

WEREHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council Monday 13 November 2023 at 6.45 pm In the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall, Wereham

Attendance:

Cllr Jo Wellington-Bruce (Chair)

Cllr Sandra Calvert (Vice Chair)

Cllr Gail Koopowitz

Cllr Annie Bruce

Cllr Stephen Bradsell

Cllr Jacki Hitching

Helen Richardson Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person

Also in attendance:

Residents of Wereham - Public – 3

Cllr Martin Storey, Norfolk County Councillor, NCC

Cllr Sue Lintern, Borough Councillor, BCKLWN

Cllr Martin Storey

- Latest report from Highways safety team on the Island on the A134, specifically the illuminated hat pins at the pedestrian refuge island at Flegg green and the row. They are provided to inform drivers that there is an island. The accident record at both locations show no accidents at this location in last 10 years. Therefore, this is not a strong case to provide streetlighting. Cllr Storey shared that he was not impressed by their response and will request a night-time visit from the Norfolk Highways Team. Any issues with the road can be reported to Cllr Martin Storey directly. Cllr Martin Storey shared that each direction come from two hills in either direction into a low, speed could be an issue. Reflectors and curb highlighting was also an issue. Cllr Martin Storey would continue to take it forward to them as a special case, and he understands the issues and he agrees that the lighting needs to be upgraded and would progress forward on that basis. The Clerk agreed to email the safety team to email.
- Norwich Western Link – 3.9 mile dual carriage way road is due to be built between the A1067 and A47.
- Norfolk Wellbeing Employment programme launched to help residents with long term health conditions or physical impairments preventing them from working.
- Grants from the Community Tree Project are available
- Flu and Covid Update on the NCC website.
- Foster Care findings update – Parents, social workers and others who have experience of children's in social care including children were surveyed, almost all of the children in foster care always felt safe where they lived
- Dentistry issues NCC working issues around this.
- Waterstone 2023 Launch Giving Tree Appeal – It saw more than 1000 books delivered and bought to children. Over 800 children received the books last year.
- Devolution – Government put a pilot scheme 12 months ago to look at this, the consultation period is still being discussed by NCC and consultation with the public. A decision will come on this in time.
- Planning Committee – Holme Oak in October – Cllr Storey wishes to state that he is a member of the BCKLWN Planning Committee and thought those who spoke on the application had done well, the Committee had took the decision to refuse the application. Cllr Storey had taken it that the planning application had been decided on that site, there was a need for housing, and for young people to get on the housing ladder, and he felt at the time for what the site was to vote for it. He was voting on the planning system but not in representing Wereham.
- Wereham Parish Council had attended a meeting with the Leader of the BCKLWN, which confirmed that a planning application should be called in as it can always be retracted. And if a Borough Councillor did not wish to accept a call in which goes through the Borough Councillor they would have to provide a special reason for not wishing to call it in.

Cllr Sue Lintern

- She was on the BCKLWN Corporate Performance Panel and they meet on the same day as Wereham PC and she will have to balance attendance for both.
- Corporate Strategy – BCKLWN – working on detail of this strategy and will share more detail when

received.

- There were numerous schemes at the BCKWLN regarding home energy support.
- Borough Councillor Grant Scheme – She was in support of providing funding to the village hall with an application following sign posting by the Parish Council.
- West Winch Housing Development – Will be attending a planning committee meeting as this was a large development. There were 4000 homes on three sites.
- There will be another meeting held with Parish Council's by the Leader of the BCKLWN in six months' time, including another one with Clerks. The Leader of the BCKLWN was keen to support PCs and what type of support they may need in regard to vexatious persons and had tasked the monitoring officer in finding a way this could be offered to PCs.
- Cllr Sue Lintern had attended the Planning Committee where the Holme Oak Planning Application had been considered, and spoke in support of the Parish Council views.
- All are welcome to email Cllr Sue Lintern should they need anything she is able to assist with.

95/23 To Note Openness and Transparency Notice

The Chair read the notice and it was noted.

96/23 To Consider and Accept apologies for absence

Cllr Jonathan Marsh had sent apologies which were accepted (personal reasons).

97/23 To Note Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items and Dispensation Requests

It was noted that Cllr Sandra Calvert declared interests in regard to item 90/23 Payments.

