

## South Lopham Parish Council

### Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 12 March 2024 at Lophams' Village Hall, Church Road, North Lopham, IP22 2LW.

#### Present:

#### **Councillors:**

Mr Rob Webb (RW) Chair  
Mr Barry Harber (BH)  
Mrs Caroline Phillips (CP)  
Mr Jim Pursehouse (JP) Vice Chair  
Mrs Anne Shipperlee (AS)  
Mr Simon Puttock (SP)

#### **District Councillor:**

Mrs Marion Chapman-Allen Steve Askew (MCA)

#### **Clerk:**

Alison Pena (AP)

#### **Members of the Public (MoPs): 3**

1. **Apologies for absence** - apologies were received from Mrs Kate Patel (KP).
2. **Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations** - none.
3. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 16 January 2024** – proposed by AS, seconded by SP, all in agreement and signed off by the Chair.
4. **Public Forum** – A MoP expressed concern about flooding down Church Road. It was noted that NCC Highways (NCCH) had cleared some drains but not all and water runoff from the farmer's field was a persistent problem. AS said, she was waiting a date from NCCH for further work to be completed.

The MoP reported persistent speeding from HGVs and had contacted the company concerned who were not interested. SP explained that speeding was raised at the SNAP meetings and with Police but there were only two speed awareness officers covering South Norfolk. Most of the speeding was tractors and/or HGV contractors rather than local residents. It was agreed to discuss at the May meeting when KP was present who attended the SNAP meetings. The Community Speed watch with North Lopham was discussed and agreed the Clerk would contact the Clerk for North Lopham to get an update on the scheme.

**ACTION: AS to follow up with NCCH; Clerk to add to May meeting and contact Clerk for North Lopham PC.**

5. **Reports from the District and County Councillors** – MCA apologised for her absence at previous meetings, but these were due to ill health. She noted she had sent across details of grants for D Day 80th Anniversary commemoration events; BDC had not received many applications. The Food Bus run by BDC was out of operation at present and an alternative was being considered. This was popular as well as the food provision officers from BDC were available to provide advice on council tax, housing etc. Elm House in Thetford was successful providing accommodation for the homeless as well as support for employment etc. Free advice from Shelter was also

signposted on BDC's website. There was an AI chatbot (Bobby) in place to free up customer services officer to deal with complex cases.

A community car share funding scheme had been launched in February 2024 for funding to take residents to GP, shopping etc. Some PCs had successfully applied. MCA agreed to provide details of the scheme. It was noted that there had been a scheme in place with North Lopham, but this was no longer operating.

The Chair thanked MCA for her help and support in facilitating the purchase of the land at Blo' Norton Road.

**ACTION: MCA to provide details of car sharing funding scheme.**

**6. Report on matters arising other than those listed separately on the agenda:**

- a) **Defibrillator** – the Clerk advised that the defibrillator was now live. She still needed to contact the landlord of the White Horse pub to see if we could arrange a training session. JP noted that his wife was able to deliver defibrillator and CPR training; other names were considered.

**ACTION: Clerk to action.**

- b) **Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan** – to bring forward to May meeting.

**ACTION: To discuss further at May 2024 meeting.**

- c) **Parish Councillor Vacancy** – the Clerk explained the formal process and that the Notice of Vacancy had been published. Once the deadline had passed (21 March 2024) if there was no requirement for an election, the parish council could co-opt. It was noted that two residents had expressed an interest and were present at the meeting. The Clerk would advise next steps at the end of the month.

**ACTION: Clerk to advise next steps.**

**7. Update on Land Transfer on Blo' Norton Road** – The Chair explained the background of the land purchase; and that the legal process was nearly complete.

**ACTION: Clerk to chase solicitors.**

**8. Planning applications: None**

**9. Finance:**

- a) **Financial Report to 29 January 2024** was noted. Following discussion, CP stated that there were reserves relating to the Jubilee Fund and Malsom Legacy which needed to be ring fenced and only used for their intended purposes i.e. any repairs needed to the village sign. The Clerk said that these funds had been noted under reserves in the 2024/25 budget.

- b) **Lophams Village Hall - £25 for hall of hall for March 2024 PC meeting** – payment approved.

- c) Salaries Q4 - £599 Gross, £590.60 Net – payment approved
- d) HMRC Q4 - £8.40 - payment approved
- e) Payroll 2024-25 – defer to May meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to action payments.**

## **12. Reports:**

- a) **Planning Matters** - BH had circulated his report. The call for sites for the Breckland Plan showed three sites in the parish put forward by the same landowner and the sites were discussed. It was expected that a decision on the preferred sites would be made later in the Spring. It was noted that the Planning Enforcement Officer had stated that the field shelters on Low Common were not an issue due to the time elapsed since erected.
- b) **Highways** - AS had circulated her report prior to the meeting. As discussed at 4 above some potholes had been repaired and some drains cleared but not all. It was felt that this winter had seen conditions worsen and main problem was the silt that blocked drains not just the volume of water.
- c) **Community Matters** – JP reminded that the annual litter pick was agreed for **Sunday 14 April 2024 from 11am to 12pm.**
- d) **Footpaths, hedges, and ditches** – RW noted that Gary Bennett would take on the grass cutting; he would start in April and invoice at the end of the season at a comparable price paid by the previous contractors. Top Garden Services had quoted for spraying but had suggested that mulching may be a better solution; this would also fit more closely with the Biodiversity Policy. The merits of spraying v mulching were discussed. RW would ask Top Garden Services for an example of where mulching had been used in another parish. It was noted that the tree order was with BDC for comment.

**ACTION: RW to action.**

- e) **Works** - SP reported that the bench on Primrose Lane needed maintenance. The librarian was happy with the idea of a wooden box in the bus shelter for people to donate books and had suggested donations of toys/puzzles could be considered but at people's own risk. CP said that the war memorial would need cleaning annually and AS would check the file for the details provided by the stone masons.

**ACTION: SP & AS to action.**

- f) **Facebook Page** – KP had circulated her report ahead of the meeting. The Facebook page continued to grow; the recent SNAP meeting was held at the Lophams' Village Hall and focused on speeding and road safety. The Speed watch had been started in North Lopham with only one resident from South Lopham.

- g) **SAM2** – RW reported that Steve Reynolds had not been able to download any data this month.

**10. Correspondence:**

- a) **Healthwatch Norfolk** – the Clerk explained the aims of Healthwatch UK. It was agreed to see the level of support that other parishes received before considering asking them to visit South Lopham.

**11. Suggestions for items to be included on the agenda for the next Meeting:** Respect and Civility Pledge to be circulated for approval.

**12. Date of next meeting:** The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at Lophams' Village Hall at 7pm. This would also be the Annual Meeting.

**13. Future Dates – noted as:**

9 July 2024

10 September 2024

12 November 2024

Signed:

R. P. Wells.

Chair

Dated:

23/5/24.