

SHELFANGER PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 9 October 2023 at 7.30 pm at All Saints church, Shelfanger.

Councillors Present: Cllr S Groom (Chair), Cllr M Paines, Cllr M Hurst, Cllr P Chambers and Cllr M Paines

In attendance: Elaine Tinsley (Clerk), and 2 members of the public

1. **To consider accepting apologies for absence:**
Apologies were received and approved for Cllr D Leeder and Cllr P Ross.
2. **To record declarations of interest and approve any requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests or other interests:**
None were received.
3. **To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 31 July 2023:**
The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 31 July 2023 (pages 1-4 of 4) previously circulated to all members, were proposed for approval by Cllr M Paines seconded Cllr S Groom and unanimously agreed.
4. **To receive a report from Cllr Catherine Rowett:**
Unfortunately, Catherine Rowett was unable to attend, but sent in a report, which is attached to these minutes and was circulated at the meeting.
5. **To receive questions or comments from the parishioners:**
A local resident asked why there was no report from District Councillor J Easter. Cllr S Groom confirmed that no report had been received by Cllr Easter and due to an ongoing dispute, he had not been invited to attend the meeting.
6. **To receive the clerk's reports:**
Elaine Tinsley referred those present to her report which had been sent out with the Agenda (and attached here).
7. **To receive the Chairman's Report:**
The Chairman brought to the attention of the Council the recent communication with the Charity Commission regarding the non-compliance of the Village Hall in respect of producing Accounts when requested. The Charity Commission will be writing to the Village Hall to re-affirm their duties.
8. **To receive updates from Councillors: -**
Cllr P Ross, although not present at the meeting had sent an email to request Footpaths 9 & 10 be re-opened (dealt with at point 11 below).

9. PLANNING

9.1. To Comment on and Recommend/Object any Current planning applications: - None

9.2. To receive an update on any previous planning applications:

Deal Farm – this has gone to Appeal.

Heywood Road Opening – A new opening had appeared at the top of Heywood Road. ET was requested to contact Planning as no application/approval had been seen.

Pylons – contact had been received from a local farmer to confirm drilling had taken place on their land, without permission and without any monetary gain.

Chicken Sheds, Diss Road – The Chairman reported the plans had been changed and water was no longer going to be discharged into the ditches.

10. To receive the Finance Report:

The Clerk confirmed this had been distributed with the Agenda, although a dating mistake was pointed out, which would be amended.

10.1. Payment to Norfolk Parish Training & Support – Approved by MP & PC.

10.2. Payment for mowing – Approved by MP & PC.

10.3. Payment to D Masters – Approved by MP & PC.

11. To receive a report on Footpaths 9 & 10:

ET was requested to contact the local farmer with regard to Footpaths 9 & 10 to ensure there is sufficient width for pedestrian use.

12. To receive a report on the Bank Account:

Barclays were proving difficult to manage. ET reported Lloyds had been approached and an account was in the process of being opened with them and received all the signed documents from the Councillors.

13. To receive a report on Clerk training:

ET confirmed she had attended Parish Clerk training over the past few weeks.

14. To receive reports on Correspondence:

ET requested feedback on the amount of correspondence forwarded to Councillors and it was agreed this was at the correct level.

15. To receive a report from the Diocese:

ET confirmed she had met with the Diocese regarding the 4 acres off Wash Lane. This was previously offered to residents for possible sale of strips, but was now being put with the Auction House and would be sold as a complete Lot at auction at the beginning of November.

16. Next meeting of the Parish Council: Monday 4 December 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Meeting closed at: 20:15 pm.

Shelfanger Parish Council Current Account

		Net	VAT		
01.04.23	Opening Balance				£910.68
	Receipts				
28.04.23	SNDC				£2,520.00
22.06.23	HMRC VAT				£136.98
29.08.23	SNDC				£2,520.00
	Total Receipts				£5,176.98
	Payments				
20.04.23	Employer contribution	£35.00	£0.00		£35.00
20.04.23	Footpath Mowing	£30.00	£0.00		£30.00
24.04.23	Stationery	£6.65	£1.33		£7.98
24.04.23	Auditor	£58.00	£0.00		£58.00
24.04.23	Church Hire	£30.00	£0.00		£30.00
24.04.23	NALC - Annual Sub	£151.26	£0.00		£151.26
02.05.23	Zurich	£452.12	£0.00		£452.12
17.05.23	Church Hire	£30.00	£0.00		£30.00
17.05.23	Employer contribution	£35.00	£0.00		£35.00
05.06.23	Outgoing Clerk Final Wages	£362.28	£0.00		£362.28
15.06.23	Church Hire	£60.00	£0.00		£60.00
26.06.23	Parish Clerk Wages	£144.94	£0.00		£144.94
26.06.23	Employer contribution	£38.60	£0.00		£38.60
29.06.23	Footpath Mowing	£30.00	£0.00		£30.00
24.07.23	Parish Clerk Wages	£144.94	£0.00		£144.94
24.07.23	Employer contribution	£36.20	£0.00		£36.20
02.08.23	SNDC Dog Bin Emptying - Dec 22 - March 23 (chq No. 100567)	£42.92	£8.58		£51.50
22.08.23	Parish Clerk Wages	£144.94	£0.00		£144.94
22.08.23	Employer contribution	£36.20	£0.00		£36.20
31.08.23	SNDC Dog Bin Emptying - April 23 - March 24 (chq No. 100568)	£167.00	£33.40		£200.40
22.09.23	Parish Clerk Wages	£144.94	£0.00		£144.94
22.09.23	Employer contribution	£36.20	£0.00		£36.20
	Total Payments				£2,260.50
	Bank Balance - 01.10.23				£3,827.16
	Funds held for Friends of Boyland Common				£531.62
	To be authorised				
	Footpath Mowing				£30.00
	Norfolk Parish Training & Support				£100.00
	Potential Bank Balance				£3,165.54

