

BIRCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Full Council on Wednesday 12th October 2022. The Meeting was held at 7.30 in Bircham Social Club.

Present: Cllrs G Daniels (Chairman), T Clark, D French, R Hutchinson, B Mele, C Morley, D Noon, H Rayner, M Sargent, P Spake

Also present, NCC Cllr M Chenery, Simon Bower (Clerk) and 1-4 Members of the Public.

Prior to the meeting there was a short period of silence for reflection on the reign of Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

1. Declarations of Interest (22/088)

- a) Cllr French declared an interest in the Planning Applications (he would remain in the room, in the event of questions, but would not contribute otherwise).

2. Apologies for Absence (22/089)

- a) There were apologies for absence from Cllr Howell.
- b) Not relevant due the presence of Cllr Mele.

3. Chairman's welcome and announcements (22/090)

- a) The Chair had welcomed those present at the start of the meeting, and had no further comments.

4. Minutes (22/091)

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 7th September 2022, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record and duly signed.
- b) There were no matters arising from the above minutes.

5. Public Participation (22/092)

- a) An item on possible donations to the Church for maintenance of the Churchyard having been previously deferred, there was a representative present who answered questions on the request for additional funding. There was mention of Tree Protection Orders (a visit from the Borough Officer), safety, ivy, and ongoing actions. The Clerk also asked about the proposed Memorial Display Case.

6. Reports (22/093)

- a) Bircham in Bloom [BiB]– representatives of BiB noted their pleasure on the awards won last month. They were looking forward to feedback from the regional organisers. They were meeting on the 13th October to discuss "what next?", including the possibility of BiB becoming independent of Council, now or at some point in the future. There was discussion of this, including

Signed:

(Chairman) Date: 30/11/2022

clarification of the present position (insurance, terms of reference etc.). Item 11d, where Council was to consider this, was therefore deferred until a response from BiB could be received.

- b) County Councillor – Cllr Chenery noted he had sent a series of emails (which the Clerk would forward to Cllrs) dealing with fisheries, “elderly voice” in Norfolk, adult social care and mental health. This last was a major concern of his and Norfolk and Waveney was improving but it was a “long slog”. There was discussion of parish records and local history including Cllr Mele. Cllr Hutchinson asked about the pollution of the Wash, and was referred to the Fisheries as per the emails above. [As Cllr Chenery left later, he was asked about the School – no further developments.]
- c) Borough Councillor – Cllr Morley expressed his concern on the response of the Borough to the report that one in nine residents were suffering from depression and anxiety. He was due to appear on Radio Norfolk the next morning to cover his two proposals to Full Council – releasing funds from reserves as a supplementary hardship fund, and the spending of the £25m Town Deal funding. He expressed concern particularly over the state of the Guildhall and its proposed development, the clean air project and the future of the library in Kings Lynn. The CITB were “bullish” on student numbers and the swimming pool there was receiving basic maintenance. The Clerk asked after the solar panel project – not all residents had received information – it was apparently only being sent to those parishes who might be interested. [Cllr Chenery left.]
- d) Clerk – The Clerk noted that Operation London Bridge had been overly complicated for many smaller parishes, and this had been discussed in networking etc. He also noted that he had been asked in future to make a more detailed report on his general administrative activities. He had arranged for clearance of a fallen tree at the Pond.

7. Planning (22/094)

- a) [Cllr French retired from the table, responding to one question.] There was brief discussion of both applications on the agenda. Council agreed to raise no objection to PA 22/01297 (Conservatory etc. - Rose Cottage, Docking Road) or PA 22/01653 (extension, cartshed, garage - Tofts End, Syderstone Rd)

8. Finance (22/095)

- a) Financial Report – The Clerk noted that there was just over £22,200 in the bank. On spending against budget, one or two areas were over due to spending being early in the year. It was requested that such areas be highlighted by colour coding in future. He had also added a predicted spend for the year to help with budget setting.
- b) There was discussion of the money for the Social Club in lieu of rent for Library and Post Office (£400), donation to the Church¹ (£800) and a late

¹ This £400 as budgeted, remainder a one-off payment from reserves.

request for payment to Sandringham. Salary figures had come in earlier that day. Expenditure, as listed in the public pack, and amended by these figures², was agreed.

- c) The Clerk referred to the spending predictions, noting the need for additional items as per Item 11b below, and possibly including a line for the Coronation. Budgets would need to be mainly complete by the November meeting.

9. Highways (22/096)

- a) Cllr Sargent noted the arrival of the SAM sign, with training, on 17th October.

10. Delegated decisions (22/097)

- a) Following deferral of discussion of Planning Application 21/01503 last month, there had been exchanges by email as agreed. The Clerk produced a “no objection” response based on this.

11. Other items for consideration (22/098)

- a) The text of a draft letter to HM The King³ was agreed without amendment.
b) There was a lengthy discussion of a list of suggestions from Cllrs for projects for the future. In summary:

- Items for further consideration/costing: adult gym equipment, additional children’s play equipment, replacement of current footpath map with interpretative sign/map with wider info., warning signs of speed limit at south of Great Bircham (possible Parish Partnership), speed signs with ANPR (more research needed);
- Items which were not PC responsibilities, or where it was clear no action could take place: school site, CITB swimming pool;
- Items involving administrative action: website content, condition of path adjacent to Lynn Rd (possible Parish Partnership, but need chasing first);
- Items best referred to BiB: feature triangle at Snettisham/Fring Rds, hanging baskets;
- Items where Council may support, but best done by external groups: local history,

Ref Dark skies there was a clear contradiction between that and a request for additional street lights⁴. There was also discussion of the problems faced by those who were not computer literate, provision of warm spaces during the fuel price crisis, general wellbeing (possibly combining some of the above). The Clerk noted that an open request for public views on such items often only returned the negative responses, and Cllrs might do some asking of residents directly.

The Clerk to write to Malcolm Page asking for a review of the supports of the children’s swings, with Cllrs Mele and Sargent.

² See below

³ See below

⁴ Cllr Hutchinson noted the support for this from those adjacent. Cllr Rayner asked about how dark skies could be promoted – possible agreed wording on planning responses relating to outdoor lights etc.

- c) Council agreed a donation of £25 to the Poppy Appeal, in return for a wreath.
- d) Deferred as above.
- e) Council agreed that the Clerk should write a "to whom it may concern" letter in support of the Cricket Club plan for new nets, to help with funding applications.

12. Other items for discussion (22/099)

- a) No further matters raised.
- b) No agenda items requested.
- c) The Clerk noted the possible need for changes to Council's domain name and email provision. This to be dealt with in more detail at a future meeting, with a view to being in place for the new Council in May.

13. Correspondence (22/100)

- a) No correspondence not already referred to.

14. Next Meeting (22/101)

- a) *Next meeting confirmed as 7.30pm on Wednesday, November 30th 2022, at the Social Club*

15. Private session (22/102)

- a) It was agreed to close the meeting to public and press, under relevant legislation and standing orders. [Clerk left the meeting]
- b) Council agreed to an additional increment on the Clerk's salary from April 2023, and an approved ten hours overtime to go through files, scan and save as appropriate.

The Meeting ended at c.9.40

Expenditure:

To	For	Gross	VAT	Budget
nPower - Aug	street lighting	£92.56	£4.41	SLP
Social Club	library/PO	£400.00	£0.00	SOC
Church donation	churchyard	£800.00	£0.00	CHD/RES
Sandringham Estate	Playing field	£600	£0.00	PLR
nPower - Sep	street lighting	£96.15	£4.58	SLP
Salary/Tax	October	£417.56	£0.00	CKS

Text of letter to the King:

I have been instructed to write by Council to express our sincere and humble condolences on the death of your Mother, Queen Elizabeth II.

We have had, as one of the parishes closest to Sandringham, a deep and long-lasting relationship with Her Late Majesty and the Royal Family, which means so much to our

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residents. This has been reinforced by visits over time, and the proximity and support of the Estate.

We know that many of our parishioners have visited Sandringham in recent weeks, and can attest to the clear outpouring of affection and respect – the whole area was deeply affected.

We trust you will forgive us if we add, in addition to the formal nature of this letter, our admiration for the way in which you, Her Majesty the Queen Consort, and the rest of the Royal Family allowed the nation to share in your personal grief. It has been a source of great comfort to us, and we hope that you felt supported and loved in return.

We wish you a long a successful reign.

Signed:

(Chairman) Date: 30/11/2022