

Draft Meeting Minutes of Emneth Parish Council

Tuesday 7th November 2023 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 Tingley and Councillor Wiles. Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk), Borough Councillor Chris Crofts and three members of the public

Apologies: Councillor McCourt, Councillor Kok, County Councillor Chris Dawson and Harry Humphrey

Minutes (draft)

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for this month's meeting were received as above and approved. The Chairman apologized for the language used whilst repeating verbatim, at last month's meeting, an inflammatory / expletive conversation that had taken place between a resident and our Norfolk County Council Highways Engineer.

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

Councillor Howard declared an interest in Item 10a): Planning Application 23/00576/F.

4 Open Forum for Public Participation (15 minutes)

- The Chairman and the Secretary of Emneth Bowls Club were present to request financial assistance with the funding of a new mower for the Club (£5,000.00) and 140m of security fencing (£6,000.00) to replace the hedge that is currently there. It was resolved for the Club to obtain three quotes for the removal of the hedge surrounding the Club and to replace with security fencing and to then apply to the Borough Council's Cil¹ fund for assistance with the project. The Club currently has 30 members of which 80% are Emneth residents. The Parish's precept cannot absorb this size of donation for the amount of parishioners it would benefit so outside funding would be required; on going.
- A resident of Meadowgate Lane was present to report the large quantity of nitrous oxide cannisters that he has recently collected from this area. He was advised to report the matter as fly tipping to the Borough Council via their online reporting system <https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/homepage/312/fly-tipping-illegal-dumping>

5 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th September 2023

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 solar lighting unit has now been installed at the replacement bus shelter on the A1101 adjacent to The Peel Centre. The invoice has been received and funding for the project from both Norfolk County Council and the Borough Council received back into the Parish Council's bank account.
- b) Repairs to the church wall are still awaited.
- c) Still awaiting approval from the Diocese and the Borough Council for permission to pipe the dyke at the cemetery to extend the ashes plots over the dyke² to provide further burial plots for the Parish.
- d) Still awaiting confirmation from Marshland St. James Parish Council regarding their parishioners' support in investigating the feasibility of reinstating the 63 once-weekly bus service from Emneth to King's Lynn that was decommissioned last year.
- e) Works to the trees in the churchyards and the cemetery will take place late December 2023.

¹ Community Infrastructure Levy

² Roughly 40m long and 7m wide

- f) UK Power Networks will be attending to trees along the towpath to clear away from overhead power cables.
- g) Works to the ash tree along the towpath suffering from ash tree die-back will be carried out soon.
- h) A resident of Outwell Road has cut some branches from a tree along the towpath that were overhanging onto their property and left the branches on the towpath.
- i) The new energy contract with SSE Energy commenced 15th October 2023 with a saving for the next 12 months of nearly 50% on last year's costs.

7 To receive a report from Norfolk County Council; no report.

8 To receive a report from the Borough Council

- a) A review of polling districts, stations and places is being carried out: Monday 16th October to 24th November 2023 https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20090/elections_and_voting/397/polling_district_review_-_2023
- b) A large amount of planning applications are currently having to be considered by the Planning Committee so a further meeting has been arranged in a bid to catch up.
- c) The Local Plan has not yet been approved due to a lack of Gypsy / Traveller Sites in the Borough. A further 76 pitches are required over the next five years <https://democracy.west-norfolk.gov.uk/documents/g6022/Printed%20minutes%2010th-Oct-2023%2009.30%20Local%20Plan%20Task%20Group.pdf?T=1>
- d) A comprehensive report on Cil funding applications is available on the website https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20233/cil_governance_and_funding/874/cil_project_funding
- e) The Fawkes in the Walks free firework display was postponed due to flooding. https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/news/article/1534/fawkes_in_the_walks_tonight_is_postponed

9 Finance

- a) It was resolved with all in favour to approve the November 2023 Payments List as presented.
- b) Income received since last meeting:
 - £7,516.00 grant funding for replacement bus shelter
 - £1,883.66 Community Infrastructure Levy payment
 - £935.00 cemetery
 - £4,623.80 land rents
- c) It was resolved with all in favour to approve expenditure of £23.98³ for a poppy wreath.
- d) It was resolved to approve expenditure of £100.00 to a resident for cutting the tops of the two boundary hedges at the old churchyard.
- e) It was resolved to approve expenditure of £500.00 to cut the laurel hedges at the front of the old churchyard and to cut back the inside of the boundary hedges and remove the 5-6 self-set elders from memorials.
- f) After careful consideration of the mitigating financial commitments for the Parish for the next financial year it was resolved to set the 2024/25 Precept at £43,000.00 (an increase of £2,000.00 from this financial year). Considerations made were:
 - An increase to the national living wage in April 2024 for two employees
 - An increase in hours and potentially hourly rate for one employee
 - An increase in grass cutting costs for the football pitches / play area / churchyards
 - Maintenance works required to the pavilion at the Playing Field
 - A 10% increase from British Telecom for broadband at Central Hall
 - The volatile market for energy prices for the Parish (50 street lights)
 - The loss of income from full grave burial plots at the cemetery
 - Costs associated in piping the dyke at the cemetery to increase capacity for burial provision
- g) Councillor Fry viewed the bank statements for internal audit purposes.

