

**Minutes of the Meeting of Lessingham and Hempstead with Eccles Parish Council
held on Tuesday 10th January 2023 at 7.30pm at Lessingham Village Hall**

Present: Peter Peruzzi (Chairman)
Steve Bennett
Jennifer Boardman
James Holden
Alan Shields
Catherine Moore, Parish Clerk

Also present: County Councillor Richard Price (from 9pm) and District Councillor Lucy Shires and 0 members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Cull and David Reynolds.

2. Declaration of Interest for items on the agenda

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th November 2022

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed**, proposed by Jeni Boardman, seconded by James Holden, all in favour, and were signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

a) Hedge Cutting - Bridleway

It was noted that Norfolk County Council had pushed this back to being the landowners responsibility, and that it should be maintained to the standard of a bridleway. This would be discussed with Richard Price when he arrived.

b) Barclays Bank – Change of Address

The bank mandate and change of address had been completed, with the signatories confirmed as James Holden and Andrew Cull. The Chairman would be going to the branch with a letter of authority to obtain bank statements from April 2022 to present.

c) Unity Trust Bank Account

The Clerk noted that she now required the last six months bank statements to be able to progress this.

d) Telephone Box Refurbishment

The Clerk reported that she had received the repainting kit from BT. The pre-application advice form had been submitted to North Norfolk District Council in relation to listed building consent, however BT had suggested that they had never applied for planning permission to renovate a phone box. BT were not concerned about the lean on the box.

It was noted that the Bush Estate phone box was not able to make calls, it was suggested that this may be faulty. Lucy Shires agreed to report this to BT.

ACTION: LS

5. Public Forum

a) Public

None.

b) District Councillor

Lucy Shires reported that she had secured funding for early years and key stage 1 children to receive supervised tooth brushing sessions. She was working with schools to introduce this scheme.

North Norfolk District Council were setting budgets, with inflation being volatile.

There had been 40% increases in costs in the construction sector, and the Council was only doing emergency work and repairs. Coastal defence costs had doubled.

This was impacting on projects which were still at the funding application stage.

NNDC was not looking to cut services at this stage.

The cost of living crisis continued to be a problem especially among older people who would not put their heating or oven on. The death rate had increased. Customer Services at NNDC were taking more calls than ever, with a lot of signposting to other services, or identifying and dealing with secondary issues that were raised as a result of the call, often with positive outcomes. The policy was that one phone call would deal with all the matters the caller required, instead of being passed around departments.

Councillors noted their concerns with the recent Environment Agency works to the sea defences. Lucy agreed to take this back to the relevant people, and to try to set up a site visit when the sand level was down. The Chairman would send the video he took of the faults.

ACTION: LS / PP

6. Planning

a) New Applications

RV/23/0012 Seascape, Beach Road, Eccles-on-sea: Removal of condition 4 of planning permission RV/20/2661 to allow the property to be used as personal and for family holiday use only.

It was **agreed** to support approval of the application, 2 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention, passed on the Chairman's casting vote in favour.

ACTION: Clerk

b) Applications considered between meetings

PF/22/2756 The Den, Beach Road, Eccles-on-Sea: Erection of front porch.

NO OBJECTIONS

NP/22/2796 Hempstead Heath Farm, Sea Palling Road, Ingham: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed agricultural reservoir.

COMMENTS SUBMITTED

c) Decisions

None

7. Finance

a) Finances 2022/23 To Date

The Clerk reported that there were still no current account bank statements available since 29th April 2022. The Clerk would be able to update the accounts once the bank statements had been received. The outline accounts were presented and noted.

ACTION: Clerk

b) Returned Cheque

The reimbursement to the Clerk for the unpaid insurance premium (£300.97) had been returned by Barclays again as the signatures were not on the accounts. This reimbursement would be raised again as two cheques for lower amounts.

c) Appointment of Internal Auditor

It was **agreed** to appoint Kerrie Wilton as internal auditor for the 2022/23 accounts at a cost of £50, proposed by Jeni Boardman, seconded by Steve Bennett, all in favour.

d) Payments

It was **agreed** to pay the following, proposed by Peter Peruzzi, seconded by Jeni Boardman, all in favour:-

C Moore	Salary Nov - Dec 2022 incl 22/23 uplift	£279.30
HMRC	PAYE Nov - Dec 2022	£70.00
C Moore	Expenses	£5.49
C Moore	Reimbursement – Insurance	£300.97

8. **Correspondence**

a) General Correspondence

None.

9. **Other Matters**

a) Eccles Road Sign

Following a brief update on the matter, a vote was taken on whether to consider this project any further, with one in favour of continuing and four against. It was **agreed** not to proceed.

b) Sea Wall Repairs

Covered earlier in the meeting.

It was **agreed** to exclude the Press and Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 for the next item.

c) Review of Clerk's Salary and Working from Home Allowance

It was **agreed** to revise the Clerk's salary to SCP20 from 1st April 2023, and to give a working from home allowance of £5/month, proposed by Peter Peruzzi, seconded by Jeni Boardman, all in favour.

The Press and Public were readmitted to the meeting.

d) Budget and Precept 2022/23

The budget and precept was considered. It was confirmed that the £300 payment to Hempstead PCC was for maintenance of the two churchyards. The Clerk noted that, subject to receiving bank statements, the Council held reserves of around £5,400. Earmarked reserves would be considered at the May meeting once the year was completed and reconciled, however the Council should hold in reserves a General Reserve (6-12 months revenue expenditure); a Staffing Reserve (75% of the annual salary bill in case of sickness); and an Election Reserve (with a by-election estimated at around £2,200). The Contested Election budget line was discussed, the Clerk noted that this would be the cost if the May election was contested. It was **agreed** to revise this budget line to £180 which would be the cost of an uncontested election, and to use reserves if a contested election took place in May.

It was **agreed** to set the precept at £4,490, which was an 8.32% increase, Band D £19.61, proposed by Peter Peruzzi, seconded by Jeni Boardman, all in favour.

ACTION: Clerk

10. Public Participation

a) County Councillor

Richard Price reported that an exhibition and memorial service would be held in Sea Palling over the weekend of 29th to 31st January 2023, which was the 70th anniversary of the 1953 floods. He was working to engage with schools, and the exhibition would look ahead at the next 70 years and what was being done to protect the coastal and river areas.

It was hoped that two speed roundels in the parish would be funded through the Road Safety Community Fund.

The SAM2 was due to return to Lessingham, Peter was setting up training with Westcotec.

The devolution 'County Deal' would be debated at Norfolk County Council soon, with the favoured option being an Elected Leader.

The old bridge at Potter Heigham had been closed due to sinkhole defect, tests were underway to establish stability and remedial work required.

Potholes were raised and it was noted that only one of the items reported to the Rangers had been dealt with. Richard asked that potholes be reported official through the online portal, then he could chase these up using reference numbers.

Richard agreed to speak with the landowner at Seaside Lane regarding hedge cutting so the bin lorries could access properties.

ACTION: RP

11. Reports from Councillors

The Chairman reported that he had discussed a defib with a supplier however they were being quite pushy with sales. Other suppliers would be considered. It was suggested that other defibrillators were available locally, and the Council could contribute towards their upkeep in return for them being publicly available. It was suggested that the First Responders could be engaged for advice.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 14th March 2023 at 7.30pm at Lessingham Village Hall. The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

CHAIRMAN