

ASHWELLTHORPE AND FUNDENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 19th March 2024 at
6.50 pm Meeting held at Thorpe Hall Ashwellthorpe

Present: J Ives (Chair)
M Williams
C Leggett
S Allen
R Burridge
S Engamba
C Wood joined after item 3

Alan Arber (Clerk)

District Councillor Ian Spratt and County Councillor Catherine Rowett

Two members of the public in attendance.

1) Apologies for Absence

No apologies.

2) To consider co-option of a new councillor

Charlotte Wood Introduced herself to the council and detailed why she would like to join the council.

After a short discussion all councillors agreed Charlotte Wood as the new parish councillor for Ashwellthorpe and Fundenhall PC.

3) New councillor to sign all forms and witnessed by the clerk

Charlotte Wood then signed the necessary forms such as Acceptance of Office witnessed by the clerk and the Register of interests form as required and joined the meeting as the new co-opted councillor of Ashwellthorpe and Fundenhall Parish Council.

4) Declarations of Interest.

Chair.....

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S Allen for a
payment J Ives for a
payment All agreed.

5) Minutes of the Meetings on 9th January 2024

The minutes were then agreed and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr Williams Seconded: Cllr Leggett

6) Public Open Forum

County Councillor Catherine Rowett gave the following report attached as Appendix 1

A question was raised by a councillor as to how locals could utilise the local carparks parking for free and get the bus using their bus passes. There was no provision the county councillor was aware of but she felt there may be areas you can pay to park. Park and ride are a good option, but you can only use your bus pass at a reduced rate after 9.30am. District Councillor Ian Spratt gave the following report attached as appendix 2.

A parishioner brought up the issue of a recent planning application 2023/3547 and that the wording was acrimonious to him, and he requested a formal minuted apology. A frank discussion on this occurred between both the parishioners and the councillors. It was agreed that the parish council would email a letter to the parishioner and send a letter to SNDC planning retracting their comments and this would hope to be done in the next few days dependent on the clerk's time.

7) Planning

2024/0678 Supported by the Parish Council. No issues.

8) Matter Arising from previous Minutes.

No matter arising.

Chair.....

9) To hear an update and consider any necessary action regarding the following:

To resolve any issues with Speed Awareness Machines and location.

10). Finance

a) To note the following payments made since last meeting.

b) To consider payment of the following:

I.	A Arber	January Salary	€373.82
II.	A Arber	February Salary	f373.82
		Mobile Internet for Clerk's office January	f41.18
IV.	EE	Mobile Internet for clerk's office February	f41.18
		Mobile internet for clerks office March	E41.18
VI.	Npower	Street Lights January	f68.71
VII.	Npower	Street lights February	E75.88
VIII.	Npower	Street Lights march	E65.03
IX.	W Hodgson	Grass cutting	E115.00
X.	HMRC	Tax and Ni January	E123.32
XI.	HMRC	Tax and NI February	f86.80
XII.	S Allen	Maintenance items	f205.47
XIII.	J Ives	New planters	09.77
XIV.	TT Jones	Street Light maintenance	E52.48
XV.	Parish Online	Gov.uk email charge	f216.00
XVI.	ICO	Annual Charge for	E35.00
XVII.	S jackman	New website	f270.00
XVIII.	An Arber	Wix annual charge for new website	f108.00
XIX.	Ang in Bloom	Seminar	f40.00
XX.	NPTS	Essential Seminar	E120.90
XXI.	An Arber	Printer Ink	27.98
XXII.		To note any payments received after the agenda is posted	
c)		Receipts since last meeting	
		Transfer from saver account	EO.91
d)		To receive the Internal control for the Fourth quarter	
		Internal control Officer Councillor Leggett had done the internal control and found no issues.	
e)		To receive the councils current standing	
		The clerk produced the bank statement for the end of Feb and the balance at the start of march was f9411.04.	

Chair.....

The Chair signed the bank statements as a true record of this minute. There was no meeting in Feb due to the clerk's leave.

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The clerk produced a report to show that the balance at the end of March after the EE mobile charge comes out is E7676.23 which is around f1250 up from the year end last year.

11) Update on Thorpe Hall and other issues.

The clerk reported that he has filled the forms for the planning application, and this will be submitted with the necessary documents asap.

The chair has resigned as a trustee and has asked the other trustees for an update on events and discovered the hall is now being used a lot for varied events.

The village hall committee will take on the entrance to the village hall on both sides.

Grass cutting on the play area needs to be put to Omache Gardens due to their good work.

A request was made for bike racks at the village hall, and this would be made to The Village Hall.