³ To be paid from the annual Chairman's allowance

10 Planning

- a) To consider any outstanding planning applications since last meeting:
- **Planning application 23/01787/O** proposed single storey dwelling at Land NW of 52 Elmside, Emneth; it was resolved to support this application.
 - **Planning application 23/01874/F** removal of condition 3 attached to 2/78/3531/O bungalow at Glyncli, 78 The Wroe, Emneth ; it was resolved to support this application.
 - **Planning application 23/00576/F** (amendment) dwelling at Kirklea, 56 Church Road, Emneth; it was resolved to support this application⁴.
- b) To note any planning decisions made by the Local Planning Authority
- ❖ 23/01501/F Louan, Chapel Lane, Emneth: refused.
 - ❖ 23/01469/RM 1 Gaultree Square, Emneth: permitted.
 - ❖ 23/01392/F 89 Hollycroft Road, Emneth: permitted.
- c) The recent presentation from the Borough Council for parish councilors to update them on general planning matters had been circulated.

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.

11 Parish Matters

- a) For the purpose of the Minutes it is noted that the agreed commuted sum for thirty years of energy and maintenance for the 29 street lights at the new development at 11-37 Elm High Road, Emneth, if paid as one lump sum directly into the Parish Council's bank account, can be reduced from £54,599.11 to £50,000.00.
- b) The meeting with Liz Truss MP went ahead on Thursday 5th October 2023. Local issues such as parking at Gaultree Square / Hollycroft Road, policing and the incinerator were discussed.
- c) The unveiling of the Upwell to Wisbech tram memento at Birds Corner took place on Saturday 4th November with a good number of residents supporting the event. Clerk to add this asset to the Council's Asset Register at a value of £2,000.00 for insurance purposes.
- d) Further discussion took place surrounding funding for Emneth Bowls Club for a new mower and security fencing (see Item 4) and to consider establishing a formal agreement between the Parish Council and the Bowls Club in order to improve communication between both parties; it was agreed to arrange a meeting end March / early April 2024. It was also resolved for a few Members to meet this month to trim back the boundary hedge surrounding the Bowls Club / Play Areas.
- e) It was noted that there is now a requirement for local authorities to consider *biodiversity* as part of their policy and decision making processes; first consideration of what action to take is required by 1st January 2024. It was resolved for Councillors Finnis, Burgess-Lee, Curtis, Purchase and Groves to arrange a Working Party Group Meeting to progress.

12 To note general correspondence received since last meeting

- a) Telephone call noted from a resident of Elmfield Drive concerned with the speed of traffic along the A1101 and the difficulty for the elderly in crossing the road to reach the bus stop and beyond. The lady in question was invited to attend this meeting to discuss with councillors; she did not attend.

13 To discuss Playing Field issues

- a) Thanks to be recorded to Councillor Burgess-Lee for attending to the required roof repairs at the new pavilion. He suggested having an on-going maintenance plan for the pavilion to be considered every three months; further discussion required with the Playing Field Committee Chairman.

⁴ Councillor Howard left the room when voting took place on this application

- b) A discussion took place regarding the feasibility of providing a new Sports and Social Club for the Parish. Further discussion required; Councillors Burgess-Lee, Tingley, Finnis and Curtis agreed to be part of a Working Party Group to make further enquiries / investigations.

14 Cemetery Issues

- a) 88 new ashes plots have been created in order to be able to continue to offer burials for the residents of Emneth. Full grave burial space is now very limited but ashes interments will be available now for many years.
- b) It was noted that the grass has suffered quite badly following the contractors installing the new ashes plots but it was felt that this will grow back next Spring.
- c) The recent heavy rains have caused several recent burials to sink quite badly; all have now been built up with soil again and reseeded with grass seed.
- d) It was resolved to remove the wooden post by the village sign that has been hit and is damaged.

15 Allotment Land issues

- a) The annual land rent invoices have been sent out and most payments now received.
- b) It was noted that one of the tenant's 3-year contract has expired and needs renewing.
- c) It was resolved to carry out a Red Book Valuation on all Parish Council-owned land at a cost of £1,250.00 + Vat to ensure the land is achieving an acceptable market value.

16 To discuss Central Hall issues; no report.

17 To discuss Norfolk County Council issues including highways

- a) It was noted that the access issues at Mill Road have now been resolved.
- b) The Highways Rangers are due to visit December 2023; any local issues to be reported to the Clerk.
- c) Residents are reminded to report pot holes directly via the Norfolk County Council website / link here refers; [Potholes - Norfolk County Council](#)

18 To note any communications from the Police since last meeting

- a) Emneth's Beat Manager is PC Andy Wise.
- b) The Community Engagement Officer for Emneth is Paula Gilluley paula.gilluley@norfolk.police.uk
- c) Residents are encouraged to report any anti-social behaviour issues on the Police 101 non-urgent number.

19 Items for the next meeting agenda

- To consider quotes from Emneth Bowls Club for the removal of the perimeter hedge / fence and to replace with security fencing
- To consider creating a Parish Council Facebook page
- To receive a report from the Working Party Group reference a new Sports & Social Club
- To receive an update from the Working Party Group reference biodiversity
- To arrange a date for the Clerk's appraisal and to consider correspondence received relating to the 2023/24 Local Government Services Pay Agreement
- To consider a school visit relating to parking outside the school

20 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; no report.

A discussion took place relating to an incident with a resident and the Police and Norfolk County Council Highways concerning a highways matter.

21 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 6.30pm in the Committee Room at Emneth Central Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman's signature