

Minutes of a Meeting of Bergh Apton Parish Council Wednesday 22nd May 2019 at 7.30pm In The Village Hall

Members Present

Parish Members Present David Skedge (Chair), Janet Skedge, John Ling, Hugh Porter,
Steve Whitby

In attendance: Clerk Julie Gosling, 2 members of the public (item 14)

Apologies Cllr Barry Stone, Cllr John Fuller

1 To receive apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies as above and no declarations of interest.

2 To approve minutes of meeting held on 24th April 2019

The minutes of the meetings held on 24th April 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3 To report progress on items not on Agenda arising from last meeting

3.1 Item 3.1 – Rowan Tree Plaque – NCC had offered to modify the plaque to fit the mounting if necessary. John Ling and Hugh Porter to ascertain what would be required.

3.2 Item 3.2 – Councillor Fuller’s report on Broadband – Clerk had emailed Councillor Fuller re broadband ‘blackspots’ and as yet not received a response. John Ling stated that he had now ascertained that lower Sunnyside could not receive broadband via Wi Spire. Councillors were also aware that it could not be used on Gravel Pit Lane properties and Washingford Bridge Lane as well as Cookes Road. Steve Whitby was aware of the possibility of fibre broadband being installed close enough to Gravel Pit Lane to be able to hook into within the next 3-4 months. Clerk was asked to write to Councillor Fuller stating facts regarding the inability to receive broadband as there was now evidence that this could not be obtained and asking what possible solutions were available.

3.3 Item 3.5 – Planning Appeal – Cookes Road – Clerk reported the appeal was still undecided. David Skedge stated that he had made a complaint re the handling of his communication with the Planning Inspectorate but this had been rejected.

3.4 Item 3.6 – Chet Valley B Line – Clerk had written to NCC Highways requesting permission to use highway land to sow wildflower areas, as yet a response had not been received.

The Clerk reported the Conservation Trust had requested a letter of support from the Parish Council as they are to make a bid for funding from the Water, Mills and Marshes Broads Landscape Scheme. David Skedge agreed to draft a letter of support to be forwarded to Clerk to submit to the Conservation Trust.

4 Open forum for Public Participation: an opportunity to hear from members of the public

Two members of the public present for item 14 only.

5 County Councillor's Report – Barry Stone

None

6 District Councillor's Report – John Fuller

None

7 Planning

7.1 2019/0971 – Land off Cookes Road, Bergh Apton – erection of 1 dwelling. Councillors discussed the application and were in agreement to object to the proposal on the following grounds.

- Narrowness of Cookes Road and considered a single track. The site has similar issues to the proposed appeal site opposite and wording of comments should be in line with those previously made by the Parish Council.
- As proposed the building would be immediately adjacent to the road when the established dwelling line on Cookes Road and Hawthorn Drive is some 60 feet from the carriageway. Furthermore for safety reasons this would seem inappropriate.
- Drainage issues – Councillors are aware of the difficulties there were with the Hawthorn Drive development in terms of drainage and similar limitations would apply to this site
- The hedge on the boundary is described as scrub in the application, but Councillors are aware that it is more than 100 years old and mature, believing that it would be protected by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Councillors consider that the hedge should not be removed.

Clerk to request an extension of time from South Norfolk Council to make comments. Clerk to prepare draft comments for Councillor consideration and agreement.

David Skedge reported he had undertaken further investigation into the Hedgerow Act and protection of ancient hedgerows. Councillors agreed they were keen to preserve the hedges in the village and that it would be useful if there was a definitive plan of hedges within the parish so that ancient hedges could be identified and published on the website. Agreed that John Ling and Steve Whitby would liaise with the Conservation Trust to see what could be achieved with their assistance. David Skedge to further look into the definition of protected hedges and the way in which they could be protected in terms of development.

8 To consider candidates for co-option and elect Councillors for 2 vacancies

Unfortunately no candidates had come forward for co-option. In view of this David Skedge had approached a couple of people asking whether they would wish to become Councillors, one of whom had confirmed they would wish to be co-opted and a further one was uncertain. David Skedge to pass contact details to the Clerk so that the potential co-optee could be invited to the next meeting.

