

WEREHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council
Tuesday 23 November 2021 at 7.00 pm
In the St Margaret's Church, Wereham

Attendance:

Cllr Joanne Bruce (Chair)
Cllr Jacki Hitchin (Vice Chair)
Cllr Annie Bruce
Cllr Jonathan Marsh
Cllr John Nicholls
Cllr Sandra Calvert
Helen Richardson Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person

Also in attendance:

Residents of Wereham - Public – 11
Non-Residents of Wereham – Public – 2
Jeremy Burton, County Officer, Norfolk Association of Local Council Clerks.
Cllr Martin Storey, NCC, County Councillor
Cllr Colin Sampson, BCKLWN, Borough Councillor

101/21 Openness and Transparency Notice

The Chair read the notice and wished to provide an update to parishioners why the meeting two weeks previous did not take place. The Chair shared that the Council had looked to protect the Parish Clerk from an ongoing issue with people who were not tax payers or residents of Wereham, and to deal with it as sensitively as the Council could with the Clerk in mind. The Chair shared that at the previous meeting the people concerned refused to leave the meeting when requested to do so, the Council had sought advice and as employers they had a duty of care to protect the Clerk as their employee. At the meeting due to take place two weeks previous and at this meeting the people concerned refused to leave the meeting when requested to do so. The Chair shared that the Police had been called as a result. The Chair stated that when it comes to the precept/Council tax money that comes from the residents to cover things like the pond dredging, the play area etc., there is not a huge amount of money left for dealing with unnecessary issues such as this in terms of legal costs and wasted time of the Clerk and the Council particularly where the people concerned are not residents or tax payers in Wereham. The Council not only has a duty of care to the Clerk, they have a duty of care to Councillors and the public, and this is not the way we would wish to operate. The Chair shared that Jeremy Burton, County Officer from Norfolk Association of Local Council's had provided great support to the Council and the Clerk over the recent weeks before the meeting and was in attendance to be in support of the Council because of this issue. The Chair thanked the residents of Wereham who had attended the meeting. The Chair asked the public if they had any comments of which there was none.

102/21 To Consider and Accept apologies for absence

There were no apologies.

103/21 To Receive Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items

Cllr John Nicolls declared an interest in regard to register of decisions made on email as the training had been for him.

104/21 To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 7 September 2021 and Matters Arising (Clerks Report)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 7 September 2021 be approved as a true record. (Cllr John Nicholls proposed; Cllr Annie Bruce seconded, all were in favour).

105/21 To Approve Wereham Village Sign Design Sketch and Public Consultation Arrangements

The proposed painting design by a local artist for the back of the village sign was shared in the meeting, it included the village hall; the pub; farm; pond and play area. The Parish Council were happy to go ahead with the concept and were appreciative of the two Wereham volunteers involved in the refurbishment.

RESOLVED: That the concept be approved for the back design of the village sign. (Cllr Jacki Hitching proposed; Cllr John Nicholls seconded, all were in favour).

106/21 To Discuss and Approve Any Action in Relation to the Norfolk County Council Parish Partnership Fund Grant Application for 2022/23 – Cemetery Footpath

The Council considered a project at the cemetery to remove and install a new hedge further back from the road; wider gateway; improving pedestrian safety by installing a new public footpath running the length of the hedge on the cemetery side. A quote was pending from Highways for the footpath work and volunteers would assist in regard to the hedging work required. The bid would be for the highways work to the footpath.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Partnership Funding Bid application for a new footpath be approved pending costs from Highways. (Cllr Jo Bruce proposed, Cllr Sandra Calvert seconded, all were in favour).

107/21 To Approve Quote in Relation to Tree Management Work Identified and Other Self Seeded Plants in the Cemetery, Playing Field, Churchyard and Pond by the Handyman and Skip Cost for Its Removal

For minor tree works identified on the tree management survey (playing field, pond, churchyard and cemetery), the Handyman had quoted two days' work at £250 plus skip hire at £196 plus VAT. Cllr John Nicholls had shared a quote for tree work in the churchyard at £350 no VAT with a chipper using a tree surgeon. The Chair shared that we need to see copy of their insurance, competence certificates and questioned whether the Council could provide services different to that in the churchyard to that elsewhere in the village. The Clerk agreed to contact Richard Fisher at the BCKLWN to give an independent view of the churchyard trees in accordance with the survey.

RESOLVED: That a comparable quote be sought from the tree surgeon for all areas of the village up to a threshold of £500 to go ahead with the works and pending competence certificates and insurances. (Cllr Jo Bruce proposed; Cllr Jacki Hitching seconded, all were in favour).

108/21 To Receive and Approve Any Action in relation to the Bi-Monthly Village Health and Safety Inspection

Actions identified would be carried out by either the Clerk or Handyman.

109/21 To Discuss and Approve Any Action in Relation to EV Charging Provision for Residents with No Off-Street Parking in West Norfolk

The scheme was 100% funded for residents with no off-street parking in west Norfolk, and there was an idea of it being at the pond. It was proposed that the Council apply for two at the pond.

RESOLVED: That application be made to the scheme for two car charging units at the pond. (Cllr Jo Bruce proposed; Cllr Annie Bruce seconded, all were in favour).

