

Hockering Parish Council

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MINUTES of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Tuesday 12th March 2024 at the Village Hall, Hockering.

Cllrs Present at the Meeting: J Blackwell (Chair), P Cocker, R Neave, L Parker and B Higgins

Also Present: Parish Clerk and 3 members of the public.

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence** – Apologies were received from District Cllr. Bembridge
2. **To receive any declarations of interest** – there were no declarations of interest.
3. **To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9th January 2024** – having previously been circulated to all councillors, Cllr Parker proposed, and Cllr Neave seconded that they be approved and signed. All agreed.
4. **To receive County/District Councillor reports** – District Cllr Bembridge had sent his apologies and there was no report.
5. **To receive updates from:**
 - a) **Hockering Life** – Cllr Cocker reported that the next edition of Hockering Life had gone to print and should be available shortly.
 - b) **Village Hall** – The Village Hall Committee has approved plans for the kitchen and rewiring for plug sockets. The chairs will also be replaced, and new tables purchased to replace the old wooden ones. The school have said that as there is a screen in the Village Hall, this could be used for showing educational films, videos of school events and so on, if a projector could be purchased by the Village Hall. This could also be used for Cinema Nights in the Village Hall to raise money.
 - c) **Village Church** – Cllr Neave said that financial difficulties continue, and it has not been possible to find another Treasurer. If one cannot be found, the Church has to close but ongoing costs would still be incurred.
 - d) **Primary School** – Cllr Parker reported that the school had recently had the C. of E. inspection and a report should be published soon. The school are looking for volunteers to help set up a nature garden in the school grounds.
6. **Open Forum for Public Participation – maximum of 3 minutes per person** – a resident said that he would be willing to help with grass cutting around the village and Cllr Higgins said that the main problem is disposing of the grass clippings. Cllr Bembridge had said that he would look into ways of disposing of green waste, but we had not heard from him yet. Concerns were raised about the state of the Stile footpath and the repairs needed to the bridge. Cllr Blackwell is looking into this and will report back when he has found a contractor able to undertake the work. Another concern was the state of local roads where potholes are making the surface unsafe, especially as Mattishall Lane is closed and other smaller byroads are being used instead. Mattishall Lane will not be re-opening due to the heavy plant traffic using it for the new A47 upgrade. Residents were encouraged to report problems on the roads, such as potholes, on the NCC Highways website. This is simple to do and the more reports received the more likely it is that repairs will be carried out.
7. **To consider updates on the following Working Parties:**
 - a) **Neighbourhood Plan** – The Chairman said he had recently met with 6 other local Parish Council Chairmen to discuss local issues and one or two of them had carried out Neighbourhood

Plans for their parishes and would be able to advise.

- b) **Play Area/Youth Club** – Cllr Cocker reported that although there is a local resident willing to run a Youth Club, more help is needed. She also reported that there is now a 3-year Plan in place for the football field and play area. The first year will concentrate on upgrading the parking area, the second year will address expanding the pavilion and the third year will look at developing the play areas, in particular where the old tennis court is now, as an amenity for the whole village. She said that over 150 footballers are now trained at the Club and it is the largest amateur FC in Breckland. The plans for the future are dependent upon raising funds which could be available from the A47 upgrade scheme or the Hornsea Project, Lottery Grant Funding, or ASB funding. Cllr Blackwell said that the Parish Council had received a letter from the Community Liaison Officer of the Hornsea Project Three, offering to attend Parish Council meetings to talk about the Project and any possible funding available for villages affected by the Project. He will get in touch with them to invite them to come to a meeting in Hockering.

If any residents are interested in helping any of these Working Parties, they would be warmly welcomed and should contact the Parish Council for more information.