98/23 To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 18 September 2023 and To Note the Matters Arising Report

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the 18 September 2023 ordinary meeting be approved as a correct record. (Proposed Cllr Jacki Hitching, seconded Cllr Annie Bruce, all were in favour).

Matters Arising:

- **Streetlights** – The contractor confirmed the annual clean and review, there were no recommendations (September 2023)
- **Play Area Flooring** – The Clerk continues to chase up the enquiry regarding the flooring in the play area raised with a member of the public with the contractor who is investigating.
- **VAT Reclaim** - £4.5k was received for previous two years financial accounts.
- **Pond** – The Caretaker at the request of the clerk cleared debris from the pond.
- **Remembrance Sunday** – Wreath purchased and provided to service people from the village who were happy to lay on behalf of the village.
- **Playing Field Tree/Hedge Work** – Tree maintenance was actioned on a tree line behind the village hall early October as part of the Tree Management Survey.
- **G4 Magazine** – The Clerk fed back the Parish Council's response from the September meeting to the G4 Magazine who shared that they would be looking further into their funding arrangements.
- **Laptop Security** – This was installed on the PC's laptop by the contractor who hosts the website.
- **Tree on Cavenham Road** – This was reported to NCC who wrote to the land owner following an inspection. The land owner as at beginning of November is seeking quotes for work on the tree needed, this is ongoing.
- **Bike Sign at Pond** – NCC confirmed after reported rusty pole at the pond that two new signs either end of the path will be installed.
- **Mole Contractor Report** – July – Sept 2023. Playing Field – 6 moles caught. Cemetery – 3 moles caught. Advice was sort from them in regard to rat sightings between Crown Gardens and Flegg Green who confirmed presence. Land owner found and contacted, land owner is looking to resolve. Residents on Facebook have received guidance.
- **The Row – Dyke, Hedging and Trees** – The Clerk wrote to the home owners, who swiftly responded to agree with the PC's recommendation that they should be arranging for them to be cut back and cleared out and they would be seeking quotes to arrange the work.

Decisions (Not requiring PC consultation)

23/00058/HEDGE Wereham Gibbet Lane Fincham Road Wereham Norfolk – For Diddlington pipeline scheme, we require up to 10 hedgerow removals in order to install the pipeline or to allow vehicle access. This scheme has been through EIA screening with two councils (Kings Lynn & West Norfolk and Breckland) and has been approved. For all hedgerows to be removed, these will be replaced like for like or better using native species and planted during the planting season following completion of the works. Hedge Application - no objection. 8 September 2023. Delegated Decision

23/00201/TREECA Wereham I wish to take down a large single conifer tree the branches of which are now touching my neighbours overhead main electricity cable. The roots are also lifting and cracking my boundary brick wall. The tree is also blocking my neighbour's light. I intend to leave about 3 meters of the trunk as a support for a climbing plant. Chile House Bens Lane Wereham King's Lynn Norfolk PE33 9FL

23/00848/F Wereham Holme Oak Stoke Road Wereham King's Lynn Norfolk PE33 9AT - Proposed construction of 4 residential units in existing footprint of agricultural barn benefiting with prior approval including the demolition of existing agricultural barn. Application Refused 9 October 2023 Committee Decision

99/23 To Approve Any Action in Relation to Greening our Communities Fund Project; Associated Costs and Acceptance of Donated Items

- There was a £5k total budget.
- Open mornings were held in the Village Hall.
- Eight people registered interest for getting involved. The Parish Clerk's details were provided.
- Facebook, parish council website, noticeboard was utilised to reach as far and wide for ideas.
- Cllr Gail Koopowitz shared that she had spent around 150 hours on the project so far. A personal friend had helped her on a voluntary basis on the plans, and a founding member of setting up a community garden had also assisted.
- A pack of information was shared with the Parish Council including the two members of public present.
- We were looking to create a seating from within the planter.
- It was circular so it was easier from a ground maintenance point of view.
- A diagrammatic diagram of the plan was shared, there was plenty of space between the swing and neighbouring properties.
- A slope would be planted which was better for biodiversity.
- There was a hexagonal planter and a square planter joined in the middle by a bench made of wood. They come bespoke make ready to put together. There was currently a 10% discount on a design shared and volunteers would help to assemble.
- The planting will constantly give colour and plants for pollinators throughout the year.
- The final plan pack approved would be placed on the website.
- The plan was based on what was best for wildlife during the winter.

