

Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 14th March 2022 at from 7.30pm – 10:00pm in Blofield Courthouse. It was noted that the meeting scheduled for the 14th February 2022 was cancelled at short notice due to a small number of councillors being available as a result of COVID isolating within the council.

PRESENT

Stuart Smith, Paul Culley-Barber, Yvonne Burton, Stella Shackle, Rebecca Blezard and Sarah Osbaldeston (Clerk) and Eleanor Bannister (Deputy Clerk).

1. Welcome and Introduction to the meeting by Chair, Stuart Smith.
2. **TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
 - 2.1. Mary Moxon listened to the meeting online but did not take any part in voting. Pat Wilson, Joseph Scholes and Sarah Dhesi sent their apologies which were accepted by the council.
3. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
 - 3.1. Items 8.1, 11, 12, 29, 30, 31 – Paul Culley Barber declared pecuniary interests.
 - 3.2. Items 29, 30, 31 – Yvonne Burton declared a pecuniary interest.
 - 3.3. Item 35 - Rebecca Blezard declared an 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. Two parishioners were present for a planning agenda item. Cllr Andrew Proctor sent his apologies.
5. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11TH OCTOBER 2021**
 - 5.1. Stella Shackle proposed (seconded by Yvonne Burton) the council approved the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th October 2021. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal and the minutes were duly signed by the chair.
6. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 17TH JANUARY 2022**
 - 6.1. Paul Culley-Barber proposed (seconded by Rebecca Blezard) the council approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th January 2022. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal and the minutes were duly signed by the chair.
7. **TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA**
 - 7.1. The new churchyard gate has been repaired so it no longer sticks.
 - 7.2. The Mill Road bench has been repaired and is back in place.
 - 7.3. The bench (collected from outside the Post Office/spa shop) – is pending oiling and this can be done just before it is to be delivered/re-positioned. Council to decide on a new location in the spring.
 - 7.4. The dog waste bin at the Mill Road/Pedham Road/Hemblington Hall Road junction has not been collected twice a week yet. Clerk (SO) to chase again with Broadland District Council.
8. **TO CONSIDER FEEDBACK ON ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA (Clerk (EB) to submit comments to BDC)**
 - 8.1. **Application: 20220229**

Description: Replacement roof and side extension
Location: Red Berries, Holly Lane, Blofield NR13 4BX

The Parish Council agreed to make no comment on this application. However, if new or additional information comes to light it would appreciate the opportunity to consider this further.

A parishioner spoke and raised concerns regarding planning application 20220211.

8.2. Application: 20220211

Description: single storey front extension including new garage, single and 1.5 storey side/rear extension creating annexe accommodation

Location: Aldwin, Woodbastwick Road, Blofield, Norwich, NR13 4QH

This proposal is for a very large extension to more than double the footprint of the property on Woodbastwick Road. Moving from 3-bedroom bungalow to a 6-bedroom property comprising the original enlarged dwelling and annex offering a studio flat and 2 bedrooms.

The parish council object to this application with the following comments:

- **It is contrary to the Blofield Neighbourhood Plan** – HOU4 ‘Rural image, heights and massing’.
- **It looks as if the development will overshadow the neighbouring property to the north; a material consideration.** (If it were a single-story rear / side extension then it would be less likely to impact the neighbouring property but the fact that it is close to a two-storey side looks like it would have implications and block light.)
- **Car parking:** The plot is large enough to contain extension at the back, but the Council is unsure of the availability of car parking spaces with this increase as the house front is also extending towards the road. This is not considered to be in keeping with the area. Additionally, a hardstanding is already being created in the front garden prior to application coming to committee. Question: Is semi permeable paving being used for the car park area?
- **Drainage:** Into the existing system and soakaways is also a real concern as this was deemed impossible with the Jenkinson site.

8.3. Application: 20220109

Description: Erection of a 9 Bay Building which will be used for machinery storage, hay/straw storage and livestock use

Location: Land off Hall Road, Hall Road, Blofield, NR13 4DE

The Parish Council agreed to make no comment on this application. However, if new or additional information comes to light it would appreciate the opportunity to consider this further.

8.4. Application: 20220260

Description: Single-storey side extension

Location: 6 Newstead Gardens, Blofield, NR13 4FN

The Parish Council agreed to make no comment on this application. However, if new or additional information comes to light it would appreciate the opportunity to consider this further.

9. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DAWSONS WAY PLANNING APPLICATION 20211717 APPEAL

- 9.1. Dawsons Way drainage strategy went to planning committee 5/1/22, and it was agreed to wait 12 months from the decision date to allow road to be top dressed and then check the system was working with a new drainage report so proving it would not increase flooding elsewhere. Condition was varied so the applicant is able to complete and sell all the properties. The decision has not been uploaded onto the application site, and the applicant has appealed this decision. Broadland District Council are now awaiting the decision of appeals inspector as to whether this can be taken as an appeal, and to publish reasons for it if this moves further. This process can take up to 18 weeks.

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

10.1. Application: 20220273

Description: Single storey rear extension, replacement of flat roof to garage with pitched roof and window & door alterations to the front elevation

Location: 3 Reve Crescent, Blofield, NR13 4RX

The Parish Council agreed to make no comment on this application. However, if new or additional information comes to light it would appreciate the opportunity to consider this further.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE RECENT NCC CHILDREN'S SERVICES / BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 11.1. The parish council have drawn up a draft heads of terms document detailing key points for the land exchange. NCC CS have identified that this needs splitting into two documents. NCC CS will review the council draft document and provide feedback as soon as possible.
- 11.2. Initial land surveys are taking place on the Wyngate land. The target date for the school opening is Summer 2024. The council continue to meet with Children's Services for updates.

12. TO NOTE CORRESPONDENCE FROM BDC REGARDING COMMUNITY USE AND PARKING ON THE 'OLD SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD'

- 12.1. Broadland District Council have confirmed that 'in principle' a community facility on the 'old school playing field' would be supported in terms of development plan policy and the Blofield Neighbourhood Plan. However, the detail such as scale/layout/appearance/noise assessment/parking provision are all significant factors to consider.

13. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOWN PIT POND TREES AND CLEARANCE AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 13.1. Work has now been carried out on the Town Pit Pond. The dead, fallen trees have been removed. The Pond has been cleared and herbicide will be sprayed in April to reduce the reed growth.
- 13.2. The drains that join the road surface into the Town Pit have now been cleared by Norfolk County Council Highways.

14. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON QUOTATIONS FOR CULVERT WORK/BRIDGE PROJECT AT MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 14.1. Some culvert repair quotations and new bridge quotations have been received. There is notable variation in both the costs and the proposed solution to the problem by different companies. The council agreed to take the detail received to date and approach the Environmental Agency for guidance on the best repair solution for the culvert and best bridge solution. The council will then obtain detailed comparative quotations for the work. Clerk (EB) to progress.

15. TO CONSIDER A SPECIAL MOTION TO RECONSIDER ITEM 13.3 ON THE 6TH DECEMBER 2021 AGENDA

- 15.1. The parish council agreed to reconsider the motion agreed in item 13.3 in the December 2021 meeting.
- 15.2. After a detailed discussion the following proposal (items 15.2.1 - 15.2.6) was unanimously approved. Clerk (EB) to advise Brundall Parish Council.
 - 15.2.1. Blofield Parish Council have agreed the following points regarding the new bridge:
 - 15.2.2. Brundall Parish Council take ownership of the bridge as it is solely on their land.
 - 15.2.3. Brundall Parish Council will be responsible for insuring the bridge.
 - 15.2.4. Should a replacement be required in the future the two councils will meet to discuss the funding of the replacement.
 - 15.2.5. Blofield Parish Council agree to share any maintenance costs (not bank related) with Brundall Parish Council on a 50% / 50% basis.
 - 15.2.6. As confirmed by Brundall Parish Council, maintenance of both banks the bridge sits upon, will be the responsibility of Brundall Parish Council as the land is in their ownership.

16. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COURTHOUSE WINDOW REPLACEMENTS, APPROVE BUILDING REGULATION COSTS AND REVIEW QUOTATIONS FOR SCAFFOLDING

- 16.1. Building regulations are required for the replacement windows work at Blofield Courthouse. This has involved further expenditure of around £500. The council unanimously approved this additional expenditure. Work on the building of the replacement toilet window has commenced. Clerk (EB) to continue working on quotations for the cell bars work, repointing and scaffolding quotations.

