then have areas around them that deteriorate). Initially, the more critical area is the north elevation east of the lynch gate to east pier, so it is this area that will be addressed first, tackling some 20m, or more, from the east pier. Work will commence for two weeks from early September with two or three people working from 7.30am to 4.30pm. The council unanimously resolved to fund two weeks of work. Half from churchyard reserves, half funded by the grant from the Snellings Trust.
- 13.2. Clerk (EB) to ensure the relevant faculty permissions have been granted by the Diocese. Clerk (EB) to liaise with the Parochial Church Council regarding access to power / toilets / kitchen.
- 14. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON WYNGATES AREA 3 DESIGN PLAN MEETING, WORKS FOR THIS SITE AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 14.1. A meeting took place on site with the Broadland District Council representative (who currently own the land), councillors and Garden Guardian the contractor. It was proposed that the council get the whole site cut regularly (rather than key areas previously discussed) to help contain the thistles and control growth across the site. The council resolved to approve this proposal at a total cost of £1,600 for 2024. This work will be funded by the commuted sum available for this site (currently held by BDC).
- 14.2. It was agreed to discuss the small woodland style trim trail play area in the Autumn.
- 15. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS**
- 15.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve all payments presented of vouchers #13 - #33 totalling £11,047.06 (Appendix A). Clerk (SO) to arrange payments.
- 15.2. The council continues to withhold £5,000 payment to EIBE until all the outstanding playground items are resolved at the Margaret Harker Hall.
- 15.3. The council noted the balance of £985,446.69 at 4 March 2024. (Appendix B).
- 16. TO AGREE THE INSURANCE AND PUBLIC LIABILITY OF THE NEW COMMUNITY HUB PLAYGROUND AND APPROVE REASONABLE COSTS FOR WATER USE AT THE SCHOOL**
- 16.1. The Clerk (SO) reported that the council can insure the play equipment under our policy although we do not currently own the land. The council discussed if vandalism and deliberate damage would be covered by the insurance. Clerk (SO) to find out more detail and return to the council.
- 17. TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL DONATIONS OF £250 TO THE BADCOG FOR HOWES MEADOW MAINTENANCE AND A DONATION OF £150 TO THE TREE WARDEN NETWORK**
- 17.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal and clerk (SO) to make payments.
- 18. TO NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS AND APPOINT SUE LAKE AS AUDITOR FOR 2024/25**

- 18.1. The council noted the Internal Auditors Report and unanimously resolved to appoint Sue Lake as auditor for 2024/25. Clerk (SO) to carry out the relevant actions.
- 19. TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S CURRENT RESERVES POSITION**
- 19.1. The council noted the bank balance at 31 March 2024 of £1,048,636.11 (Appendix C). The council reviewed the current reserves position, of which £1,007,819.04 of the balance is allocated to earmarked reserves. During 2023/24 £242,126.88 of earmarked reserves were spent and £296,339.86 were received. (see Appendix D).
- 20. TO APPROVE BLOFIELD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24**
- 20.1. The council approved the annual financial report 2023/24 (Appendix E) and this was duly signed by the chair and RFO.
- 21. TO APPROVE THE 2023-24 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**
- 21.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24. (Appendix F)
- 22. TO APPROVE THE 2023-24 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**
- 22.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the Statement of Accounts 2023/24. (Appendix F)
- 23. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING REVISED DOCUMENTS DRAFTED BY THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY**
- Standing Orders
  - Finance Regulations \*
  - LGA Code of Conduct
  - Risk Assessment
  - Freedom of Information Scheme
  - Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control
  - Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit
  - Duties of the Responsible Financial Officer
  - Investment Policy
  - Business Continuity Plan
  - Communications Policy
  - Co-option Policy
  - Complaints Policy
  - Grievance Policy
  - Disciplinary Policy
  - Filming and Recording Policy
  - Dark Skies Policy
  - Equal Opportunities Policy
  - Bullying and Harassment Policy
- The council unanimously resolved to approve all the documents detailed above with the exception of (\*) the Financial Regulations to be updated with the revised NALC template document (SO to action).
- 24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 24.1. A working party has recently taken place moving wood chippings to the far end of the path. A further working party will take place in June. Bat boxes will be put in place soon by the cubs.
- 24.2. A quotation has been obtained for a tree survey for Marty's Marsh at a cost of £1,585+VAT. The council agreed to obtain a break down of this figure and alternative quotes as this seemed expensive.
- 25. TO AGREE A MEETING WITH BDC COMMUNITY OFFICER AND CONSIDER NEXT ACTIONS REGARDING THE COMMUNITY HUB**
- 25.1. Following a brief discussion the council agreed to consider the community hub next actions and meet with Sally Hoare in the Autumn. Clerk (SO) to advise Sally.

