Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 29th July 2024 from 7.30pm – 9.50pm in Blofield Courthouse.

PRESENT

Stuart Smith, Sarah Dhesi, Paul Culley-Barber, William Crane, Yvonne Burton, Stella Shackle, Joseph Scholes 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

All councillors were present.

3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Items 10, 16, 17 - 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 sent their apologies.
- 4.2. District Councillor Paul Newstead attended the council meeting. Seven parishioners were present.
- 4.3. Two representatives from the First Responders Group visited and explained how they support the local defibrillators carrying out monthly/quarterly checks. However, they do not have the funds to carry out any maintenance or repairs/replacements to the defibrillators.
- 4.4. Two parishioners raised concerns over speeding within the parish on Yarmouth Road, particularly around the Margaret Harker Hall site where children are crossing the road. In addition, speeding as traffic is leaving/entering the village between the MacDonalds Roundabout and the Courthouse is excessive. The council agreed to action the following points 4.5 4.11 (Clerk EB):
- 4.5. Contact NCC Highways to request the tree growth around the 'play sign' is cleared.
- 4.6. Request that speeding data is collected along Yarmouth Road to support the council case for action to be taken to reduce the speeds.
- 4.7. Request that the police carry out speed camera checks on Yarmouth Road in the hot spot areas to act as a deterrent.
- 4.8. Contact MacDonalds to request litter picking further afield, along Yarmouth Road into the village and along Shack Lane and Woodbastwick Road.
- 4.9. Request NCC Highways trim a pathway/clear overgrown areas along the grass verge of Yarmouth Road between Frogs Hole and MacDonalds to make it easier for parishioners to safely walk off the road. In the long term, the council continue to seek a footpath along this stretch of Yarmouth Road as part of planning applications in this area.
- 4.10. Report to NCC Highways the sunken manholes near Brewsters Court.
- 4.11. Report to NCC Highways the overgrown hedge creating a Health and Safety issue restricting the visibility splay of the junction of Garden Road onto The Street on the right-hand side.
- 4.12. Rob Christie from the Courthouse Management Committee requested that works to the Courthouse room with damp are scheduled for August 2025. Rob outlined the Treasurer's request to renew the Courthouse fixed term interest deposit with Lloyds. This was proposed and agreed by all (see item 22.1). It was also noted how the Courthouse Committee was impressed by the contractor who worked on the cupula (EFL Ltd.) recommending they were considered for future work.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 17TH JUNE 2024

5.1. Following two minor amendments the council unanimously resolved to approve the parish council meeting minutes and they were duly signed by the chair.

Item 25 was discussed here.

6. **TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA** 19.2 – The Mill Road shrubs have been cut by the local residents.

7. PLANNING

7.1. Application: 2024/1858

Location: 6 Mill Close, Blofield, Norfolk, NR13 4QT Proposal: Alterations and 2 storey extension The Parish Council unanimously resolved to make the following comments: Please can it be ensured, as suggested by the Tree Survey, that the roots of the mature oak are protected and there is no damage to them. Can the Parish Council also be informed if there are any further changes to the application.

7.2. Application: 2024/1989

Location: Woodlands Manor, Shack Lane, Blofield, Norfolk, NR13 4DP Proposal: Alterations and 2 storey extension

The Parish Council unanimously resolved to make the following comments:

The access and rights to use the **footpath (FP3** adjacent to the dwelling) need to be retained during the demolition, construction and subsequent occupation.

Howes Meadow is an important habitat and is a Country Wildlife site 2071 notified in 1998. The Meadow is fed from a stream that runs west - east across the southern edge of the building site; Howes Meadow is adjacent to the dwelling. Howes Meadow therefore needs to be protected during the demolition and construction phase to prevent any pollutants from entering the Meadow. (The application does not reference the proximity of Howes Meadow, or points 1, 3, and 6.) Close to a **watercourse** - the Parish Council understands that the site is within 20m of a watercourse (Government's Flood map for planning - Planning Portal Ref: PP-13229328) and requests that Planning check this given the possible implications in relation to surface water disposal etc.

