

# GREAT MASSINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Great Massingham Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024, at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors, K Hobart (Chair), P Harries, P James, S Nash, M Wingell and the Clerk, Sarah Harvey.  
Member of Public: 6

1. The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** it was AGREED to accept apologies from Cllrs R Arbenz, A Brun, K Frazer, and O Locke. Cllr K Frazer asked that it be noted that should the Parish Council meeting have proceeded on the 9<sup>th</sup> September, she would have been in attendance.
3. **Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items:** None.
4. **Minutes**  
It was noted that Agenda Item 15d (Ponds/Village Greens) had been amended to include the addresses 49 – 53 Station Road. Following the amendment the minutes of the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2024 which were circulated before the meeting were PROPOSED by Cllr M Wingell, SECONDED by Cllr P James and AGREED as a correct record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman, Cllr K Hobart.
5. **To consider the Clerks Report (Matters arising for information only):** None.
6. **Parishioners Questions and Statements:**  
A parishioner commented that work was required to clear out the fallen tree debris from the swims along the east side of Scotsman's Pit and that this could be undertaken voluntarily during the start of 2025. Cllr K Hobart asked the at the Council be kept informed when the work would take place.  
A parishioner advised that following the last Classics on the Green event the litter bins were overflowing with rubbish as a consequence of the event.
7. **To receive reports from the County and Borough Councillors:** in the absence of County Councillor S Dark no report was received.  
Borough Councillor A Beales in his absence provided a report via email advising that Kate Blakemore the new BCKLWN chief executive would start work with the Borough Council on 17<sup>th</sup> September. Kate's immediate priorities were noted as including addressing the projected future budget deficit of some £4 - £5 million which looms in 2026/27 and an evaluation and restructure of the Council to best deliver for residents. Cllr A Beales reported that as a relatively new Council leader, his leadership really starts with the new CEO – many challenges ahead. On a more local level, Cllr. Terry Parish had been appointed as Member Champion for Parish Councils and he would be organising events in due course.
8. **Finance**
  - a. **To note accounts for payment under the Late Payments Interest Act (1998):**

|                                                                  |        |      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------|
| FOSPGM (Unplanted Coir Roll (from Salix Ltd) for Scotsman's Pit) | 395.40 | BACS |
| P James (Reimbursement of costs for dog fouling signage)         | 28.58  | BACS |
  - b. **To approve the accounts for payment (list at meeting):**

|                                                                                  |          |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------|
| Scottish Hydro (Street Lighting, July Account)                                   | 625.52   | BACS |
| Cozens (UK) Ltd, Street Lighting Maintenance (August 2024)                       | 54.00    | BACS |
| HHA Grounds Maintenance Ltd (Grass Cutting in August)                            | 567.00   | BACS |
| Zurich Municipal (Parish Council Insurance Policy)                               | 1,104.06 | BACS |
| PKF Littlejohn LLP (External Audit Fee)                                          | 378.00   | BACS |
| Norfolk Parish Training & Support (Councillor Induction)                         | 56.00    | BACS |
| Lisa Hobart Garden Services (Work around Scotsman's Pit)                         | 130.00   | BACS |
| Clerk's Salary & Expenses (12 <sup>th</sup> August to 8 <sup>th</sup> September) | 579.48   | BACS |
  - c. **To note the finance received during August 2024:**

|                  |        |
|------------------|--------|
| Fishing Receipts | 123.00 |
|------------------|--------|
  - d. **To approve the August 2024 financial statement:** it was PROPOSED by Cllr K Hobart, SECONDED by Cllr M Wingell and AGREED that the financial statement for August 2024, should be approved and signed by the Chairman.
  - e. **To receive the External Auditor's Report following the Limited Assurance Review of AGAR:** it was noted that PKF Littlejohn had completed their review of the AGAR for 2023/24 and that no

issues had been brought to the Council's attention. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit along with sections 1,2 and 3 of the AGAR would be available to view on the notice board and parish council website.

- f. **To consider a further fixed rate saver option for funds with HTB:** it was PROPOSED by Cllr P James, SECONDED by Cllr P Harries and AGREED that £50,000 should be placed in the HTB 1 Year SME Fixed Saver Account and the remaining sum, £29,394.76 should be placed in the Unity Trust Bank Instant Access Savings Account.

