

Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 10th February 2025 from 7.30pm – 10.30pm in Blofield Courthouse.

PRESENT

Stuart Smith (Chair), Sarah Dhesi (Vice Chair), Paul Culley-Barber, Joseph Scholes, 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**
All councillors were present.
3. **TO CONSIDER THE CO-OPTION OF PAUL NEWSTEAD ON TO THE PARISH COUNCIL**
Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council co-opt Paul Newstead on to the parish council. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
4. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
Items 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 22 - Paul Culley-Barber 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. Seven parishioners were present together with District Councillor Paul Newstead, and County Councillor Andrew Proctor who provided an update to the parish. He reported that Norfolk would be a priority area for devolution and local government reform. As part of this, the Government is seeking to create a devolution deal for Norfolk and Suffolk, which would include the introduction of an elected mayor. In addition, there are plans to reshape local government in Norfolk. The Government intends to replace the current two-tier structure, where services are shared between county and district councils, with unitary authorities. This would concentrate decision-making and service delivery into a single authority, streamlining local government processes and potentially increasing efficiency and saving taxpayers money.
 - 5.2. Three parishioners spoke regarding planning application 20200077 and concerns regarding the drainage strategy. In addition, they are concerned at the lack of information published on the planning website. Clerk (EB) to raise missing planning information with Broadland District Council.
 - 5.3. A parishioner raised the issue of the speeding traffic on Lingwood Road, particularly at the narrow sections near Fox Lane and Shillito Road. This increased traffic appears to be a direct result of the A47 road changes that are likely to continue once the A47 dualling is completed. The council agreed to take this to NCC Highways / A47 National Highways Dualling team and discuss solutions. Clerk (EB) to arrange a meeting.
6. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13TH JANUARY 2025**
 - 6.1. Following minor amendments, the council unanimously resolved to approve the parish council meeting minutes from 13th January 2025, and they were duly signed by the chair.
7. **TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA**
 - 7.1. The clerk has purchased bin liners for the Keep Blofield Special Group with the £12 balance from the Pride in Place Clean Up and Bloom Grant.
 - 7.2. NCC Highways has confirmed that the Flying Scotsman vans are not causing an obstruction to the Yarmouth Road, and they are able to continue parking there.
 - 7.3. NCC Children's Services has confirmed the School will still be insured to use the field and the swimming pool until the time when Children's Services declare the retained section of land surplus.
 - 7.4. Bleed kits have been installed in the two defibrillators. A further defibrillator has been identified at Snellings (off Blofield Corner Road), and this is now live on The Circuit system. This defibrillator

was bought by Brundall & Blofield Community First Responders and managed and maintained by Snellings.

7.5. The four missing 'Thank you for visiting' village signs have been ordered by NCC Highways.

7.6. The bus shelters have had their walls cleaned and the ivy has been removed from the Blofield Heath shelter. Stuart Smith agreed to visit to see if painting is required.

7.7. NCC will consider the missing dropped kerb opposite Manor House on Yarmouth Road.

8. PLANNING

8.1. Application: 2025/0078

Proposal: Single storey rear extension including internal & external alterations

Location: Willow Lodge, 51 Yarmouth Road, Blofield, NR13 4LE

The Parish Council unanimously resolved to make no comments but to request it is informed if there are any further changes to the application.

8.2. Application: 2025/0098

Proposal: Certificate of Lawful Development for the proposed conversion of the garage into accommodation for carers & family, ramped access to the entrance doors for wheelchair access. A new side door & the garage door changed to a window

Location: 35 Mill Road, Blofield, NR13 4QS

The Parish Council unanimously resolved to make no comments as it is a permitted development.

8.3. Application: 2025/0304

Proposal: Erect cart lodge

Location: Brazen Hurn, Brundall Road, Blofield, NR13 4LB

The Parish Council agreed to request conditions to ensure that no trees / mature shrubs will be impacted as a result of this development.

8.4. Application: 2024/2974

Proposal: Phase 2 Extension to car park

Location: Heathlands Social Club, Woodbastwick Road, Blofield Heath, NR13 4QH

The Parish Council agreed to support this planning application.

8.5. Application 2024/3030 - planning appeal raised

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

Proposal: Erection of 1 no. self-build dwelling

The Parish Council objects to this planning application and further appeal. The Parish Council comments remain the same as submitted under the original application.