8. To discuss updates on the following:

- a) **Local Map on the Bus Shelter** – This has been put on hold at the moment as changes to the A47 will impact on the map and local footpaths. As soon as a new map is available, one will be purchased and displayed.
- b) **Parking in the Village** – Cllr Cocker had attended the recent SNAP (South Norfolk Area Police) meeting and spoken to Sgt Fuller concerning the parking outside the school. He asked that anyone seeing illegal parking, such as across a junction, should make a note of the registration number and make of the car and pass them on to Cllr Cocker to email to the Police. Parking tickets will be issued. A Neighbourhood Watch Pilot Scheme has been set up in our area, starting in April. A Speedwatch Team is operating in Lyng but if this was needed in Hockering, at least 6 volunteers are required for 2 hours per week, or we could liaise with neighbouring councils to share resources and personnel. Cllr Blackwell reported that there is one SAM2 speed machine operating in Hockering at the moment, but the second machine was damaged by a leaking battery. These 2 machines are shared between 7 parishes. It is possible that another Parish Council has a machine to spare which they may be willing to pass on for our use.
- c) **Grasscutting in Village Public Areas** – Cllr Higgins said that he is happy to arrange for the purchase of a ride-on mower so that he can undertake the cutting of the smaller public areas in Hockering, but he is waiting to find out where he can dispose of grass clippings before going ahead.

- 9. **To consider future Village Events** – The Football Club Friends are arranging a Village Fete sometime in August and it was suggested that the Parish Council could help them with this. Cllr Blackwell said that he and his wife are willing to organise the Bingo sessions but on a quarterly basis, on 27th April, 29th July and 30th September, until someone else could be found to take on the organization in future.

- 10. **Correspondence for circulation - All correspondence had been circulated and dealt with as required.** Cllr Blackwell said that Norfolk Parish Training Services offer excellent training courses for councillors and he would encourage them to check the NPTS website to see if they are interested in attending. He said that Gt Witchingham have said that they are willing to host a training session for local PCs and to let him know what subjects they would like covered.

11. Planning Matters –

- a) Planning Application 3PL/2024/0163/VAR, Location: HOCKERING Albatross Road, NR20 3JL
Proposal: Removal of Condition 12 on 3PL/2021/0533/VAR (originally approved under condition 13 on 3DC/2018/0192/DOC) - to remove the delivery of highway improvements, including road widening and pedestrian refuge, due to changes to the A47 road network and new Hockering bypass (Variation of Cond's). Councillors discussed this application and rejected the removal of the original delivery of highway improvements, stating that this junction is dangerous and the improvements to the A47 will not have an impact on this junction. Cllr Parker proposed and Cllr Cocker seconded that this decision and the views of the PC should be forwarded to Breckland Planning Dept.
- b) Any other applications received after the publication of the agenda are available on

<http://planning.breckland.gov.uk/OcellaWeb/planningSearch>

- c) To note any planning decisions/appeals – Planning Application 3PL/2024/0036/0 for Change of Use of Land from amenity to residential development has been withdrawn.

12. To approve the following Council Policies:

- a) Code of Conduct
- b) Financial Regulations
- c) Internet Banking
- d) Risk Management and Assessment
- e) Grant Awarding
- f) Retention and Disposal

The Clerk explained that a new Standing Orders Policy has been recommended and will be forwarded to councillors so they can discuss this at the next meeting. The Asset Register will be updated and considered when the end-of-year finances are approved.

13. Finance & Governance Matters

All councillors agreed to approve the following payments and noted the bank account balance:

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL THIS MONTH: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK COMMUNITY ACCOUNT					
BALANCE AS AT 09.01.24				£20,464.21	
PAY TYPE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT	
BACS	M Ridgwell	Jan Salary & Exps	359.80		
BACS	M Ridgwell	Feb Salary & Exps	356.20		
BACS	HMRC	PAYE to Period 9	171.60		
BACS	Norfolk PTS	Training for Cllr Cocker	40.00		
BACS	Norfolk PTS	Annual subscription 2024/25	100.00		
BACS	Westcotec	Assessment charge for SAM2 machine	54.00		
BACS	Garden Tools & Engineering	Ride-on mower and mulcher	2,941.00		
		Less	4,022.60		
Receipts	N Blackwell	Bingo Takings	383.80		
	HMRC	VAT Refund	1,010.78		
BALANCE C/FWD			£17,836.19		

- 14. To receive any new items for the next agenda –** To progress and receive updates on matters raised above.

To note the next meeting of the Parish Council – This is scheduled for 7:30pm on Tuesday 9th April 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed