

GREAT MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Great Moulton Parish Council Ordinary Meeting

held in the Coronation Hall Carr Lane Great Moulton NR15 2LA

on Thursday 18th January 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs C Bailey (Chair), G Timms (Vice-Chair), M Negm, S Morgan & K Bailey
Libby Alexander (Clerk)

No members of the public were in attendance

1. Apologies for absence

None.

2. To record Declarations of Interest from Council Members in any item to be discussed

Cllr Morgan, Item 7 – Sneath Cottage planning application.

3. To agree and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings on 16 November and 14 December 2023

The minutes were duly agreed and signed.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meetings on 16 November and 14 December 2023

None.

5. Public Participation including report from the District Councillor and County Councillor

No public participation required.

The District Councillor, Cllr Ridley was not present and no report had been received.

The County Councillor, Cllr Catherine Rowett was not present, but had sent a report (see Appendix for full report).

6. Finances

6.1 To discuss and approve the budget for 2024-25

The Clerk confirmed she had revised the figure for the salary for the Clerk following Cllr C Bailey reviewing the figures for salary, which now included pension contributions and also removed a budget figure for costs for the website, as agreed at the previous meeting. It was resolved to approve the revised budget.

6.2 To approve the Precept request for 2024-25

Cllr C Bailey proposed setting the Precept request at £7195 for 2024-25, which was the same as 2023-24. This was seconded by Cllr K Bailey and unanimously agreed.

6.3 To approve the attached schedule of payments

The schedule of payments was duly approved and forms part of these minutes.

6.4 To receive an update on the banking mandate of the Council

Cllr C Bailey reported that the amendments to the banking mandate were slowly being sorted and she now had access to online banking. It was now just a case of adding the Clerk so that she could arrange payments to be authorised.

6.5 To review the report on CIL Money held

The Clerk presented a report detailing the CIL money held, this to be updated to include details of when CIL money has to be spent.

7. Planning Applications

New –

2023/3812 | Proposed self-contained annexe | Castine Frith Way Great Moulton Norfolk NR15 2AP

Clerk to submit comments online objecting to the application based on the lack of information provided. Also for the Clerk to contact SNDC to ensure comments sent to the District Councillor have been received due to his absence due to sickness.

2023/3840 | Nonmaterial amendment of 2021/1463 - amendments to plots 8-14 | Land North of High Green Great Moulton Norfolk

Duly noted.

Determined –

2023/3171 | Details of conditions 4 and 6 of 2023/0582 - (4) Historic Building recording (6) Material Reclamation | Sneath Cottage Black Mill Lane Great Moulton Norfolk NR15 2DZ – Approved

2022/2349 | Proposed 2 dwellings (All matters reserved) | Land North of New House Farm Broadgate Lane Great Moulton Norfolk – Refused – Appeal made against decision

Both duly noted.

8. Correspondence received:

SNDC (Pride in Place and Clean up and Bloom Community Grants, Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan Consultation) – all noted.

NCC (Norwich Western Link Update) – noted.

9. To consider a Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan

The Clerk reported that information had been received from Norfolk ALC informing the Council that under the 2021 Environment act Parish Councils must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Following a discussion, it was resolved that as the Council had an appointed Wildlife Warden that steps were actively being taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the local area.

10. To consider the potential of the Parish Council purchasing/developing an area of land for a village playing field/play area

Following a discussion the main points raised were:

- The donkey paddock was currently owned by the Parish Council and rented out for grazing but was located on the edge of the Parish
- Any area for a playing field/play area would need to be centrally located but would be appreciated by some residents
- Purchase of land would be expensive and donation of a land parcel would be a preferred route
- Cllr Timms would look into the Townlands Charity as to when it closed and what funds may be available
- Besides purchase of land there would be additional costs for a play area such as Insurance, maintenance etc
- Resolved to keep under consideration as to what may be possible in the future

11. Defibrillator update

The Clerk had received an email from Mr J Davies, who carries out monthly inspections on the defibrillator, advising the Council that the pads will need replacing in March 2024. He also informed the Council of Defibrillator training available through Community Heartbeat Trust. Resolved for the Clerk to get a cost for replacing the pads for the next meeting. Training was considered not necessary as the defibrillator gave instructions when used.

