

Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 11th November 2024 from 7.30pm – 10.45pm in Blofield Courthouse.

PRESENT

Sarah Dhesi (Vice Chair), Paul Culley-Barber, William Crane, Joseph Scholes, Stella Shackle, Yvonne Burton and Eleanor Bannister (Clerk) and Sarah Osbaldeston (Clerk).

1. Welcome and Introduction to the meeting by the Vice-Chair, Sarah Dhesi.
2. **ONE MINUTE'S SILENCE WAS HELD FOR REMEMBRANCE DAY**
3. **TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies were received and accepted from Stuart Smith.
4. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
 - 4.1. Items 10,11,12,13,14 - Paul Culley-Barber declared a pecuniary interest.
 - 4.2. Item 25 – Yvonne Burton declared a pecuniary interest.
5. **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**
 - 5.1. County Councillor Andrew Proctor sent his apologies and circulated a report to the parish council. District Councillor Paul Newstead and 6 parishioners were present.
 - 5.2. The landowners spoke about planning application 2024/3030 for a residential development of one dwelling on Land Adjacent to Blofield Hall, Hall Road, Blofield, Norfolk. In addition, three neighbouring property owners spoke about the development.
 - 5.3. The current editor of Focal Point, Mat Finch advised the council that he is stepping down as editor of Focal Point and therefore the publication's future is uncertain. The December edition is the last edition he will edit, and he has put in a request for a new editor to come forward.
6. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14TH OCTOBER 2024**
 - 6.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the parish council meeting minutes from 14th October 2024, and they were duly signed by the vice chair.
7. **TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA**
 - 7.1. The new defibrillator is awaiting installation at Heathlands Community Centre. The planned electrician is unwell and unable to install it. Clerk (EB) to obtain an alternative electrician for installation.
 - 7.2. The Pride of Place £300 grant has been spent by the Keep Blofield Special group on daffodil bulbs to plant in the parish. Specific focus will be made on Wyngates area 3 with planting taking place by volunteers.
 - 7.3. The new drainage pipe has been installed across Wyngates 3 and Anglian Water has repaired the road tiles on Farman Way. Heras fencing is still around a section on Wyngates 3. Some land reprofiling has resulted from the pipe laying. Clerk (EB) to contact Pentaco to understand if this will change or cause issues.
8. **PLANNING**
 - 8.1. Application: 2024/3080
Location: East Lea 27 Blofield Corner Road, Blofield, NR13 4SA
Proposal: Demolish rear conservatory, single storey front and rear extensions
*The Parish Council resolved to make the following comments:
The proposal for the front of the property has a mix of flat roof (closest to the adjoining neighbour) and a pitch roof. On consideration, the Parish Council would like to state it is concerned that the*

proximity to the neighbouring dwelling will lead to a loss of light for the neighbour. Could this please be checked?

Additional questions include that the application form does not state that hedging is to be removed which would appear contrary to the street view of the property and the council has concerns regarding the potential loss of parking?

8.2. Application: 2024/3030

Location: Land Adj Blofield Hall, Hall Road, Blofield, Norfolk

Proposal: Residential development of 1 dwelling

The parish council considered the 'permission in principle application' detailed above. The council object to the application given various concerns. Not in a specific order of priority, these include:

- The application form states there is access to Blofield Heath via a Public Footpath. The public right of way is in reality an unmade right of way that crosses through a field. This therefore raises the question if this is sustainable as vehicle travel would be needed on a daily basis. (As such, it is contrary to Blofield Neighbourhood Plan (NP) TRA3 as it is lacking appropriate footpath provision that can accommodate different users' needs.)*
- Following the points above, there is no public transport serving this location of Blofield Heath; vehicle travel would be needed.*
- Access roads are of a single-track nature and very narrow in places.*
- The location is outside the defined settlement limit and therefore would be contrary to Broadlands Development Management DPD - Policy GC2.*
- The site has not been identified as a site in the GNLP, where a site allocation has been made for Blofield Heath.*
- It is also contrary to Blofield Parish NP ENV6 - Distinct Villages.*
- Contrary to Blofield NP HOU4 – Rural image, heights and massing. (Footprint of proposed plan as indicated in arboricultural assessment is very significant compared to neighbouring properties.)*
- Contrary to Blofield NP ENV4 – Habitat and agricultural land (as it is on Grade 2 agricultural land).*
- The application also makes no mention of the TPO woodland.*
- Pre application advice has stated the Planning department sees no reason to deviate from Policies GC1 and GC2.*
- The Parish Council has been contacted by a number of concerned local residents and the PC understands that it would impact services to Blofield Hall, such as shared drainage and gas supplies to name but a few.*

9. TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA

9.1. Planning Application: 2024/1713, Solar Panels at Garden House, Lingwood Road, NR13 4LL have been granted planning permission.

