

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Sparham Parish Council held virtually at 7.30pm on Tuesday 8th September 2020.

Under the Coronavirus Act, the Secretary of State has published meetings regulations which remove the requirement to hold annual meetings and allow virtual meetings up to 7 May 2021. These are contained in The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Present: Cllr Adam Pryke (Chair)
Cllr Tony Bolderston (Vice Chair)
Cllr Leona McConnell
Cllr Charles Sayer
County Cllr Bill Borrett

Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence received.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were no declarations of interest received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2020.

Cllr Pryke proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Sayer and agreed by Council. The Chairman will sign the minutes in due course.

4. County & District Councillor Reports.

C/Cllr Borrett reported, in respect of Breckland Council, that the Chief Executive of Breckland had resigned. The position, together with other senior management roles, was shared with South Holland in Lincolnshire, which had resulted in a £1M saving for Breckland. However, South Holland were now looking for a partner in their neighbouring districts which leaves Breckland to try and find another partner locally.

He also reported that there is a new White Paper regarding planning applications which will require more building in Breckland, however, this may now change due to the very recent resignation of the Government Minister for Housing.

In respect of County matters, he reported that he was the cabinet member for public health and had been overseeing the Banham Poultry Covid-19 outbreak. The rate of infection is going down and the situation appears to be under control and lessons have been learnt for any future outbreaks. Overall, county infection rates remain very low.

In response to a question, C/Cllr Borrett reported that there is push from Government for a unitary council in Norfolk, which is currently a District/County system of government. Options are to remove all district councils and have one large unitary council or split the existing councils into three larger unitary councils.

5. Meeting open for public participation.

There were no members of the public present.

6. To discuss planning issues:

a) Applications for consideration.

There were no planning applications to consider.

b) Decisions to note.

Council noted the following application decision.

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

7. To consider any Highway issues.

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

Council noted that a site meeting was due to take place with Highways and the adjoining landowner and it was expected that works would take place in the near future. It was hoped that this would resolve much of the flooding issues.

b) To notify any new highway issues.

There were no new highway issues raised.

c) To consider any options for an application to the Parish Partnership Scheme.

This scheme allows parish councils to bid for money from the County Council for highway projects in their parish, with match funding grants available.

Council considered the need for a westbound bus shelter but it was considered that the bus stop was not well used, however, the use of the stop will be monitored and the project reconsidered in the future if necessary.

Council noted that there was no likelihood of a permanent bus stop at Sparham Hill as there was no layby opposite for the bus to pull in and this would be a highway safety issue.

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

Council noted the new agreement, which will now renew on an annual basis until such time as any new Agricultural Scheme was rolled out, which would be likely to include access options.

Council were grateful to the landowner for making the pathways available and noted it was well used and been particularly appreciated during lockdown.

The Chairman was currently obtaining quotes for the relevant signage.

9. To consider any issues relating to the Village Green, including the Land Registry application.

The Chairman reported that the land registry application was ongoing and the delay was caused by an issue re the boundary.

The Chairman also reported that the wall requires some remedial work, otherwise it was in danger of deteriorating further and he will obtain some quotes for consideration.

Cllr McConnell reported that she had been in contact with a Norfolk Conservation Group for advice regarding a wildflower area on the Green. Cllr Sayer advised Council regarding layout, types of suitable flowers, possible trees for interest and planting times and he will liaise with Cllr McConnell regarding a plan for the project. Council were in favour of the project and Cllr McConnell will report back at the January meeting with costings and an action plan.

Council agreed that any measures to make the Green more welcoming to residents was a positive step and will also consider another bench once the wildflowers are established.

The Chairman reported that the grass area outside of the Old School Room was due to be rotavated and re-seeded shortly and will be a useful piece of land for social events.

10. To consider any works to the Sparham Phone Box (including the installation of a defibrillator or as a recycling centre).

Council noted that the recycling box was now installed in the phone box and it was hoped this was being well used.

Cllr McConnell had no update in respect of the defibrillator as the scheme which may be able to provide one remained closed at present.

11. To consider the request to site a waste bin at Sparham Pools.

Council noted that there had been considerable issues at Sparham Pools during lockdown with large amounts of waste dumped, cars parked on the side of the road and various highway safety matters. It was hoped that as the weather worsened and alternative venues reopened that the problems would reduce. However, Council agreed to contact the police to raise concerns regarding highway safety and social distancing as it was a police matter.

Council noted that siting a bin at Sparham Pools may well cause problems and attract more waste and fly-tipping and agreed not to proceed with this request.

At this point in the meeting, C/Cllr Borrett left the meeting. The Chairman thanked him for attending.

12. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the year 31st March 2021.

Council noted the financial report and there were no queries raised.

b) To receive an update regarding an application for a Community Governance Review to increase Councillor numbers from five to seven.

Council noted the application had been submitted to Breckland Council and a decision was awaited.

Council agreed that they should promote the opportunities available locally, both at the parish council and on the Old School Room Committee, as new ideas were always welcome. The Chairman will prepare an article for the Hill & Vale magazine.

d) To consider approval of the recommendations set out in the Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2020-21.

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

e) To receive an update regarding the new website accessibility regulations.

Council noted that a local resident, who had built the site, was carrying out the work to meet the new standards. However, Council agreed to consider an option to bring the site in-house and this would be considered at the next meeting.

f) To authorise financial payments as set out below:

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

• Clerk (Salary & Allowance: July - Sept)	£234.10
• HMRC	£10.40
• ICO (Data Protection Registration)	£35.00 (direct debit)
• Permissive Path (landowner)	£160.00

13. Correspondence for circulation

Council noted the following correspondence and no actions were required.

- Norfolk NALC Wellbeing – various topics.
- Western Link Road Consultation Reminder.

14. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

15. To note the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th January 2021 at 7.30pm.

Council noted the date of the next meeting and the meeting closed at 8.48pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____