## 9. Planning Matters

- a. **To consider Planning Applications received:**

*Dealt with by delegated decision (Planning Advisory Group) – NO OBSERVATIONS*

24/00484/F - Subdivision of existing plot involving demolition of the existing barn with class Q approval and construction of a new replacement dwelling with separate private access and improvements to driveway, parking and turning area of existing dwelling. at West Heath Barn Lynn Lane.

**NO OBSERVATIONS** - 24/01426/F - Proposed solar panels at The Dabbling Duck 11 Abbey Road.

- b. **To consider plans since publication of agenda:** None.
- c. **Applications approved/refused by Borough Planning Control:** None.
- d. **To note the BCKLWN Local Plan 2021-2040 - Consultation on Main Modifications (August - October 2024):** it was noted that all comments to the consultation needed to be submitted by 2<sup>nd</sup> October.
- e. **Neighbourhood Development Plan: to receive a progress update:** Cllr P James provided an update and reminder regarding the NDP Communication Conversation planned to take place on the 19<sup>th</sup> October.

## 10. Ducklings Preschool

- a. **To consider a proposal (along with supporting documentation) for a new Preschool:** following consideration of the proposal submitted by the Ducklings Preschool and noting legal advice as well as recommendations made by the Clerk it was PROPOSED by Cllr K Hobart, SECONDED by Cllr M Wingell and AGREED that a definitive answer should be obtained from Norfolk County Council (via County Councillor S Dark) regarding whether partial use of the school playing field could be used for the purposes of building a new Preschool.

Further research should be undertaken to ascertain whether the land situated at Charles Dewar Close was acquired for allotment purposes or appropriated for this specific purpose or acquired for another purpose. Following which, consent from the Secretary or State would be required for disposal of the land.

A community consultation would need to be undertaken to ascertain whether there was a clear mandate of support for the proposed project

The Parish Council would adopt the General Power of Competence at the 2025 Annual Parish Council meeting.

## 11. Highways

- a. **To note highway matters requiring attention and to receive any updates:** the Clerk advised that the with regard to the repair of the vehicle activated sign at Castle Acre Road, Westcotec Ltd had sent a quotation for repairs to NCC, therefore the decision was now theirs if they wished like to repair it or replace it.  
Cllr P James commented on the condition of the pavement along Castle Acre Road.  
Cllr K Hobart commented that a parking deterrent was required outside Hoss Chesnut House, Abbey Road, as regular parking of vehicles was causing a hazard and blocking the entry/exit to Station Road.
- b. **To consider bids for the Norfolk County Council, Parish Partnership Scheme 2025/26:** a summary of SAM2 Sign options and pricing provided by Westcotec Ltd was reviewed by the Council. It was PROPOSED by Cllr M Wingell, SECONDED by Cllr K Hobart and AGREED that an official quotation should be sought for a SAM2 Sign only along with two new batteries.

## 12. Street Lighting

- a. **To receive reports of any lighting problems:** it was noted that streetlight 9031, outside Parsley Barn and the streetlight opposite The Malthouse, Weasenham Road required attention.

### 13. Correspondence

To note any general correspondence/circulars received (list provided at meeting).

- a. **Email from Parishioner, Scotsman's Pit Fishing:** the contents of the email were noted.
- b. **Email from Parishioner, Weeds at Post Office Pit:** it was noted that work around the Post Office Pit had been scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup> September.
- c. **Gray's Fun Fair, to note dates 7th - 13th October:** noted.
- d. **BCKLWN, Funding and support for West Norfolk Community Buildings:** noted.
- e. **BCKLWN, Parish and Town Councils - Council Tax Base Training:** Cllrs K Hobart, S Nash and the Clerk to attend.