8.6. Proposed telecommunications Base Station Upgrade at Norwich United FC, Yarmouth Road, Plantation Park, Blofield, NR13 4PL

The Parish Council unanimously resolved to make no comments.

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

9.1. No further applications were received.

10. TO NOTE PLANNING UPDATE ON 20200077 AND ANY OTHER PLANNING APPLICATIONS

10.1. Planning application 20200077 on Woodbastwick Road will go to planning committee when it is ready. The planning department at BDC has reported that an alternative drainage strategy is being considered that does not involve dykes / ditches. (See 5.2)

10.2. Planning application 2024/0504, erection of two commercial rental units and flats has received planning approval Adjacent to the Tamarind Indian Restaurant.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM NCC CHILDREN'S SERVICES MEETING ACTIONS REGARDING SITE PREPARATION AND HANDOVER TIMELINE AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

11.1. A meeting is taking place on Friday 14th February onsite at the School to review the fencing and boundary position, shed removal and discuss other matters with NCC Children's Services.

- 11.2. Quotations for the hedging removal / cutting as part of the entrance creation are being obtained and clerks will arrange this for this work to be completed by mid-March. The council approved up to £2,000 for this work at the January meeting. Pentaco has offered to provide the Heras fencing required to secure the School site once the hedge removal / entrance creation has been carried out. Additional blackout covering may be required on top of the Heras fencing.
- 12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE SCHOOL REGARDING SPORTS FIELD PREPARATION, SPORTS EQUIPMENT STORAGE SHEDS AND PLAY EQUIPMENT AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 12.1. Paul Culley-Barber (chair of school governors and parish councillor) reported that the new school playing field has not yet been seeded. This will take place in April weather permitting and will require at least six months to mature. Paul is concerned about the delay in this playing field for the new school. The school have access to the old school playing field until 31st July 2025 if required.
- 12.2. In addition, no planning permission has been given for outdoor storage of play equipment for the new school site. Equipment is spread across nine sheds on the old school site and it is unclear where this will move to. It is also unclear if Sport England will object to the 'loss' of some playing field for sports equipment storage. Paul Culley-Barber is working with NCC Children's Services and County Councillor Andrew Proctor to urgently resolve this matter.
- 12.3. Clerk (EB) to understand from our solicitor / planning department if the delay in the new school playing field will effect the Parish Council planning permission granted for developing the community hub on the old school site.
- 13. TO REVIEW THE SECTION 278 DESIGN REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW ACCESS AND APPROVE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 13.1. Clerk (EB) has submitted the Section 278 detailed design requirements on the planning portal as part of the planning conditions for the new access to the community hub site. This will be reviewed as an urgent matter by the planning department in order that the council can progress this quickly and create the new access whilst the other works are taking place in April on Planation Road in relation to the new school. The planning department has confirmed that they will write 'letters of comfort' regarding the planning conditions that the council cannot fulfil in time for this new access to be built, as they recognise the benefit of the council installing this entrance in conjunction with the other works. This will reduce disruption for parishioners and keep the costs down.
- 13.2. NPS are obtaining quotations for the work from local contractors for the new access. Clerk (EB) is obtaining quotations for the hedge works required. The council has some reserves for this work and has secured Parish Partnership funding for 2024/25 of £5,000 and hopes to obtain further Parish Partnership funding in 2025/26.
- 14. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE NEW COMMUNITY HUB CONCEPT DESIGNS AND MEETINGS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 14.1. The architect has drafted three concept designs, two with and one without a preschool.
- 14.2. The Preschool has met with the Parish Council for their thoughts and details of facilities they would like. Compromises will need to be made to achieve a possible solution. It was agreed to show the management staff of the Preschool the year 6 classroom to enable them to consider their options further. In addition, the council agreed to meet with the preschool trustees to understand their views on a possible new location. A statement of intent will be required if the Preschool is keen to relocate. Dates for any relocation have not been discussed.
- 14.3. The council agreed to then use this research to consider and possibly develop further concept design(s) as required.
- 14.4. The council resolved to pay the architect bills before the end of March to enable to grant funding to be reclaimed.
- 15. TO DISCUSS EV CHARGING POINTS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 15.1. The planning conditions for the community hub recommend six electric vehicle charging points. This is a NCC Highways recommendation only. Since this recommendation, 80 EV charging points have been approved by BDC Planning on Yarmouth Road (close to McDonald's), only 1.1mile away from this site. Taking this into account and the facilities provided at other, recently built community halls, the council unanimously resolved to go back to BDC Planning and propose installation of one electric vehicle charging point. Clerk (EB) to contact Planning to discuss.