10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE 'OLD SCHOOL SITE' PLAYGROUND BRIDGE CHAINS AND INSPECTION REPORTS

10.1. The bridge chains have been inspected by Paul Culley-Barber and are all in good order. No replacements are required and the Clerk (SO) has paid the final EIBE playground invoice.

10.2. Weekly inspections are taking place and forms completed. Clerk (EB) awaiting these from the school secretary.

11. TO NOTE THE NCC PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE 'OLD SCHOOL SITE', REVIEW THE MAP AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

11.1. The Parish Council reviewed the consultation and resolved to make the following points:

11.2. The Parish Council requests that any future development ensures that the original, external elements of the Victorian part of the school building are maintained as part of Blofield's historic inheritance.

11.3. The Parish Council hopes that NCC will explore all possible options for maintaining the existing pool as a going concern that can be accessed by parishioners.

11.4. The Parish Council would like clarity as to how the main school building will be accessed if all the land around it is being sold?

- 11.5. The Parish Council would like confirmation that the existing access is shared access, as indicated in the Conditional Contract with the parish council but not indicated in the public consultation
- 12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM NCC CHILDREN'S SERVICES REGARDING NEW SCHOOL PLANTATION ROAD ADJUSTMENTS, REVIEW ZEBRA CROSSING CONSULTATION AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 12.1. The council are awaiting the costings of the new entrance to the new playground from NCC Highways. The council recognises there may be a need for a full specification of works for the entrance way to the new playground. The council unanimously resolved a spend of up to £1,000 for this specification.
- 12.2. The council had no comments on the zebra crossing consultation but would like to work with NCC in order to reduce disruption and obtain best value for public money by getting all the road works around the new and old school sites completed at the same time.
- 13. TO AGREE A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE 'OLD SCHOOL SITE' PREPARATION AND HANDOVER TIMELINE (SD)**
- 13.1. The council unanimously resolved to arrange a meeting with NCC Children's Services to discuss the timeline and detail between now and the council obtaining the new community land ('old school playing field'). Clerk (EB) to arrange a meeting.
- 13.2. Points for NCC CS meeting include: Will the SAM sign location post need to change? When are the services being separated? What has happened with the substation contract? Who owns the area of land adjacent to the substation? Ensure sheds and the mobile classroom hardstanding is removed. Will the school hedge be cut back to the boundary fence soon? Will old zig zags be removed and new ones added? Will the bus stop be moved and the bus shelter remain? What is the timing around rights of access for Summer 2025 for the play area to be used by parishioners? Will fencing off part of the site be required?
- 14. TO NOTE THE WRITTEN RESPONSE FROM BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL REGARDING THE COMMUNITY HUB PROJECT AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 14.1. The council noted the BDC letter regarding the community hub project (Appendix A). The District Council support the parish council in the ring fencing of CIL and S106 funds towards the development of the community building. They state 'While this project is being developed and to enable a wider understanding of the scale of need / design / cost of the building that it is appropriate to safeguard the current CIL/S106 contributions. Clearly once final delivery costs are known, the Parish Council will be in a better position to determine how any remaining funding should be prioritised for use in the Parish.'
- 15. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS**
- 15.1. The council reviewed payments #111 to #125 totalling £6,112.90 (Appendix B) and the council unanimously resolved to approve the payments. The parish council noted the bank reconciliation on 4th October 2024 of £1,164,574.98 (Appendix C). In addition, the council noted the monthly checks carried out by Sarah Dhesi.
- 16. TO NOTE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR PATHS**
- 16.1. Broadland District Council has a small amount of Green Infrastructure funds left (£6,841.69) related to the parish which they have agreed can be used on either an extension to the pathway in Marty's Marsh or for the small footpath (a planning requirement) to be installed at the new hub site to ensure safe access from the road to the new playground.
- 17. TO AGREE PARISH PARTNERSHIP FUNDING BIDS FOR 2025/26**
- 17.1. The council unanimously resolved to apply for additional funding (a £2,500 grant for 2024/25 secured already) towards the new entrance/kerbing/footpath required by planning for the new community hub. The council are awaiting costings from NCC Highways and also working with NCC Children's Services regarding timings of this work.
- 17.2. The council discussed applying for a grant for improvements to PROW Footpath 4 (parallel to the A47) but it was felt this is not required. The work required here is minimal; probably grass cut back/trimming. Clerk (EB) to contact the PROW officer to discuss.

