

# Blofield Parish Council

Minutes of the online Meeting of Blofield Parish Council on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7.30pm-10:15pm.

## **PRESENT**

Stuart Smith, Sarah Dhesi, Mary Moxon, Pat Wilson, Paul Culley-Barber, Yvonne Burton, Stella Shackle, and Sarah Osbaldeston (Clerk).

1. Welcome and Introduction to the meeting by Chair, Stuart Smith.
2. **TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
  - 2.1. Rob Christie and Joseph Scholes sent their apologies which were accepted by the council. Melanie Eversfield (assistant clerk) was unable to attend.
3. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
  - 3.1. Item 29 - Mary Moxon declared a pecuniary interest.
  - 3.2. Items 8, 10, 11, 24 – Paul Culley-Barber 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. District Councillors, Justine Thomas and Nigel Brennan were present. County Councillor, Andrew Proctor was also present. No parishioners were present.
  - 4.2. District Councillor Justine Thomas provided an update on work at Broadland District Council (BDC). She advised that the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Norfolk and Waveney Health area continues at pace and at scale. It was revealed that 22% of people aged over 16 have now received a first dose of vaccine, ranking third out of 42 health systems in England.
  - 4.3. Mental health support is available for the public, for tips and advice visit [www.everymindmatters.co.uk](http://www.everymindmatters.co.uk). If you are worried about your own mental health and wellbeing call First Response, a free 24/7 helpline offering immediate support, on 0808 196 3494.
  - 4.4. Additional Restrictions Covid-19 financial support is available to large, small and micro local businesses. To get full detail please see here: [https://www.broadland.gov.uk/news/article/392/3\\_million\\_available\\_for\\_local\\_businesses](https://www.broadland.gov.uk/news/article/392/3_million_available_for_local_businesses)
  - 4.5. The BDC cabinet has approved a draft GNLP for publication from 1 February to 15 March 2021. The period for submission of representations will run for six weeks between 9am on Monday 1 February to 5pm on Monday 15 March 2021. See webpage: <https://www.gnlp.org.uk/regulation-19-publication>
  - 4.6. Nigel Brennan advised about the increased spread of Penniewort in the broads. This is a big concern to the Broad Internal Drainage Board and everyone should keep an eye out for it on the broads as it spreads fast!
  - 4.7. County Councillor, Andrew Proctor attended the meeting and provided an update on Norfolk County Council. They are working on finalizing their budget for 2021/22. 1100 Laptops have been provided to schools to assist during the COVID crisis.
5. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11TH JANUARY 2021**
  - 5.1. The council unanimously resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and the minutes were duly signed by the chair.
6. **TO REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA**
  - 6.1. No matters arising to report on.
7. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON MARTY'S MARSH AND APPROVE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS**
  - 7.1. Sarah Dhesi shared the detailed summary report with the council.

- 7.2. The working group have met with Brundall parish council to discuss various matters. Blofield Council agreed to obtain two further quotations for the friendship bridge and tree works detailed in the recent tree survey. A further meeting is planned for March with Brundall PC.
- 7.3. Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Yvonne Burton) the council buy the Bodmin style bench at a cost of £419.14. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (ME) to order.
- 7.4. Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Stuart Smith) the council order two lecterns (total £1361+VAT) with vandal proof aluminium display boards and the approved detailed information for Marty's Marsh. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (ME) to order.
- 7.5. Vandals have damaged the new fencing at Marty's Marsh; the council thanked Yvonne Burton and her husband for repairing the damage.
- 7.6. The council agreed to submit a land registry request for the boundaries to Marty's Marsh.
- 8. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON BLOFIELD ALLOTMENTS AND APPROVE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 8.1. Sarah Dhesi provided a detailed report to the council.
- 8.2. The council has received a detailed report from the new pest controller regarding the intensive pest control work that has been carried out. The monthly treatments commence from the beginning of February when the council will receive a regular report and risk assessments etc.
- 8.3. The allotments entrance is very muddy with deep potholes. The council will continue to try and source some hardcore to make repairs.
- 8.4. The allotments inspection has been delayed due to the current COVID lockdown. This will hopefully take place in early March.
- 9. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REPORT ON HIGHWAYS ENGLAND A47 ROAD PLANS**
- 9.1. Highways England have confirmed they are going to visit the site this week to mark the red boundary of the land they will require for the A47 road improvements. Highways England have submitted their plans to the planning inspectorate/ Secretary of State. The final outcome will not be known for a further year.
- 10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE SWIMMING POOL RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATION**
- 10.1. Stuart Smith provided a report on the meeting with BDC Relationships and Development Manager with Active Norfolk and the Communities Officer at BDC. Both offered to support and will report back to the council.
- 11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REPORT ON GENERAL PROJECTS AND APPROVE ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS**
- 11.1. Melanie Eversfield provided a detailed project report.
- 11.2. Tree works have been completed at the Churchyard in accordance with the quotation.
- 12. TO NOTE COVID GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION AND AGREE NEXT ACTIONS**
- 12.1. Melanie Eversfield provided details of the £1000 grant that has been applied for on behalf of the council. No response has been received to date.
- 13. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT**
- 13.1. Paul Culley-Barber proposed (seconded by Stella Shackle) the council approve all payments of vouchers #181 - #189 totaling £1,098.19 (see appendix A). The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.
- 13.2. Receipts from 7 December 2020 to 4 January 2021 (voucher #61) were noted, totaling £60.92 (see appendix B).
- 13.3. The council noted the total bank balance at 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 of £661,283.11 (see Appendix C).
- 14. TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL MONTHLY REVIEW**
- 14.1. Sarah Dhesi provided a detailed internal monthly review of the accounts. No concerns were raised and the contents was noted.
- 15. TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF MARTYS MARSH NOTICEBOARDS AND BENCHES**
- 15.1. See items 7.3 and 7.4 above.