The Parish Council felt that the 'off the shelf' planter/bench was a good option.

The public commented by admission of the Chair that they would now be excited to see it when it comes to fruition.

Three quotes will be presented for approval in January for ground works.

Cllr Annie Bruce agreed to work on the social media for the project.

RESOLVED: That the following aspects for the project to proceed be approved as follows:

- a) The plan as presented.
- b) Application for trees and hedging for £119.68 plus VAT be approved through the Million Trees Project with Norfolk County Council and payment for February collection.
- c) The Planter proposed costing £1221.75 plus VAT
- d) Order of bulbs for £51.36

(Proposed Cllr Jacki Hitching, seconded Cllr Sandra Calvert, all were in favour)

100/23 To Consider/Approve Tree Planting Required at the Wereham Pond

On request by the PC, the BCKLWN Tree Officer visited the pond to provide advise on where to locate the three willow trees stipulated within the TPO order for the felled Willow Tree. He provided advise that due to the amount of space at the pond, the willow trees would grow too large that he suggested one Swamp Cypress should be planted instead and he would amend the TPO.

RESOLVED; That one Swamp Cypress be approved and planted in the location of the willow stump. (Proposed Cllr Gail Koopowitz; seconded Cllr Jacki Hitching, all were in favour).

101/23 To Approve Any Action or Costs as a Result of the Bi-Monthly Health and Safety Inspection including Village Caretaker Hours for Nov and Dec 2023

RESOLVED: That 10 hrs be approved for the Village Caretaker work in November and December, including any to carry over from September/October. (Proposed Cllr Gail Koopowitz, seconded Cllr Jacki Hitching, all were in favour)

102/23 To Approve Improvements to the Cemetery Interment Area and Associated Costs

The Parish Council agreed to proceed with planning for the improvements, the Clerk agreed to bring quotes from the Village Caretaker in January.

103/23 To Approve Cemetery Hedging Purchase

The Parish Council agreed to revisit the decision to plant hedging in the front boundary of the cemetery since the new railings and gates have been installed. The Parish Council had received lots of comments of how great the area now looked and now that this was open. The Parish Council agreed not to proceed the hedging at this time. The Clerk agreed to add to the January agenda the issue of grassing the verge on the front boundary of the cemetery.

104/23 To Approve Movement of Dog Waste Bin

The dog bin had been broken on its post in the last 24 hours. The Parish Council believed that it was in situ Sunday evening following Remembrance Sunday, so the incident must have happened after this time up to 7 am the following morning when a Councillor had found the damage. This dog bin had been in place for two years and there was no way it would suddenly break at the wooden post, which was fairly short and firmly in the ground. The Parish Council agreed to ask the Village Hall to suggest an area for placement of the bin on the edge of the playing field. The Parish Council felt the integrity of the playing field in terms of keeping faeces off the field was paramount to residents health. The Clerk agreed to post on Facebook why the bin is out of action for the time being and to contact BCKLWN. It would be added the January meeting for further discussion.

105/23 To Discuss Performance of Grounds Maintenance Contractor for Approval (To Continue Year 2 or 3)

It was agreed that they had done a good job to continue into the second year of a three year contract.

RESOLVED: That the current contractor be approved to continue into a second year. (Proposed Cllr Annie Bruce, seconded Cllr Jacki Hitching, all were in favour)

106/23 To Approve One Additional Cut between End of Season and Start should if be required, delegated to Parish Clerk for PC Responsible/Owned Land and Verges

It was agreed under the delegation to the Clerk for anything health and safety related she could action if needed.

107/23 To Discuss Projects for NCC Parish Partnership Fund 2024/25

There was one section of path on the other side of the pond which needed resurfacing near where the willow tree was felled.