12. To receive a report from the Coronation Hall

Cllr C Bailey reported that the Christmas Fayre had been cancelled owing to insufficient stall holders. The last coffee morning was very well attended. The next Quiz was to be held on 3rd February and was virtually sold out. A Rock 'n' Roll evening was being held on 8th March.

13. To receive the Wildlife Wardens report

The Wildlife Warden was not in attendance and had not sent a report.

14. To approve the date of the next ordinary Meeting of Great Moulton Parish Council and accept any items for the agenda

The next meeting date was set for Thursday 15th February 2024 at 19:00.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 20:02.

SIGNED:

DATED:

Appendix

Councillor report, January 2024, from Catherine Rowett

Wet weather and floods

The wet weather and flooding problems have been a nightmare over the period to December, so it's good to have a bit of a drier patch now to allow the water to subside. Once the ditches are a bit less full, it's worth getting a work party out into the parish to clear grills and culverts, and make sure water can flow well but not too well (given that a slower flow can be important for protecting those further downstream). Do let me know if there are problems you haven't been able to solve, and report road flooding to the County flood reporting site. Report a flood - Norfolk County Council.

Anglian Water also needs to be held to account if there are sewage spills during wet weather. If this is a problem, I'm happy to attend public meetings if you invite Anglian Water to come and speak to us and explain what they are going to do to solve it.

Other problems in winter

We may yet get some more ice and snow. There's lots of information about staying safe during cold spells on the county council website page called Norfolk Winter, which is [here](#). Take care to avoid burst pipes by ensuring that outdoor pipes are lagged, and that improved insulation hasn't left the pipes out in the freezing cold of your loft. If you go out driving in wintry weather, make sure you take warm clothes, rug, shovel etc. Don't rely on the car's heating system to keep warm, in case you break down or get stuck. Snow must be cleared off the car before you set off, so that it doesn't cause accidents to vehicles behind. Always take your ice scraper with you, to clear the screen before you set off to come home. In snowy conditions it is safer to walk to nearby shops, or get milk and other supplies delivered by the milkman or supermarket, rather than driving to get your basics. It's better for the environment too.

It's a good idea to follow the County Council social media, which will use the hashtag #NorfolkWinter for updates and advice relating to winter weather. Please also let me know if there are any grit bins that have been missed off the refilling round. If you are thinking of adding another grit bin for the parish, we need to get it added to the round, so do let me know if that is your plan.

Council "devolution deal" plans

The Cabinet at the County Council have been considering the options available if they accept one of the so-called "devolution" deals that the government is using as part of its so-called "levelling up" plans. Cabinet decided to recommend that Norfolk accepts a "level 3" deal, which adds a range of additional responsibilities to the council's work (things that were formerly done by central government) and provides a longer term guarantee of some funding to deliver them over the period of the funding agreement that comes with the deal, but they opted to postpone implementation of the new arrangements until 2025. The current situation where councils are looking at year on year cuts and no long term plan for how they can make ends meet make it seem attractive or even necessary to go for this promise of some investment in Norfolk and some replacement of the funds that have been lost since Brexit and with cuts to local authority funds and with rising inflation eating away at what we do have the right to raise in local taxation. But there are grave doubts as to whether the funds (which are not index linked) will actually be sufficient to deliver any significant improvements, and the deal comes with some unsatisfactory constraints on the democratic functioning of the Council, including a leader directly elected by the people of Norfolk, who won't be a council member and might be at odds with the majority view of the Council, despite having to appoint a cabinet from elected members of Council.