**16. TO CONSIDER A FUNDING QUERY FROM BLOFIELD COURTHOUSE (SO)**

16.1. The council discussed the request and agreed it was not within the Blofield Courthouse Constitution to provide donations to other groups. The council continue to maintain close contact with Acle Food Bank and the Blofield and Brundall Good Neighbours Scheme to ensure they have sufficient funds during these extraordinary COVID times.

**17. TO CONSIDER A FUNDING REQUEST FROM NORFOLK CITIZENS ADVICE**

17.1. Following a brief discussion Paul Culley Barber proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council donate £100 to Norfolk Citizens Advice. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (SO) to action.

**18. TO CONSIDER COUNCIL UNSPENT FUNDS AND REALIGNMENT OF THESE**

18.1. Following a brief discussion Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council re-align the underspends in Parish Upkeep (£3,800) and Parish Partnership (£5,000) Cost Codes to Martys Marsh reserves to cover the costs of the lectern, bench and other anticipated big spends in 2021/22. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.

18.2. Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Yvonne Burton) the council donate £200 from the small local grants underspend code to the Blofield and Brundall Good Neighbours Scheme. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (ME) to establish if this will assist with COVID related costs now before payment made.

18.3. The council agreed to contact Acle Food Bank to establish if their funds high and if they would benefit from a further donation. Clerk (ME) to action.

18.4. The council agreed to review the understand of the remaining £737.50 in small local grants at the March meeting.

**19. TO CONSIDER RENEWAL OF THE NPTS MEMBERSHIP**

19.1. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council renew the NPTS membership for 2021/22. The proposal was unanimously approved by all present.

**20. TO AGREE PURCHASE OF AN ANNUAL ZOOM ONLINE MEETING LICENSE**

20.1. Following a brief discussion Sarah Dhesi proposed (seconded by Stuart Smith) that the council renew the zoom online license for a year instead of month by month. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (ME) to action and discuss with the two councils the license is shared with.

**21. TO APPROVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

21.1. Following a minor amendment Paul Culley-Barber proposed (seconded by Mary Moxon) the council approve the equal opportunities policy. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.

**22. TO AGREE AGENDA POINTS FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING WITH JEROME MAYHEW**

22.1. The council agreed the following points for discussion at the meeting with MP Jerome Mayhew on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021:

- Flooding issues - lack of joined up thinking on planning applications - residents being repeatedly flooded.
- Assistance with improving traffic flow at Cucumber Lane Roundabout - just to raise awareness that problems will increase.
- Requested closure of the footpath across A47 from Hopkins Homes.
- Request for an essential footpath between Blofield and Blofield Heath
- Assistance with Highways England regarding the Allotment land red line to be provided
- Assistance with improving traffic flow along the street and North Street, including improvements to the Highways England A47 design.
- Update on new school issues / delays.

**23. TO AGREE PROPOSED SIGNAGE FOR BLOFIELD CHURCHYARD**

23.1. The clerk (SO) provided a summary of the information obtained regarding headstone safety. Following a brief discussion, Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Yvonne Burton) the council approach the Parochial Church Council again regarding an 'in keeping' and 'attractive' sign regarding churchyard headstone safety. The proposed wording is 'PLEASE BE AWARE SOME

MEMORIALS MAY BE UNSTABLE AND THE GROUND UNEVEN.’ The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (SO) to action.