Clerk's Report – Meeting 9th October 2023

Highways

1. **Obscured Road signs – main road.** These were reported to the local farmer who has confirmed they will be cut back following the nesting season.
2. **Other Hedges** – Contact was made with Highways/Rangers – especially with regard to the hedges along Wash Lane. These were inspected and it was deemed not necessary for any work to be carried out.
3. **Footbridge on Path 11** – This was reported again to Highways, they have obtained a quote and said the work will be carried out within six week (email dated 26th August)
4. **Water course, Common Road** - Contact was made with Highways about the watercourse and problems associated with it at the base of the carpark below the Council Houses on Common Road. It was confirmed the grille had been removed during the watercourse works, but as this was part of the Environment Agency asset, it had to be replaced. The Environment Agency were adamant it needed to be in place for H&S reasons. The grille is on a 6wk inspection regime and this would increase during the winter months. He would contact the EA again to discuss, but felt it would not be something that could be removed. It was explained that the water level, when flooding occurred, rose very quickly (1/2 hour) and 6 wky regime would not help in this instance, Highways confirm, that unfortunately their hands were tied as it was not their asset. Email chase 23.09.23.
5. **Grips** – Again, Highways were contacted about the grips along the roadside - This 5 week programme is scheduled to start early October. In some circumstances they would be re-done in the New Year, but generally were now only done once per year.
6. **Village Sign/Pump/Noticeboard** – A local resident was contacted and has taken the maintenance of these items in hand.
7. **Boyland Common Funds** – it was confirmed that £531.62 has been set aside in the Parish Council accounts for Boyland Common. This was placed in the Parish funds by Friend of Boyland Common, but had been lost in the accounting system.

Highways and road safety:

I have been busy working with Parishes and with the highways officer on schemes for improving things relating to roads and road safety. Some of these will be funded through the Parish Partnership scheme, from which you can get up to £25,000 contributed by NCC providing the Parish Council finds the funding to contribute half the costs. This scheme is for works that don't involve changes to any legal traffic order. Most urgent however has been work on the applications that I shall be making to the Road Safety Community Fund which is currently open to applications from this part of Norfolk. This one does allow us to apply to change Traffic Regulation Orders if our proposal meets the relevant criteria. I now have a spreadsheet of all the schemes that have been suggested, and I'm working with the Highways officer to see which ones are suitable for the RSCF scheme and how to make a convincing and effective case for them. We hope to have this work complete by the middle of October.

September's Full Council meeting

Full Council met on Tuesday 26th September. I spoke on a number of important motions, including one on coastal erosion, one on the nutrient neutrality regulations that (thankfully) the House of Lords voted to keep in place when the government suddenly proposed to scrap them, and one on ensuring that the County is not investing its money in fossil fuel assets that will lose value as we move to a carbon-free future. We also asked a number of searching questions to the Leader and Cabinet. I asked the Transport Cabinet member (Graham Plant) about the lack of rural bus services, and got a pretty unsatisfactory answer from which it appeared that only his wife ever travels by bus in his family. We also pressed the administration to ensure that they continue with insulation programmes to end the problem of cold homes, despite the government's latest betrayal of its net zero commitments.

Long Stratton Bypass:

The Long Stratton Bypass has now got planning permission from South Norfolk District Council. It includes huge numbers of new homes (I've heard it described as a housing estate rather than a bypass) and a new primary school. I'm having a proper briefing on the scheme later this week, in the hope of understanding the details of how it will affect those who actually want to drive from this division into Long Stratton to access facilities, and how it will affect cyclists, businesses in Long Stratton who rely on passing trade, and bus routes. I would be interested to hear the views of West Depwade residents and parish councils.

