

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF HOCKHAM PARISH COUNCIL ON 5TH
DECEMBER 2022 AT 7.30PM IN HOCKHAM VILLAGE HALL**

Present were councillors Bennett, Thomas, Leech, Loft and Lambert (Chair), plus the clerk and 6 members of the public.

The chair reported the sad passing of Ben Campbell, who had been a councillor for 30 years plus. He would be missed.

- 1) There were no apologies for absence.**
- 2) Declarations of interest** were from Councillor Bennett (Allotment holder), Councillor Leech (local farmer) and Councillor Lambert (Landlord of the Eagle)
- 3) There were no requests for dispensation.**
- 4) The minutes from October 22** were agreed and approved.
- 5) Progress Report**
 - a) No tree work quotes had been received yet.
 - b) The streetlight on Wretham road had been replaced. There were issues over the brightness though the lamp had been put on lowest setting. It was considered the K rating may be too high. The road closure had not happened, and the clerk had asked if a refund would be received but with no answer yet.
- 6) District/County councillor reports.** None.
- 7)** The meeting was closed for public participation.
- 8) Councillor Vacancies and Responsibilities.** The two vacancies were currently in the co option phase with closing dates of 9th December and 23rd December 2022 respectively. There was some interest. These would be voted on at the Jan 9th 23 meeting.
- 9) Highways and Road Safety.** Councillor Thomas reported that the drain opposite the pub had been worked on but there could still be an issue. Repair work had been carried out on the Wretham Road/Harling Road junction. White lines had been refreshed and the finger post on the B1111 had been attended to. Councillor Bennett praised the road sweeper for the works done recently.
- 10) To consider Planning Applications.**
 - a) A letter had been received from councillor Cowen regards The Smithy Cottage Wall and sign. The issue of the sign had not been commented on. Councillors were not happy with the answers from planning and a response would be constructed. Councillor Bennett was asked to assist.
 - b) The Kingshill application had been refused on several grounds.
 - c) A letter from Highways had been received about the potential Larkshall traffic. They would not be funding a weight restriction.
 - d) A question was raised as if a 5-property planning rule existed regards a cul-de-sac. The clerk would investigate.
 - e) A meeting would take place on 20th December at 4pm regards the Local Plan and submission of sites. Councillors Lambert and Leech would attend.
 - f) There was no issue considered with the condition removal on the barkers Farm reservoir application.
- 11) Finance Report.**
 - a) Councillor Bennett gave a detailed report of the findings of the finance committee regards the potential 23/24 precept. Breckalnd Council had advised

budgeting £1000 for local elections. The streetlights the parish owned needed maintenance and there was a capital project to pursue of replacement with LED's. This would offset the potential quadruple energy price hike. A precept of £15,000 was suggested. A decision would be made at the January meeting to agree this once more information had been received.

b) It was agreed that following the passing of Mr Campbell a new cheque signatory was needed. It was agreed that Mr Leech as a current Barclays customer would be put on the bank mandate.

c) The bank account had £14193.38 in it.

Approval was given for the following payments.

Pearce and Kemp £91.20 (Nov & Dec contract fees.

Clerks' salary at £119.60 plus PAYE at £5.40.

Community car reimbursement to C Garrod at £14

It was agreed to pay the reduced Serco invoice for Grass Cutting when received at £875.04 plus VAT.

12) Allotments.

Following issues on the Shropham Road allotments it was agreed to conduct regular formal inspections of all allotments in the future, with impartial councillors.

13) Footpaths and Rights of Way.

The Forestry Commission had thanked the council for reporting potential overnight stays on the picnic site.

The trod was in need of work soon.

14) Playing Field. No progress but the chair reported interest with a potential new committee.

15) Correspondence had been received from.

Breckland Council over Local Elections in 2023

A letter from MP Liz Truss. It was agreed to try and take Ms Truss up on the offer of a meeting.

There was a new police contact. PC Damian Wicks.

A thank you letter had been received from the British Legion for the parish council donation

16) Policy approval. It was agreed to update POL018.

17) The Chair thanked the Xmas tree team and mentioned the village advent calendar in various windows around the village. He wished all a very Merry Christmas.

18) Date of the next meeting

Monday 9th June 2023