HELLESDON PARISH COUNCIL
The Council Office Diamond Jubilee Lodge Wood View Road Hellesdon Norwich NR6 5QB
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Minutes of the Meeting of Hellesdon Parish Council held on Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 7pm in The Council Chamber, Diamond Jubilee Lodge

PRESENT:

Cllr B Johnson (Chairman)
Cllr G Britton
Cllr I Duckett
Cllr R. Forder
Cllr S Holland
Cllr R Sear
Cllr N Barker
Cllr L Douglass
Cllr D Fahy
Cllr S Gurney
Cllr D Maidstone
Cllr S Smith

In attendance: Mrs F LeBon (Clerk) and six members of the public.

Welcome by the Chairman – Cllr Johnson opened the meeting at 7pm and welcomed all in attendance.

1. Apologies and Acceptance for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Britcher, Cllr Diffey, Cllr Lock and Cllr Sparkes.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest, or requests for dispensations made.

3. Minutes from Full Council meeting held 14th November 2023

The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 14th November 2023 had been previously circulated. It was **RESOLVED TO ACCEPT** these Minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

4. Public Participation

A member of the public thanked Cllr Gurney for her response to their highway concerns about the Low Road. He understood that many concerns were outside the jurisdiction of the Parish Council. Highway problems were exacerbated by a tree coming down over the weekend, which was cleared by local residents. The invite to the Parish Council to attend the next meeting of the residents on 4th January 2024 at 7pm at the Parish Hall was reiterated.

Cllr Gurney advised that the downed tree ought to have been removed by official highways contractors. With regards to the requests of the group, Cllr Gurney advised that she had been in discussions with the Ward member for the Wensum division of Norwich City Council, as the Low Road spans both divisions, and the following was updated:

- Redoing the road markings is being reviewed.
- The bus shelter referred to is on Rotary Court which is Wensum Ward
- Costings are being obtained on the sign refurbishment
- It is not Norfolk County Council policy to put mirrors up, due to glare distraction.

Approved……

Date……

- A review of the metal railings is taking place, with a view to replacing with concrete bollards (Wensum Ward).
- A pedestrian crossing is unlikely, but a footfall count will take place.
- Most accidents are due to drivers not driving with due care and attention, rather than the highway being a danger.
- The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport will view the site in the New Year.

A member of the public asked if there was any update on Northgate House, as there is definitely activity at the property. Cllr Douglass will escalate to Broadland Council.

5. Council Reports

a) To Receive Clerk's Written Report

This had been previously circulated. An update was provided on the library bollard scheme, with the legal agreement being completed on 8th December. An update was provided on the defibrillator, advising that match funding had been withdrawn due to the delay in confirmation of site location. It was **AGREED** after a proposal from Cllr Gurney and a second from Cllr Sear that the £750 match funding for the defibrillator is paid by Hellesdon Parish Council (Good Causes for Hellesdon Earmarked reserve) to ensure that the opportunity to receive a defibrillator isn't lost. Cllr Douglass reported that the line markings on Cromer Road had yet to be repainted, despite assurances that they would be done by 13th November. The Clerk is to chase this with highways. The Clerk's report was **ACCEPTED**.

Cllr Duckett Provided Apologies and Left the Meeting

b) To Receive Written Reports from District and County Councillors

Written reports had been previously circulated and were **NOTED** by the meeting.
Cllr Gurney reported that she had been assisting HAHA in obtaining a grant to contribute to their community hub.
Cllr Gurney reported that the government issued a 'Plan for Drivers' in October, which states that they will 'Strengthen guidance to local authorities on the operation of bus lanes. For example, bus lanes should only operate when bus services are running, or when traffic flows are heavy enough to delay buses'. This government guidance is not yet complete and Chloe Smith MP is chasing the department of transport. Cllr Gurney has requested that Norfolk County Council officers expedite actions to have the Cromer Road bus lane operational only during peak hours. It will not be possible to have the bus lane removed.
Cllr Gurney reported that the 512 bus was no longer routed through Mountfield Avenue and City View Road. Cllr Britton raised concerns about the quality of recent bus services.

c) Verbal Update from Chairman

Cllr Johnson reported that he had volunteered at the Senior Citizens' Christmas party, which was a great success.

