



BINHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk – Keith Leesmith
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2015/10

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 18 MAY 2015 AT THE MEMORIAL HALL

Those Present Mike Bond, Mike Chapman, David Frost, Stan Hewitt, Lucy McCallum, & William Wales
Keith Leesmith (Clerk), Marie Strong (NCC), Vincent Fitzpatrick (NNDC), Simon Hester (NNDC), 42 members of the public
Sheila Oxtoby, Nicola Baker, Tom Fitzpatrick - visiting from NNDC

1) Election of Chairman: David Frost elected unanimously
Declarations of Acceptance of Office signed by all Councillors

2) Election of Vice-Chairman: Liz Brown elected unanimously

3) To confirm dates of meetings for the coming year:
Confirmed as 20.07.15 : 14.09.15 (one week early) : 16.11.15 : 18.01.16 : 21.03.16 : 16.05.16

4) Apologies received: Liz Brown

DF welcomed the visitors from NNDC, and congratulated the two new District Councillors and the two new Parish Councillors on their election

5) Declarations of interest: None

6) Minutes of the meeting held 16 March 2015: Approved

7a) NCC Report

NCC is keen to promote more apprenticeships in the County and MS provided a folder of information for circulation amongst Councillors. Wells is working towards becoming a “dementia friendly community” and should achieve this status in the next year. The Norfolk Coast partnership would like to advertise local producers on its website. The Norfolk Trails promotion will be repeated this year. A fuller report appears on the website at:

<http://binhampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk>

7b) NNDC Report

Both new District Councillors were at the meeting, and although they had nothing to report yet, introduced themselves. Both live locally; Vincent Fitzpatrick in Walsingham, and Simon Hester in Hindringham. Both said that they were happy to speak to any Parishioners who had concerns with any issue

7c) Safer Neighbourhood Team Report

At the time of the Annual Parish Meeting the police had sent a report, which KL read now. There had been 9 reported crimes in the previous 12 months, compared with 5 in the previous year. Most of these were thefts from gardens such as trailers, statues, and benches. During the winter period there are still thefts of heating oil being reported generally.

7d) Parish Clerk Report

KL had passed copies of the Code of Conduct to all Councillors, since at this meeting they had to sign a Declaration that they were prepared to abide by it. Letters of thanks for donations made last month had been received from Binham Youth Club, Glaven Caring, Wells Hospital and the Memorial Hall.

8a) To agree the accounts for 2014/2015

Copies of the accounts had been circulated to Councillors beforehand, and it was agreed that the Chairman could sign them off.

8b) To complete the annual governance statement for the audit

Copies of the questions required to be considered had been circulated beforehand and it was agreed that they could all be answered positively. As the internal audit had been completed, the accounts could now go forward for external audit.

9) To announce the results of the village survey re proposed Broadland Development

The box containing the survey forms had been taken to the Memorial Hall on Saturday 16 May, and opened in the presence of those Councillors who were able to attend. 75 forms had been returned; 40 were broadly against the development (29 making comments), 30 were broadly in favour of the development (23 making comments), 3 were not concerned one way or the other, and there were two spoiled papers. KL analysed the comments and read some of the most prominent ones. 11 people had concerns over extra traffic, 10 thought the plans disproportionately large for the village, 7 had concerns over the lack of public transport, 7 were worried about a shortage of school places (already) and 5 had concerns over sewers which were already smelly at times. 5 people thought that affordable homes were needed, and 5 thought that the village would benefit from an influx of younger families. There were several comments relating to worries that the market houses might become second homes, rather than be lived in permanently. The full list of comments will be made available.

10) To welcome Sheila Oxtoby – Chief Executive of North Norfolk District Council

[Sheila was accompanied by Nicola Baker – Chief Planning Officer, and Tom Fitzpatrick – Leader of the Council]

In introducing SO, DF read a letter that he had received from Broadland, in response to a request for quantitative information. The letter appeared to be rather dismissive, stating that pre-enquiries with statutory consultees, such as Highways, and Anglian Water seemed to suggest that they believed that any problems in building the development could be overcome. SO explained that NNDC had entered into an agreement with Broadland to loan them £3.5m at preferential rates. This was beneficial to both as NNDC would get a higher rate of interest than they could obtain from a bank, and Broadland would pay less interest than they would to a bank. The loan was secured against the Broadland housing stock, so should be safer than any bank. Broadland would use the money to build housing, which there was a shortage of in north Norfolk, as well as the Country as a whole. They had an option to buy several sites from NNDC, which would not be exercised until planning permission was given. They intended to increase the supply of affordable homes, but would also need to build market homes, in order to pay for the affordables. Some of the market housing planned for Binham could be subsidising affordable homes elsewhere (as well as the Binham affordables) but this would not be known until a planning application was received.