- 17.3. A new trod style extension (instead of bark/woodchip) to improve the pathway in Marty's Marsh was discussed. This is a long distance to meet up with the PROW behind Blofield Church and it was felt that this is not required at this time.
- 18. TO NOTE NALC STAFFING ISSUES AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 18.1. The council noted the NALC staffing issues and unanimously resolved that the clerks could rejoin NPTS if necessary.
- 19. TO NOTE THE OWNERSHIP OF PART OF THE ALLOTMENTS LAND AND THE ORCHARD LAND HAS CHANGED**
- 19.1. The council noted that the landowners have changed for part of the allotments land and the orchard land. Rental will now be paid to the new owners. Clerk (EB) to check if anything legal needs to be actioned by the parish council.
- 20. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COURTHOUSE DRAINAGE QUOTES AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 20.1. Eleanor Bannister reported that RJ Bacon has visited to review the damp in the solicitor's room and will provide a quotation for removing the panelling, replastering with lime plaster and repairing where necessary. Clerk (EB) to obtain a second quotation for this work too; it may be tricky to obtain a third quote given this work is on a listed building.
- 20.2. The source of the damp is unclear. It may be from the leaking down pipes (repaired in Spring 2024) or possibly from problems with a drain. Eleanor reported on two quotations for drain inspections the cost is significantly different so the council requested a third quotation.
- 21. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FOCAL POINT AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 21.1. The council thanked Mat Finch for all his hard work as editor of Focal Point. See item 5.3 also. The council unanimously resolved to contribute towards the October to December editions as required.
- 22. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 22.1. Yvonne Burton reported that a working party of 13 volunteers took place on Saturday 9th November. The area 1 conservation area was scythed and raked. Chippings were added to the footpath towards the churchyard gate. The next working party will take place on Saturday 14th December
- 22.2. There has been a report of an otter nearby.
- 22.3. Wire-secured logs are required on the bank near the bridge to avoid wear and tear to the grass/bank. Yvonne Burton will liaise with members of Cremers Meadow to get this actioned.
- 22.4. The recently built weir is holding and helping with the water flow. The council are still awaiting contact from Anglian Water regarding the pollution area that was reported to them sometime ago. Yvonne Burton to chase them again.
- 22.5. The Parish council agreed in principle to take part in a joint orchid day event with Cremers Meadow next summer 2025.
- 22.6. The Poplar tree on the bank between the run and the road has been reported to NCC Highways, they will take responsibility for any work required, but it will take a few weeks to obtain quotations and schedule the work.
- 23. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE NCC HIGHWAYS ENGINEER MEETING ON MATTERS AROUND THE PARISH**
- 23.1. Sarah Dhesi shared a very detailed long report with the council on all matters discussed with the new NCC Highways engineer; matters have been taken away for action and resolution.
- 23.2. The Highways engineer advised that he is also involved in looking at the costs of narrowing Woodbastwick Road at points to reduce speeding through the village.
- 23.3. White 'H' road markings could be provided across driveway entrances to assist with the parking obstructions on Yarmouth Road on football match days at Margaret Harker Hall.
- 23.4. The council agreed not to move the Bay Bridge entrance to the village signs.
- 23.5. The Highways engineer hoped the large potholes by the MacDonalds roundabout would be repaired overnight on 18/19 November 2024.
- 23.6. Sunken Anglian Water utility holes have been reported again. These may be fenced off to expedite a repair.
- 23.7. Clerk (EB) to discuss a bench location on Blofield Corner Road with the new Highways engineer.