6. Financial Matters

a) Bank Reconciliation – November 2023

It was **AGREED** to accept this reconciliation.

b) Earmarked reserves summary

This report was **NOTED**. Cllr Gurney reported that PP&R had reviewed the earmarked reserves and will be making a recommendation to full council in January.

c) Approval of Payments – November 2023

The payments detailed in the written report were **AGREED**.

Approved……

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d) Receipts – November 2023

The receipts detailed in the written report were **AGREED**.

e) Detailed Income and Expenditure 1st April 2023 – 30th November 2023

This report was **NOTED.**

7. Planning Committee

a) To Note the Decisions made by the Planning Committee on 14th November

The minutes and decisions arising from the Planning Committee meeting held on 14th November 2023 had been circulated. Cllr Britton advised that a contentious planning application for a change of use at 127-129 Reepham Road had been objected to by the Parish Council, and the Local Planning Authority was following up on the concerns raised. It was **AGREED** to note the minutes and the decisions made**.**

8. Policy, Property and Resource Committee

a) To Note the Decisions made by the Playing Fields, Allotments and Amenities Committee on 11th December 2023 (verbal report)

Cllr Gurney reported that this was a busy meeting. Two grant applications were considered and the earmarked and general reserves were reviewed, with a view to providing a recommendation to full council in January.

The budget and associated precept had been discussed and the recommendation to full council in January, taking into account the increase in tax base, is a 4.96% increase in the Parish Council's share of the council tax.

Cllr Gurney thanked all staff for their assistance with the budget.

It was **AGREED** to accept the verbal report**.**

9. Community Centre

a) To Receive Update report on WC Improvement Project

Cllr Forder reported that the WC project was completed on schedule and positive feedback had been received at the Senior Citizens' party on 9th December.

The Clerk reported that there had been an incident since whereby the men's toilet had become blocked and an urgent site meeting was being held on 13th December with the contractor to review. This report was **NOTED**.

Cllr Smith raised concerns about the smell of the aged stage curtains in the Marjorie Lewis hall. After due consideration it was **AGREED** to remove the curtains after a proposal from Cllr Smith and a second from Cllr Douglass.

10. Neighbourhood Plan

a) Receive Update on the Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk reported that Collective Community Planning had put in an application to Locality for funding for works which are likely to be completed up to 31st March 2024. A subsequent application will be made for works which will take place in the new financial year.

Broadland Council will also be approached for additional funding if available.

The Clerk and the consultant met with representatives of AECOM on 6th December for an initial meeting to discuss technical support. AECOM will be applying for funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities to support this technical work.

b) To Agree Members to form the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Under the Terms of Reference agreed by the Parish Council, the Working Group will be up to 15 members including up to nine parish councillors to be nominated for the working group.

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council members should be Cllrs Barker, Douglass, Forder, Gurney, Johnson, Sear and Smith. The Clerk will see if any councillors absent from this meeting would like to accept any of the remaining two spaces.

Approved……

Date……

c) To Agreed Date / Time of First Meeting

It was **AGREED** that the first meeting should be held on Monday 15th January 2024 commencing at 7pm.

11. Grant Opportunities

a) To Consider Application for Broadland Council Winter Pressures Grant

The Clerk provided a proposal to alleviate four aspects of Winter Pressures. These were the purchase of warm wear, low energy wash packs, creation of a drinks station in the warm room and provision of clubs in the warm room supervised by the family hub. The cost of this would be £1,576.49, of which a grant application would be made for £1,500 and the balance coming from the Good Causes for Hellesdon Earmarked Reserve. It was **AGREED** to proceed with a grant application on this basis.

It was noted that all persons are welcome in the warm room, even if a club is in session as the clubs would be supervised by a DBS checked and safeguarding trained member of the Family Hub.

b) To Consider Application for Broadland Council Clean Up and Bloom Grant

Broadland Council is offering a 'Clean Up and Bloom' Grant of up to £300 to enhance the physical landscape but also foster significant social and mental health benefits.

The Facilities Manager has made several suggestions to improve planting around the community centre, including removing the old shrubs at the front of the building which were badly damaged by the building work, treat the soil, and replace with a hydrangea called paniculata 'Vanille Fraise. This flowers from July until October and would hopefully will the front of the centre, making it more welcoming. This would benefit numerous visitors to the site, including those visiting the library and the Family Hub.

It was **AGREED** to apply to Broadland Council for £300 for this purpose.

c) To Consider Application for Broadland Pride in Place Grant to Refurbish West WCs in the Community Centre

The Clerk reported that the next area which requires attention is the WCs to the west of the building. These consist of one ladies and one gentlemen's toilet, which are very tired and run down. Tiles are currently in a poor state of repair due to alleged flood damage.