Infrastructure and Development Committee

I attended a meeting on the morning of Wednesday 13th September, with several items of important business including (among other things) the first tranche of Norfolk County Council's Climate Action Plan, and the new Walking, wheeling and cycling strategy (which is good in general, but I was not satisfied with the fact that it fails to address the issue of speed limits and other measures to make walking and cycling safe in the country lanes). I hope to bring a motion to council to bring us into line with other councils that have a much better policy regarding rural speed limits, and will be interested in the response given that most of my parishes are keen to see reductions in speeds in their villages, and to be able to walk dogs and ride bicycles. I'm alarmed that the government seems determined to eliminate 20 mph limits, even though they have been shown to vastly reduce the risks of fatalities and sever injuries in road accidents-as well as reducing the risk of the accident occurring in the first place. I hope to prepare this motion for the December Council meeting.

People and Communities

On Friday 15th September I attended the People and Communities Select committee (substituting for a colleague who is on holiday) where we considered new strategies relating to Special Educational Needs provision for children, and also the "Integrated winter plan (health and wellbeing)" which is the Council's plan for how to manage resources over the winter and ensure that there are hospital beds and safe places for people to be discharged to etc. This latter document was very vague and lacking in detail, and the risk assessment was, in my view, wholly inadequate. The final item of business was on Children's Social Care, which is a new strategy to ensure that children who need intervention are raised in a family setting if at all possible.

Contact me

You can contact me on Catherine.rowett.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk for Council-related business, and I look forward to helping with a range of issues that people have already brought to my attention, including the anaerobic digester issue in Bressingham and the pylons, but also dangerous roads and other issues. I'm always delighted to attend award ceremonies, events, centenaries, lectures, exhibitions, conferences, debates, litter picking parties, campaign events and protests, so don't hesitate to add me to your mailing lists!

I also have a facebook page which will include updates on what I am working on, posts about events and opportunities relevant to residents, and a place where you can comment and leave your views on things I want to ask you about. The link is here: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100095138285501>

Other County Council news

A few items to mention from the County Council more generally:

Preventing floods

Small, simple steps that ensure water can drain away from your home can cut down the likelihood of flooding: e.g. keeping drains, ditches, and watercourses clear. Many ditches and watercourses will benefit from clearing branches, and cutting back new undergrowth. Early autumn is a good moment for property owners to put in a little work to keep their properties safe.

A build-up of flood water with nowhere to drain can quickly turn a minor incident into a disaster for the home. By starting off small, and checking drains for any blockages such as mud, leaves and stones, residents can take the first step towards mitigating the impact of flooding.

Outside the home, if residents spot any blocked or broken drains on Norfolk's highways, they can report it via www.norfolk.gov.uk/flooding, allowing Norfolk's Highways Team to clear them and keep our roads open.

More information [here](#).

Finding a green way to get there

The County Council has launched a new website that enables you to check for any journey you need to make whether there is a suitable way to get there by bus, train, bicycle, walking, or some combination of these things, and compares the time, cost and carbon footprint of each mode of travel, including car travel, so that you can see if there is a better/quicker/cheaper or less damaging way to get to the place you need to go. It's interesting, though rather depressing when I ask it for public transport routes to the villages in my County division! Fun to play with and could be very interesting for children at the school to investigate the carbon footprint of their journeys and to work out how to manage them without emitting so much planet-killing stuff. Find it here: [Journey Planner - Travel Norfolk](#)

I've also been amazed to discover that, contrary to rumours, the Flexibus still exists and you can book it here: <https://online.norfolk.gov.uk/flexibusjourneyrequest/> (Let me know if that is not true!)

Stop smoking in October? The Stoptober Campaign

Public Health at Norfolk County Council is urging smokers to take the opportunity to quit this October during the annual Stoptober campaign. The key objective is to encourage smoking adults living in Norfolk to quit smoking for good using the tools and support available via Smokefree Norfolk.

The Norfolk campaign will signpost people to our Ready to Change website where they can find out more about their smoking behaviours and get help from our partner Smokefree Norfolk.

More information at www.readytochange.co.uk

Broadband scheme wins Access Innovation Award

Norfolk County Council recently won the Access Innovation Award, at the Connected Britain Awards ceremony, for its work to connect remote and hard to reach villages to deliver superfast broadband.

The project uses Starlink satellite-based services to bring high speed broadband to some of the hardest to reach communities in Norfolk. It is being trialled in ten village halls, with connectivity provided to the village through this connection.

With 97% of the county now receiving superfast broadband the project reaches the final areas of the county where prohibitive cost had previously been a barrier to connection.

Norfolk County Council has won awards three times in four years at these national awards.

Recruiting foster parents

The Council (in collaboration with other councils) has launched a new film to encourage people to consider becoming foster parents, to help ensure that all children in care get the best possible chances in life. Information about becoming a foster carer in Norfolk and a link to the film can be found [here](#).

Catherine Rowett

2nd October 2023