RESOLVED: That an application be made to the NCC Parish Partnership Fund 2024/25 to resurface part of the path on the far side of the pond near where the willow tree had been felled. (Proposed Cllr Gail Koopowitz, Seconded Cllr Jacki Hitching, all were in favour)

108/23 To Approve SLCC Annual Membership for the Clerk

RESOLVED: That SLCC annual membership be approved at £112. (Proposed Cllr Gail Koopowitz, Seconded Cllr Annie Bruce, all were in favour)

109/23 To Approve Review of the Equality Policy

RESOLVED: That the Equality Policy be approved as presented. (Proposed Cllr Jo Wellington-Bruce , Seconded Cllr Stephen Bradsell, all were in favour)

110/23 To Approve Review of the Cemetery Policy and Approval of Any Amendment to Fees

RESOLVED: That the Cemetery Policy be approved and that fees to say as they currently were to be reviewed in two years. (Proposed Cllr Jo Wellington-Bruce, Seconded Cllr Gail Koopowitz, all were in favour)

111/23 To Discuss the Draft Budget and Precept 2024/25 for approval on 8 January 2024

The draft budget was noted as presented, the final budget and precept for 2024/25 would be approved at the January meeting.

112/23 To Approve Payments to date

Payee	Service	Exc VAT	VAT	Inc VAT
Parish Clerk	Wages, Expenses and Mileage (Sept and Oct)	649.85	0.00	649.85
	Back dated pay National	139.00	0.00	139.00
Parish Clerk	PAYE (Sept and Oct)	169.89	0.00	169.89
Royal British Legion	Wreath	20.00	0.00	20.00
Greenman Woodlands	Playing Field Tree/Hedge Maintenance	380.00	0.00	380.00
FDC Civil Engineering Ltd	Cemetery Boundary Project - Railings/Regrading	3347.00	669.40	4016.40
Pearce and Kemp Ltd	Annual Street Lighting Maintenance Fee	80.00	20.00	96.00
Npower	September 2023 Streetlight Electric	41.45	2.07	43.52
Anglia Computer Solution	Webhosting; domain and antivirus	164.00	32.80	196.80
HHA Grounds Maintenance	PAID September 2023	615.50	123.10	738.60
SJA Pest Control	July, August and September 2023	60.81	0.00	60.81
Service Charge	30.09.23	18.00	0.00	18.00
Darren Limbert	Village Caretaker	175.00	0.00	175.00
HHA Grounds Maintenance	Oct-23	581.00	116.20	697.20
Npower	Streetlight Electricity	47.78	2.39	50.17
BCKLWN	Election Fee	1025.84	0.00	1025.84
Cllr Gail Koopowitz	Bulbs - Greening our Communities Project	51.36	0.00	51.36
WoodBlocx	Planter Bench - Greening our Communities Project	1221.75	244.35	1466.10
NCC	Small Trees/Hedgerow - Greening our Communities Project	119.68	24.83	144.51
SLCC	Annual Membership Clerk	112.00	0.00	112.00
Bank Account as at 8 Nov 2023 - £35,366.79				

RESOLVED: That payments as presented be approved. (Proposed Cllr Gail Koopowitz , Seconded Cllr Jacki Hitching, one abstained and , five were in favour)

113/23 To Note Councillors Concerns and Agenda Items for next meeting and forward Work Programme

- The Row (towards Flegg Green on Wereham Row and Wretton Row and School Lane) – there were a lot of pot holes along the edge of the road. The Clerk agreed to report to Highways to survey the whole road for pot holes.
- The Parish Clerk agreed to speak to the residents in regard to the Dyke Clearance, there was a willow tree that was broken across the road and hanging down that needed removal.
- The Clerk agreed to report Highways a path from Back Lane to the A134 was overgrown with weeds.
- The Clerk agreed to report a drain on The Row for clearing out.
- Cllr Sue Lintern agreed to look into funding for the well.
- There were four fruit trees that were planted in the cemetery. It was agreed for the Village Caretaker to remove dead ones.
- The Clerk agreed to touch base with the landowner regarding a tree on cavenham road.
- The Council wished to have the Norfolk ALC's view on removing weeds from older graves.

114/23 To Approve Date of Next Meeting – Monday 8 January 2024 at 6.30pm in the Community Room, Wereham Village Hall

The date of the next meeting were noted.

115/23 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 as follows:

- **To Consider/Approve Action in Relation to Access to Parish Responsible/Owned Land –** The Parish Clerk agreed to write to state the access to the pond from the gate that there is no vehicular

access. Agreed to check the PC before sending. The Clerk agreed write to the house on the field to reconfirm that there was no access from the gate installed onto the playing field.

- **To Consider Clerk's Annual Appraisal and NALC Sector Pay** – Norfolk ALC had provided the negotiated pay for the sector, it was approved the increase the Parish Clerk's pay based on this proposal.