- 17. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COUNTRY PARK PROJECT AND APPROVE 'IN PRINCIPLE' THE SETUP OF A CIO**
- 17.1. Stuart Smith provided an update from the recent meeting with Brundall Parish Council.
- 17.2. Stuart Smith proposed the council approve 'in principle' the set-up of a CIO as the management structure for the country park. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 17.3. The working party have agreed to a clerk and two council representatives from each council working together to set up a draft constitution for the CIO. Clerk (SO) to request a cost from our solicitors for reviewing a draft constitution.
- 17.4. Broadland District Council and the Section 106 officer have agreed that monies required for legally setting up the CIO can come from the section 106 funds the developer has provided for the project.
- 17.5. The Deputy Clerk (Eleanor Bannister) has worked hard on the questionnaire for the parish and will liaise with Brundall to develop further.
- 18. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CHURCHYARD GATE WORKS**
- 18.1. The new churchyard gate at the back of the churchyard will be installed on the 19th April 2022. Clerk (EB) to liaise with the installer and Parochial Church Council representative to ensure all runs smoothly.
- 19. TO NOTE THE GARDEN CUTTING CONTRACTOR WITHIN THE PARISH FOR 2022**
- 19.1. The council approved the renewal of the grass cutting contract within the parish for 2022 at a cost of £3247.50. This covers cutting at the Town Pit pond, Marty's Marsh and The Courthouse and weedkilling around signage. It also covers churchyard grass cutting and tree maintenance. In addition, the council agreed to continue with delegated grass cutting at a cost of £2465 for the verges within the parish. This is funded by Norfolk County Council.
- 20. TO CONSIDER NPTS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**
- 20.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the NPTS membership for 2022/23 at a cost of £525.
- 21. TO CONSIDER ZOOM LICENCE RENEWAL**
- 21.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the Zoom licence renewal for 2022/23 at a cost of £98.94.
- 22. TO NOTE UNSUCCESSFUL PARISH PARTNERSHIP BID 2022/23**
- 22.1. The council noted their unsuccessful bid for funding for a fixed position speed sign within the parish.
- 23. TO CONSIDER A SMALL GRANTS FUNDING REQUEST FROM BLOFIELD AND BRUNDALL MENS SHEDS**
- 23.1. Following a brief discussion, the council unanimously agreed to provide a small grant of £200 to the Blofield and Brundall Mens Shed Group. Clerk (SO) to arrange payment.
- 24. TO CONSIDER A DONATION REQUEST FROM NORFOLK CITIZENS ADVICE**
- 24.1. Following a brief discussion, the council unanimously agreed to provide a small donation of £50 to Norfolk Citizens Advice. Clerk (SO) to arrange payment.
- 25. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS**
- 25.1. The council noted the payments made in February 2022 of vouchers #187 - #199 totalling £3,193.67 (Appendix A). The council unanimously resolved to approve all payments for March 2022 of vouchers #200 - #223 totalling £11,441.92 (Appendix B). Clerk (SO) to make payments.
- 25.2. The council noted the bank reconciliation balance at 4 February 2022 of £908,583.10 (Appendix C).

26. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON S106 FUNDS FROM BDC AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS

26.1. The clerk (SO) advised that the badger homes development S106 funds is approaching its expiry date. The Section 106 officer at Broadland District Council has advised that this can be extended by drawing up a Deed of Variation with a small legal cost of approximately £300 for each party. After a brief discussion, the council unanimously resolved to pay both party's legal costs at approximately £600 in total. This will give more time for the section 106 funds to be spent when the community project progresses. Clerk (SO) to confirm extension and ascertain when the variation will extend until.

27. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING REVISED DOCUMENTS DRAFTED BY THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY

27.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the revised documents detailed below for 2022/23.

- Standing Orders
- Finance Regulations
- 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
- Complaints Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Filming and Recording Policy
- Dark Skies Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy.

28. TO APPROVE COMMENTS/DRAFT OF THE A47 NORTH BURLINGHAM SCHEME HEADS OF TERMS AGREEMENT

28.1. The first draft of alterations have been made by Highways England. A second revised Heads of Term agreement is now with the council for further review. The council agreed to refer this to the Allotment Association and bring the final draft back to the council in April. Clerk (EB) to action.

29. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION / COUNCIL WORKING PARTY MEETING AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

29.1. Eleanor Bannister (Deputy Clerk) reported that the plots are looking tidy. The plot holder's leases are being issued over the next week. Pest control is ongoing and effective. Eleanor is looking into if mole control is included in the monthly pest control cost.

30. TO NOTE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTION OF THE ALLOTMENT SITE AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

30.1. The Health and Safety inspection of the Allotment site was carried out in February 2022. No issues were noted.

31. TO NOTE THE APPENDICES ALTERATION FOR ALLOTMENTS LEASE AND RECEIVE AN UPDATE

31.1. The council noted the alteration to request allotment holders do not use parishioners email addresses in large circular emails.

