

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HOCKHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 19.30HRS**  
**ON MONDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

**Attending;** A Lambert (Chair), C Garrod (Clerk), T Bennett, B Campbell, J Leech, D Childerhouse, C Thomas, Ward member P Cowen, County Councillor F Eagle and 24 members of the public.

- 1) **Apologies for absence;** Christine Woodsford.
- 2) **Declarations of interest** were from A Lambert re anything about the Eagle pub and J Leech as he is a farmer in Little Hockham
- 3) **Minutes of the last full meeting** of the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and the Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021, had been circulated. It was proposed by D Childerhouse and seconded by C Thomas to take these as read. All were in favour and the minutes signed as true records.
- 4) **Matters arising** from the minutes.
  - a) Policies and procedures. These were now in place. The councillors did not request any more at this stage.
  - b) Chestnut Square sign. H Stebbing had completed the work free of charge. The councillors thanked him for the work and gesture.
  - c) Playing Field Fence. This should hopefully begin mid August.
  - d) Good Councillor Guides. These had been distributed.
  - e) Bottle Bank Advert. This appeared in In Touch.
  - f) Ring Fenced Bottle Bank money. Suggestions were given as to what to do with the money. No decision made.
- 5) **Finance Report.** The new clerk was now a signatory.

Finance report 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Payments since the last meeting

C Garrod	Community Car	£14.00
NALC	Hand Books	£31.20
Pearce & Kemp	Street Light Main.	£45.60
E-ON	Electricity	£91.11
Info Commissioner	Fee	£40.00

There has been no income since the last meeting.

Balance                    **Community Account**                    **£20,985.99**

Approval for payments were made of £45.60 for Street Light maintenance and £66.55 for clerk's expenses. The clerk requested his salary was deferred for now. Proposer for accounts and payments, C Thomas Seconded J Leech all voted in favour.

- 6) **Breckland Councillor Phil Cowen** gave a report of Breckland Councils return to a degree of normality following the pandemic. Changes were being made to the council offices and to peoples work patterns, following investment. People being “pinged” had caused some recent disruption. Breckland Council finances are underpinned by commercial property renting, waste management and recycling, so central government funding changes are not a major concern.
- 7) **County Councillor Fabian Eagle** reported that NCC had also revamped itself. The main office buildings had been made much safer, but NCC were not self-funding and needed Central Government monies and had a £200 million shortfall. A social care green paper was needed as adult social care services cost more than the council tax income. A council tax rise was needed.

### 8) **Traffic and Road Safety**

The chair opened by stating that the Norfolk County Council Highways were the Responsible Authority for the local roads and that the parish council had very limited ways of helping parishioners. Ward member P Cowen reiterated that highways in Norfolk were the responsibility of NCC (excepting the A11 and A47, which were Highways England responsibility). He said he was very aware of Norfolk’s rural nature and that rural traffic had changed dramatically, particularly given contractor use on farms and the use of larger vehicles. He said the public highway was just that and that there was little to do to stop the traffic. Weight restrictions would only deter through traffic and certainly not local traffic and it was a county wide problem. The clerk gave a brief account of a meeting held between some parish councillors and J Griffiths Highways Engineer, in the village. Mr Griffiths had seen the damage to property and verges but was unsure on the ownership of some of the verge land. He had reported that a search was being conducted to assess ownership as items like bollards, could not be placed on private land without permission. The search could take up to eighteen weeks. White road bars were also being considered, similar to those in Shropham. Highways had asked that any incidents were reported via their online portal. He would get back to the parish council.

Councillor Eagle mentioned the Parish Partnership Scheme and that he had some limited funds potentially available elsewhere if required.

The meeting was opened to parishioners, several of whom gave personal accounts relating to farm traffic, ranging from property damage, verge damage, speeding, hazardous driving (some of which had been recorded), driving with mobile phones in hand and several near miss issues. Some parishioners had reported matters to the police and to highways. In some cases, it was considered there was a hit and run culture, though some accident liability had also been accepted. A traffic management plan was suggested.