9 Finance

- 9.1 Cheque raised and approved for Clerk's salary for May - £174.72. Councillors also approved salary payment for June - £174.72, cheque to be raised in due course when payroll issue payslips.
- 9.2 Cheque raised and approved to Clerk for reimbursement of registration fee for Information Commissioner's office - £40.00
- 9.3 Cheque raised and approved to Norfolk Parish Training and Support for Councillor Induction training - £44.00
- 9.4 Cheque raised and approved to Clerk for reimbursement for website provider - £57.48
- 9.5 Cheque raised and approved to Wicksteed for supply and installation of climbing dome - £6,636.79
- 9.6 Clerk reported first half year precept of £2,079 had been received.
- 9.7 Clerk reported that the annual accounts were nearly ready for audit and these would be delivered in the next week to the internal auditor.

10 To consider and approve updated asset register

Clerk had circulated two updated asset registers, one for 2018/19 to be included in the internal audit and a further one to cover 2019/20 subject to any further purchases during the year.

2018/19 – Clerk reported that the sum for the play area equipment had been amended in line with addition of the new swing unit. Furthermore, agreed that the projector and War Memorial should now also be included.

2019/20 – Clerk reported that the sum for the play area equipment had been amended in line with the addition of the climbing dome. Projector and War Memorial to be added in keeping with 2018/19 Register.

11 To consider insurance renewal quote and approve payment

Clerk had circulated papers relating to the insurance renewal quoted prior to the meeting. Councillors discussed the current level of cover and considered it to be insufficient, particularly in view of recent work to the play area. Clerk requested to go back to the insurers requesting a revised quote based on additional cover for the play area and the inclusion of the newly acquired community projector. Clerk to circulate amended quote for Councillor's agreement and approval for payment.

12 To consider playground refurbishment progress and further actions to be taken

The contractor who had originally undertaken the ground works to the play area had been instructed to top up the bark since the new climbing dome had been installed and lay slabs adjacent to the entrance gate.

Concrete Sports had confirmed it was not necessary to have a hardstanding for the table tennis table, on this basis Councillors agreed to proceed with the purchase of the table with the additional cost of £100 for the matting at either end. The contractor had also confirmed that it would need a playing area of 8m x 4m. John Ling to mark out possible locations on the playing field for Village Hall Committee approval prior to Clerk writing to them for permission. Agreed not to proceed with the order until this had been resolved.

13 To consider update on phone box re-location proposals

Clerk reported that sale of the building plot was due shortly. A further planning application would need to be submitted for full planning permission and relocation of the phone box. Clerk had written to prospective purchasers as instructed at the last meeting and instructed BT to have the box electricity supply disconnected.

14 To consider issues arising from Mill Road junctions

A member of the public thanked the Parish Council for the installation of the SAM2 unit but wished to bring attention the recent occurrence of issues on Mill Road when there had been an accident on the A146. This meant traffic had diverted both ways through Mill Road causing congestion on the partially single track road, largely because of the signage at the Mill Road/Threadneedle Street crossroads indicating that this was the route to Thurton. David Skedge said he would look at the location and report back with a view to requesting NCC Highways to consider the matter to see if this could be resolved.

The member of the public also reported that the new 'Give Way' sign had been installed on Mill Road.

Further discussion was had regarding the Hellington Corner issue and the introduction of 50 mph signage, Clerk had not had a response to her query to NCC Highways. Councillors agreed to try to ascertain the historical background in relation to the junction and the increased traffic as a consequence of the extension of Green Pastures. David Skedge to report back to next meeting.

15 To consider situation with maintenance of village footpaths

Postponed until next meeting.

16 To consider donation request from Norfolk Accident Rescue Service

A request for a donation had been received from NARS. The Parish Council had made a donation the previous year of £50. Clerk asked to investigate with NARS the relevance of the service to the village as previously and come back to next meeting.

17 To formally thank outgoing Councillors

David Skedge wished to thank the outgoing Councillors for their work on the Parish Council. Clerk requested to draft a suitable email and circulate for approval before sending to ex Councillors.

18 To agree items for the next meeting

To consider the contribution made by the Parish Council to the Village Newsletter.

Future Dates for meetings: Tuesday 25th June, Tuesday 20th August, Tuesday 22nd October