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**Minutes of a Meeting of Harling Parish Council**

**Held in Harling Old School Hall on Tuesday 23rd January 2024**

**PRESENT**

Cllr P Edge (Chairman) Cllr K Rayner

Cllr A Hayward Cllr H Mackenzie

Cllr B Copping Cllr G Denham

Cllr L Mould Cllr S Blades

Cllr J Jacobs Cllr J Denniss

Mrs K Filby (Clerk)

There were two members of the public present

**1. APOLOGIES WERE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED**

Cllr G Jubb

**2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28th November 2023**

**3. MINUTES SIGNED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD BY THE CHAIRMAN**

**4. PUBLIC FORUM**

Members of the Parish Grounds Team informed the Council of faulty Christmas lights and discussed traffic safety for next year’s event. The Clerk will be investigation traffic management for all village events in 2024.

**5. DECLARATION BY COUNCILLORS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY**

 **OR PERSONAL INTEREST(S) IN ANY AGENDA ITEMS**

 Item 7C – Cllr J Jacobs

**6. PLANNING**

a) 3PL/2023/1195 – Normead, Garboldisham Road - *The Parish Council were dismayed that the original application for a landmark property on this site had subsequently became a watered down solution that they were not consulted on. Since the original application having found approval as a 1.5 storey chalet dwelling we are now faced with a proposal that dominates the site. The application is little different to the previous application that was termed a variation to the original approval. The orientation and position of the dwelling have changed, as have the design and materials proposed (in comparison to the original approval) Having fully considered the design proposed and comments made by village residents the Council consider the scale of the building excessive as it does not respond to the levels of this site and those adjoining it (the previous proposal was 1.5 storeys and this is 2 storeys high).*

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*Harling PC accept there will be a need for new housing but wish to see this done as a considered and sensitive approach. There are two options for this site. One being a modern, landmark building with great architectural merit and the other being a response that more closely reflects the local vernacular, unobtrusive and considered in design which would likely be more budget friendly. Regretfully the proposal as it stands falls into neither of these and as such the Council respectfully requests the design and overall massing is reconsidered. This is a lovely site which holds great potential for good design. As the gateway to the village the PC would like to see this potential realised. We would also request that this application is put forward for Planning Committee consideration*

b) 3PL/2023/1156 – Kowloon House – *The Parish Council have no objections*

c) 3PL/2023/1135 – Waterways Farm - *This lane already has a substantial amount of dwellings, agricultural, private and businesses. The Parish Council have no objections in principal, but would strongly recommend a condition being put in place, if Officers approve this application, to state that access to this dwelling does NOT utilise Fen Lane, and also that it remains an agricultural dwelling only, and is not to be used for residential purposes in the future.*

**7. ACCOUNTS**

**a**) Npower - £384.71

**b**) BT -£53.15

**c**) Staff costs - £3114

**d**) Market Stores - £8261

**e**) Clearscape - £396

**f**) NPTS -£54

**g**) Mervyn Lambert - £398.54

**h**) URM - £82.08

**i**) Christmas light supply -£150

*The Parish Councillors were presented with copies of receipts of payments and bank reconciliation showing year to date spending and balances for main current account*

**8. ALLOTMENTS**

The Council resolved to hire a skip to be sited outside the walled in allotments for tenants of both sites to be able to dispose of allotment rubbish, within a specified time period. Grounds Team to dispose of any items deemed as unusable after.

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**9. COLUMN MARKET STREET**

Item deferred to next meeting

**10. NEW PARISH NOTICE BOARD**

The Council resolved to purchase a new freestanding notice board at a cost of approximately 2- 3,000. To be sited on the newly created seating area on Market Street

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**11. PRECEPT AND BUDGET 2024/2025**

In setting this Precept the Council had regard to the current economic climate.

The Parish Council will be requesting a £74,998 Precept amount from Breckland Council in the next financial year.

This will equate to a 3.83% increase on the 2023/24 Precept requirement.