The chair said that the parish council would try and help though help was limited. It was agreed that a letter detailing concern would be sent to the local police community liaison officer and all local farmers made contact with, to try and get across the many concerns. It was suggested the police should be asked to visit regularly as a deterrent.

The chair explained that a speedwatch project had been difficult to organise and that only four people had shown interest, but six were required to run the project.

Mr Leech a farmer in Little Hockham addressed the meeting. He said that accessing the Little Hockham Lane/ Harling Rd junction was not easy for larger vehicles and that when the farm had deliveries it tried to warn residents in advance. However, delivery companies did not always give advance warning, despite the best attempts. He explained that his own farms vehicles had speed limiters, set at 30km/h or 18 mph. He also said that any contractors he used were asked to abide to the same speed rules. Regards mobile phones, his tractors had Bluetooth so there was no need to use a hand-held phone. He did agree a resolution was needed for all parties and at the request of the chair, agreed to help facilitate a meeting between the local farmers and the parish council, to help explain the issues mentioned. It was also suggested that some sort of local incident reporting method could be considered.

## **9) Planning**

An enforcement appeal had been held ENF/47/19/PAR regarding some land bordering the A1075. The inspector has agreed with Breckland Council's decision to enforce action.

3PL/2021/0990/F Church Lane Barn proposed new access point onto Wretham Rd. This was considered a good idea, no objections

3PL/2021/0963/F St Merryn proposed garage and games room. Concerns from parishioners had been raised regards the potential to convert in the future to residential. The chair would speak to the planning officer.

Three suggestions for the new Wretham Rd development and the three fronting properties had been requested. The names Home Meadow, Hall Close and Hawitage were suggested. The clerk would see if more time were available for public suggestions.

## **10) Highways**

C Thomas reported the following;

- a) Damage to a highway adjacent to fire hydrant in Little Hockham Lane had been reported
- b) Ditches by the Watton Road had been requested for maintenance
- c) The concealed entrance sign near Three Gables had been chased up, but no action so far
- d) The school footpath had yet to be inspected
- e) Maintenance on the trod on the A1075 had been requested

B Campbell requested that hedges were maintained near the claypits. The Clerk would speak to Shropham Parish Clerk. Leech Farms suggested they may be able to help if required and would mention the issue to Savills

Broadland Housing Streetlights were discussed. NCC had said no streetlights were required but Councillor Childerhouse did not agree. Broadland would put streetlights in at their cost, but the parish council would need to pay maintenance costs, which would be minimal. It was proposed by D Childerhouse and seconded by T Bennett and approved by five votes for and one against.

Councillor Bennett asked Councillor Eagle, what the criteria was for NCC suggesting no lighting necessary. Was it light pollution, cost or safety? Councillor Childerhouse would follow this question up with Councillor Eagle.

#### **11) Any other business**

- a) Website. This was very well managed by C Wiltshire who had paid for its running costs since 2015. It was agreed, (under protest from Mr Wiltshire), that the parish council covers the costs for 2020 and 2021 at £196.80
- b) No In Touch donation had been granted for some time. It was agreed to donate £100 and to consider this annually.
- c) FOI request. A request was being processed by the clerk, but this would go over the usual 20 days, due to recent workload.
- d) The permissive path at the rear of the playing field was now reopened. Reflectors were going onto the posts in the near future.
- e) Luke Pavey asked if anyone was interested in being a school governor as there was a vacancy.
- f) A suggestion for a village hall electric car charging point had been received. This would be passed to the Village Hall Committee.
- g) The clerk would look into GDPR and FOI training for the councillors.

**Date of next meeting** September 13<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm in the village hall.

Suggested further meeting dates were; Mon Oct 11<sup>th</sup>, Mon Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mon Dec 13<sup>th</sup> and Mon Jan 17<sup>th</sup> 2022.