

Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 22nd May 2023 at from 7.30pm – 10.00pm in Blofield Courthouse.

PRESENT

Stuart Smith, Sarah Dhesi, Paul Culley-Barber, William Crane, Yvonne Burton, Stella Shackle, Joseph Scholes 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.
3. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
 - 3.1. The council unanimously resolved to grant dispensation for Mary Moxon to continue as a parish councillor joining parish council meetings online via Zoom.
 - 3.2. Items 10,14 and 31 – Paul Culley-Barber declared pecuniary interests.
 - 3.3. Item 31 – Yvonne Burton declared pecuniary interests.
 - 3.4. Items 10, 14 and 15 - William Crane declared pecuniary interests.
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. Both newly elected district councillors were present, Nigel Brennan and Paul Newstead. 10 parishioners were present raising concerns regarding planning application 7.1 (The Conifers 2023/1086) and agenda item 10 (the proposed secondary footpath across Wyngates Area 3).
5. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24TH APRIL 2023**
 - 5.1. Following minor amendments, the council unanimously resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2023 and the minutes were duly signed by the chair.
6. **TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA**
 - 6.1. 42.7 - Yvonne Burton has reported the missing postbox to the post office and it is being investigated.
 - 6.2. 31.2 - The Clerk, Eleanor Bannister is updating the Marty's Marsh risk assessments for Scythes.
 - 6.3. 10.6 - The footpath on Hall Road in Blofield Heath is now being built.
 - 6.4. The gate at the back of Blofield churchyard has been repaired.
 - 6.5. 20211717 - Dawsons Way drainage system appeal – The planning inspectorate has been in touch with BDC so hopefully a decision will be made shortly.
7. **PLANNING**
 - 7.1. Application: 2023/1086
Description: Detached garage to front of property
Location: The Conifers, Garden Road, Blofield, Norwich, NR13 4JL
*The Parish council agreed to make the following comments on this application.
Please note that the Parish Council previously submitted comments in February on application 20230173 which is closely related to 2023/1086 – as are previous applications related to The Conifers site, namely 20221457 and 20230009 (the latter was rejected). Please consider the comments the council submitted on 23rd February 2023 alongside the ones below as they are still relevant.
In summary, the Parish Council strongly objects to this application on the basis of:*

- *It is an over-development of the site that will lead to loss of light and lead to further overshadowing for the neighbouring property.*
- *The excessive height, and width of the proposed new garage building is out of keeping with the area. (This is further to the overshadowing caused by the existing garage on the original property that has recently been converted to living accommodation - through permitted development. The parish council objected to this on the issue of overshadowing and loss of light and had asked for it to be called in by the two previous district councillors and they did act.)*
- *The new plans for a garage to the front of the property, also include velux windows which are not required for a garage.*
- *Height dimensions are not easy to assess in the recent plans submitted. (However, the garage plans state the eaves will be 2.480m and the total roof height will be 5.930m.) This appears to be over twice the height of a normal, flat roof garage and this additional height is not required for a garage. (The only obvious reason for twice the height of a normal garage and velux windows that the Parish Council can consider would be if the garage was going to be converted into a dwelling.)*

Therefore, should this application be considered further, the Parish Council requests a flat, or much lower pent roof garage to reduce overshadowing concerns and loss of light.

After the Parish Council agreed the above response, District Cllr. Nigel Brennan confirmed to the Parish Council that he had called in application 2023/1086 on material considerations including not in keeping with local area.

7.2. Application: 2023/1269

Description: Change of use of land from horse grazing to vehicle storage B8 to include boundary treatment of species rich hedgerow and scattered trees
Location: Atlantic Trading (Norfolk) Ltd, Sparrow Hall Farm, Yarmouth Road, Blofield

The Parish council agreed to make the following comments on this application.

It requests confirmation of the type of surface that will be used to park cars on. If tarmac or heavy-duty with limited drainage options this would be a concern given potential flooding issues. Please confirm drainage system would be a SUDS system and that this would be checked to ensure that there will not be an increase in the risk of surface water flooding elsewhere.