It is proposed that these toilets are replaced with two DDA compliant unisex toilets, in a similar manner to what is housed in Diamond Jubilee Lodge. These are increasingly being placed in public buildings as they comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, particularly to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. It would allow a facility for the disabled and also for those who are transitioning, or have transitioned through gender reassignment. These are protected characteristics which the Parish Council must not disadvantage in its facilities.

There is a final round of Pride in Place funding where applications are due to be received by Broadland Council by 31st January, which, if successful, would fund 50% of this project.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should work with the Parish Council's Project Manager to create a specification and go out to tender, in readiness for a meeting in January to provide the Council with full details of a proposed application to Broadland Council.

d) To Receive Notification of Successful Veolia Grant

The Clerk reported that, upon suggestion from Broadland Council, a grant application was made to the Veolia Sustainability Fund, primarily for stocking the Community Fridge. Extra funds were included to supply the apiary, and also for a contribution to the allotments so that these areas of the parish could help with the supply of the community fridge. Veolia has advised that the purchase of food to stock the community fridge is not in line with their grant, but they have awarded the Parish Council £200 to be split between the apiary and the allotments, on the grounds that contributions are made to supply the community fridge.

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Approved……

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Discussions occurred as to the financial split between the apiary and the allotments, and whether the selling of honey breaches the rules on trading. It was **AGREED** to delegate the decision to the Playing Fields, Allotments and Amenities Committee.

e) To Receive Notification of Successful Busseys Tree Grant

The Clerk reported that The Parish Council had been successful in obtaining a grant to plant 3no. Paulownia tomentosa trees at Mountfield Park. This grant will cover 3no. semi mature trees, guards and mulch. This report was **NOTED**.

12. Hellesdon Parish Council Website

a) To Receive Update on Hellesdon Parish Council Website

In July the Parish Council received a full refund from the selected contractor to redesign the Parish Council's website as the company was unable to fulfil the contract. The Senior Administrator obtained quotes from alternative contractors and a local company, Xpose, was selected as the company which could provide the Parish Council with a dynamic website, which was still user friendly and is accessibility compliant. It is anticipated that this will be ready by the end of the calendar year.

b) To Consider Options for Redesign of Hellesdon Parish Council Logo

The one matter that has proven difficult with the redesign of the website is the lack of branding for the Parish Council and the lack of associated logo.

The Parish Council could engage the services of a professional designer, or it could take the opportunity to engage with the high school, as it is anticipated that design students who live in the local area would be passionate about a design. Should the school be open to this idea, the Parish Council could offer prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place (£50, £25, and £10 amazon vouchers respectively). It was **AGREED** to contact the high school to see if they would be interested in this joint project, with the suggested prizes.

13. Biodiversity Duty

a) To Agree Biodiversity Policy

A draft policy had been circulated to members. It was **AGREED** to adopt this policy. An action plan will be considered in the New Year.

14. To Consider Request for Contribution to Grass Cutting

a) To Consider Correspondence from the Church

A letter from the church was presented to members requesting a contribution towards grass cutting in the churchyard and burial ground. It was **AGREED** to contribute £750, as budgeted for this financial year.

15. To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public for the duration of the items 16 and 17 in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. This was **AGREED**.

The Meeting was Closed to the Press and Public

16. Community Centre Outstanding Matters

a) To Consider Further Action to Bring Contract Works to a Close

The Clerk reported that the written proposal that had come from the contractor to settle the contract differed from the verbal proposal which was put before the Parish Council last month. The council's Project Manager and Clerk have pushed back to the contractor to revert to what was originally offered.

Approved……

Date……

17. Staffing

a) To Note Decisions Made by the Staffing Committee on 21st November

The minutes and decisions arising from the Staffing Committee meeting held on 21st November 2023 had been circulated. Cllr Douglass also provided a verbal update. It was **AGREED** to note the minutes and the decisions made.

The Meeting was Re-Opened to the Press and Public

18. Matters for the Next Agenda

The Clerk is to provide a report on community car schemes
Budget
The Clerk is to apply for support for the community fridge via the East of England Co-Op website.

19. Time and Venue of Next Council meeting.

Tuesday 9th January 2024, 7pm at Diamond Jubilee Lodge

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

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Approved……

Date……