

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
COLBY & BANNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE BANNINGHAM & COLBY COMMUNITY HALL
ON WEDNESDAY 17th JANUARY 2024 at 7.00pm**

PRESENT: Mr R Anderson-Dungar (Chairman)
Mr N Andrews
Mrs P Ashby
Mr S Elliott
Mr D Holgate
Mrs S Woolliams

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr C Studholme (Clerk), Mr S Penfold (NCC), Mr J Toye (NNDC), 8 members of the public

114. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs J Morgan

115. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

The following interest was declared – Mr Anderson-Dungar – Allotments.

116. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th November 2023

The minutes were agreed, proposed by Mr D Holgate, seconded by Mrs Woolliams.

117. INFORMATION ON MATTERS ARISING

- (a) Whole Council Training. It was agreed that an evening meeting (starting at 7.00pm) would be the most convenient for members. The Clerk was to contact NPTS further suitable dates.
- (b) Hazardous wooden bridge near Beck Farm
The Clerk had contacted NCC and had been informed that the bridge had been visited by an NCC officer and remedial action had been scheduled.
- (c) Councillor email addresses
It was agreed that, for security purposes, members should have Council email addresses separate from their personal email addresses for Council work. The Clerk was to investigate the best options.
- (d) Defibrillator Training. Training was held on Saturday 13th January 2024. Approximately 22 people attended but only 4 from Colby & Banningham. The trainer had highlighted the need for defibrillator units to be regularly charged and serviced. Masks to assist resuscitation were also recommended. Councillor Elliott was to investigate. It was also agreed that we should find out and inform residents of the locations of other defibrillators in the area.

118. OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Eight members of the public were present and several spoke regarding pre-application advice which had been sought from NNDC for a site on Long Lane for affordable housing. The Parish Council was not aware of this until a member of the public had informed the Clerk a few months earlier. NNDC had

given their advice on 15th February 2023 and a member of the public gave copies of the advice letter to the Chairman and Clerk (available now on the Parish Council's website). Although the letter says that "This advice will be shared with the Parish Council and wider community of Colby and Banningham", this does not seem to have been the case.

Residents were concerned that there had been no public consultation on the proposal as there had been for the site originally proposed for land adjacent to Church Close, Banningham in July 2022. The Chairman and Councillor Toye explained that as pre-application advice it was private between the applicant and NNDC and would be used by the applicant to decide whether development was feasible, at which point they would submit an application and the parish council would be consulted, as would the wider community. There was discussion about the transparency of this procedure and whether the parish council should have been notified that pre-application advice had been sought. However, there is no statutory requirement for NNDC to do this. Councillor Toye undertook to speak to NNDC's Community Housing Enabler to seek clarification on events and report back. [Soon after Councillor Toye left the meeting. However, he later emailed the Clerk clarifying the likely origins of the pre-application advice request, and this was shared with the meeting. A copy of his email is attached as appendix 2].

The Parish Council had received no communication from Broadland Housing Association since the July 2022 consultation, and the Clerk was to contact them for an update.

119. **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

Councillor Penfold updated members on recent activity. The County Deal had been discussed on 12th December and Norfolk County Council and the Government had signed an in principle agreement to transfer key powers and funding to Norfolk - known as a **level three** county deal. This includes a £20m per year investment fund, plus powers and funding for transport, brownfield regeneration and skills. One of the outcomes would be a directly elected leader for NCC at the May 2025 elections.

The County Council was setting its budget for 24/25 and tough cuts were anticipated, especially likely in culture and the arts.

There is a high level of fuel poverty in North Norfolk and NCC is taking action to try to address this.

Councillor Toye updated members on recent activity at the District Council, including likely pressure on budgets for 24-25. He also introduced members to the County Council's "Norfolk Swift Response" which can provide 24-hour, 365 day service which offers help if a person has an urgent unplanned need at home but doesn't need one of the emergency services. The number is: 0344 800 8020 (option 1).

120. **ITEMS REFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. **Residents Survey** – a second draft had been circulated and was discussed. There was an urgency in getting the survey out to residents as a key topic was play equipment and a funding window had been identified which needed to be pursued as soon as possible. Members were to send comments to Councillor Woolliams. The questionnaire was to be delivered

by hand but returned via a freepost envelope. A licence was to be obtained to operate the freepost system.