D-Day event will be held on 8th June 2-6pm.

a) Blacksmiths Lane

As detailed in the district councillor's report a meeting has taken place with all parties and hopefully action will be moved forward, and the issue can be stopped.

b) Footpaths

It was discussed how we get a better reporting system for issues with the footpaths and that we utilise maybe groups in the village to help Serge with reporting. We will also put the highways reporting system link on our new website.

c) Village maintenance

The clerk reported that Simon Allen had installed the new noticeboard and the new planter and he was thanked by everyone for his diligent work on this.

d) To review the data from the SAM 2 machine including New Road

The data from the last location on New Road is quite encouraging with a maximum weekly speed not above 35 mph although it is sad to report that we had one speeder on 30/12 at 70mph. It is also worrying in that the 2 months we had the SAM 2 machine in place the average

number of vehicles daily was 2880 which is very high.

- e) To look at current providers for contractors to the parish council for services

Chair.....

The clerk has investigated this but had not found any new contractors and we are tied into our insurance agreement for another 2 years so it was best to leave this till late Dec to look at again. The clerk had spoken to Will at Omache Gardens around the possibility of a 3-year contract for his grass cutting moving forward. The councillors agreed this would be a good project. All agreed and the clerk will get the costs back to councillors along with any increments moving forward.

- f). Wood farm development

The village hall will cut the part detailed earlier but the other plot still needs looking at. It is Mr Musket's land and he should be undertaking the work but currently the parish council have been paying and will need to be reimbursed by Mr Muskett.

- g). New Website for The Parish council

The new website looks good and should be finished by the end of March and it was agreed we would look at putting more information on around footpaths and the link to the highways reporting form for parishioners to also use. New pages will be added once agreed and worked out.

- h). To agree parish meeting dates for 2024-2025

The clerk produced the proposed dates on a sheet and all agreed they were acceptable and the clerk had also sent them to the village hall co-ordinator for her attention.

- 12). Correspondence.

Asset register has been updated

Planning application 2024/0678 received

Precept request paperwork sent in

New website works underway and looking good and should be completed by end of March

Complaint received from a parishioner

Blacksmith's Lane meeting attended and actions agreed

Pride in place clean it and bloom grant received

The internal auditor has confirmed and she is ready to do our internal audit and emailed form for clerk to work at before submission New Road noticeboard installed

Internal Control undertaken

Chair.....

All Defib checks undertaken
Play area checks undertaken
Forms given to Charlotte for Co-Option
Year-end forms received
Email from Village Hall to say they own the part of land on the right as you enter and they will maintain it

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New website domain work done and council website on Google
Gov.uk email addresses almost complete
Email on Flooding on Whipps Lane Fundenhall and all reported to Highways

13) Items for the Next Meeting:

Year End
Website
Grass cutting contract
Wreningham school
Memorial plaques

14) Date and Place of the Next Meeting:

Thorpe Hall 7pm on 16th April 2024

Meeting closed

Chair.....

Chair.....

Councillor report, March 2024, from Catherine Rowett

1 8/03/2024

Council budget

The main issue in February at County Council was setting the budget for 2024-25. Despite the gloomy outlook and extensive cuts (caused by cuts in central government grant and the below inflation cap on how much council tax rise the council is allowed to request), the administration's budget proposals were passed in full council. All the opposition parties, including my Green group, presented alternative budget proposals, but the Conservatives currently still have a majority on the council.

The MIC

The Minimum Income Guarantee is a way of subsidising the cost of care, including residential care, for severely disabled people who need to pay for care out of their allowance. It ensures that however much their care costs, they will have some income left to spend on basic necessities such as clothing, shoes, toiletries, outings and so on. The council is required to ensure that people have a certain level of income left, so even if their care costs more to provide, the council will cover the remaining cost so as to leave the person with a little income left over, and families will not be out of pocket if they have a disabled person living with them.

The Council are currently consulting on their plan to save money by reduce the MIG in Norfolk, which would mean that disabled people have to pay more for their residential or home care. This will have a considerable impact on the quality of life and personal dignity of young and working age disabled people given that we are facing continuing inflation in costs for clothing and other necessities.

The consultation opened on 19th February and closes on May 17th this year. You can take part

▪ Online at www.norfolk.gov.uk/savingsproposals ▪

By email at haveyoursav@norfolk.gov.uk ▪ By post, writing to:

The Minimum Income Guarantee Consultation 2024/25 Freepost Plus RTCL-XSTT-JZSK

Some anger has been caused because they are offering only two options, to reduce the MIG for everyone under pension age, or to reduce it for everyone under pension age and additionally reduce it even more for young people of 18 to 25. They are not offering the option of keeping it as it is. In our Green group budget proposals we had hoped to get the council to agree to resolve to retain the current levels Of income for disabled people, with an adjusted rise for inflation.

A new station for South Norfolk?

YOU may have seen the report in the newspaper about my proposal to get the old Fornsett station (near Long Stratton) reopened. I'm keen that communities that have a railway running nearby should have easy local access to speedy travel to Norwich and London. I suggested to the County Council that it would be worth making a capital purchase of the land on which the old station used to lie, which is currently available for purchase. Much of it is effectively a brownfield site since it was formerly the station yard, sidings and Other facilities at the junction with the old line that ran to Wymondham. I am suggesting that the County could purchase it now, and hold the land as part of the County Farms portfolio, until such time as the plans for restoring the station are complete, and then later it would recoup additional income from it by leasing it for the station and associated car park and businesses etc., while potentially retaining some (or selling it) as farm land. There are many campaign groups who are keen to rebuild a good railway system, and to increase the ambitions of the county towards making that happen properly, so I shall continue to push for this, and a parkway station at Cringleford for the research park, having sown the seeds of the idea in our budget proposals for 2024.

Road Safety Schemes:

I've been working with Adam Mayo (highways officer) to identify the best way to spend my highways budget this Spring, mainly to solve longstanding suggestions for road safety schemes that weren't awarded funding in the Road Safety Community Fund this winter. After the new financial year starts I shall have a new budget to spend and will try to pick up some other outstanding requests and new issues that have emerged since we had all that water. I'm also working on getting a county-wide scheme to make it easier to get safe speed limits if you want them--and where necessary we'll also need to push for nation-wide changes on this—and I am also investigating how we might get nation-wide solutions for the problem of large lorries following sat nav and computer generated routes that include lanes that are too narrow and too bendy for long vehicles.

Wet weather and floods

The wet weather and flooding problems this year have been devastating for most of the villages in West Depwade. The officers have been working flat out, and have spent more than a year's budget on assistance and problem solving, so there has been a lot of activity to try to secure additional funding to help with the costs. I apologise to

the many people who have been told that their problem isn't bad enough to merit intervention, but unfortunately officers have had to prioritise situations where there is danger to life and flooding of properties. Do let me know if there are really serious problems you haven't been able to solve, and report road flooding or blocked roads to the County flood reporting site. [Report a flood - Norfolk County Council](#).

Norfolk County Council Climate Change Strategy

Troublesome wet weather and coastal erosion/rising river levels are among the growing consequences of global climate change. On 13 March 2024 the Infrastructure and Development Committee discussed the third tranche of Norfolk County Council's strategy for actions to deliver the climate change strategy. The actions will support low carbon transport, climate adaptation, and decarbonisation of local business and industry. Initiatives include:

- A pilot to develop a sustainable and viable seaweed industry in Norfolk - the project will work with partners in the Netherlands, already implementing sea farms.
- Supporting the development of nature-based solutions to help secure Norfolk's long term water resilience. • Further walking and cycling improvements in places including King's Lynn, Norwich, Great Yarmouth, and Dereham.

Read the Infrastructure and Development Committee report [here](#) or watch the meeting [here](#).

Government schemes:

Community Ownership Fund: Round 4 update

The Community Ownership Fund has published the prospectus and guidance for Round 4, the final round of the fund. This fund helps community groups buy or renovate assets that would otherwise be lost to the community.

Capital funding available: Up to \$.2 million for all asset types, but most awards will be for up to Z250,000 of capital funding.

Revenue funding available: No more than \$50,000 or 20% of the total capital funding applied for, whichever is smaller. All groups are encouraged to apply for revenue funding, as all projects will incur initial running costs.

Round 4 Prospectus available [here](#). Additional government guidance available [here](#). Development support is also now available to applicants via the [My Community website](#). They will also be providing informative webinars on the following topics which you can register for now:

[How to create a strong Community Ownership Fund application](#) [How to raise match funding for your Community Ownership Fund project](#)

Extension of Platinum Jubilee Village Hall funding

The government is providing additional funds for the Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund. The original \$3m capital fund to improve and modernise village hall facilities ahead of the Platinum Jubilee was announced in 2022. An additional \$5m has now been allocated.

Ofsted Consultation — the Big Listen launched

Ofsted's Chief Inspector has promised transparency and openness as they work to rebuild and strengthen the confidence of professionals and the public. As part of Ofsted's wish to improve, they have launched the Big Listen Consultation. The consultation seeks views across their work, from schools and children's social care to teacher training and early years. They are seeking views about Ofsted's work from the full range of professionals and providers with whom they work, as well as from parents, carers, children and learners. The adult survey is available

(There's going to be other consultations to get the views of children).

