

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of the Kirby Cane & Ellingham Parish Council on Monday, 26th September 2022 at 7pm in Kirby Cane Memorial Hall

Present:

James Lally Lesley Lodge Kerry Mallard Julie Pickering
Michael Skipper Iain Wright

and County Councillor Barry Stone, the clerk to the council, Jane Love, and one member of the public.

The chairman requested a minute's silence in honour of the late Queen Elizabeth II

1. To receive apologies for absence:

Apologies were accepted from District Councillor Brendon Bernard and Councillor John Cook – in the absence of the parish council chairman, the vice chairman, Michael Skipper, would chair the meeting.

2. To receive declarations of interest from members on items on the agenda, and any requests for a dispensation on those interests:

Michael Skipper and James Lally were trustees of the Kirby Cane Memorial Hall; Iain Wright was a trustee of Kirby Cane Charities; and Kerry Mallard was a trustee of the Ellingham United Charities.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting of 18th July 2022:

The minutes of the meeting on 18th July were agreed to be correct and were signed by the chairman.

4. To report matters arising from those minutes (no decisions can be taken on any of these items):

Footpath, Mill Road – work had been completed on part of the footpath, and there will be more on this later in Correspondence. The hedge along this part of the footpath had been cut back by the tenant farmer as requested;
Jubilee trees – the clerk had put an item in Tidings, but received no responses from residents;
There has been no further response from SNC about the empty properties in Ellingham;
The rubbish reported to the clerk in Geldeston had been removed;
The clerk had reported visibility issues at Church Road/A143 and Wardley Hill/A143, but as no action had been taken as yet, she would report this again;
Again, another item in Tidings about emergency planning had received no response, and this would be dealt with later in the agenda.

5. Opportunity for public participation:

There were no public comments

County Cllr Stone reported that budgeting was a major issue for NCC, and it was still endeavouring to make savings and reduce costs, although this was becoming increasingly difficult after years of austerity, while the council did not want to put up council tax. Cllr Stone reported that the village Rangers scheme was operational again and offered to be a point of contact to ensure that work presented to the Rangers did get done.

District Cllr Chris Brown joined the meeting.

County Cllr Barry Stone left the meeting.

District Cllr Brown reported that the district council had been told on Friday that the new office space, the Horizon Building, had been purchased and the aim was to move everyone to move out of Long Stratton by early November. It had been announced that there would be a satellite office Diss, but he did not know opening details etc. A resident enquired if the contact numbers for the council would still be the same.

Cllr Brown still had money in his member's ward fund, and also told the meeting about Go For It grants, which might be suitable for a Warm Spaces initiative for organisations such as the Memorial Hall for the winter months.

The mobile library service was under review, and it was possible that extra services may be added to the mobile units to make the overall offer more viable.

A new SNDC officer had been appointed to go round to check ditches are clean, etc as part of the effort to stop future flooding, who would be reaching out to local communities.

6. To discuss planning matters:

Leet Hill Quarry - an appeal had been submitted on the rejection of the planning application by LP Pallett Quarry Ltd for the use of the existing site for the recycling of CDE waste and soil for a temporary period until 31/12/2025, refuting the four grounds for rejection cited by Norfolk County Council, namely the adequacy of visibility splays at the junction of Old Yarmouth Road and Church Road; apparent conflict of the application with the aims of sustainable development given the remoteness from sources of inert waste for recycling; a dispute concerning the number of HGV movements; and the possibility that approval would delay the restoration of the quarry by the current end date of 31/12/2025. Representations must be received by Thursday, 20/10/22 and the appeal would be heard in early December. Councillors felt that, although some remediation measures had been taken, such as improving visibility at the junction of Church Road and Old Yarmouth Road, and the site seemed consistently to have been watered during the summer months to reduce dust, a recycling operation on the site could still affect the end date for the quarry, and that there was no mechanism in place to quantify the amount of material that would be processed in this part of the operation.

They remained concerned that the site was not appropriate for this use, although measures had been taken to improve access;

Fishing lakes – the latest application for the site was still “pending consideration”, but was generally much quieter, although lorries had still been seen accessing the site;

Stockton site – there was a possibility that the site might be used for paint balling, but the enforcement officer had promised to keep an eye on the site;

Lagoon, Leet Hill Farm – the chairman and vice chairman had taken pictures of work up on one of the fields south of the A143, adjacent to the Stockton site, where a slurry lagoon is being created. The clerk checked on the planning portal and this was subject to an application last year, which seems effectively to have been agricultural permitted development, and as such did not require full planning permission and therefore no consultations were made;

The clerk had just been informed of a pre-submission consultation on the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan, which was open from 28th September to 11th November, which she would circulate to councillors.