A band D property’s Council Tax payment for the Parish Council will increase to £81.96 per year (£79.26 for the previous year)

At the end of this financial year the Council should have a balance, including its set aside funds in earmarked reserves of £54,200

The increase in next year’s precept has been kept to a minimum and the Council will continue to closely monitor spending during 2024/25 which will continue to be a difficult year financially for many with the continuing increase in household costs.

Earmarked reserves of £73610 are being set aside for continuing projects including, phase 3 of the Market Square refurbishment which will be complete resurfacing. Repairs to potholes has been carried out during 2023. The work currently being carried out on the front of the Market Square will be paid for out of funds from this current year’s budget.

Grants have been applied for through Norfolk County Council’s Parish Partnership Scheme, for 50% funding, for white traffic gates on the B1111, Church Road as you enter the village, and also for vehicle activated signage on Church Road/Market Street. These signs will hopefully slow down traffic and manage larger vehicles as they navigate around Valentines Corner.

Significant work may need to be carried out to the flint wall surrounding the walled in allotments.

The ride on mower is now 20 years old and funds are being set aside for its replacement.

During 2023 the Parish Council carried out repairs and refurbishment to the brick pillars off West Harling Road, The Recreation Ground Trust are obtaining quotes for resurfacing of the entrance way.

The Parish Council have obtained land on Garboldisham Road to create more allotments, funding has been received from Breckland Council via S106 funds. It is hoped work will start early spring.

Funding has been received towards a defibrillator that will be fitted to the surgery building for 24 hour use. The funding will cover 50% of the cost.

During 2023 the Council qualified for the Quality Award through the National Association of Local Councils. This award shows that the Council work at a high level of professionalism, show high regard for its Parishioners, are open and transapparent, and work lawfully at all times.

New Christmas lights were purchased during 2023, all lights are now LED.

In 2024 the Council will be continuing its commitment to biodiversity around the village, working with the Community Garden to help support the growing requirements to ensure biodiversity is one of our top priorities.

During 2023 the Parish Council assisted in the setting up of East Harling Men’s Shed, an organisation that will stand alone, but will be supported by the Parish Council where possible.

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New bins have been purchased for various locations around the village, and these will continue to be replaced as and when required

The Parish Council hosted a very successful event during the summer to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles

Training will continue for all Councillors and Staff as required and pay awards will be reviewed.

The Clerks salary is linked to the National Joint Council annual increases, and the statutory increase was awarded in November 2023.

The Responsible Financial Officer will continue to monitor monthly spending.

**Proposed budget 2024/25**

Balance brought forward 1st April 2024 £ 54.200 (Est)

Precept requested £ 74.998

Budgeted income £ 28,180

Total: **£157,378**

Budgeted expenditure £ 81,650

Proposed earmarked reserves £ 75.728

Leaving uncommitted funds of £0

**Ear Marked Reserves have been agreed at:**

Market Place enhancement £35,000

Contingency Fund £16,000

Traffic gates B1111 £2360

Welcome Hub £1570 (holding of funds only)

Community Garden £570 (holding of funds only)

VAS Signage Market Street £6000

 Allotment wall repairs £7000

 Defibrillator £1000

 New mower £5750

Total EMR **£75,750**

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**12. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED/CLERKS REPORT**

 **a.** The bio annual inspection of all Council owned trees to be carried out during 2024 at a cost of £465 plus VAT

 **b.** It has been agreed that the Council will organise a commemorative event for the DDay anniversary on 9th June

 **c.** An amendment to the local government act has been issued to state that Parish Council may now offer financial support to their Parish church through grants

 **d.** Surgery have agreed that they will pay for the annual charge for electricity supply to the new defibrillator. Harling Electrical to be contacted to quote for install

 **e.** Grant received for orchard trees, to be planted in various locations

 **f.** All Councillors have been issued with new .Gov emails and passwords

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

27th February 2024

*K Filby*

Clerk 7th February 2024

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