

# SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Sparham Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 in the Old School Room.

**Present:** Cllr Adam Pryke (Chairman)  
Cllr Tony Bolderston (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Charles Sayer  
Cllr David Sayer  
Cllr Leona McConnell

Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

## **1. Welcome and apologies for absence.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from D/Cllr Gordon Bambridge.

## **2. To receive any declarations of interest.**

There were none received.

## **3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019.**

Cllr Pryke proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record, this was seconded by Cllr Bolderston and agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

## **4. County & District Councillor Reports.**

There was no report available from either the County or the District Councillor.

## **5. Meeting open for public participation.**

There were no members of the public present.

## **6. To discuss planning issues:**

### **a) Applications for consideration.**

- 3PL/2019/1558/HOU - Conversion and extension of existing garage to provide annex. Alteration of access arrangements @ Holly House, Lyng Road.

Council agreed to submit the following response:

Sparham Parish Council has no objections to this application on the grounds that the building remains attached as an annexe to the main building. Any application to change the use to a separate dwelling would be objected to on the grounds that this would be outside of the defined settlement boundary and contrary to Policy HOU05 of the Local Plan.

### **b) Decisions to note.**

Council noted that the following application had been approved.

- 3PL/2019/1348/HOU – Briars, Whitwell Road – single storey side extension and conversion of existing garage to playroom and gym.

**7. To consider any Highway issues.**

**a) To receive an update on blocked drain on corner near bus shelter.**

Council noted that the County Council had been informed that the pond, where the water should drain to, was their responsibility as they had purchased the land from the local owner many years ago for this very purpose. However, the pond had not been cleared for many years and was now so silted up that the water was unable to drain away. It was agreed to request a site meeting with Highways and to request the support of C/Cllr Bill Borrett in this matter.

**b) To notify any new issues.**

There were no new issues reported.

**8. To receive an update in respect of the Permissive Access Path Agreement.**

The path agreement had now been signed by all parties and would be returned to the solicitor for completion. The wording for the signage would be agreed and the Clerk's contact details would be included on the signs as Footpath Warden.

**9. To receive an update in respect of the Village Green.**

The Chairman drew Councils attention to further deterioration of parts of the flint wall which may need patching up to prevent further collapse. Cllr David Sayer agreed to speak to a local contractor to obtain a quote for repair works.

Cllr Bolderston updated Council in respect of the church grass cutting schedule being reduced to fewer cuts, despite positive feedback from local residents. However, it was agreed that this was a matter for the PCC and the parish council will continue to make a donation towards the grass cutting.

The Village Green will continue to be cut by the same contractor, who did a very good job in 2019, although there may be an increase in fees due to the changes in the PCC contract.

**10. To receive an update in respect of the Land Registry application relating to the Village Green.**

No update was available in respect of this issue.

**11. To receive an update in respect of the bus shelter.**

Council noted that the hedge between the bus shelter and Sparham Hill had been cut back which would enable a safer journey between the two for pedestrians.

**12. To consider any works to the Sparham Phone Box (including the installation of a defibrillator).**

Cllr McConnell informed Council that match funding for a defibrillator may be available from the British Heart Foundation, with a small window open in May to apply. The total cost of a unit is approximately £1,200, with an additional cost of up to £500 for a cabinet, making a total cost to the Council of approximately £1,100. The Council will be required to commit to offering training for parishioners but Cllr McConnell would be happy to do this. Cllr Pryke proposed that Cllr McConnell submits an application for match funding, this was seconded by Cllr Bolderston and agreed by Council.

The unit will require an electrical supply and efforts will be made to ascertain if the BT Box still has a supply. An alternative location of the Old School Room was suggested.

It was agreed to consider any maintenance to the BT Box at a later date.

**13. To consider the way forward regarding the transfer of the old highways surveyor's land from Breckland Council to Sparham Parish Council.**

This matter remains with Breckland, who are waiting for a response from solicitors and the Charity Commission.

**14. To consider any future use for Sparham PC laptop.**

As there was little value to the laptop, Council agreed there may be a use for it at the Old School Room for presentations etc.

**15. Finance & Governance Matters**

**a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.**

The financial report was noted.

**b) To consider increasing number of meetings to six per year.**

Cllr Bolderston suggested that Council consider increasing the number of meetings held each year to six, in line with most other Councils of a similar size. However, although it was agreed that it could assist with momentum for projects, it was felt this was not required at the present time as an extra-ordinary meeting could be called, if required.

**c) To consider a different format to Parish and Council Annual meetings.**

Cllr Bolderston suggested ways to increase community engagement and a separate annual parish meeting was one option. However, Council agreed to continue to keep the annual parish meeting in its present format, held prior to the Annual Parish Council meeting in May, but to try to increase public awareness, an entry in Hill and Vale being one option.

**d) To consider an application to increase to Councillor numbers.**

Cllr Bolderston suggested it may be useful to submit an application to Breckland for an increase in councillor numbers, from the current five to seven, in line with most other parishes of a similar size. Cllr Bolderston felt it would be useful to increase the number of councillors to assist with succession planning and to lower the average age of current members, some of whom are over retirement age. Long-standing members felt there had been more than five members previously and it was agreed to check the number with Breckland before any application was submitted.

**e) To receive an update regarding public sector website accessibility regulations.**

Council noted that the current website required re-structuring to bring it into line with new regulations and approved the works proposed by the website builder, kindly offered at no charge to the Council.

**f) To receive a report regarding Operation London Bridge.**

Council did not consider any planning necessary by the parish council in the event of the death of a senior member of the Royal Family.

**g) To receive an update re the appeal to a HMRC fine regarding filing of reports.**

There was no update in respect of this ongoing appeal.

**h) To consider a draft budget proposal and set the precept for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.**

Council considered the draft budget proposal and agreed that additional funds would be required for the defibrillator and the Village Green wall repairs. Cllr Pryke proposed that the precept be increased to £5,000 for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, this was seconded by Cllr Bolderston and agreed by Council.

**i) To authorise financial payments as set out below:**

Cllr Bolderston proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Pryke and agreed by Council.

• Clerk (Salary & Allowance - Oct to Dec)	£236.13
• Norfolk PTS (Training Course – TB)	£75.00
• Sparham PCC – Donation	£525.00
• Citizens Advice Bureau – Donation	£100.00
• Grass Contractor (November 19)	£70.00 (paid 29.11.2019)
• Pathway Agreement (1.8.17 – 31.7.20)	£480.00 (paid 7.10.2019)

**16. Correspondence for circulation**

Council noted the following correspondence, no actions were required.

- Norfolk County Council Budget 2020/21 Consultation
- NCC Fire & Rescue – Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan
- Digging up Norfolk – Boreas & Sheringham Shoal
- Breckland Adoption of Local Plan
- Breckland Parish Forum – 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020
- Bus Timetable Amendments

**17. To note 2020 meeting dates.**

Council noted the meeting dates for 2020.

- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020
- Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 (following the Annual Parish Meeting)
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**18. To receive any new items for the next agenda.**

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

**19. To note the date of the next meeting which will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in the Old School Room.**

Council noted the date of the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed:

Date:

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