### 14. Open Spaces

- a. **To approve the draft consultation document and costs to establish public opinion on parking issues within the village:** the content of the draft consultation document was AGREED, and it was noted that this would be circulated as an A4 prefolded insert in the October edition of The Mallard at a cost of £30.  
The Clerk advised the Council that following the consultation should parking on the greens wish to be pursued further a combination of professional and legal advice would need to be sought. It was noted that there was statutory protection of village greens under the two nineteenth century acts (Inclosure Act 1857 and Commons Act 1876) and that parking on a green may still be an offence under section 12 of the 1857 Act or section 29 of the 1876 Act. Planning permission would also be required for any proposed scheme, and in order for this to be considered in detail, it was recommended that a pre application request in the first instance should be submitted
- b. **To receive an update regarding the village greens registration and boundary issues, Weasenham Rd:** following further legal advice regarding the boundary query with the occupant of 24 Weasenham Road the Clerk advised that in order to formalise the position of the boundary a surveyor should be engaged to stake the boundary and then prepare an agreed plan. It was noted that Hayes and Storr litigation department could provide an estimate of fees for preparing a document (boundary agreement) and once this had been agreed they would facilitate the registration of this at the Land Registry. It was AGREED that the relevant quotations should be obtained for approval at the October meeting.  
The Clerk advised that she was finally coming to the end of organising and collating the evidence the Parish Council has to evidence occupation and possession of the village green land for at least the last 12 years. All original documents would need to be provided to Hayes and Storr and these would be sent via recorded delivery.
- c. **To consider the replacement and approve a specification for a new Parish Council/Village notice board:** it was AGREED that quotations should be sought for two 12 x A4 noticeboards to replace the existing Parish Council noticeboard and also to provide an additional space for community notices. The Clerk advised that planning permission may be required given the size of the new noticeboards and that they will be placed within the conservation area.
- d. **To discuss the planning arrangements for Christmas Lighting in the village for 2024:** it was AGREED that 6<sup>th</sup> December should be earmarked for the Christmas lighting switch on event. It was noted that The Dabbling Duck PH had confirmed suitability, and the Harpley Community Choir had also confirmed their availability. It was noted that Wyer Electrical Services Ltd had arranged for UKPN to attend site on Tuesday 17th September between 8 – 1 to assess and provide a quotation to provide an independent power source for the lighting. It was noted that Cllrs P James and M Wingell had expressed an interest in meeting them on site to discuss the arrangements.
- e. **To receive an update from Community Safety & Neighbourhood Nuisance (CSNN):** following a renewed request to CSNN by Borough Councillor Alistair Beales a response was noted from Nathan Reed, CSNN Officer. It was noted that a CSNN Officer had attended site on the evenings of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of July on Out of Hours Shifts and they had not found any evidence of excessive feeding or rats. It was noted that at no point during their visits to the site had they witnessed rats in situ or someone feeding the ducks. Therefore, it was reasonable for them to conclude there was not an infestation of rats and as such did not meet the threshold for formal intervention. It was noted that if any legal action was to be pursued, evidence would be required, of which they had none.
- f. **To review the dog/litter bin provision around the village greens:** it was AGREED that permission should be sought for a dog waste bin to be installed next to the litter bin at Abbey Road. Cllr P James advised that the new 'Please clean up after your dog' signs had been disseminated at the agreed places within the village.

- g. **To consider the purchase and planting of further spring bulbs on the village greens:** it was AGREED that Cllr P James would obtain a quotation for the associated costs for review by the Council at the next meeting.

15. **Ponds/Village Greens**

- a. **Scotsman's Pit: To consider any further information, actions and updates:** None.
- b. **To consider and approve a quotation to carry out work to the bridge, Biodiversity Project:** Cllr M Wingell presented an alternative proposal to repairing the current footbridge with associated costs. Cllr S Nash confirmed that she had received a verbal quote to carry out repairs to the footbridge. It was AGREED that Cllr S Nash would secure a written quotation for consideration by the Council at the next meeting.
- c. **To note the further response from Houghton Estate regarding DEFRA funding and agree any further action:** it was noted that DEFRA had advised that the proposed works for the ponds did not meet their grant suitability requirements. It was AGREED that further options to remedy the eroding banks would be investigated and quotations secured for the work. A proposal would then be further discussed with Houghton Estate.  
Concerns were noted regarding willow trees overhanging Scotsman's Pit and that this should be reported to Houghton Estate for investigation.

16. **Play Area**

- a. **To note the further deterioration of the Platform Roundabout and consider a plan of action:** the Clerk reminded the Council of advice from Norfolk Mobile Welding Services on completion of the previous repair and also the expectations of the Parish Council insurers regarding faulty equipment. It was AGREED that another repair should be carried out to the equipment, and it was noted that the faulty bar had been removed from use and the appropriate notices displayed.  
It was noted that an online survey had been created for residents and Play area users to register their support and provide feedback regarding a replacement roundabout. The consultation deadline was 31<sup>st</sup> October.
- b. **To note any issues arising from the Play Area weekly visual inspections:** there were none raised.

17. **To note reports of any village incidents:** None.

18. **To propose items for the Mallard and Parish Council website:** Play Area Consultation.

19. To note the date of the next Parish Council Meeting, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 7.30pm.

With no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.35 pm.

..... Chairman, 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

THESE MINUTES ARE UNCONFIRMED UNTIL APPROVED BY FULL COUNCIL