- 15.2. The council noted that the new school is not supplied by the substation, on the old school site, but has its own electricity supply using power cables (now buried underground) from North of the A47.
- 16. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE SUBSTATION LEASE AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 16.1. The UK Power Networks substation lease has been delayed. NCC are reviewing removing the condition to say, 'the lease between UK Power Networks and themselves must be prepared and signed before the land transfer'. This is a concern for the Parish Council as this may result in extra costs and time for the Parish Council to resolve the lease after the land transfer. Clerk (EB) to request the matter is resolved before land transfer and if the lease is delayed all legal costs are covered by NCC Children's Services.
- 17. TO REVIEW QUOTATIONS FOR THE COURTHOUSE GUTTERING AND REPOINTING REPAIRS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 17.1. The council agreed that the most likely source of the damp in the Solicitor's Room is the missing gutter to the left of the side door. In addition, some repointing is required in this area and behind the recently replaced downpipe. Following a brief discussion, Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Stuart Smith) the council approve up to £7,000 for the full works on the Solicitor's Room, small section of hallway and outside repairs to the gutter and repointing. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerks to review the two detailed quotations (both listed building contractors the council have used before) once received and appoint a contractor for the works.
- 17.2. Clerk (EB) to liaise with the Courthouse Management Committee around timing. There is a likelihood that the walls will be stripped of wood panelling and plaster for a significant length of time which will need to be flexible.
- 18. TO DISCUSS TIMING OF TRIM TRAIL FOR WYNGATES AREA 3 AND CONSIDER NEXT ACTIONS**
- 18.1. The council agreed to discuss this further in September when further clarity is available on the new school site drainage. Clerk (SO) to contact S106 office regarding funds and liaise with BDC estate manager.
- 18.2. Clerk (EB) to contact Pentaco regarding bund reinstallation.
- 19. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS**
- 19.1. The council reviewed payments #155 to #170 totalling £5,843.76 (Appendix A) and the council unanimously resolved to approve the payments. The council noted a reconciliation at 4 January 2025 with a total bank balance of £1,149,260.44 (Appendix B).
- 19.2. In addition, the council noted the monthly checks carried out by Sarah Dhesi.
- 20. TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER TWO COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDING REQUESTS FROM HEATHLANDS COMMUNITY CENTRE AND BLOFIELD UNITED YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB**
- 20.1. The Finance Working party reviewed the documentation received by both groups, requested further clarity and made recommendations to the council. Following a brief discussion, Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council resolve to approve a grant donation of £5,000 towards the Heathlands Community Centre car park phase 2. This is subject to planning permission being in place for the works. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (SO) to email detail of the grant conditions to the group.
- 20.2. The council reviewed the Blofield United Youth Football Club Grant application. The project is at a very early stage and as such it is not possible for the council to consider funding at this time. The council understand that the group play at Heathlands Community Centre and any provision of facilities would need to be developed and agreed in conjunction with the Community Centre as they are the landowners. Clerk (SO) to update the group.
- 21. TO REVIEW A QUOTATION FOR HANDYMAN WORKS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 21.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the handyman works at a cost of £225, including repairs to the bandstand at Wyngates. Clerk (EB) to instruct the work.
- 21.2. Stuart Smith and Will Crane will repair the metal gate gas strut and ball joint at Wyngates.
- 22. TO CONSIDER REQUEST FROM FUNTIME CLUB TO USE THE YEAR 6 CLASSROOM FROM APRIL 2025 DUE TO A DELAY IN THE OFSTED PAPERWORK**

