

# SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Sparham Parish Council held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 8.24pm, in the Old School Room, Sparham. This meeting followed the Annual Parish Meeting.

Present: Cllr Adam Pryke (Chairman)  
Cllr Leona McConnell (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Charles Sayer  
Cllr David Chapman  
Cllr David Gerrie  
Cllr David Sayer

One Member of the Public  
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

## **1. Election of Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

Cllr McConnell proposed that Cllr Pryke be elected as Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Gerrie and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Pryke duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

## **2. Election of Vice-Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

Cllr Pryke proposed that Cllr McConnell be elected as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr McConnell duly signed her declaration of acceptance of office form.

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

The Chairman declared an interest in item 9a – 3PL/2024/0360/HOU and will leave the meeting whilst it is being considered.

## **5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

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

## **6. To consider the co-option of a new member to fill the one Council vacancy.**

Council noted that there was currently no interest in the vacancy.

**7. County & District Councillor Reports.**

Reports from both Councillors had been received at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting.

**8. Meeting open for public participation.**

No matters were raised by the member of the public.

**9. Planning issues.**

**a) Applications for consideration.**

CLlr McConnell took the Chair for the next item.

- 3PL/2024/0360/HOU – 3 Church Farm Barns, Well Lane - placement of Traditional Shepherd's Hut in Garden to provide occasional additional Sleeping Accommodation (Personal Use) – Council raised no issues and a no objection response will be submitted, with the addition of the Dark Skies policy comments regarding outside lighting.

CLlr Pryke rejoined the meeting and took the Chair.

- 3PL/2024/0387/HOU – 2 Sparham Hill - single storey rear extension - Council raised no issues and a no objection response will be submitted, with the addition of the Dark Skies policy comments regarding outside lighting.

**b) Decisions to note.**

Council noted the following application has been approved.

- 3PL/2023/1225/F - Land adjacent to Bawdeswell Hall, Fakenham Road - installation and operation of a 55.04kW ground-mounted solar array.

**c) To receive an update re the Breckland Local Plan and consider any action.**

Council noted that the next consultation is due to commence in June.

**10. Highway & Footpath issues.**

**a) To receive an update regarding speeding issues on A1067 and the need for a lower speed limit.**

Council will await the site meeting with the Highways Engineer when it was hoped this matter could be progressed.

**b) To receive an update to the request for an additional bus stop at Sparham Hill.**

Council noted that no update was due until July.

- c) To receive an update re the request for the X29 to pass through the village due to the dangers of using the bus stops on the A1067 and to consider an approach to NCC to enlarge the current stop on the A1067 (westbound).**

Council noted that the bus company was unable to re-route due to the narrow width of the road and the many overhanging branches.

Council agreed to request that NCC consider increasing the size of the bus stop on the westbound side.

- d) To receive an update to the request for a 30mph speed limit within the village.**

Council will await the site meeting with the Highways Engineer when it was hoped this matter could be progressed.

- e) To receive an update regarding any issues reported to Highways and to report any new highway issues.**

Council noted the following updates:

- Damaged Whitwell Road sign – reported to Breckland but no action and will be reported again.
- Potholes on Church Lane – reported to Highways and programmed for repair.
- Fly-tipping on Church Lane – reported to Breckland and cleared.

## **11. The Village Green**

- a) To receive an update regarding the wildflower project.**

A report had been received at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting and there was nothing to add.

- b) To receive an update regarding planting a Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Orchard.**

Council agreed to consider this matter at the next meeting in September.

- c) To receive an update regarding repairs to a section of the wall.**

Council noted that the first section of the wall was due to be repaired soon and it was hoped the contractors will be starting work in June.

- d) To consider approval of a request from a resident to use the Green for parking on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2024 for a private function.**

Council approved the request from a resident to use the Green for parking and highlighted a low spot where cars can get stuck, which may require raising.

- e) To receive an update regarding grass cutting.**

Council noted that the contractor remains the same and is now strimming the edge of the wildflower area.

- f) To consider any new issues relating to the Village Green.**

There were no other matters to raise.

**12. To consider if an alternative use for the Phone Box would be preferable and to receive a maintenance report.**

Cllr Gerrie suggested alternative uses for the Phone Box including a food bank, a plant share, a pop-up bar, and will liaise with the recycling co-ordinator currently using the Box to discuss the way forward.

**13. To receive an update regarding the Permissive Pathway agreement.**

Cllr Charles Sayer reported there was no update regarding government funding via the Sustainable Farming Initiative but said that public access was likely to be included and said the item should remain on the agenda.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Charles Sayer for providing this valuable facility for the village.

