

Draft Meeting Minutes of Emneth Parish Council

Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 6.30pm held in the Committee Room at Emneth Central Hall

Parish Councillors present: Councillor Pearson, Councillor Howard, Councillor Curtis, Councillor Finnis, Councillor Purchase, Councillor Groves (Chair), Councillor Fry, Councillor Burgess-Lee, Councillor McCourt, Councillor Tingley, Councillor Kok and Councillor Wiles. Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk), County Councillor Dawson, Borough Councillor Crofts and one member of the public

Apologies: Harry Humphrey

Minutes (draft)

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received as listed above.

3 Members' Declarations of Interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations required considered

Councillor Tingley and Councillor Curtis both declared an interest in planning applications due to be considered at Item 10b) on this month's Agenda and confirmed that they would both leave the meeting room when Members discuss the application that they have an interest in.

4 Open Forum for Public Participation (fifteen minutes only)

A resident of Meadowgate Lane was present and reported that pot holes have been filled at this location and recent drainage works to the verge do not appear to be alleviating surface water drainage issues.

5 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2024

It was resolved with all in favour to approve the Minutes of last month's meeting and these were signed as a true record by the Chairman.

6 Clerk to provide an update on any matters not included on this month's agenda

- a) The Clerk reminded Members of their request to arrange a joint meeting with Emneth Bowls Club for end March 2024 / early April 2024 to encourage a more cohesive relationship between both parties. It was resolved to not pursue this at this time until the Bowls Club has been back in touch regarding their request for help with removing the perimeter hedge/fence around the Club and replacing with security fencing; quotes are awaited from the Club for consideration by Members of the Parish Council.
- b) The Clerk and Councillor Curtis had met with Maxey Grounds to enable them to carry out a Red Book Valuation on all Parish Council-owned agricultural land in the Parish; the report is awaited.
- c) A new land tenancy agreement for a tenant at Hungate Road will be raised once confirmation of current competitive land prices have been confirmed by Maxey Grounds' Red Book Valuation.
- d) The Clerk requested confirmation of a meeting date from the Chairman regarding the joint meeting with Councillor Dawson and the School to consider parking issues along Hollycroft Road; the Chairman is awaiting a response from the School.

7 To receive a report from Norfolk County Council; see Item 13 of these Minutes.

8 To receive a report from the Borough Council

- a) As a result of the recent local government pay increases, the Borough's income needs to drastically increase to compensate. Council tax will increase by 4.99% and car park charges by 10%.
- b) The Planning Department is still very under-staffed.
- c) Councillor Crofts reminded Members of the £1,000.00 annual Member's Fund he has available to him for local groups to apply to for a donation; a group from Emneth has not applied for it yet this financial year. Any interested parties should contact Borough Councillor Crofts and / or Harry Humphrey directly.
- d) The retrospective Planning application 23/02015/F, Sweet Things Savoury, 33 Gaultree Square, Emneth will be considered by the Sifting Panel (not via delegated powers).

9 Finance

- a) It was resolved with all in favour to approve the February 2024 Payments List as presented.
- b) Income received since last meeting: £0.00.
- c) It was resolved to appoint Robin Goreham of Dereham as the 2023 2024 financial year internal auditor.
- d) Councillors Tingley and Finnis viewed the bank statements for internal audit purposes.

10 Planning

- a) It was noted that the Borough's Local Plan review was submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2022 and was identified as requiring further work relating to Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation, transport, housing land supply amongst others. These topics have been addressed and published for consultation. Further hearing dates have now been set for March, April and September 2024 and will be held at Knight's Hill Hotel, King's Lynn.
- b) To consider any outstanding planning applications since last meeting:
 - Planning application 24/00160/F variation of conditions 3,4 and 7 of 22/00256/F dwelling at Little Orchard, 55 Elmside, Emneth. It was resolved to *support* this application. (Councillor Tingley left the meeting room during discussion/debate/vote).
 - Planning Application 24/00273/F change of use from vacant shop to mix use takeaway and restaurant with insertion of extraction flue and new shopfront with retractable canopy at Curtis Butchers, 18 Gaultree Square, Emneth. Members asked the Clerk to request a more detailed location / site plan before commenting on this application. (Councillor Curtis left the meeting room during discussion/debate).
 - Premises Licence Application at Wisbech Service Station, 40 Elm High Road, Emneth: it was resolved to submit a representation to this application voicing concerns over the sale of alcohol from a garage forecourt. Members did not feel it was necessary or prudent to do so remarking that there are plenty of other retail outlets in the Parish selling alcohol.
- c) To note any planning decisions made by the Local Planning Authority or report any appeals made to the Secretary of State:
 - Planning application 23/02072/CU Appleyard Farm, Emneth (retrospective) from agricultural barn to B2 (car repairs and spraying garage). Refused by the Local Planning Authority requiring further information regarding foul drainage, septic tank, welfare facilities, noise, permit, safety measures, air quality, ventilation/ extraction and opening hours.
 - Planning application 23/01864/RM for 3 dwellings at Towler Coaches Ltd., 24 Church Road, Emneth has been withdrawn. Planning Officer was recommending refusal based on over-development of the site.
 - Planning application 23/02041/F Lane Cottage, 44 Church Road, Emneth; proposed detached garden room and garden store. Permitted.
 - Planning application 23/02300/F 71 Church Road, Emneth erection of garage and change of use of land from agricultural field to residential. Permitted.