- 32. TO NOTE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTION OF MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 32.1. The health and safety inspection has been carried out at Marty's Marsh. A tree damaged in the winter will require further work in the summer.
- 33. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON HIGHWAYS ENGLAND DESIGNATED FUNDS INFORMATION REQUESTS AND AGREE ACTIONS**
- 33.1. Sarah Dhesi has submitted bids for play equipment to National Highways designated funds for a feasibility study.
- 34. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS**
- 34.1. The council noted the minutes from the committee.
- 35. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MARGARET HARKER HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS**
- 35.1. The council noted the recent notes from the recent committee meeting.
- 36. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PROW FOOTPATH 7 CONCERNS AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 36.1. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the clerk (SO) will write to the PROW officer and NCC Highways officer to request further about having the footpath closed.
- 37. TO APPROVE A DRAFT PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER**
- 37.1. Stuart Smith detailed thoughts for the next newsletter. If possible, it will contain the country park questionnaire. Other thoughts included Marty's Marsh update, Doctors Surgery donation and images of the tidied Town Pit area. Stuart requested any article by Friday 18th March 2022.
- 38. TO CONSIDER A GREEN/ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**
- 38.1. This was postponed to a later date.
- 39. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**
- 39.1. A Police community engagement event took place at Heathlands Community Centre on 19th February between 10 and 12 pm.
- 39.2. BADCOG planted 14 roadside oaks on 22nd January 2022 along Dyes Road with permission of the landowner Mr Smith. The group will also deal with their aftercare.
- 39.3. The deputy clerk (EB) has put forward the next two names on the WWII street naming list for the development on Hall Road.
- 39.4. A parishioner raised concerns over the lack of footpath on the way out of the village west bound on the Yarmouth Road. A footpath along this section of the road is planned as part of the next developments in this area. Clerk (EB) has chased planning to ensure this improvement does not get lost with many revised reiterations of planning applications.
- 39.5. A new report providing an update on our Norwich Western Link project, to create a new dual carriageway road between the A47 and the western end of Broadland Northway, has been published. This report will be considered by the county council's cabinet when it meets on Monday 7 March 2022.
- 39.6. A member of the public has contacted the clerk delighted to find out that the Newstead Development has been named after her Grandfather Frederick Ernest Newsteads 1st cousins. They are also uncles of a lady who is now into her 90s and so pleased to hear that the two brothers were remembered by having Newstead Gardens named after them.
- 39.7. The clerk (SO) has advised NCC highways that the parish council are happy with the proposed speed change and installation of further yellow lines on Plantation Road as part of the Doctors Surgery improvements.
- 39.8. The council have been advised that the testing is taking place on the large empty piece of Wyngates land during March 2022.
- 39.9. A parishioner has raised concerns about ball games on the small community space in Wyngates. Clerk (EB) has contacted NCC to see if they will install any signage.

40. OTHER REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

40.1. Drainage within the parish – Mary Moxon.

41. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

41.1. Monday 25th April 2022 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

42. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING MEETING

42.1. After a detailed discussion the council agreed to cancel all planning meetings scheduled for 2022. The council are managing to include the planning applications within the one meeting a month and keep the meeting length to 2.5 hours. Clerks to action.

43. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

43.1. Thursday 31st March 2022 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

44. 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

44.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the above resolution.

45. TO RECEIVE A STAFFING UPDATE AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS

45.1. Stuart Smith advised that one to one's had recently been conducted with each of the Clerks, both of which were satisfactory and nothing of significance to be reported.

45.2. As a result of the one to one with Eleanor Bannister and in consultation with the Clerk, Sarah Osbaldeston, and Vice Chair Sarah Dhesi the council unanimously agreed to formally end the parole period for Eleanor and to inform her that the role would be transitioned to permanent in line with her contract.

45.3. The Chair informed the Council that the level and method of payment of the Clerks expenses has not been in line with HMRC guidelines, thus putting the Council, as the Corporate body, at risk of financial penalties should this be investigated and that the Council has an obligation to ensure conformance. As a consequence, a paper has been prepared by the Chair and discussed with the Vice Chair and both Clerks and the council agreed that payment of the full "Work from Home" allowance would be adopted in future.

45.4. The Clerk, Sarah Osbaldeston, has over a number of years, accrued a number of hours worked over and above her contractual obligation. This has historically not been addressed on an annual basis and has risen to significant levels. As the budget for 2021-22 is forecast to have an under spend against Wages and Salaries, the Chair encouraged and agreed that the Clerk should submit an additional salary payment, in order to address the bulk of these back hours (evidenced in payments list for March 2022). The council agreed to make this payment. Minimal hours now remain and this must be addressed, where accrued, on an annual basis as a minimum going forward for both Clerks.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:00pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....