- 22.1. Following a brief discussion, Stuart Smith proposed the council are unable to offer this facility to the Funtime Club as the council will not take ownership of the building until the end of May (at the earliest) and works will be taking place on site, together with ongoing school usage for swimming / PE sessions when the site must remain secure. The council resolved to update the Funtime Club and ensure they now have Ofsted permissions for the new school site. Clerk (EB) to action.
- 23. TO CONSIDER A SPECIAL RESOLUTION FOR THE NORFOLK ALC TO CONVERT TO A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE (SO)**
- 23.1. The council support the special resolution proposed for Norfolk ALC. Clerk (EB) to feedback.
- 24. TO CONSIDER A FURTHER ASBESTOS REVIEW AT BLOFIELD COURTHOUSE**
- 24.1. To consider in March.
- 25. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 25.1. Yvonne Burton updated the council on the recent working party works clearing brambles, and a new sewer access has been identified. The risk assessment documentation has been reviewed and completed by all volunteers. A new fungus has been identified on the site.
- 26. TO CONSIDER REQUESTING THE COMMUNITY PAYBACK TEAM CARRY OUT THE CLEARING AND SANDING OF THE KISSING GATES ON PROW FP10 ACROSS YARMOUTH ROAD**
- 26.1. The council unanimously resolved to request the Community Payback Team carry out these works. Yvonne Burton to take photographs and liaise with the team to see if and when this work will be possible. Chipping spreading will also be required in Marty's Marsh.
- 27. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON A NEW BENCH LOCATION ON BLOFIELD CORNER ROAD**
- 27.1. As the residents on Borton Road who were approached, are unhappy with the proposed location of the bench, no bench will be placed at the entrance to Borton Road (off Blofield Corner Road).
- 27.2. The council agreed to review the entrance to the Bennetts site again, once the management company is established for the site.
- 28. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE HEATHLANDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**
- 28.1. Yvonne Burton reported that Heathlands continue to apply for grant funding towards their car park. They are holding a VE/VJ day on 4th May to celebrate the end of the war in Europe.
- 29. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**
- 29.1. The committee has got a brown bin for the Courthouse and are continuing to try and recruit new members. Robin Bunce will hand over the finances to the new treasurer.
- 30. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MARGARET HARKER HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AND AGREE A MEETING WITH THE COMMITTEE CHAIR**
- 30.1. Sarah Dhesi reported that the Margaret Harker Hall Committee still requires trustees. The chair has requested a meeting with the parish council. Clerk (EB) to arrange.

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

- 31. TO DISCUSS THE NEXT NEWSLETTER, COMMUNITY HUB UPDATE AND FOCAL POINT**
- 31.1. Stuart Smith will work on the final draft of the newsletter. It is still hoped a suitable volunteer editor will come forward to continue Focal Point.
- 32. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**
- 32.1. Yvonne Burton reported that the Brundall and Blofield Good Neighbourhood Scheme continues to provide a service to the community. There is a shortage of volunteers in Blofield which the council will help to publicise.
- 32.2. A free 'Learn to Fix (your bike) workshop' is being run at the Margaret Harker Hall on 2nd March.
- 32.3. An A47 dualling newsletter has been circulated to the council.
- 32.4. Yvonne Burton attended the Flood and Drought Summit on 31st January and provided a report to the Parish Council.

- 32.5. The Acle Police Neighbourhood Team have their next priority setting meeting on Thursday 13th March at 6pm on Microsoft Teams. Anyone can attend, please contact them via SNTAcle@norfolk.police.uk
- 32.6. A resident of Little Plumstead raised concerns about the lack of footpath linking Salhouse Road to Woodbastwick Road (known as Post Office Road / Dyes Road). This is a rural road between villages and not a road previously identified as requiring a footpath. The council is currently working towards its first priority for footpaths - a footpath joining Blofield and Blofield Heath making the amenities more accessible to both areas. Clerk (EB) to update the resident.
- 32.7. Strumpshaw Neighbourhood Plan is out for pre-submission consultation.
- 32.8. Tree planting grants of up to £1000 from Broadland District Council are available, to be planted by end of March 2025.

33. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- 33.1. To discuss the tidying of PROW FP4 parallel to the A47.

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

- 34.1. Monday 24th March 2025 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

35. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

- 35.1. Thursday 27th March 2025 at 7:30pm at Heathlands Community Centre, refreshments will be served.

36. 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

- 36.1. The council unanimously resolved to pass the resolution detailed above.

37. TO DISCUSS LAND WITHIN THE PARISH

- 37.1. The council unanimously resolved to continue exploring the land opportunities across the parish.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:30pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....