- 26. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BLOFIELD 'OLD SCHOOL SITE' ENCROACHMENT MATTER, REVIEW REVISED REDLINE BOUNDARY AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 26.1. The council approved the revised land boundary for the 'old school site' with the small encroachment by the two landowners. The deeds will be altered accordingly when the land transfer takes place.
- 27. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MARGARET HARKER HALL AGM**
- 27.1. Sarah Dhesi provided a brief update from the Margaret Harker Hall AGM. Four trustees stood down and two new trustees were appointed. In total there are 6 trustees out of a maximum of 16. Their disabled toilet is in need of attention as there is black mould gathering.
- 28. TO RECEIVE / NOTE THE CHURCHYARD INSPECTION RECORD APRIL 2024 AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS**
- 28.1. The council agreed to obtain further tree survey quotations as the one obtained is expensive.
- 28.2. Clerk (EB) to contact Garden Guardian to request a little more cutting on the new remembrance plot area.
- 28.3. The council agreed to meet with the Community Payback leader to understand if they can help with detailed/fine epicormic growth cut back, sanding and oiling of the gates and spreading woodchip at Wyngates Area 3.
- 29. TO CONSIDER COMMENTS ON A TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER FOR A ZEBRA CROSSING ON PLANTATION ROAD**
- 29.1. The council discussed the plans and agreed they were in favour of the crossing. The council request that the crossing is located in line with the dropped kerbs already in situ and note that the council are not in favour of light pollution and would like to ask if the crossing lights come with covered tops and can be timed so they are not lit at night. Clerk (EB) to feedback comments.
- 30. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE A47 DUALLING WORKS AND IMPACT ON THE ALLOTMENTS AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 30.1. Work has paused on site due to the ongoing appeal. The council agreed to ask Galliford Try if there are any traffic plans for lorries/vehicles entering the A47 compound to avoid them driving through the village on Yarmouth Road. Clerk (EB) to action.
- 31. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY PAYBACK TEAM POSSIBLE WORKS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 31.1. See item 28.3 above.
- 32. TO CONSIDER TAKING PART IN THE HEDGEHOG HIGHWAY PROJECT**
- 32.1. The council reviewed this project and decided not to take part.
- 33. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MAY TOWN AND PARISH FORUM**
- 33.1. Mary Moxon provided an update to the council. There is some guidance on ways to obtain new councillors.
- 34. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**
- 34.1. A dinosaur hunt will be taking place in the parish in the summer. Marty's Marsh, Margaret Harker Hall and the doctors surgery will be some of the locations.
- 34.2. Parishioners have been asking when the footbridge will be built between Cremer's Meadow and Marty's Marsh.
- 34.3. A few parishioners have raised concerns over the signage on the Margaret Harker Hall under 5's play area, 'for use between 9:30 and 10:30am and 1:30-2:30pm by Blofield Preschool'. Jenny Cuthbert, the chair of Margaret Harker Hall has responded with detail and reasoning.
- 34.4. Clerk (SO) attended a meeting in Rackheath with the Norfolk County Council education team regarding new primary and secondary schools in the surrounding area. There were no impacts on the Parish of Blofield.
- 34.5. Provisional TPOs have been allocated to various trees at Land at Blofield Hall, Hall Road, Blofield (No. BD0649).
- 34.6. Planning approval has been given for work to be carried out under application 2024/0906 on various trees at Woods End, 9 Church Road, Blofield.

- 34.7. A tree preservation order has been placed on an oak tree in the entrance to Orchard House, Laburnum Drive, Blofield Norwich, NR13 4RF.
- 34.8. A motion was submitted to the Norfolk County Council meeting due on 7 May 2024 on a Safe Speeds Policy for Norfolk. This was discussed at the meeting and not progressed.
- 34.9. Blofield Church has installed a stop by the gates to ensure they are not damaged. Clerk (EB) to request Garden Guardian note this and avoid it entering and exiting and during their work in the churchyard.
- 34.10. A parishioner has raised concerns regarding storage of a caravan partially on the public highway. This has been referred to both NCC Highways and the Police as it is not a parish matter.
- 34.11. The council has received a request from the researcher for Lord (Don) Foster requesting the council support their campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal. The council requested further details on what such support would entail.

**35. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

- 35.1. To review access to the PROW FP4 between the A47 and the new school.
- 35.2. Grit bins correspondence from NCC Highways.
- 35.3. How best to find new councilors
- 35.4. Headstones for consideration
- 35.5. Tree survey quotations for Marty’s Marsh and the churchyard

**36. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- 36.1. Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....