Not all decisions on planning applications for the Parish are resolved upon at a monthly meeting; some are considered during the course of the month and resolved upon online. Details of all planning applications considered by Emneth Parish Council can be viewed on the Borough Council's planning portal by visiting <https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/> and referencing the relevant *planning application number* or a *key word* into the *Search* bar.

11 Parish Matters

- a) The Parish Council is taking part in the D-Day 80 Event on 6th June 2024 which will involve lighting a beacon at 9.15pm to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings. A 'gas' version of a beacon is currently being investigated which should be safer than a naked flame from a brazier. No

fireworks at the event, maybe glow bands / glow sticks. Looking into providing a fish & chip supper. On going.

- b) It was resolved to create a Facebook page for the Parish Council to be in the form of a noticeboard /information board rather than a forum for discussion. Councillor Finnis and the Clerk to action.
- c) Councillor Burgess-Lee and Finnis agreed to upright the dog waste bin at Meadowgate Lane which has been hit by what would appear to be a tractor.
- d) Several matters relating to the old canal towpath were discussed:
 - It was resolved to approve in principle the request to give F.E.E.T. an annual grant to help with costs towards fuel and equipment maintenance. The amount of the grant is still to be agreed.
 - Correspondence was noted from Elm Parish Council relating to email correspondence they had received from a resident concerning dogs off leads along the towpath accessing neighbouring private land and the dogs snarling and being aggressive. It was suggested that this would be a matter for the Police.
 - It was noted that the next joint meeting with F.E.E.T. and Elm Parish Council is Wednesday 27th March 2024 at 6pm at the Elm portcabin on Begdale Road.
 - Before a donation is considered, it was resolved to request a breakdown of costs from the invoice received from Elm Parish Council towards the remedial works organized by them when the field gate was demolished at the Collett's Bridge end of towpath: the invoice raised to Elm Parish Council was for £479.81 + Vat which seems high.

12 To discuss Playing Field issues

- a) The drainage / toilets are currently the main area of concern at the new pavilion requiring maintenance. A specification to be raised by Councillor Burgess-Lee for the works required and quotes to be sought.
- b) Other maintenance required involves the removal of some plasterboarding, some painting and cleaning; Clerk to investigate skip hire charges.
- c) Clerk to obtain a quote for reinstating a 660 litre bin at the playing field to be emptied weekly.

13 Cemetery Issues

- a) Tree works following the tree survey last year are now nearly complete; work to just three trees is now outstanding.
- b) It was resolved to appoint a new grass cutting contractor for 2024: Neill McCourt.

Councillor Dawson joined the meeting and gave a brief update on the approval this month by the Secretary of State for the Energy from Waste Facility for Wisbech.

- c) It was noted that there are approximately only 14 full grave burial plots left. A response has now been received from the Diocese regarding permission for piping a section of one of the dykes in the cemetery to provide further burial space; both ashes and full grave burials. The Clerk provided an update as follows:
 - The Diocese has passed the matter to Emneth Parochial Church Council as the Diocese has no record of ownership of the dyke. If the project goes ahead they will require us to apply for a licence for access over the churchyard to carry out the works and a faculty for permission to pipe the dyke. Consecration¹ of the dyke area would also need to be further investigated.
 - The Clerk has spoken with Bob Waterfield at Emneth Parochial Church Council and he is happy, in principle, for the Parish Council to arrange for a specification to be drawn up and

¹ Dedicated to the service of God according to the Church of England

to apply to the King's Lynn Internal Drainage Board for their approval to do the works. The Borough Council has confirmed the same.