County Council campaigns this month:

Food waste week 1 8th to 24th March

Norfolk County Council's Food Savvy team will be supporting national Food Waste Action Week, to raise awareness Of food waste issues and give practical tips to help householders cut down on the amount they throw away. More information can be found on their food savvy website [here](#).

Contact me on

Catherine.rowett.ellr@norfolk.gov.uk for Council-related business.

See also my facebook page [here](#).

Catherine Rewett 10
March2024

Ashwellthorpe & Fundenhall Parish Council — 19th March 2024

District Councillor Report

Grants

Members ward grants will open again in April 24. Contact your District Councillors for further information.

Leader of South Norfolk Council

Following his elevation to the peerage, John Fuller (now Baron Fuller of Gorleston-on-Sea) has announced that he will be standing down as Leader of South Norfolk Council. At the SNC Cabinet meeting on 18th March 2024, Lord Fuller announced that the Conservative councillor group will elect a new leader at a meeting on 25th March.

Blacksmith's Lane

Following the concerns expressed by a resident in Blacksmith's Lane about HGVs using the route, despite width and weight restrictions, District Councillors, Bob McClenning and Ian Spratt, together with County Councillor Catherine Rowett, Alan Arber and a member of Highways made a site visit recently to examine these problems. Been made aware of this hopefully Highways will start to implement measures to prevent this continuing.

Hethel Planning Applications

The major expansion of Lotus Cars' technology park could now be slowed down by planning issues. The development has hit a potential snag after Norfolk County Council's flooding and historic environment teams lodged issues with the proposals.

The flooding department has called for an acceptable Flood Risk Assessment Drainage Strategy, alongside further information from Lotus on how it plans to ensure the expansion would not "adversely impact flood risk".

This comes amid a series of concerns raised about drainage issues in and around Hethel - including the impact of a 23-home development in Bracon Ash. The council's historic environment team also wants to investigate the land proposed for the site. A letter sent to South Norfolk Council's planning committee read: "There is potential for previously unidentified heritage assets with archaeological interest (buried archaeological remains) to be present within the current application site and that their significance would be affected by the proposed development.

Hethersett Academy /Inspiration Trust

Inspiration Trust has published the results of its consultation on admission arrangements. There will be no change to the admission arrangements for Hethersett Academy, which means that the new Cringleford Prep will become an additional feeder school. This will put even more pressure on school places in future years, potentially restricting opportunities for children from Mulbarton and neighbouring villages. The consultation received 247 responses.

Flooding on B1113

District Councillors are still active in attempting to resolve this, but to date we have still had no response from either County Councillor Daniel Elmer or Graham Plant, cabinet lead for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport. We are hoping we might achieve some sort of resolution in the near future however following an article published in the EDP on Friday 8th March following an interview with Ian Spratt, which highlighted your District Councillors concerns about the lack of response or action received so far. Speaking to other parish councils also concerned with this it has been suggested that a more coordinated approach should be considered by all parishes affected. Orsted appear to be taking measures to mitigate the flooding and have arranging a meeting at Swardeston Village Hall on 11th April to discuss this further.

Council Tax Increases

South Norfolk voted to increase Council Tax by £5 for a Band D property (3%) at SNC Council on Wednesday 21st Feb. Budgets for 24/25 were signed off on the same day. Higher interest rates and VAT changes have created a surplus for 23/24. All political parties agreed late amendments to allocate the surplus to service improvements including E350,000 to the Household Support, strengthening planning enforcement and additional resources to work with landowners on flood prevention.

Cllr. Stephen Ridley

We note the unfortunate death of South Norfolk Councillor Stephen Ridley, who had represented Bunwell since 2019. This will trigger a by-election in due course.

'Norwich to Tilbury' received 12th March.

The ESO Network Study has just been published.

Pylons East Anglia have slammed the review of options for the grid saying:

"The voluntary nature of the Government's offshore coordination scheme (OCSS) resulted in a far too narrow review. For anyone in East Anglia seeking a fully offshore grid it is a whitewash. We see none of the cost or environmental benefits of integration that we would see from a fully coordinated offshore system, which would reduce the amount of infrastructure needed. In fact, the OCSS leads to even more infrastructure on land, with potential for additional pylons between Friston, in Suffolk, and Tilbury, in Essex. "

None the less, the review highlighted the potential economic, environmental and community benefits from using HVDC underground cabling. This has the highest economic benefits (even better than current pylon proposals) if delivery of both options were to be deferred until 2034. The Pylons East Anglia team say, "we will be studying this option very carefully". For the latest information visit <https://pylonseastanglia.co.uk>

Bob McClenning, Ian Spratt & Jim Webber

Councillor Contact Details

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19th March 2024