The land in Priory Crescent was zoned for housing. The planning process was totally separate from other departments within NNDC and in accordance with statutory requirements would make any decisions on planning grounds alone. SO had noticed from the survey that many people were concerned about new housing becoming second-homes. Although they had not done so before, it was possible that the market houses could have a condition that prevented this.

The Councillors and Public were then invited to ask questions.

NNDC were asked about the need for local affordable housing. There were currently 81 households on the housing register within Binham and the surrounding adjacent Parishes. Of these 20 were in the highest category of connection to the village. There were none in the second category but 44 in the third.

Why were brownfield sites not considered? They were – of the 495 properties currently being constructed in North Norfolk, 220 are on brownfield sites. However, most of these were in towns, and people also wanted to live in villages.

Concerns over highways – it should be possible for a Highways officer to attend the meeting in Binham when the Parish Council discusses the planning application

Concerns over schooling – the boundaries of which children are allocated to which schools vary over time according to numbers of children and popularity of the schools. These can be changed as necessary, and if anyone has a problem currently they could speak to Marie Strong.

If an alternative builder came forward with a better offer than Broadland, would it be considered? – There exists already a legal option to purchase by Broadland; therefore any alternatives would have to be looked at from a legal point of view. Any proposals would also have to provide the right type of property i.e. size of dwellings.

If all the land available for affordable housing in Binham was used up now, partly for market housing, where would the need for affordable housing in the village be met in the future? – That is not known at present. The current Local Development Framework plan covers the period from 2001 to 2021. The next plan, to 2036 will soon be started.

What is the position following the Conservative Party announcement just before the election that tenants of housing associations would be allowed to buy their homes at a discount? – We have no details of this at the moment and think that when it is looked at fully, the government will have to treat urban and rural areas differently.

Would it be possible to put restrictive covenants on the affordable housing so that (in the event of them being sold) they can only be sold to people with the same local connection that originally existed? – Probably not, as this would be contrary to government policy.

What is the position of people needing emergency housing? – Emergency housing could be provided from the new affordables, but only to people who have the same proven local connection as others.

Any new homes need to sympathetically match existing dwellings in the village – indeed, that is part of the planning process.

Why is a pre-application consultation not shown on the NNDC website? – This is an error, and will be looked into.

In view of the major importance to the people of Binham of the proposed development, will it be possible to have a longer period for consultation than the usual three or four weeks? – We will do all we can to accommodate you.

At this point, because of the lateness of the meeting, the rest of the agenda was abandoned until the next meeting. However, cheques were signed (as below) and “Minor Items” were allowed to be discussed – see next page:

11) Accounts for settlement

The following cheques were signed to settle current liabilities:

Zurich Municipal Insurance	annual insurance policy	312.12
Kier Environmental Services	brown bin collection from the Priory	42.64
Clifford Hudson	grounds' maintenance	200.00
Norfolk Association of Local Councils	annual subscription	97.57
Mike Gates	internal audit	30.00
Keith Leesmith	1 st quarter salary and expenses	453.60
HMRC	PAYE on above	109.40

12) Minor Items

A resident wished to know if the Parish Council had any plans to install dog bins or "no fouling" notices – they do not. The bins are very expensive to empty and the notices add to the "urbanisation" of the village.

Juliet Case wanted to know why Binham Parish Council was not known as "Binham and Cockthorpe Parish Council". KL explained that throughout Norfolk (and presumably the country as a whole), amalgamations of Parishes had taken place in the 1920's. Although they had started off using both names, after nearly a hundred years in almost every case the name had been shortened to the larger settlement only. This was what happened in Holkham and Quarles – now known only as Holkham. It was also the case at South Creake (and Waterden), Gunthorpe (and Bale), and Stody (and Hunworth) and many others.

WW and KL had both noticed that the noticeboard in Westgate had been damaged (probably by a stone from a passing vehicle). The glass needed replacing in one side, but it would also benefit from a re-paint. WW/DF would endeavour to find a local tradesman to carry out the repairs.

13) To confirm the date of the next meeting

Monday 20 July 2015

[It is possible that plans for the proposed development could be received before that date – prompting an additional meeting]

The meeting closed at 2120