7. To discuss correspondence:

a) A resident had reported a dog waste problem across along the well-used footpath from the corner of Mill Lane/Mill Road behind the houses and across the large field to the old railway bridge. Councillors discussed whether it was appropriate to put in a new dog bin, or put up signs and decided to start with appropriate signage asking residents to clean up after their dogs and to keep them on leads;

b) EV points – SNC had asked for information about the site earmarked for a point, so the clerk had sent back the address and location, along with the plan of the car park used for the planning application;

c) A resident contacted the parish council to say that their car had been damaged, apparently by contractors carrying out some clearing work on footpaths on a Saturday in early August - enquiries to Highways had been fruitless, and the clerk was only able to reassure the resident that it was certainly not due to work carried out by the parish council; councillors were sure that this work had been carried out in preparation for footpath works, and therefore the contractors were working on behalf of NCC Highways. The clerk would inform the resident of this;

d) As mentioned earlier, the footpath at the school end of Mill Road had some surfacing work carried out, and a resident emailed to complain about the quality of the work, as the surface was uneven and grass is showing through. The clerk had referred this to highways twice, and received no reply. The councillors were concerned that this and other footpaths on the Crisp Road estate which had been resurfaced were uneven and would be prone to black ice in the winter, especially as the surface was now black. The clerk would contact the highways engineer again;

e) Road closure, Ellingham, Iugs Lane/Ingloss Lane, 10-14 October due to Anglian Water works;

f) Road closure, Kirby Cane, School Road, 11-13 October, again because of Anglian Water connection works;

g) the council had received a report that the path across the lower part of Kirby Cane Hall park was restricted by three strands of wire at either end. The owner had explained that this was because there are sheep grazing in the park, and this is the usual practice. The clerk would enquire from the footpath officer if this was permitted; Also the Honeypot Lane FP3 has been reinstated, but the hedge was quite overgrown, so it would be necessary to write to the landowner at an appropriate time.

8. To receive a financial report from the Clerk (including a half-year budget summary) and to approve invoices for payment:

The external auditor had sent through all the final paperwork to conclude the audit for 2021/22 – unfortunately there were two items noted in its report, these being the problem regarding the publication of elector’s rights caused by the ending of virtual meetings in May 2021 and then the restarting of face-to-face meetings in July 2021; and the issue raised over the payment of PAYE, which had already been addressed. The clerk reviewed the interim budget summary, which showed expenditure broadly in line with expectation.

A further invoice has been received from TT Jones electrical, for the usual quarterly amount, had only been received that day, and would be added to the next statement. Bank details for the annual payment for permissive access to the Kirby Cane Estate had not yet been received, so this payment would be made in due course.

Unfortunately the sudden death of Queen Elizabeth had occurred before the councillors could decide on the purchase of a condolence book, so the clerk had bought one, in consultation with the chairman and vice chairman.

Councillors agreed the list of payments presented by the clerk and the chairman checked and signed the reconciliation and bank statements.

Financial Report:

Balance b/f at 18 th July 2022		£53,500.43
Receipts:		
Cash	Proceeds of garage sale, 17/7/22	£378.60
Standing order:		
Jane Love	Clerk’s monthly salary + use of home – August	£512.44
Jane Love	Clerk’s monthly salary + use of home – Sept	£512.44
Payments to be agreed:		
IMON Site Ltd	July + August grasscutting	£240.00
Kirby Cane Memorial Hall	Hire of hall for meeting 26 th September	£10.00
Kirby Cane Estate	Permissive access agreement – year 3	£224.59
PKF Littlejohn LLP	External audit, 2021/22	£240.00
Premier Toilet Hire Ltd	Toilet hire at playing field for summer holiday	£210.00
Norfolk Parish Training & Support	Clerk’s attendance at autumn seminar, 22 nd September 2022	£52.00
Ellingham United Charities	Playing field rent 2021/22	£132.00
Elysian Associates	VAT advice for car park project	£468.00

