

SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Sparham Parish Council held on Tuesday 30th January 2024, in the Old School Room, Sparham.

Present: Cllr Adam Pryke (Chair)
Cllr David Chapman
Cllr Charles Sayer

Two members of the public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllrs McConnell and Gerrie were approved.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2023.

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

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

Council noted there had been no interest in the vacancy and a poster will be placed on the notice board, website and in the Hill & Vale.

5. County & District Councillor Reports.

In the absence of both councillors, there was no report.

6. Meeting open for public participation.

There were no matters raised by the members of the public.

7. Planning issues.

a) Applications for consideration.

- 3PL/2023/1225/F - Land adjacent to Bawdeswell Hall, Fakenham Road - installation and operation of a 55.04kW ground-mounted solar array – Council raised no issues and a ‘no comment’ response will be submitted.

b) Decisions to note.

There were no planning decisions to note.

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

Council noted that Breckland had not approved the proposed site for the 'New Town' as suitable for development and it will not be included in the revised Local Plan. This does not stop any developer from submitting an application in the future.

d) To consider a Dark Skies Policy with a CPRE advised Standard Light Clause to include in responses to planning applications.

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the Dark Skies Policy, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman and unanimously agreed by Council.

8. Highway & Footpath issues.

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

Council agreed that it was difficult to know how to proceed with this issue, the accident record was not enough to warrant a lower speed limit and the speed checks were only being carried out intermittently, with not enough evidence being collected to back up the request. However, it was agreed to leave this item on the agenda as the need for a lower speed limit was recognised by Council.

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

Council noted that Highways are looking at how to install a bus stop opposite the layby at Sparham Hill for westbound buses and it was hoped that some decisions will have been made by July.

c) To consider a request for regular cleaning of the bus shelter and changes to the opposite stop.

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of a cleaning rota, at an initial cost of £70pa, £60pa thereafter, with one clean every quarter, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman and unanimously agreed by Council.

A request had been received to look at the stop opposite to the bus shelter as it was quite dangerous to stand there, due to the close proximity of traffic. Council agreed to submit a request for the X29 to pass through the village, rather than along the main road, which would be much safer for any passengers waiting for a bus.

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

Council noted that Highways had agreed the road was suitable for a 30mph and are speaking to C/Cllr Borrett to look at ways to fund this, possibly the Local Member's Fund.

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 not yet repaired.
- Potholes – the various potholes around the village will be reported to Highways.

9. The Village Green

a) To receive an update regarding the wildflower project.

Council noted that the bug hotel had been installed and it was anticipated that the wildflowers will start to return in spring.

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

Council noted that no progress had been made on this matter.

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

Council noted that it had proved impossible to obtain three quotes to repair the wall as it was such specialist work and agreed the one quote be accepted and works commence to repair part of the wall in spring.

d) To receive an update re car parking signage in relation to public liability.

In the absence of Cllr Gerrie, Council was unable to progress this matter.

e) To receive a report regarding the grass cutting contract.

Council noted that there was to be no increase in the rate to cut the Village Green but an increase to cut the churchyard was expected.

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

The Chairman raised the issues of overhanging trees which caused a possible danger to members of the public. Cllr Sayer said that Norfolk County Council regularly inspects roadside trees and will advise landowners of any works required.

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

In the absence of Cllr Gerrie, this item was remitted to the next meeting.

11. To consider a policy to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Sparham, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

Cllr Pryke proposed approval of the Biodiversity policy, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman and unanimously agreed by Council.

12. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The financial report (attached) was noted. It was noted that Council had approved a £150 donation from the OSR Management for insurance cover but that this was yet to be received.

b) 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 Sayer and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipt was noted.

PAYMENTS

P29	Clerk (Salary & Allowance) Dec Including pay arrears in respect of 2023/24 pay award	£192.97 (SO)
P29	HMRC PAYE	£45.80
P30	Breckland 2 x Dog Mess Signs	£83.00
P31	Clerk (Salary & Allowance) Jan	£135.17 (SO)
P31	HMRC PAYE	£31.20
P32	Website (Domain & Plan) – refund to Clerk	£106.06
P33	Permissive Pathway	£160.00
P34	Clerk (Salary & Allowance) Feb	£137.17 (SO)
P35	HMRC PAYE	£31.20
P36	Norfolk Citizens Advice	£100.00

RECEIPTS

Bank Interest	£37.80
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13. To note the meeting dates for 2024.

The meeting dates were noted.

- 14th May (Annual Parish and Council Meetings)
- 10th September
- 12th November

14. Correspondence for circulation

Council noted the correspondence regarding the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan but, as there was nothing near to Sparham, there was no comment.

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

Cllr Sayer reported that changes to the Sustainable Farming Initiative are likely to mean that payments will be made to farmers for public access and the Parish Council may no longer need to fund the permissive pathways. The permissive pathway will be added to the next agenda for any updates.

16. To note the Annual meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 following the Annual Parish Meeting which will commence at 7.30pm, in the Old School Room.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

Signed:

Date:

**SPARHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2024
FINANCIAL REPORT - JANUARY 2024**

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget	To date	%
	2023/24		
PAYMENTS*			Paid
Admin	2,472	1,118	45%
Salary	1,799	1,632	91%
Open Spaces	665	616	93%
Permissive Pathway	160	-	0%
Bus Shelter/BT Box	100	23	23%
Donations	781	681	87%
Defibrillator	10	-	0%
TOTAL	5,987	4,071	68%

RECEIPTS			Received
Precept	6,500	6,500	100%
Admin	150	-	0%
Bank Interest	-	43	
PAYE Refunds	-	38	
TOTAL	6,650	6,581	99%

SURPLUS/DEFICIT	663	2,510
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Admin Budget 2023/24

Payments	Budget	Paid to date	Receipts	Budget	R'cvd to date
Insurance	567	625	OSR	150	0
Website	110	106	TOTAL	150	0
ICO	35	35			
Office Allowance	120	110			
Audits	235	35			
Training	120	51			
SLCC/NPTS Membership	80	82			
Stationery/Postage	5				
Elections/Legal	1,200	75			
TOTAL	2,472	1,119			

Balance as at 01.04.2023	9203.83
Less Payments @ 29.12.2023	3813.37
Plus Receipts @ 29.12.2023	6927.62
TOTAL	12,318.08
Balance as at 29.12.2023	
Current Account	590.83
Business Account	11,773.05
TOTAL	12,363.88
less outstanding payments	45.80
	12,318.08
Including the following reserves:	
Wall Repairs	4,603.00
GENERAL RESERVE	7,715.08