2. **Play Equipment** – a meeting had been held on 11th January between Councillors Elliott, Holgate and Woolliams and Catherine Wedge-Clarke, a grant enabler at NNDC. Funding is available and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) can assist with an application. Some match funding (25%) will be required but this could be from other grant awarding-bodies. A working group consisting of the above Councillors plus Councillor Morgan was to take the project forward.
3. **Grit Bins** – Councillor Penfold said that he would be able to fund some grit bins for Bridge Road and the Council agreed in principle to start the process to obtain them. County Highways would need to approve any suggested locations and their advice was to be sought via Councillor Penfold. The Chairman stressed that if grit bins were to be placed on Bridge Road then there should be provision made for them to be used effectively in icy conditions.
4. **Biodiversity Duty** – The biodiversity duty is a legal obligation for public authorities in England to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The duty was introduced by the Environment Act 2021 and requires public authorities to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity, agree policies and specific objectives based on their areas of operation, and act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives. Although the duty primarily focuses on higher tier authorities, parish councils are also required to identify what they can contribute. The Clerk suggested that a question be added to the residents questionnaire to obtain ideas that would work locally.
5. **Updating the Website** – The Clerk had circulated a paper listing the current contents of the parish council website. The paper also contained suggestions for additional elements to be added. Councillors were to consider the paper and contact the Clerk with any additional suggestions. It was agreed that work should start on the updating and that some of the content could also be used for the information panels in the Information Centre.
6. **Monitoring of Bannaroo** – Councillor Toye had sent an email updating members on the monitoring of noise which had taken place at the 2023 event. Members were to consider the contents of the email and whether any improvements could be made to the monitoring of the 2024 event. The Clerk would pass any suggestions on to Councillor Toye.
7. **Report of Christmas on the Green** – The event had been hampered by windy weather but still c50 people attended. Councillor Elliott thanked all those who had helped out on the evening and during its planning. It was agreed that an alternative venue should be identified for next year in the event of bad weather so that residents would be aware that it would still be taking place. This would be communicated via the newsletter.
8. **SAM2** – Councillor Penfold had agreed to fund the data logger from his Local Member Fund and it was agreed to progress with its purchase. The Unit would need to be returned to Westcotec for the retro-fitting of the logger. The Clerk was to place the order and Councillor Elliott volunteered to deliver it to Westcotec.
9. **Noticeboard at Colby School** – The clerk had identified a suitable board and it was agreed to order one which was big enough to hold 6xA4 sheets.

The Clerk would first contact the school to ensure that they were happy with the one chosen.

121. CLERK'S REPORT

1. **Elden's Retreat** – Mr Catton had agreed to remove and dispose of the old sign. There was no plan to replace it with anything else. The Draft contract for grounds maintenance had been circulated to members along with the contractor's justification for the price rises. The Clerk reported that other parish councils had also noted that their (different) contractors had reported increased prices. It was agreed to accept the quote for 2024 but also that the contract should go out for tender again for 2025. The Clerk was to forward the contract to the contractor.
2. **Village Green** – Snowdrops "in-the-green" had been ordered. Some had arrived and the rest were on their way. A planting day of 27th January at 10.00 am had been agreed. Members were to encourage people they knew to come along on the day to help and to bring a trowel/bulb planter if possible.
3. **Allotments** – Nothing new to report..
4. **Information Centre (Telephone Kiosk)** – Openreach were due to reconnect the electricity supply to the kiosk. The Chairman had circulated his original schedule showing work required and who had been nominated to write the necessary text. Members were encouraged to complete their pieces as soon as possible. The item had been a matter arising for a considerable time and Councillor Elliott was uncomfortable with it continuing to be so without action. The Clerk was to review it in light of the text being prepared for the website. There was also discussion about the Long Land noticeboard an Mrs Cort present as a member of the public agreed to enquire if a neighbour would be able to refurbish the board.

122. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS/EVENTS

1. Email from District Councillor Wendy Fredricks regarding affordable housing in the parish – This had been circulated to all parishes and was not linked to the item above (118) but was to make all parish councils aware of the need for affordable housing in the District. Colby and Banningham & Colby Parish Council had already agreed to support in principle the building of affordable homes in the Parish if a suitable location close to existing amenities/services could be identified.
2. Email from County Broadband regarding a possible meeting
Councillors discussed the proposal and agreed that they would not be able to assist County Broadband in promoting their service to residents. The Council is impartial in this respect and it leaves residents to identify the best solution for their own needs. The offer of a meeting with County Broadband was therefore declined. The Clerk was to communicate the Council's view to County Broadband.
3. Email from Duncan Baker MP regarding a mobile phone reception meeting
Councillor Woolliams had volunteered to attend this virtual meeting on 31st January and would report back.

123. POLICIES

None to consider.

124. FINANCE REPORT**1. FINAL DRAFT OF BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR 2024/25**

The final draft of the budget for 2024-25 had been circulated and was discussed. The predicted net expenditure for the coming financial year was £17,106, £490 (6.69%) more than last year. The main reasons for the increase in payments was grounds maintenance and staff costs. There was discussion about various options – whether to increase the precept by the full amount: a lesser amount (2 or 4%) or to again leave the figure at the 21-22 level as had been the case for the two previous years. After discussion Mr Holgate proposed that the precept should remain unchanged at £16,034. This was seconded by Mr Elliott and agreed unanimously.

2. SCHEDULE OF BILLS OF PAYMENT

The schedule of bills awaiting authorisation for payment for December and January had been circulated.

All payments were approved. These were:

December -

| | |
|---|----------|
| • Colin Studholme - Clerk (Salary) | £ 503.03 |
| • Elise Mabbutt – Hall Administrator (Salary) | £ 113.70 |
| • Grounds Maintenance 2023 | £3396.91 |
| • Christmas on the Green expenses | £ 152.79 |
| • Crawley & Co - Hall Valuation | £ 100.00 |
| • Adcock Refrigeration - Hall Heating System (from grant) | £7660.80 |
| • Adcock Refrigeration – Interface Cards | £ 502.80 |

January –

| | |
|---|----------|
| • Colin Studholme – Clerk (Salary) | £ 503.03 |
| • Elise Mabbutt – Hall Administrator (Salary) | £ 113.70 |
| • SLCC – Subscription | £ 160.34 |
| • Boston Seeds – Snowdrops for Village Green | £ 155.99 |
| • British Gas – Electricity supply for Hall | £ 121.55 |

3. BANK RECONCILIATIONS AS AT 30th NOVEMBER AND 31st DECEMBER 2023

These were noted by members and signed by the Chairman.

4. THE BANK STATEMENTS FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2023

The Bank Statements were noted as being in agreement with the Bank Reconciliations.

5. CASHBOOK AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2023

The Cashbook was noted as being in agreement with the Bank Reconciliation.

6. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

None.

Acceptance of the Finance Report was proposed by Mrs Ashby and seconded by Mr Elliott.

125. PLANNING MATTERS

None.

126. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/FUTURE AGENDA

No new items.

127. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – The next meeting was agreed as **WEDNESDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2024 at 7.00 pm** AT THE COMMUNITY HALL.

128. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05p.m.

Signed (Chairman)

Date

Appendix 1 – email from John Toye

Regarding the discussion with residents this evening for the Pre-App advice IB/23/0190 Having got the reference from the paperwork given to you by residents I believe I might be able to offer some more clarity.

Part of Anna Clarke’s role is to find potential sites for exception housing sites on behalf of the Council.

If a landowner offers a potential piece of land, then Anna will take pre app advice to see if this has the potential to be brought forward. If it is a possibility she will then see if a housing provider like Broadland want to develop the site.

It is then up to the housing provider.

The pre-app advice application was NOT from Broadland but from NNDC housing. It may be in this case that the investigation by Anna has developed from conversations after the previous consultation.

It also states very clearly on the application that the information will be shared with the Parish Council and as the advice was only given on the 15th, 2 days ago, I’m sure Anna will be in touch.

As I have copied Anna in so she can correct anything I may have misunderstood also can I ask Anna that in future discussions with planning colleagues if it would be possible going forward for the Colby and Banningham parish council be advised of pre-apps for housing.

I hope that clarifies things a little.

Best wishes

John Toye

07400 724676.
Member for Erpingham Ward
Armed Forces Champion
Chairman of GRAC