It strongly recommends and requests that there is a double-hedge screen around the site, increasing the hedgerow depth to reduce visibility of parked cars in what is an agricultural landscape.

It requests that there is a condition that if any existing trees need to be removed, that they are replaced by other trees and maintained.

The Parish Council also noted that the site is trying to work in with changes in A47 layout which is still awaiting legal determination. (This is apparently due early June 2023.) While appreciating this site will have a new access from Blofield rather than the A47, if granted, the Parish Council recommends that this application waits until the results of the legal review to confirm that the new access will materialise before extensions to the site.

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

8.1. Application: 2023/1221

Description: Bridge

Location: Bridge between Cremers Meadow and Marty's Marsh Brundall Road, Blofield, Norfolk.

The council 100% supports this application!

9. TO RECEIVE PLANNING UPDATES

9.1. The Dawsons Way appeal is still with the planning inspectorate.

- 10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM NCC CS REGARDING THEIR PLANNING APPLICATION AND TO PROVIDE FURTHER DETAIL ON THE COUNCIL POSITION ON THE PROPOSED SECONDARY FOOTPATH ACROSS WYNGATES AREA 3**
- 10.1. Following a brief discussion, Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Stuart Smith) and the council resolved to approve (5 – for, 1 – abstention) the following additional wording regarding the secondary footpath proposal across Wyngates Area 3 land. *‘As the intended landowner (of the remaining community space) BPC cannot give permission for a secondary path from Wyngates/Farman Way, given it has serious safety concerns about the surrounding roads which would lead to the path. BPC would not wish to inherit a section of community space with a 3mtr wide path (that would greatly reduce the community area). There is also a potential for BPC to inherit ongoing maintenance responsibility for the footpath which does not have a wider community benefit.’*
- 10.2. Sarah Osbaldeston (Clerk) reported that the Lead Local Flood Authority are now happy with the drainage strategy for the new school.
- 11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BRIDGE PROJECT AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 11.1. The bridge project planning application has been resubmitted by Brundall Parish Council. It will take up to approximately 8 weeks to be considered.
- 11.2. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Joseph Scholes) that the council approve the terms of engagement letter with Norfolk Rivers Drainage Board. This was unanimously agreed by the Parish Council, Clerk (EB) to action.
- 11.3. The council requested, as previously discussed with the contractor, that some additional aggregate is added to the Marty’s Marsh path in the ‘boggy’ area.
- 11.4. It appears that due to voles along the bank it is unlikely that work will be able to commence before October.
- 12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON COURTHOUSE CUPULA WORKS, APPROVE SCAFFOLDING COSTS AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 12.1. In order for the Cupula repair works to take place significant alterations to the scaffolding are required. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Joseph Scholes) the council approve an additional £800 for these alterations. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 12.2. EFL will be commencing works on site shortly.
- 13. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON COURTHOUSE GUTTER REPAIRS AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 13.1. Eleanor Bannister (Clerk) reported that the original contractor is no longer responding to emails. Eleanor has obtained a further quotation at a cost of £3,320, she will endeavour to find another before the June meeting.
- 14. TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF WYNGATES AREA 3 FROM BDC TO NCC (& ASSOCIATED PAPERWORK) AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 14.1. The council do not yet have all the necessary paperwork, clerk (SO) to add to the June agenda.
- 15. TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF WYNGATES AREA 1&2 TO BLOFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**
- 15.1. Eleanor Bannister (Clerk) updated the council on this transfer. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council sign the transfer document for Wyngates Area 1&2 from Broadland District Council (BDC) to Blofield Parish Council. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. This transfer will not be completed until BDC sign and date the document.
- 15.2. Eleanor Bannister continues to investigate a solution to repair the broken spring close latch on Wyngates area 1.
- 16. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS**
- 17. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT, NOTE COUNCIL FUNDS AND REVIEW INTERNAL MONTHLY CHECKS**
- 17.1. The council noted a final payment for March and the 2022/23 accounts, vouchers #195 totalling £55, (Appendix A).

