



Hempton Parish Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday 16 September 2021, 7pm

Parish Councillors present: Vivien Woods, Christine Haydon, Patricia Ainger, Christine Warne, Nigel Housden (District Councillor), Tom FitzPatrick (County Councillor). Also in attendance: Jodie Bond (Parish Clerk). There were 3 members of the public present.

1. Welcome and to receive apologies for absence

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

There were no apologies received.

2. To fill a Parish Councillor vacancy by co-option

Following review and consideration of the co-option application received the Council RESOLVED to co-opt Christine Warnes. Proposed by Cllr Haydon and seconded by Cllr Ainger. The declaration of office was duly signed and register of interest form will be signed and returned to NNDC within 28 days.

3. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensations

Cllr Woods declared a pecuniary interest in item 8.6.

Cllr Warne declared a pecuniary interest in item 8.1 (including sub items).

It was RESOLVED to grant Cllr Woods a dispensation to participate in the consideration of item 8.6 and to grant Cllr Warnes a dispensation to participate in the consideration of item 8.1 (including sub items).

4. To approve the minutes of meeting held on 15 July 2021

The minutes were approved without amendment.

5. To report progress on items not on the agenda from the last meeting

- o Cllr Woods reported that the suggestion of an arboretum is to be followed up with Raynham Estate via Cllr Housden.
- o We will reconsider the Charitable Trust course in the future as it was not attended last time, due to the event being cancelled.
- o Working with young people – PC Dawson will be taking this forward and we will follow up and ask for him to attend our meeting in November to provide a progress report.
- o Lord Dannatt seems to be progressing things on flood issues and we hope to see some practical work happening very soon.
- o Cllr Housden mentioned that there is an issue with flooding at the 3 bridges going east. The water is being held back and discussions are going ahead to try to alleviate this high water level that has caused many problems.
- o This is a County matter but has gone beyond that now with the Environmental Authority. Cllr FitzPatrick added that it is a County led initiative. County were appointed as the lead authority 3 years ago and recruited Lord Dannatt to head up the project.
- o Due to work happening up at Pensthorpe it has impacted at the 3 bridges in Fakenham and the water table has now risen. It is not an easy task but there is work being done. Natural England licenses must be received and they

take a long time to be processed(18months), there are restrictions due to breeding times in the year and it is a SSSI site.

- o Cllr Housden explained that the Internal Drainage Board are working with farmers to have water held back and stored to help irrigation during the summer, rather than send it straight out to sea. River work is best done in summer when water levels are naturally lower. Cllr Woods asked whether there is a way to raise the footpaths? Cllr Housden agreed this may be the best option in the end and to watch this space...but slowly!

6. To receive reports from Local PC, NCC Councillor and NNDC Councillor if attending

Tom FitzPatrick, County Councillor

One success in the past 7 years is that broadband coverage is at 96% coverage. Funding recently came via Better Broadband which will bring fibre broadband to 30% of new houses in Norfolk and will address the shortfalls in rural areas. If there are less than 10000 people in a town/village it counts as rural.

County have revamped their Digital Strategy – District Council have come in on board too, together with Norfolk Chamber of Commerce and UEA. Inclusion of school students and vulnerable adults in the development of digital skills is seen as a priority.

At a cabinet meeting last week, they launched the Apprentice Strategy – the aim being to increase the number of apprenticeships for those who may not want to go to university and will apply to all sectors, as Cllr Woods asked. There will be money invested in road safety – work will be done in tranches, West and South Norfolk first – North and East in the second tranche. A review of local speed limits will be undertaken too.

County are pleased that Lord Dannatt accepted NCC's invitation to head up the Flooding Task Force. He has hit the ground running and is bringing people together, joining the dots and getting this done through improved co-ordination.

The County Council budget is being put into place for next year – all authorities by law must provide a budget. Adult social care funding still comes from us locally and is raised by increasing the precept. NCC are looking to raise the budget next year. Part of Cllr FitzPatricks remit is to make people more efficient and effective, not to cut services, including lots of work in innovation.

Social Care - A low range network that covers the whole county has gone from nothing to whole county coverage in 3 years. Using the network in social care homes will inform people whether someone has filled their kettle or left the room etc. The service is for relatives of the people in care homes to use but it's not 'big brother'.

The localised monitoring for gritting will tell if a route does not need to be gritted because the service can measure if the road is freezing enough to warrant gritting. As it costs £60k per run and the teams go out 80-100 times per season this monitoring will save money.

Proposed roundabout - There will be a public exhibition next Tuesday 21 September. When Cllr FitzPatrick was first elected in 2013 the possible funding of a roundabout was then cancelled. In November 2018 he reported that funding may be available for a roundabout, he then pushed for a roundabout. It is noted that there was no further discussion about the proposed roundabout again until 2019. The next stage is the planning application whereby people can make their views known to the planning committee.

Nigel Housden, District Councillor

- o The Cosmic Roots music festival at Raynham Estate went off at the weekend without too much fuss. This will be the last year of Cosmic Roots and, next year's music festival will be more family friendly.
- o Cllr Housden will follow up on the concerns raised about the property on the corner of River Court.