Biofield's Neighbourhood Plan (ENV5) includes a Dark Skies policy and this needs to be adhered to, minimising light pollution from the development. As there is a lot of glazing in the proposed plans, the Parish Council ask that this be considered and addressed. Additionally, the Parish Council also approved on 29/7/24 including wording from the CPRE on 'Light Pollution' on all relevant future responses to planning applications. This is below and the Parish Council request this is followed:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Clause 191c and Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy both recognise the importance of preserving dark landscapes and dark skies. In order to minimise light pollution, Blofield Parish Council recommend that, if this application is permitted, any outdoor lights associated with the proposed development should be: 1) Fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments)

- 2) Directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)
- 3) Switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)

4) White light low-energy lamps (preferably LED's*) and not orange or pink sodium sources.

The plans need to ensure there is sufficient **parking spaces** for a 4+ bed dwelling.

Trees and Hedges – Can Planning please visit the site and confirm whether there are trees or hedges on the proposed development site? (The Parish Council believes there are trees, but this has not been indicated on the plans.) If 'Yes', the Parish Council believes a full tree survey may be required at the discretion of the local planning authority, and requests that a tree survey is requested and submitted alongside the application (in accordance with the current BS5837; trees in relation to design, demolition and construction).

The Parish Council also requests that it is kept informed should plans change.

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

No further applications have been received to date.

- 9. TO CONSIDER REGULARLY HIGHLIGHTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN PLANNING APPLICATION FEEDBACK; SWIFT BRICKS / LIGHT POLLUTION ETC
- 9.1. The parish council unanimously resolved to request swift bricks are included on all relevant planning applications going forward.
- 9.2. The council unanimously resolved to include wording from CPRE on 'light pollution' on all relevant planning applications going forward. This is below and the Parish Council request this is followed:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Clause 191c and Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy both recognise the importance of preserving dark landscapes and dark skies. In order to minimise light pollution, Blofield Parish Council recommend that, if this application is permitted, any outdoor lights associated with the proposed development should be: 1) Fully shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments)

- 2) Directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards)
- 3) Switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)
- 4) White light low-energy lamps (preferably LED's*) and not orange or pink sodium sources.

10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE 'OLD SCHOOL SITE' PLAYGROUND, APPROVE CONTINGENCY, CONSIDER WETPOUR UNDER GYM EQUIPMENT AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 10.1. The work is progressing well on site with some equipment already in place.
- 10.2. Wetpour is not required for the adult gym equipment, and it is not within the tree route area which reduced complexity.
- 10.3. The council unanimously resolved to spend the small contingency funds of circa £900 by agreement by the clerks/chair/vice-chair if required in the next month.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COMPLETED FOOTBRIDGE PROJECT AND AGREE AN OFFICIAL 'OPENING' DATE

11.1. The bridge has been installed and councillors have received lots of positive feedback. The memorial bench will be installed by mid-August. The council agreed to official opening date in early September. Clerk (EB) to liaise with Brundall Parish Council to set a date and invite those who have donated to the bridge.

12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE EEL TILES AND THE NEW DONATED MARTY'S MARSH BENCH AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

- 12.1. The Eel tiles will be installed next week at Marty's Marsh Culvert and the new memorial bench will be installed by mid-August.
- 12.2. An area of the footpath has sunk and is pooling water when it rains. This was due to the machinery accessing the bridge site. This can be repaired at a cost of approximately £200 by adding additional granite to the area. The council unanimously resolved to make this repair. Clerk (EB) to contact the contractor and arrange.

13. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BENCH FOR LOCATION ALONG BLOFIELD CORNER ROAD AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

- 13.1. The possible location at the entrance to the Bennetts development is difficult as the bench ownership would then transfer to the management company for the site and it would not be possible for the parish council to maintain ownership and maintenance.
- 13.2. Following a brief discussion, it was proposed that the council contact NCC Highways to see which communal pieces of land on Blofield Corner Road they would approve for a bench. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (EB) to contact Highways and Yvonne Burton to update the parishioner.

14. TO REVIEW AND RECONSIDER A CAR PARK FUNDING REQUEST FROM HEATHLANDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

14.1. Following a brief discussion, District Councillor Paul Newstead updated the parish council to advise the council that Heathlands Community Centre car parking project has raised funds through grants and fundraising and the district councillor is supporting the project to obtain match funding ensuring the project can go ahead as planned.

15. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS

15.1. The council noted the payments previously agreed and made in mid-July for outstanding items and salaries #45 - #52, totalling £191,434.89 (Appendix A). This includes an invoice (#46) for the first payment for the EIBE 'old school' play equipment totalling £151,190.42+VAT. This payment has been split over multiple dates and 4 separate payments to ensure the funds are transferred under the Barclays £50,000 limit. The final payment of this invoice will be made on the 31st July 2024.

- 15.2. The council unanimously resolved to approve all payments presented of vouchers #53 #66 totalling £25,813.75 (Appendix B). Clerk (SO) to arrange payments.
- 15.3. The council noted the receipts received between the 1 April 2024 and 4 July 2024, #01 to #44 totalling £119,465.54 (Appendix C). Key figures to note are a VAT refund of £46,894.46 received from 2023/24, a grant of £6,000 from the Snellings Trust for the Churchyard Wall and a HMRC refund of £4,422.68 due to historical unreconciled issues/statutory maternity pay issues.
- 15.4. Bank reconciliations were noted for 4th June and 4th July 2024 (Appendix D) showing a council balance of £1,138,598.16.

16. TO NOTE THE COST OF THE INSURANCE AND PUBLIC LIABILITY OF THE NEW COMMUNITY HUB PLAYGROUND

16.1. The insurance for the new community hub playground is £1,251.14 and has been paid with this month's payments.

17. TO APPROVE PAYMENT OF £108,809.58+VAT FOR EIBE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT FOR THE 'OLD SCHOOL' SITE ONCE ALL WORK COMPLETE

17.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the payment, before the next meeting, of £108,809.58+VAT for the EIBE equipment following the council final checks. If any sum is required to be withheld whilst minor issues are resolved this will be approximately10% and discussed and agreed by the clerks / Chair / Vice-Chair accordingly.

18. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON SPEEDING ON WOODBASTWICK ROAD AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

18.1. District Councillor Paul Newstead has put a business case to the County Council for improvements / help with speeding on Woodbastwick Road.

19. TO DISCUSS THE DAMP IN THE COURTHOUSE CHAIR ROOM AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

- 19.1. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) a camera survey in the ground drains around the outside of the chair room to see if this is what is causing the issues, if funds allow surveying all drains around the courthouse would be valuable. The council unanimously resolved to approve a drain survey up to the value of £500. Clerk (EB) to obtain quotations and deal with accordingly.
- 19.2. The council noted the management committee request to have any damp works carried out in August 2025 where possible.

20. TO NOTE THE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MONTHLY AND AGM MINUTES AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS (SJS/SS)

- 20.1. The council noted the Courthouse Management Committee plans to renew the six-month fixed interest deposit which matures in November. The council agreed with this proposal.
- 21. TO NOTE THE REVE FOUNDATION AND RELIEF-IN-NEED PARISH APPOINTED CHARITY TRUSTEES TO SERVE UNTIL MAY 2025 (A COUNCILLOR/CLERK/PARISHIONER)
- 21.1. The council unanimously resolved to appoint both Yvonne Burton and Joseph Scholes into these roles until May 2025.
- 22. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BLOFIELD CHURCH GRAVEYARD HEADSTONES FROM THE PCC AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS
- 22.1. The clerk (EB) reported that a parishioner is currently working on digitalising the gravestone records at Blofield Church. A further health and safety review of the headstones will take place soon to review any 'wobbly' headstones.
- 23. TO RECEIVE ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENTS OF MARTY'S MARSH AND THE CHURCHYARD AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS
- 23.1. Full Arboricultural Reports have been received for Marty's Marsh and Blofield Churchyard.

23.2. Key works identified at Marty's Marsh are:

551 – Grey Poplar – ('high' risk) – Reduce crown of regrown stem location over dyke and Leaning to the main Brundall Road. This tree is on the bank beside the pavement along Brundall Road. An area that NCC Highways have previously taken responsibility for. (Land not owned by the PC or Highways.) Clerk (EB) to contact NCC Highways.

579 – Oak – (medium risk) - Reduce remaining crown to south by 6m, leave low growth to north. Also previously identified on the last report. Clerk (EB) to obtain quotes and establish urgency.

23.3. Key works identified at the Churchyard are:

The Lime Trees – (medium risk) - along the north wall (and one or two other trees along the north wall) should have their 'low canopy raised over Church Lane'. Technically "Crown lift over roadside to highway specification. Remove hazardous loose, small and medium deadwood over roadside only." Clerk (EB) to obtain quotes and establish urgency.