- 24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE GRASS VERGE CLEARANCE BETWEEN FROGS HOLE AND MACDONALDS ON YARMOUTH ROAD**
- 24.1. The NCC Highways engineer was made aware of the urgent need for a footpath between Frogs Hole and MacDonalds on Yarmouth Road. He will review historical planning applications for any information to help and support the need with any future planning applications that arise. In the meantime, the grass verge is a temporary walkway being used by some parishioners. Clerk (EB) to request if this can be cleared for road safety.
- 25. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE ALLOTMENTS AND A47 DUALLING**
- 25.1. Sarah Dhesi provided a written update on the Start of Works Ceremony A47 Blofield to North Burlingham.
- 25.2. National Highways continues to make progress with various tasks at the allotment site.
- 26. TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH SCHOLES AS PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE FOR BLOFIELD CHURCHYARD, TO BLOFIELD COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND ON THE LOCAL AUTHORITY CLUSTER GROUP**
- 26.1. The council unanimously resolved to appoint Joseph Scholes as parish council representative for Blofield Churchyard, Blofield Courthouse Management Committee and the Local Authority Cluster Group.
- 27. BLOFIELD AND BRUNDALL GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHEME UPDATE**
- 27.1. Yvonne Burton reported that the Good Neighbourhood Scheme is still running and they actively support many parishioners across Blofield and Brundall. Another committee meeting will take place soon.
- 28. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY PAYBACK TEAM ADDITIONAL WORK IN THE PARISH AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 28.1. The Payback team has carried out repairs to the churchyard path and cut back the epicormic growth. They will return in around one month to carry out the gate cleaning and oiling and cut ivy off the limes together with any work requested by Blofield Parochial Church Council.
- 29. TO AGREE ATTENDANCE AT THE NOVEMBER TOWN AND PARISH SUMMIT**
- 29.1. It was agreed that Sarah Dhesi and Eleanor Bannister attend the Town and Parish Summit at BDC.
- 30. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MHH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**
- 30.1. Sarah Dhesi reported that the MHH committee are still advertising for a treasurer, secretary and vice-chair. The replacement trampoline has been ordered after a successful insurance claim.
- 31. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**
- 31.1. Blofield Church are looking to apply for the 80th anniversary grant for celebrating VE day / D Day.
- 31.2. The Courthouse has increased their rental rates from January 2025. The council unanimously resolved to pay the increased rate of £22.50 per session.
- 31.3. PROW adjacent to the A47 behind Hopkins Homes development – the access to the stile over the A47 has been cleared, however the stile is 100m from the children's playground.
- 31.4. Acle police are holding their next monthly online meeting on 3rd December 2024 at 1800 hours via Teams.
- 31.5. The Government are carrying out a consultation on remote meetings for parish councils. The council unanimously resolved to submit a comment supporting the need and value of online meetings for parish councils going forward.
- 31.6. A parishioner reported vibrations near Marty's Marsh and this has been raised with Anglian Water as there is a nearby pumping station.
- 31.7. A parishioner raised a request for more dog waste bins on the Hopkins Homes development. This is the responsibility of the management company for the estate and BDC are working with them to progress this need.
- 32. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**
- 32.1. Tree actions required following tree surveys at Marty's Marsh and Blofield Churchyard.

- 32.2. New bench location on Blofield Corner Road – Yvonne Burton.
- 32.3. An update on handyman work required at Wyngates bandstand – Eleanor Bannister.

33. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- 33.1. Monday 9th December 2024 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

34. TO RESOLVE TO PASS A FORMAL RESOLUTION (UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES AND ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS ACT 1960) TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC FOR THE REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS

- 34.1. The council unanimously resolved to pass the resolution detailed above to exclude the press and the public from the remaining agenda items as the council believes it is in the public's interest due to commercial and policy related detail. All remaining parishioners left the meeting room.

The council unanimously resolved to extend the meeting beyond 10pm in order to complete the agenda and suspended standing order item 3w.

35. TO DISCUSS LAND WITHIN THE PARISH

- 35.1. The council resolved to continue to search for allotment land within the parish.

36. TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE NEW COMBINED GRANT POLICY

- 36.1. The clerks have sought guidance and developed a new combined grant policy and associated application form.
- 36.2. The council unanimously resolved to approve the following points 36.3 – 36.8:
- 36.3. All detail contained within the one single grant policy and application form for small or larger grants.
- 36.4. Applications for a small grant (i.e. a grant of a sum up to £300) can be made at any time of year subject to funds available in the budget.
- 36.5. A maximum budget for large grants of £5,000 is available per annum for the whole parish (this could be divided among multiply organisations).
- 36.6. The first application window will be in this financial year with the deadline of the 31st January 2025. Any applications from a community organisation will be considered and applicants will be informed by 31st March 2025.
- 36.7. The second application window for year 2 will be from the 1st April 2025 up to 31st May 2025, and projects cannot be applied for retrospectively.
- 36.8. The grants policy is subject to regular reviews and may not always be available in future years as parish council funds come from precept taxes from the parishioners of Blofield.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:45pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....