7. Open Forum for Public Participation: An Opportunity to Hear from Members of the Public

One member of the public present asked whether there could be traffic lights at the crossroads instead of a roundabout. Passing the crossroads for work every day it is felt that traffic lights would work better.

This member also explained that she is aware of 3 accidents and the white lines are not white enough for drivers to see.

Cllr FitzPatrick explained that he believes the police won't support traffic lights and the road safety surveyors won't support this either. He went on to say he 'is not wedded' to the idea of a roundabout, but only wedded to the prevention of people suffering injury and the road safety team tell him the best way is through a roundabout. He leaves the details to the experts. Cllr Fitzpatrick thought it would cost £300,000 three years ago but this sum increased to £1.67million. He stated that he was nearly decapitated by previous council members when the funding that was expected in 2013 had been withdrawn.

Cllr Housden proposed that it is not a roundabout that is the concern as much as the scale, size and location of the roundabout and is not fitting with the area. He believes a large roundabout, such as this one, will just be driven across and won't necessarily prevent accidents from happening. Cllr FitzPatrick did not wish to enter into discussion with Cllr Housden at the meeting and said he would discuss the matter outside the meeting.

Cllr Woods also added that the Parish Council do not object to a roundabout in principle, but it's the proposed roundabout that is objected to, namely its out of scale size and location. Also, we have not received an acceptable reason as to why it's as big as it is, apart from the land being available to buy and Highways will therefore build to the optimum size for an articulated lorry simply because they can. The proposed roundabout structure is 29.7metres diameter and 40.5 metres diameter, including lanes. The junction currently invites drivers to speed up as they approach the crossroads. The Parish Council has asked the project engineer at NCC to go back and look at a design which would be more suitably sized and put in on the current crossroad junction.

Cllr FitzPatrick said that the speed limits will be consolidated at the same time as the roundabout. He also said that the Sat Nav which reportedly says 'go ahead' at the junction says 'go straight ahead' not 'go ahead'. However semantics do not alter the fact that road users/ drivers appear to take this as a green light to go.

The only complaint Cllr FitzPatrick has received is about the Shell roundabout which is reportedly too small, he advised that his job is to get the funding, the highways team's job is to do the design. Everyone has the opportunity to either support or object, or do nothing.

8. To receive updates from Council Members

8.1 Allotment Report

Cllr Warnes has agreed to take on the role of allotment liaison, together with help from Carol Stubbs, and provide reports to council members. The Councillors acknowledged their appreciation to both.

A meeting was held with the allotmenters which was productive and a number of issues were resolved. The plot renumbering turned out to be quite emotive but this is purely an administrative function and has been implemented. The allotmenters were concerned about there being an ulterior motive, but once explained they were happy. The wooden stakes are in the shed and the plaques need to be collected and painted, then erected on site. The majority of attendees would like to see the allotment year move from 1 May to 1 October. As it is felt this would align with the planting season. It also aligns with the Parish Councils head lease and it was therefore agreed that this would be instigated from 1 October 2022. Partial rent will be collected on 1 May 2022, and then

a full year's rent will be collected on 1 October 2022, at which stage it was agreed the rent will be £12 per plot per year.

8.1.1 Allotment plot numbering update

Please see item 8.1 above.

8.1.2 Allotment rent review

Please see item 8.1 above.

8.2 Memorial Hall Committee Report

Cllr Woods attended the AGM as did Carol Stubbs.

Carol Stubbs advised that the Committee have agreed to meet with a contractor tomorrow to carry out a 'green' survey and consider the possibility of installing an eco/green hot water system and an air source heating unit.

Cllr Woods had explained at the AGM that the Parish Council must be made aware of any works to include structural changes that may be considered, prior to any work being agreed.

As the Committee have been successful in receiving various Covid related grants there is a healthy reserve.

Trolleys for tables may also be purchased.

The Clerk suggested getting WIFI at the hall. Carol Stubbs will take this forward to the Memorial Hall Committee.

Carol Stubbs reported that the August Bank Holiday car boot sale had been a great success.

8.3 Events Committee Report

Cllr Haydon reported that due to the impact of Covid-19 and also a shortage of manpower no events had taken place. The Council RESOLVED to postpone organising any events until 2022.

9. Open Spaces

9.1 Play Area Update

The Council RESOLVED to authorise AOT Limited to fit steel rings to the parallel bars, which had developed a slight wobble in use. This had shown up in the ROSPA Inspection report.

The Council RESOLVED to authorise NGF Play Ltd to carry out the minor issues highlighted in the annual inspection report together with the swing replacement, as per their quotation for £1634.58 plus VAT.

The Council also RESOLVED to authorise Roy Swain to carry out the annual maintenance work to the play area, based on his price of £12.50 per hour (minimum fee of £25).