T10 – Yew – Recommendation should remove grass cuttings from the rooting area of the tree. Clerk EB to refer to the churchwarden for action.

G3 – (medium risk) - Tree should be cut back from church building. Clerk (EB) to obtain quotes and establish urgency.

24. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 24.1. The polluted ditch work creating a weir is being actioned by volunteers.
- 24.2. The next working party date is Saturday 12th August and in September BVCG are attending to cut the meadow.
- 24.3. The noticeboard on site requires the contact details changing with an overlay stick on label. Stuart Smith agreed to action this.

25. TO NOTE THE DEFIBRILLATORS AT THE MARGARET HARKER HALL SITE AND HEATHLANDS SITE ARE OUT OF ORDER AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS

- 25.1. The First Responders group provided an update to the council on the two defibrillators in the parish, both are out of order.
- 25.2. The defibrillator located at Heathlands Community Centre requires immediate replacement items at a total cost of £1,452+VAT and will require a new box shortly at a cost of £500. The defibrillator located at the football club/Margaret Harker Hall requires immediate replacement items at a cost of £410+VAT and a new AED in 12-18 months at a cost of £1,042+VAT.
- 25.3. The First Responders team are happy to continue regular checks on the defibrillators but do not have the resources or funding to regularly maintain and replace them.
- 25.4. Stuart Smith proposed the council take on the ongoing responsibility, ownership and maintenance of the two defibrillators. He proposed the council carry out the immediate repairs required through firstly grant searches/applications and if this is unsuccessful the council will fund the repairs out of precept/small grants budget. Looking forward, the council should budget within the precept for 2025/26 and onward gathering a small reserve each year for replacement parts as required. The council would like First Responders to continue with their regular checks for the parish council. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (EB) to progress grant applications / purchases as necessary liaising with both site committees. Clerk (EB) to confirm that both committees are happy to continue to have the device and supply the small amount of electricity required to run the devices (estimated at between £10 and £20 per annum).
- 25.5. For information this is the website that is used by the NHS to check for defibrillators in operation: <u>https://www.thecircuit.uk</u> and out of order defibrillators are reported by first responders and noted here.

26. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON A47 DUALLING SCHEME AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 26.1. Cadent works will begin on Monday 22 July, initially populating their compound with equipment etc.
- 26.2. Galliford Try have effectively started the preliminary phase of work on the new road.
- 26.3. Lorries bringing or removing materials from the site will use A47 access, and not come through the village. The main GT site office has moved to the B1140/A47 junction opposite the White House
- 26.4. It has been established that easement rights have already been granted under the GVD 5 between the landowner and Cadent. No further easement rights are required from the parish council.
- 26.5. For information, traffic of up to 3.5 tonnes is allowed over the new Cadent gas main. (Vehicles of anything heavier of up to 10.5 tonnes must use the designated Cadent crossing points with permission.)

27. TO NOTE PROW FP12 WILL BE CLOSED FROM 16 SEPTEMBER FOR 2 WEEKS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

27.1. Improvements as part of our Parish Partnership Scheme bid will take place to FP12 (between the church and Marty's Marsh) from the 16th September for two weeks.

28. TO CONSIDER REQUESTING IMPROVEMENTS TO PROW FP4 BETWEEN THE A47 AND THE NEW SCHOOL AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

28.1. Following a brief discussion and review of images of the path, Yvonne Burton proposed the council contact the NCC's footpath officer to discuss the tidying and improving of the footpath, PROW FP4 (for health and safety reasons) between the A47 and new school. This was approved by all.

29. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE RESIGNTING OF THE MISSING DOG WASTE BIN ON GLOBE LANE AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

29.1. The proposed relocation site is not possible, councillors to forward any alternative options to the clerk (EB) by Friday 11th August when the council will contact BDC to discuss alternative sites. If none are available, the council (Clerk EB) will request the bin is sited at its original location.

30. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

30.1. Clerk (EB) to provide an update in September.

31. APPOINT AN ADDITIONAL PLANNING EXPERT TO ASSIST PAUL CULLEY-BARBER

31.1. The council agreed that Paul Culley-Barber will continue in the role alone for the time being.

32. TO AGREE PLAYGROUND QUARTERLY INSPECTION TRAINING AT THE END OF OCTOBER

- 32.1. The weekly 'visual' inspection training will take place on Monday 2nd September 2024. EIBE will provide a joint separate session for the MHH and Heathlands on the same day if they would like it.
- 32.2. Following a brief discussion, the council agreed to obtain quotations for the cost of a trained inspector carrying out quarterly inspections on the new playground on behalf of the parish council. Clerk (EB) to action.

33. TO CONSIDER THE BEST WAY TO RECRUIT NEW COUNCILLORS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

33.1. Sarah Dhesi proposed the council hold an informal community meeting / session in October to discuss outcomes from the community survey and plans for the 'old school site' / community hub area going forward. Widely publicise the event and invite all on our email list and those interested in finding out more. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (EB) to action.

34. TO NOTE THE DINOHUNT IS NOW LIVE IN THE VILLAGE

34.1. The Dinohunt is now live in the village.

35. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY PAYBACK TEAM AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

35.1. The Clerk (EB) continues to chase for an update.

36. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE JULY TOWN AND PARISH FORUM AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

36.1. The Clerk circulated the notes from the meeting and these were noted by the parish council.

37. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS FOR FOCAL POINT SEPTEMBER EDITION

37.1. To note the community meeting and new bridge installation.

38. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

- 38.1. The council noted the update by Sarah Dhesi from the Margaret Harker Hall meeting.
- 38.2. The council noted the Heathlands Community Centre minutes.
- 38.3. The council noted the Courthouse Management Committee plans to renew the six-month fixed interest deposit which matures in November. The council agreed with this proposal.
- 38.4. The area of grass when first entering Globe Court (where the grit bin is situated) has now been added to the Garden Guardian regular cutting schedule.

- 38.5. The 3rd picnic bench on the 'old school site' playground has been changed to the 'non-accessible' equivalent. It can be left un-fixed if the council wishes, but once the final location has been determined, EIBE would recommend that is secured to a concrete base to avoid damage/injury.
- 38.6. The Parent Champion programme is a great opportunity for parents to get involved in the community and support other parents. This is being promoted by Broadland District Council. There is no minimum number of hours that are needed from volunteers, making the role flexible and adaptable.
- 38.7. The Broads Authority are carrying out a consultation for the use of the Body Worn Cameras.
- 38.8. The Local Authority Cluster meeting notes have been circulated from May 2024.
- 38.9. There is an Open Garden at "The Bird in Hand" 80 Mill Road, Blofield Heath NR13 4QS over the weekend of 10th and 11th August 11:00 am 4:00 pm each day.
- 38.10. Wheelie bin stickers for reducing speeding were briefly discussed. The council decided not to progress with these.
- 38.11. A parishioner has raised a couple of concerns on the 'old school site' following the council letter drop to properties close to the playground installation area. Clerk (EB) has dealt with these queries.
- 38.12. Work continues in the house of commons to progress the lithium battery ballot proposal.
- 38.13. A member of the public has written to pass on their thanks and the thanks of their whole family to the council who took the inspired decision to name local roads in memory of the local heroes who died in battle in World War One. The relative is thrilled that her grandfather's younger brother, Private Alec East, has been immortalised in this way (See Appendix E).
- 38.14. A consultation is taking place for a district-wide Design Code for South Norfolk and Broadland districts. Everyone is invited to take part in an online consultation survey. To capture this feedback, please complete the online survey, which you can access at: https://southnorfolkandbroadland.placechangers.co.uk. This will be available until 5.00pm on Monday 2nd September 2024. This is stage one, and over the next year or so, there will be several more opportunities for you to input into this process.
- 38.15. There is a website where graves can be identified, a parishioner is working on creating a comprehensive record of the graves in Blofield Churchyard. <u>https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2226338/st.-peter-and-st.-andrew-churchyard</u> The Reve Charity report has been circulated to the parish council.
- 38.16. A parishioner has raised concerns over parking issues and the general state of the grass / weeds in the verges around Chamberlin Court. Clerk (EB) has been corresponding with NCC Highways regarding this.

39. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- 39.1. Consider any land options for allotments.
- 39.2. Review any common pieces of land that are not having the grass regularly cut.
- 39.3. Speeding update.

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

40.1. Monday 16th September 2024 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:50pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....