- The dyke is not registered so falls under riparian ownership between the Borough Council and the Parochial Church Council as landowners and the Parish Council as leaseholders with maintenance responsibilities.
- The Clerk has met with a contractor who is going to arrange for a full specification to be drafted, along with a quote which can be sent to the King's Lynn Internal Drainage Board for their consideration / approval.

14 Allotment Land issues

- a) A Red Book Valuation of all Parish Council-owned land has been carried out by Maxey Grounds; their report is awaited.
- b) Legal advice has been sought surrounding the removal of scrap vehicles from allotment land at Grays Lane. Several letters have been sent to the tenant over the last three years but there are still four vehicles remaining on the land. Further discussion of this item to take place at Item 19 of this agenda.

15 To discuss Central Hall issues

- a) Clerk to investigate the cost of a 660 litre bin for the car park area to be emptied once a week.
- b) Various maintenance works are required at Central Hall including a total rewire of the Hall, the car park requires resurfacing and new radiators are needed.

16 To discuss Norfolk County Council issues including highways

- a) The traffic survey at Hollycroft Road will be carried out from 29th February 2024 - 6th March 2024. Councillor Dawson offered to contribute towards the cost of this survey which is £333.33 + Vat.
- b) Residents are reminded to report pot holes directly via the Norfolk County Council website / link here refers; [Potholes - Norfolk County Council](#)

17 To note any communications from the Police since last meeting

- a) The Community Engagement Officer for Emneth is Paula Gilluley paula.gilluley@norfolk.police.uk
- b) Residents are encouraged to report anti-social behaviour issues to the Police by dialling 101.

18 Items for the next meeting agenda

- Update on D-Day 80 Event, 6th June 2024
- To consider maintenance requirements at the new pavilion
- To discuss scrap cars at Grays Lane allotment land
- To consider the findings from the Red Book Valuation carried out by Maxey Grounds
- To agree the terms of the renewal of a land rent tenancy agreement for land at Hungate Road

19 To consider excluding the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the items to be discussed

The Clerk had written to the Parish Council's solicitor for advice on the removal of scrap vehicles from Parish Council-owned land at Grays Lane. Several letters have been sent to the tenant over the last three years but up to four non-agricultural vehicles still remain and are not only unsightly but also environmentally unfriendly. Members felt they have been very patient and resolved to put the matter in the hands of their solicitor.

20 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 26th March 2024 at 6.30pm at Emneth Central Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm

Chairman's signature

Emneth Parish Council

8 March 2024 (2023-2024)

PAYMENTS LIST

Vouche	Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
206	NEST - Pensions	08/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	NEST	X	33.50		33.50
207	British Telecom	08/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Telecoms	British Telecom	S	45.25	9.05	54.30
208	Clerk Salary	15/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	Kate Bennett	X	1,146.00		1,146.00
209	NEST - Pensions	16/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	Kate Bennett	X	-19.14		-19.14
220	Village Hall Hire	23/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Village Hall	Emneth Central Hall	Z	24.00		24.00
221	Unity Bank Charges / Interest	23/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Bank	Unity Trust	E	3.00		3.00
217	Parks and Open Spaces	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Open spaces	Elm Parish Council	Z	459.20		459.20
214	Cemetery and Churchyard	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Refuse collection	Veolia Ltd.	S	187.60	37.52	225.12
215	Energy (electricity)	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Street lights	sse	L	100.33	5.02	105.35
216	Allotment Land	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Legal advice	Bowsers Solicitors	S	100.00	20.00	120.00
210	Clerk Salary	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	Kate Bennett	X	92.09		92.09
211	Playing Field Caretaker	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	Nicola Lane	X	233.56		233.56
212	Litter Picker	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	Jean Eady	X	333.60		333.60
213	PAYE	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	HM Revenue and Customs	X	239.87		239.87
219	Expenses	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Expenses	Kate Bennett	Z	89.00		89.00
218	Street light maintenance	24/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Street lights	Cozens (UK) Limited	S	45.00	9.00	54.00
222	Donations	26/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Playing Field	Playing Field Committee	X	157.23		157.23
223	NEST - Pensions	28/02/2024		Unity Current Accour		Salary	NEST	X	54.16		54.16
Total									3,324.25	80.59	3,404.84