

LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Longham Parish Council held on Monday 18th November 2024, at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Susan Douglas (Chair)
Cllr Roddy McLeod
Cllr Clare Mitton
Cllr Paul O'Brien
Cllr Alan Farrell

District Cllr Roger Atterwill
District Cllr Roger Duffield
County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Donna McLeod were approved.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2024.

Cllr Douglas proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

4. To receive an update regarding the one council vacancy and consider the co-option of a new Council member.

Council noted there had been no interest in the vacancy and members were advised to speak to anyone who may be interested.

5. Meeting open for public participation.

There were no members of the public present.

6. To receive County and District Councillors reports.

County Cllr Kiddle-Morris had submitted written reports and highlighted the following:

- The recent changes in VAT for public schools may result in an increase in numbers attending state schools.
- The 'Keeping warm in winter' grants are available to Village Halls etc.
- A new fleet of intelligent winter gritters is now in operation. The gritters work to sensors on the roads and measure out the amount of salt required.
- There has been a Government announcement regarding additional funding for buses and it was hoped this may lead to a bus service in Longham.

Concerns were raised by members regarding the solar farms and their impact on tourism in Norfolk, whilst also recognising the need for greener energy.

District Cllr Duffield raised the matter of mud on the road from the pig farm which should be cleared up and Cllr McLeod volunteered to have a word with the owner.

D/Cllr Duffield also said the consultation regarding car parking charges was ongoing and that nothing had been agreed to date. District Cllr Atterwill said the matter had not been handled well and that Breckland has already said that charges will be implemented, despite the consultation. He was concerned about people who work in the towns, i.e shop workers on the minimum wage and the impact car parking charges will have.

C/Cllr Atterwill highlighted the Household Support Fund and Pension Credits available for anyone struggling and that he was always available to help anyone, in confidence.

Finally, C/Cllr Atterwill said the planning portal has been updated but there are some niggles which need addressing.

The Chairman thanked the Councillors for their input.

7. Planning Matters.

a) Applications for consideration.

There were no new applications for consideration.

b) Decisions to note.

Council noted that no decision had been made on the following application:

- 3PL/2021/1460/F – Meadow, Hoe Road - change of use of land from Agricultural to residential & the erection of 1No. self-build home and provision of 1 No. Self Build Plot with associated car parking and landscaping – decision delayed due to nutrient neutrality restrictions.

c) To receive an update re the Breckland Local Plan.

Council noted that the Local Plan has been paused, awaiting the updated National Planning Policy Framework.

d) To consider the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Publication of proposed Main Modifications and Additional Modifications – closing date 13th December 2024.

Council noted there were no proposals which would impact Longham.

8. Highway Matters.

a) To receive updates on matters previously reported and to consider any new highway issues.

- Proposed 50mph speed limit on Litcham Road – C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris taking this forward and he advised that this will not be considered until the next financial year and said that it could be removed from the agenda for the time being.
- Blocked groups on Litcham Road – a complaint had been received and these will be reported to Highways.

b) To note the Parish Partnership Scheme and to consider any projects for 50/50 grant funding.

Council had previously agreed there was no funding for any projects.

9. To receive a report in respect of the Playing Field and Play Area, including a report regarding the annual inspection.

Cllr O'Brien reported that the annual inspection had raised some low priority issues and these will be resolved.

10. To receive an update regarding the Clay Pits (a county wildlife site).

Cllr O'Brien reported that a possible works day in December is planned to clear the reeds from the ponds. He also said the RWE Fund is now open but not yet for Longham, as we were not impacted by the site which was not the case, as much of the aggregate was coming from Longham and this had meant an increase in HGVs using the local roads. Cllr O'Brien will check to see when the fund is likely to be opened to Longham and, if not in the near future, then contact them to set out the very real impact on the village. Council agreed this course of action.

11. To receive an update in respect of the Village Appraisal.

Cllr O'Brien reported that the document is now at the printers, awaiting the draft sample. Once printed the document will be circulated to all households in the village.

12. To receive an update regarding the Dial-a-Bus scheme.

Council noted that there had been no interest from the village, probably due to the expense of the service, and this item will now be removed from the agenda.

13. To receive an update in respect of the Village Defibrillator.

Cllr O'Brien reported that all was in good order.