110/21 To Annually Review the Wereham Pond Action Log and to Discuss and Approve Any Action or Costs in Relation to Fish Stock Removal Quote and Advice

The Council noted the pond action log as agreed to review annually. It was agreed to defer to January fish removal considerations and an amount of £500 for removal of fish stock be written into the 2022/23 budget. The Clerk agreed to find out how many fish we should take out and would strive to get a third estimate.

111/21 To Approve Replacement of Wooden Logs on a Piece Play Area Equipment

RESOLVED: That replacement logs for the play area log bridge be replaced at £360. (Cllr Jo Bruce proposed, Cllr Annie Bruce seconded, all were in favour).

112/21 To Approve How to Receive a Specially Commissioned Memorial Plaque to Commemorate Resilience of the Community During the Pandemic from HM Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk, The Lady Dannatt MBE

It was agreed that when the village sign was refurbished and unveiled an event to receive the covid memorial plaque would be arranged at that point.

113/21 To Approve Costs for Chair Training for Vice Chair

RESOLVED: That training costs for Chair training for the Vice Chair at £38 plus VAT be approved. (Cllr John Nicholls proposed, Cllr Jonathan Marsh seconded, one abstained being the Vice Chair and five were in favour).

114/21 To Approve PO Box for Parish Council Correspondence

RESOLVED: That a PO Box be approved as the Council's correspondence mailing address at £120 shared with two other Councils. (Cllr Annie Bruce proposed; Cllr Jacki Hitching seconded, all were in favour).

115/21 To Review and Note the Wereham PC Action Sheet

The Council noted the action sheet. The land near the main road was ear marked for wild flower planting, research had been done but it was yet to be actioned. [NCC had confirmed they would give permission for wild flowers to be planted on their land as long as the PC covered the cutting needed]. The area needed to be test patched, and the grass could be turned over and then reseeded. There was also an area at the end of the cemetery identified for flower re-wilding at the end. A resident and the cubs had advised they would like to volunteer for the work to be done. The Clerk would take forward with volunteers.

116/21 To Discuss the Draft Budget 2022/23, Precept and Note Quarter 2 Bank Reconciliation

The draft Budget 2022/23 was received by the council. It was agreed to try and adapt the shelter on the playing field with sides, repaint it and move to a new location in 2022/23. The budget and precept for 2022/23 was due to be approved at the January meeting.

117/21 To Approve Register of Decisions Made on Email as follows:

- a. To Approve Councillor Training at a cost of £60.
- b. To Approve Clerk Training at a cost of £40

RESOLVED: That the register of decisions made on email a. to approve Councillor training at a cost of £60 and b. to Approve Clerk training at a cost of £40. (Cllr Jo Bruce proposed; Cllr Jacki Hitching seconded, one abstained as they attended the training and five were in favour).

118/21 To Approve Payments to date

Nov 2021 Payments for Approval			
	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Clerk Wages - Sept and Oct 2021 plus expenses	573.95	0.00	573.95
HMRC Sept and Oct 2021 - PAYE	135.20	0.00	135.20
Handyman - (move sam2 £10; laid 7 coir rolls in pond £150; wire mesh on basketball goal inc cost of mesh (£19)	179.00	0.00	179.00
Anglia Computer Solutions - Web Hosting and domain costs	140.00	28.00	168.00
RBL - Poppy Wreath	17.00	0.00	17.00
St Margaret's Church Hire - November 2021	50.00	0.00	50.00
CGM Grounds Maintenance - August and September 2021	198.56	39.72	238.28

Mole Contractor - July - Sept 2021	57.93	0.00	57.93
Norfolk ALC - Being An Effective Councillor Training - Cllr John Nicholls	60.00	12.00	72.00
SLCC - Annual Membership for Clerk	55.33	0.00	55.33
Hodson Office Supplies – Ink	33.97	6.80	40.77
Eon Streetlighting - Sept 2021	26.16	1.31	27.47
Eon Streetlighting - Oct 2021	27.03	1.35	28.38
TOTAL TO BE PAID	1554.13	89.18	1643.31

RESOLVED: That the payments as presented by approved. (Cllr Jo Bruce proposed; Cllr John Nicholls seconded, all were in favour)

119/21 To Receive Councillors Concerns and Agenda Items for next meeting and Forward Work Programme

Cllr Colin Sampson

- A fund was available of £1k a year over 5 parishes.
- Fly tipping collections had been increased significantly

Cllr Martin Storey

- The hedge funding was underway, and the Clerk had requested a second lot of hedging. He agreed to contact the Clerk with an answer on the second pack.
- Road Safety Community Fund running parallel with the parish partnership scheme, for road safety improvements schemes and if there were safety issues on the road to contact, the deadline was 30th November.
- Any help he could offer to contact him and information on the website.

120/21 To Approve Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 11 January 2022 at 7 pm

It was noted to be at the church unless the large hall at the village hall was available.

121/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC The Council will be requested to pass a resolution excluding the press and public from the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (staffing). To Discuss Parish Clerk and RFO Annual Appraisal and 2022/23 Pay

The Council discussed the Clerks appraisal and pay for 2022/23. The Council unanimously agreed that the Clerk had performed satisfactory in 2020/21.

Close: 8.20 pm