There are differing views on whether this is just a pointless gimmick by a government that has run out of ideas and run out of money, whether it is the first step on a slippery slope to something seriously problematic, and whether we have to say yes to it anyway (as many other councils are) because the bribe is money that we can't afford not to have. At Full Council on 12th December we discussed and voted on the proposals put to us by the Cabinet. In the event Council voted for the proposed deal, but there were divergent opinions in all parties. Further votes on the constitutional changes that are required will follow next summer, by which time we may have a different government in Westminster.

Road Safety Schemes:

My list of requests under the Road Safety Community Fund went in for consideration in November, after much consultation and calculations by Adam Mayo, our highways officer. There were lots of requests, but few will be funded, probably only one per councillor unless they are very cheap, or unless some councillors get nothing. I am hoping to hear the results soon.

My next task is to work with Adam to try to find other ways of delivering some of the schemes that won't win, or were too low down the list to stand a chance. I have not yet spent my highways allowance because I have been saving it for these urgent safety schemes. More on this anon.

Meanwhile I also put in a motion to Council for December 12th asking for a cross-party working group to be set up with a view to making it easier for villages to get safer speed limits where they wish to have them, and rewriting the Norfolk Speed Management Strategy to prioritise safe speeds in rural areas, and to proactively reduce accidents before they happen instead of after. Ten times as many people die on rural roads as on motorways. Cyclists are almost three times more likely to be killed on a rural road than on an urban one. My motion did not get debated in December because time ran out on discussing the devolution deal, so I shall put it in for Full Council at the end of January instead. I was on Radio Norfolk at breakfast time talking about it on Monday 11th December.

Buses and active travel

I am pursuing some enquiries on behalf of some villages concerning the provision, or lack of it, of Flexibus and Borderhopper services, and the unsatisfactory timing of bus journeys (which are sometimes useless for the purposes one might travel for). The Council has now extended free bus travel for those who hold a concessionary pass on grounds of disability, so that it covers travel before 9.30 a.m. This is good news and will allow those with disabilities to get to work and training opportunities for free, if there is a bus that works for that. Which in most of my villages there isn't!

Long Stratton Bypass

Various hurdles have been jumped towards actually beginning on this long-awaited road. Planning permission is now in place, and the Officers were in the process of deciding which contractor would get the job, just before Christmas (having received four bids). The department for transport has approved the side road orders, for diverting roads and footpaths to join up in new places, and there is a 6 week challenge period for that. There is still uncertainty over how much funding will be received from central government. It's part of the diversion of funding from rail to roads associated with the truncated HS2 rail scheme. If only we were getting a rail link from Fornsett and Great Moulton instead to shift traffic off the road... That would only be a matter of re-opening the old stations, at a fraction of the cost you'd think.

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. 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 includes 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.

County Council campaigns this month:

Get more healthy in 2024!

Look out for promotion of a campaign to get people taking steps towards becoming more healthy during 2024. More details here: Ready to Change - Norfolk County Council

Parishes might like to assist by encouraging friends and neighbours to join a group doing outdoor work in the village, cutting back hedges, clearing debris, keeping ditches clear and making sure that rainwater is getting to its correct destination. In addition, I would welcome offers of help to distribute local leaflets for me as a councillor (a newsletter) or for the Green Party (for election campaigns) if anyone is so moved. Contact me on my party email address (not my councillor address) if that's your kind of thing. Catherine.rowett@greenparty.org.uk .

Drink less

Another aspect of the healthy new year campaign is aimed at men between 40 and 75 who may be drinking more than 14 units of alcohol a week. We don't need to drink the village pub dry to keep it afloat. Information about the "Stop and 14" campaign can also be found on the same Ready to change website as above.

Support for domestic abuse victims

From 31 January 2024, there's a new government scheme to help victims of domestic abuse who are stuck with their abusers due to lack of financial independence. They will be eligible to access additional cash support. More information on the agencies charged with delivering this will be coming soon.

Catherine Rowett

12th January 2024