**24. TO CONSIDER A DRAFT NEWSLETTER AND AGREE NCC CHILDRENS SERVICES COMMUNICATION**

24.1. Stuart Smith provided a draft of a newsletter from the parish council (including a NCC childrens services communication regarding the new school progress). Following some discussion, Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Paul Culley-Barber) the council produce this newsletter and circulate it predominately online. In addition, the council agreed to print up to £100 of copies for placing at the local post offices and newsagents. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (ME) to action straight away with Stuart Smiths assistance.

**25. TO AGREE A BUS SHELTER CLEANER FOR THE BLOFIELD BRICK (THE STREET) BUS SHELTER**

25.1. Following a brief summary, Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) the council choose to use our current glass bus shelter cleaner to clean the brick bus shelter at a cost of £15 per visit. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal subject to an initial trial. Clerk (SO) to action.

**26. TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL TO MARGARET HARKER HALL TO ASSIST WITH THE SMALL PLAYGROUND**

26.1. Sarah Dhesi provided a report to the council on a possible community project. Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Paul Culley-Barber) the council offer £7,000 of Section 106 funds towards the replacement of the new small play area if match funded by the Margaret Harker Hall Committee and the Pre-school Committee to make it possible to replace the whole small play area. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal. Clerk (ME) to contact both committees in writing.

**27. TO CONSIDER THE SUBJECT OF DRAINAGE TO PUT FORWARD TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AT BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

27.1. Following a brief discussion, Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) Mary Moxon prepares a draft document on drainage to send to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.

**28. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE RECENT LOCAL AUTHORITY CLUSTER MEETING ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021**

28.1. Stuart Smith provided a brief summary of the meeting to the council. The next meeting will take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> April at Postwick Village Hall or online, hosted by Brundall Parish Council.

**29. TO NOTE THE RAMBLERS’ ASSOCIATION HAS MADE A SUBMISSION TO NCC FOR A PUBLIC BRIDLEWAY ON DAWSONS LANE**

29.1. The council has become aware that the Rambler’s Association has submitted an application to Norfolk County Council to make Dawson’s Lane a bridlepath. The Norfolk County Council (NCC) officer has requested that the council wait until we are formally consulted to make any response. The application was received last week and therefore it could be some time before we hear from NCC.

**30. TO CONSIDER ANY NECESSARY ACTIONS REGARDING PARKING ON ST ANDREWS WAY**

30.1. Following receipt of an anonymous letter regarding obstructive parking on St Andrews Way the council agreed to pass it to the local housing company it is believed are the landlords for the detailed properties.

*10:00pm - Stuart Smith proposed (seconded by Sarah Dhesi) an amendment to standing order 3w, proposing the council agree to extend the meeting by a further 15 minutes to complete the remaining agenda items. The council unanimously resolved to approve this proposal.*

**31. TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE**

31.1. Fox Lane banks – NCC Highways will add some marked posts to protect/highlight the existing kerbs around the gulley and this may help guide drivers to the actual edge of the road.

- 31.2. Churchyard Epicormic Growth – the council is looking for volunteers to cut the epicormic growths around the lime trees at Blofield Churchyard. This is something that can be carried out as a suitably solitary activity if anyone is willing to assist.
- 31.3. Churchyard gates – It is still not possible to close these gates and the latch is damaged where users have tried to shut the gate. The clerk (SO) has contacted Steven Matthews who made the gates and requested a visit to sort the gates out in the next couple of weeks.
- 31.4. The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) will go forward for a six-week Regulation 19 publication period, from Monday 1 February 2021 to Monday 15 March 2021. Paul Culley-Barber and Mary Moxon agreed to produce a draft council response to be discussed at the planning meeting on Monday 22 February 2021.
- 31.5. The council received an update on the Norwich Western Link project.

**32. OTHER REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

- 32.1. Good Neighbours Scheme update - Pat Wilson
- 32.2. High wind signage for Marty’s Marsh – Yvonne Burton
- 32.3. Highway England red line on the allotment site and allotment inspection – Sarah Dhesi

**33. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING MEETING**

- 33.1. Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 online at 7:30pm.

**34. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

- 34.1. Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 online at 7:30pm.

**35. 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**

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

**36. TO REVIEW THE CLERK AND ASSISTANT CLERK PERFORMANCE AND REMUNERATION**

- 36.1. The Council noted the report presented by the Chair and unanimously agreed to award the Clerk and Assistant Clerk a pay progression from 01 April 2021, to the new Pay Point 23.
- 36.2. The current Chair will approach Councillor Rob Christie to ascertain if he wishes to continue as line manager for the Clerks. Chair was happy to take over if requested.
- 36.3. The councillors expressed their appreciation of the Clerks’ efforts during a difficult 2020.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:15pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....