14. To receive an update regarding additional dog bins on New Road and Hoe Road.

Council noted that both locations had been approved by Breckland but there would be an annual charge of £239.78 to empty the Hoe Road bin as it was not on Breckland land.

Cllr Douglas proposed that a bin be installed at the New Road site, purchased from the recycling income, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council. Alternative sites will be sought for Hoe Road.

15. To review the church grass cutting contract for 2025.

Cllr Douglas proposed approval of the contract for 2025, which remained at the same price as 2024, £1,370, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman said what a good job the contractor did in the churchyard, which was a challenging site to mow.

16. To consider joining the CPRE Alliance re mega solar farms.

There was no proposal put forward from members to join the alliance.

17. Finance and Governance

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To consider the draft budget and set the precept for the year ending 31st March 2026.

Council members noted that there would be a small deficit the following year if the precept was not increased and agreed to reduce the amount set aside for the Clay Pits to rectify that, rather than increasing the precept. That being the case, Cllr Douglas proposed that the precept remain at £7,500 for the year ending 31st March 2026, this was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council.

Council also agreed to retain the reserve fund of £1,700.00 for the sale of the Village Hall House, if required.

c) To authorise financial payments as set out below and note any receipts.

Cllr Mitton proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Douglas and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipt was noted.

PAYMENTS

| | | |
|------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| P18 | Volunteers – Clay Pit | £408.00 |
| P20 | Bank Charges (June to Sept) | £18.00 |
| P21 | Clerk – Salary/Allowance (Oct) | £141.73 (SO) |
| P21 | HMRC – PAYE | £33.00 |
| P21A | Footpath Maintenance | £40.00 |
| P22 | Bank Charges (October) | £5.40 |

| | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| P23 | Clerk – Salary/Allowance (Nov) | £141.73 (SO) |
| P23 | HMRC PAYE | £33.00 |
| P24 | Grass Contractor – Church (2 of 2) | £685.00 |
| P25 | Volunteers – Clay Pit | £408.00 |
| P26 | Play Area Inspection | £180.00 |
| RECEIPTS | | |
| | Breckland – Precept | £3,750.00 |

18. Correspondence for circulation

Council noted the following correspondence and no action was required.

- RWE Community Fund Update.
- Rural England Prosperity Fund – Briefing Note.

19. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

20. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 20th January 2025, at 7.30pm, in the Village Hall.

Council noted the date of the next meeting and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.10pm.

Signed:

Date:

| LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025 | | | | | | | | |
| FINANCIAL REPORT - NOVEMBER 2024 | | | | | | | | |
| BUDGET UPDATE | Budget | To | % | | Balance at 01.04.2023 | 9535.39 | | |
| | 2024/25 | date | Spend | | Plus Receipts at 31.10.2024 | 8192.65 | | |
| | | | | | Less Payments at 31.10.2024 | 4,922.05 | | |
| PAYMENTS* | | | | | TOTAL | 12,805.99 | | |
| Admin | 1,225 | 831 | 68% | | | | | |
| Salary | 2,095 | 1,318 | 63% | | Bank Balance at 31.10.2024 | | | |
| Open Spaces | 2,565 | 1,670 | 65% | | Unity Trust Current Account | 4,618.06 | | |
| Donations | 1,025 | 1,025 | 100% | | Unity Trust Instant Access | 8,220.93 | | |
| Defibrillator | 50 | - | 0 | | TOTAL | 12,838.99 | | |
| TOTAL | 6,960 | 4,844 | 70% | | Less outstanding payments | 33.00 | | |
| | | | | | Plus outstanding receipts | 0.00 | | |
| RECEIPTS | | | | | TOTAL | 12,805.99 | | |
| Precept | 7,500 | 7,500 | 100% | | including: | | | |
| Bank Interest | 100 | 121 | | | Clay Pits Reserve | 1,253.33 | | |
| Wayleaves | - | - | | | Village Hall Reserve | 1,700.00 | | |
| Salary/HMRC | - | - | | | General Reserve | 9,852.66 | | |
| Recycling | 150 | 263 | 176% | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 7,750 | 7,884 | 102% | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| SURPLUS/DEFICIT | 790 | 3,040 | | | | | | |
| <i>*includes payments as listed on agenda.</i> | | | | | | | | |