Norfolk Pension Fund	Clerk's pension contribs Aug/Sep		£310.08
HMRC	Clerk's tax for August		£1.60
HMRC	Clerk's tax for September		£2.60
Jane Love	Condolence book	£10.99	£58.29
	Clerk's travel expenses	£47.10	
	Adjustment for difference in tax	£0.20	
Sub-total of payments			£ 2,974.04
Balance c/f at 26 th September 2022			£50,904.99 *

**This total includes £3000 reserve towards the cost of a future election, £9000 in general reserves, £1000 contingency reserve, £300 unspent Ellingham Football Club grant, £147.09 remaining of grant to the Memorial Hall to end financial year 2021/22, £2,281 for the playground project, £18815 for the footway lights and £500 of the Covid emergency response grant*

9. To consider a quote for internal audit services for 2022/23:

Councillors resolved unanimously to appoint Catherine Moore as internal auditor for 2022/23, which would be her second year in this post.

10. To consider and emergency plan for the village:

Unfortunately no responses had been received to the appeal in Tidings for residents to take part in the drawing up of the plan, so Cllr Mallard would meet with the clerk at a later date with the aim of making further progress with this exercise.

11. To receive a report on the playing field:

Cllrs Lodge and Pickering reported that work was continuing on the maintenance items, which would be made easier as the children were back at school and the equipment was not being used so heavily.

Rabbit damage had become an issue again, and the clerk would contact the pest control contractor to ask him to attend to address this.

Councillors agreed expenditure of £1786.04, partly to do maintenance work on the zip wire but also to replace one solo chime and install a new tractor springer to replace the elderly rabbit rocker that had frequently been a target for the safety inspectors.

Councillors also discussed two events to be held in 2023, one an afternoon fete, probably in June/July, and the other a music event on 12th August 2023. The importance of being aware of insurance and financial control was discussed.

The Olive Tree had also offered a pizza/quiz night, probably on a Sunday in November, also with the aim of raising money for the car park project.

12. To receive a report on the car park project and consider making applications for funding from the village charities:

Progress had been made on the tenancy agreement, as the diocesan solicitor had finally produced a draft agreement, although he did this pro bono as it seemed he had no actual responsibility to do so on behalf of the diocese. Some small amendments were required to the draft, which the EUC was in the process of having checked with its land agent, Durrants, before the final agreement could be signed by both parties.

The clerk reported on the current financial balance in the "car park account", which amounted to a current deficit of £1,904.28 – fundraising and grants having offset the expenditure thus far of £4,360.50.

The councillors authorised applications for grants from both village charities.

13. To receive a report on the defibrillator:

Cllr Wright reported that the parish council defib unit had been one of a large number across the country affected by a product recall. The apparently simple process of

applying for a temporary replacement while the unit was being repaired had been complicated by the fact that, due to heavy demand, there were no replacements available and so far the defib had not been collected. The unit was working but Cllr Wright was concerned that a potentially faulty unit was in place, and had therefore asked East Anglian Air Ambulance, the owners, what should be done. A further minor issue with the light in the defib cabinet was being addressed with a local electrician.

14. To receive a report on the Newgate Allotment Society:

The chairman, vice chairman and clerk had visited the allotment site on 14th September to reinstate the practice of regular visits to the allotment site. They found a tidy and well-run site. The clerk also reported she was in the process of doing a thorough review of the allotment documents which she hoped to have ready for the November parish council meeting.

15. To receive a report on the SAM2 traffic calming unit:

Cllr Wright presented his latest report on the SAM2 – amongst the interesting data collected, the unit had recorded trends for speeding, with at least 13% breaking the speed limit at certain times of day – most not much more than 34 mph, but in one case a vehicle reaching 50mph. Councillors asked if this was a downward trend, and Cllr Wright would cross-check again previous data and report further at the November meeting.

16. To consider specific local issues:

i) highways issues – these had been covered earlier in the meeting.

17. To receive items for information:

The clerk had attended a very informative seminar on 22nd September which explained changes to the local authority code of conduct, amongst other items, which would hopefully be ready for consideration at the November meeting.

18. To receive items for the next agenda:

Allotment review, code of conduct, car park lease, Warm Spaces, dates for 2023 events, empty houses in Ellingham

19. Date of next meeting – Monday, 21st November 2022, 7pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.06pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Dated.....