9.2 Receive Update on the New Village Benches

Following requests from parishioners for some seating along the top of the common and following discussion, the Council RESOLVED to purchase an additional 2 benches, (6 new wooden 'Tudor' style benches in total) at a cost of £2140.32. The benches will be installed by Roy Swain and are scheduled for installation within the next few weeks once the fixings have come into stock. Two benches will be replaced on Front Green, two will be positioned next to the duck pond (replacing the current one) and two benches located on the top of the common, close to the Church and Memorial Hall. The existing benches will be kept and repurposed for other areas in the future.

9.3 Duck Pond and Other Ponds Update

John Service has been back to site and cleared the overgrowth and is getting ready for our wet meadow planting. He will be returning to site with a digger in approx. 5 weeks to scrape back the soil, which will be removed by tractor and trailer.

9.4 Receive an Update and Make a Decision about the Bullock Hills Litter Bin

No further update has been received. Therefore following discussion, the Council RESOLVED not to purchase and install a new litter bin or dog bin at the Bullock Hills. This decision is largely due to the purchase cost and ongoing maintenance costs that would fall to the parishioners of Hempton. Cllr Ainger mentioned a Parklands resident goes over now and then to litter pick. Cllr Woods mentioned a local man from Fakenham that recently did the same. It was AGREED to close this item for the foreseeable future but keep in touch with FACT and local helpers.

9.5 Receive an Update on Works to the Bus Shelter

The bus shelter roof has now been retilled and has had new gutters fitted. The bus shelter will be painted inside, and a noticeboard installed in the future. The book exchange will be considered further, taking on board the comments from PC Dawson regarding potential vandalism and arson attacks. Further update to follow.

9.6 Receive an update and discuss proposed roundabout Public Engagement event

Please see item 7 above.

10. Planning matters

10.1 To receive results of applications

There were none.

10.2 To receive applications for consideration

There were none.

11. Financial matters

The Council's insurance is due for renewal on 1 October 2021. Following discussion, the Council RESOLVED to renew for a further year with CAS Insurance brokers for £821.24 and go to tender next year. Clerk to action.

11.1 To approve the payment of accounts list

The Council RESOLVED to approve the payments list (refer to page 6).

11.2 To review and approve the 6 monthly budget

The Clerk presented a draft of the 6 monthly budget for discussion. The Council is 51% spent on budget as of 15 September.

11.3 To agree to re-appoint the internal auditor for the 2021-22 financial year

It was discussed and agreed to appoint Di Dann to carry out the independent Internal Audit for 2021-22 at an agreed cost of £35.

12. To consider and discuss correspondence received

- o Eon letter regarding a price increase – Clerk to obtain a quote from an alternative energy supplier for comparison. At Cllr Woods suggestion, Cllr Housden agreed to mention to NNDC the option of them obtaining a 'group offer' with an energy provider and offering any discount to those who sign up to it, including Parish Councils.
- o Clerks & Councils Direct Magazine – Made available for Councillors to view.
- o Invitation from Fakenham Town Council to attend their Annual Assembly – Cllr Woods and the Clerk will attend.

13. Receive an update on progress with the proposed merger with Pudding Norton Parish Council

The Clerk and Chairman had a conference call with Rob Henry at NNDC on Monday. We have requested that the merger is moved forward without further delay. Mr Henry explained that the next step will involve a letter being sent to all affected residents, a draft of which will be sent across to the Parish Council for review first. Following this there will be a full council meeting at NNDC to make a decision and agree the merger. The final step will see both Parish Councils dissolved, and a new combined Parish Council created. This is anticipated to be completed by early next year.

14. To receive any items for inclusion on the next agenda and to note the date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 17 November 2021 – NOTE change of day/date.
As of January 2022, ALL meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of every other month.
The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.16pm.

Signed by Chairman: Date:

Payment of Accounts List (item 11.1)			
Payments To	Description	Chq No.	Payment
Eon	Electricity Aug-Sep	DD	83.68
O2	Clerk Mobile	DD	47.18
Hanworth Timber	Tudor Benches	Transfer	2140.32
RSL Construction	Newsletter Printing	101638	1732.80
C&R Roofing	Bus Shelter Roof and Guttering	101639	500.00
R Swain	Shed Painting	101640	125.00
J Bond	Salary Aug-Sep	101641	641.52
J Bond	Clerk Expenses (inc. laptop and mobile)	101642	241.17
Fakenham Prepress	Newsletter Printing	101643	177.60
Jewson	Preserver / Bolts for New Benches	101644	218.86
NNDC	Dog & Litter Bin Collections	101645	1923.48
CAS Insurance	Insurance Premium	101646	821.24
P Richardson	Allotment Rent Refund	101647	10.00
Total Payments to be Approved			£8662.85
Receipts From	Description	Ref	Amount
Barclays	Interest on reserves	DC	0.35
Allotment	P Richardson - Rent	100152	10.00
ERPC	Contribution towards Clerk Expenses	DC	25.23
WRPC	Contribution towards Clerk Expenses	DC	22.23
BPC	Contribution towards Clerk Expenses	DC	21.23
RPC	Contribution towards Clerk Expenses	DC	23.23
HHPC	Contribution towards Clerk Expenses	DC	20.31
Total Receipts Received			£122.58