- 17.2. The council noted payments in April 23 made, voucher #15 - #17 totalling £420 for the coronation celebration grants and a bus shelter cleaning invoice (Appendix B).
- 17.3. The council noted the bank reconciliation at 31 March 2023 of £967,566.74 (Appendix C).
- 17.4. Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Stuart Smith) the council approve the May payments #18 - #38 totalling £5,450.40 (Appendix D). The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (SO) to arrange payments.
- 17.5. 18.2. The council noted the internal audit checks dated 20 March 2023 carried out by Sarah Dhesi (Appendix D).
- 17.6. Joseph Scholes proposed (seconded by Stella Shackle) the council offer further drinks contributions to Blofield Library, if required, for the summer months.
- 17.7. The council is outstanding the last couple of months of pest control reports, clerk (EB) to chase.
- 18. TO CONSIDER LAPTOP SPECIFICATIONS / GOV.UK REQUIREMENTS / SOFTWARE AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 18.1. Following a detailed discussion, Joseph Scholes proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council go ahead with two new laptops and increase the budget for laptops/specifications/software etc to £2,000 and meet with Broadland computers to discuss the detail and how the systems would work. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (EB) to action.
- 19. TO APPROVE A DONATION OF £250 TO THE BADCOG FOR HOWES MEADOW MAINTENANCE**
- 19.1. Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Paul Culley-Barber) the council make an annual donation of £250 to BADCOG for the maintenance of Howes Meadow. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 20. TO NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS AND APPOINT SUE LAKE AS AUDITOR FOR 2023/24**
- 20.1. The clerk provided detail of the internal auditor's report and the council noted the content. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council accept this report and appoint Sue Lake as auditor for 2023/24. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 21. TO APPROVE BLOFIELD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2022/23**
- 21.1. Paul Culley-Barber proposed (seconded by Will Crane) the council approve the Annual Financial Report 2022/23 (Appendix B). The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 22. TO APPROVE THE 2022/23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**
- 22.1. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council approve the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 23. TO APPROVE THE 2022/23 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**
- 23.1. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council approve the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 24. TO NOTE THE RECEIPT OF RECENT CIL FUNDS AND APPROVE SETTING UP A CCLA INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNT FOR THESE FUNDS**
- 24.1. The council has received a sum of £60,136.27 in CIL funds from the Former Piggeries, Manor Farm, Yarmouth Road development. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) that the council invest these funds in a CCLA instant access account as recommended by the council auditor. Clerk (SO) to investigate and instigate.
- 25. TO APPROVE FUNDING FURTHER CURTAIN IMPROVEMENTS TO BLOFIELD COURTHOUSE**
- 25.1. The courthouse curtains require additional blackout improvements for the cinema showings. The council resolved to pay the invoice of £237+VAT.
- 26. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING REVISED DOCUMENTS DRAFTED BY THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY**
- 26.1. The council unanimously resolved to accept the revised documents listed below for the 2023/24.
- Standing Orders
 - Finance Regulations

- LGA Code of Conduct
- 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
- Co-option Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Filming and Recording Policy
- Dark Skies Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy

27. TO DISCUSS THE LENGTH OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 27.1. The council discussed various options. It was agreed to keep the meeting timings the same, maximise pre-reading and keep the meeting succinct. However, if the situation arises again the matter can be revisited.

28. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DESIGNATED FUNDS REQUEST FROM NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

- 28.1. Sarah Dhesi reported that Highways England are considering in more detail, funding towards play equipment on the 3 parish sites. The council needs to work closely with Highways England to provide them with as much information as possible.
- 28.2. The council agreed that Sarah Dhesi and Eleanor Bannister would meet with members of the Margaret Harker Hall committee and Heathlands community centre to discuss play equipment possibilities further and update the quotations obtained around 2 years ago.
- 28.3. The council agreed to arrange site visits with any interested play companies, Sarah Dhesi and Eleanor Bannister to action.
- 28.4. The council agreed to carry out a tender process for play equipment for the total value of £500,000+VAT proposed across the three sites. Clerk (EB) to action.
- 28.5. The council agreed to contact National Highways to obtain further detail and clarity on the funding and understand what is required from the parish council.
- 28.6. The council agreed to contact architects to obtain quotations for outline planning applications for entrance/exit, car park, indicative hall, play equipment. Sarah D to action.

29. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MHH PLAY EQUIPMENT PROJECT AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

- 29.1. The council noted that this would now fall under the designated funds play project.

30. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MARTY'S MARSH AND AGREE ANY NECESSARY ACTION

- 30.1. Yvonne Burton provided a written update to the council on Marty's Marsh. Yvonne has arranged to attend scythe training in July 2023.
- 30.2. A working party took place on the 29th April 2023 and a further working party is taking place on Saturday 10th June 2023.
- 30.3. Yvonne circulated a map of the areas that Garden Guardian will mow through the season.

31. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 31.1. Stuart Smith confirmed that the management committee are not happy to use the waiting room as a council area. They have alternatively offered the Judges Room to store the printer and filing cabinet.

- 31.2. The committee are not happy providing blue lights respite at any time in the courthouse.
- 31.3. Eleanor Bannister reported that David Bullen has visited the Courthouse and reviewed the cracks in the judge's room and will make a return visit in August to check again. He feels it is thermal expansion and contraction and hopefully nothing to worry about. He identified a repair required on the windowsills. Clerk (EB) to arrange.
- 31.4. Stuart Smith agreed to take David Bullen up the scaffolding at a later date to show him the Cupula works.

32. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM GALLIFORD TRY AND CONFIRMATION OF THE DRAFT A47 DUALLING RED LINE BOUNDARY ON THE ALLOTMENTS AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS

- 32.1. The A47 legal challenge is still outstanding and Galliford Try are awaiting the outcome.

33. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE TOWN AND PARISH FORUM

- 33.1. Mary Moxon provided a written report for the council.

34. TO DISCUSS THE VILLAGE CLOCK AND AGREE NECESSARY ACTIONS

- 34.1. The council agreed to write again to the property owner to discuss any necessary repairs required get the clock working again. Clerk (EB) to action.

35. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

- 35.1. Paul Culley-Barber and Mary Moxon agreed to attend the Review of neighbourhood plans meeting online on Wednesday 28th June at 6.30pm. The purpose of the meeting is to share the process and options for reviewing a Neighbourhood Plan, including when a review might trigger more significant modifications.
- 35.2. The council confirmed their support to the local cluster of parishes to see the reinstatement of the Postwick Park and Ride service.
- 35.3. NCC Highways have made repairs to the damaged sleepers on the public right of way FP12 behind Blofield Church.
- 35.4. In appropriate fly posting within the village can be reported by parishioners by email to wasteadmin.bdc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk or call 01603 430534.
- 35.5. Blofield Surgery have advised that they have finally secured an NHS England grant - and secured all the financial and legal requirements to start work on the extension project. Work will start on Monday 15th May 2023.
- 35.6. The council have received correspondence from a parishioner regarding the large number of cuts the grass verges are receiving. They would like to see less verge cutting taking place to encourage both wildflowers and weeds to grow and support the biodiversity of an area.

36. OTHER REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

- 36.1. MHH AGM update - Sarah Dhesi
- 36.2. Wyngates Area 3 maintenance
- 36.3. Town pit – obtain quotes for herbicide treatment – Eleanor Bannister
- 36.4. Courthouse update – Stuart Smith
- 36.5. Treatment of wooden street furniture in the parish – Sarah Osbaldeston

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

- 38. Monday 19th June 2023 at 7:30pm at Blofield Courthouse.

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

Signed.....

Dated.....