**14. Finance & Governance Matters**

**a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**

The financial report (attached) was noted.

**b) To receive an update regarding the parish council insurance renewal, consider the adequacy of the public liability insurance, and approve appropriate signage for the Old School Room and Church re parking on the Green.**

Council noted that the parish council insurance had renewed on 1<sup>st</sup> May, year three of a three year deal.

The Chairman reported that the Old School Room Committee had taken out specific Village Hall cover to ensure the committee and events were fully insured and proposed that Council no longer require the contribution towards the Parish Council insurance, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council. Council will continue to insure the building and contents.

'Park at your own risk' signage will be displayed on the Village Green.

**c) To receive the internal auditors report and consider any recommendations.**

The internal auditors report was noted and Council considered the following recommendations:

Asset Valuation – Council agreed to increase insurance cover in respect of the Old School Room.

Financial Regulations – Council agreed to amend the regulations.

Data Protection – Council did not see the need for separate council emails and were reminded of their obligations under data protection.

Freedom of Information – the policy will be updated at the next review.

Grant Awarding Policy – Council agreed that as it was not policy to make donations, other than to the Citizens Advice Bureau and for the Church grass cutting, that no policy was required.

**d) To approve the annual governance statement in the 2023-24 Annual Return.**

Cllr Charles Sayer proposed approval of the annual governance statement, this was seconded by Cllr Pryke and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

**e) To approve the Statement of Accounts in the 2023-24 Annual Return.**

Cllr Charles Sayer proposed approval of the statement of accounts, this was seconded by Cllr Pryke and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

**f) To approve the certification of exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.**

Cllr Charles Sayer proposed approval of the certificate of exemption, this was seconded by Cllr Pryke and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the certificate.

**g) To authorise financial payments as set out below and note any receipts.**

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr McConnell and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipt was noted.

PAYMENTS

P36	Clerk (Salary & Allowance) March	£110.97 (SO)
P36	HMRC PAYE	£25.40
P1	Norfolk PTS – Subscription	£70.00
P2	Clerk (Salary & Allowance) April (includes annual incremental salary increase)	£129.04 (SO)
P2	HMRC PAYE	£29.80
P6	Clerk (Salary & Allowance) May	£129.24 (SO)
P6	HMRC PAYE	£29.60
P4	Bus Shelter Clean (quarterly)	£30.00
P3	Grass Contractor (March)	£90.00
P7	Internal Auditor	£35.00
P5	Zurich Council Insurance (Year 3 of 3)	£641.97
P8	Grass Cutting – Village Green (April)	£90.00

RECEIPTS

R1	Precept 2024/25 (1 of 2)	£3,500.00
	Old School Room – Insurance Donation (2023/24)	£150.00

**15. Correspondence for circulation**

- City Fibre – works in village – Council noted the works which will enable the community to access faster broadband.
- Boundary Commission Review – District Wards – Council had no recommendations for the review.

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

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

**17. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024, at 7.30pm in the Old School Room.**

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.01pm.

Signed:

Date:

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025											
FINANCIAL REPORT - MAY 2024											
<b>BUDGET UPDATE</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>To date</b>	<b>%</b>								
	<b>2024/25</b>										
<b>PAYMENTS*</b>			<b>Paid</b>								
Admin	1,343	767	57%								
Salary	1,877	298	16%								
Open Spaces	630	180	29%								
Permissive Pathway	200	-	0%								
Bus Shelter/BT Box	200	25	13%								
Donations	781	-	0%								
Defibrillator	50	-	0%								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,081</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>25%</b>								
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			<b>Received</b>								
Precept	7,000	3,500	50%								
Admin	150	-	0%								
Bank Interest	-	-									
PAYE Refunds	-	-									
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,150</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>49%</b>								
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	<b>2,069</b>	<b>2,230</b>									

  

<b>Balance as at 01.04.2024</b>	<b>11675.68</b>
Less Payments @ 29.04.2024	1274.65
Plus Receipts @ 29.04.2024	3500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,901.03</b>
<b>Balance as at 29.04.2024</b>	
Current Account	994.25
Business Account	13,315.82
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,310.07</b>
less outstanding payments	409.04
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,901.03</b>
Including the following reserves:	
Wall Repairs*	6,373.00
<b>GENERAL RESERVE</b>	<b>7,528.03</b>
*includes 2024/25 budget	