

A Meeting of Hildersham Parish Council was held on Tuesday 14th May 2024, in Hildersham Village Hall, after the Parish meeting.

Present: Darren Long, Rob Clay, David Mercer and Tom Barton-Owen one member of the public and the Clerk.

1. Election of Chairman - Rob proposed Mark Logan as chairman which was seconded by Darren Long with the support of all councillors. (Mark had agreed that if he was proposed in his absence as Chairman that he would accept).

2. Signing of declaration of acceptance of office by Chairman. Mark Logan would sign the form on his return from his holiday.

3. Members of the Council to review and update their register of members' interests' forms. Councillors agreed that there were no changes required to their interest's form. The Clerk reminded Tom Barton-Owen that his form was still outstanding.

4. Election of Deputy Chairman – Rob Clay proposed Darren Long, which was seconded by David Mercer and supported by Tom Barton-Owen.

5. Apologies were received and accepted from Mark Logan.

6. Councillors to declare any interests in the items to be discussed during the meeting? Has the Clerk granted any dispensations under section 33 (1) of the Localism Act and the basis is set out under section 33(2)? No interests were declared,

7. Open Forum for Parishioners to make comments or raise items - no matters were raised.

8. Approval of the minutes from the last meeting of 7th March 2023 and the planning meeting on 12th March. The minutes were unanimously approved by councillors.

Although councillors acknowledged that there had been record amounts of rain at the start of the year (3 times the normal amount), the flood water remained a

long time, therefore the recreation ground ditch and drainage pipes may need clearing. **Action: Clerk** to add to July agenda, that contractors look at ditches leading to the river.

9. Feedback on actions from the last meetings

- a) Update on the installing the two replacement bollards at the entrance to the South Holding. There was no update.
- b) Advice requested from the Highway Dept/ Drainage and Resilience Team about how to prevent people using the Ford (and getting stuck) when it is flooded; possibly repositioning the depth measure. They offered a new depth measure but that wouldn't stop people driving into the flood water. Residents would continue to put up the flood signs in both directions to alert drivers of the dangers ahead.
- c) Replacement panel for bus stop had been installed successfully by Rob Clay. **Action: Clerk** to claim the costs from the insurance company.
- d) Bollards installed by Tom to prevent parking on the verge opposite the village hall and they were working well.
- e) Council purchase 2 posts for information sheet for two village greens, which had been installed.
- f) Actions from Internal Audit Report would need to be done once the report was completed.

10. Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

- a) Update. On 13th May, Corrie Newell and Jean Kelly had viewed Hildersham with Rachel Hogger (Modicum Planning). Under the Neighbourhood Plan, Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) classifications are now being suggested for Town Green and Forge Green (separate from previous correspondence with SCDC about the precise placement of the Forge Green PVAA). It was also suggested that PVAA status be requested for the village bridge. (Grid references relating to ancient remains in the vicinity of the churchyard and beyond have also been included in the NP.) **Action: Clerk** to write to agreed households to find out whether they would object to their homes being listed as Non-Designated Heritage Assets; a template letter would be supplied in due course under the NP process.

11. Correspondences

- a) Chasing up new electricity contract. The Clerk has emailed a Suffolk Group after receiving a link form Unity Aid but there has been no response. The council's contract ends in September- **action Clerk**.
- b) Email about grass cutting on Blench Lane, Town Green, and nearby verges.

The grass hadn't been cut this year, but the contractor had advised the Clerk that it would be cut at the end of this week. The grass cutting regime had been agreed with the contractor by the PC. **Action: Clerk** to ask the contractors to avoid the 'wild clary'; image to be sent too.

12. Year End & Annual Return-

- a) Annual Audit- the council has been selected to be the subject of a more detailed audit by Littlejohn (5% of council are selected each year).
- b) Advice sought about whether the PC year end should include or exclude the Trust income and expenditure, now there is a separate current account. The Clerk was awaiting a reply from NALC.
- c) Can councillors accept the financial year figures and the supporting statement? **Darren Long proposed the council accept the financial year figures and the supporting statement, which was seconded by Rob Clay and supported by all councillors.**
- d) The Clerk is unclear whether the council can request an exemption from completing an intermittent AGAR for the year ending 2023-24 and has asked advice from Littlejohn. The Clerk was awaiting a reply from NALC.
- e) The Internal Auditor needs to do their work, before the Council can complete the annual governance statement and approve and sign the annual return accounting statements.
- f) The public inspection period for the AGAR is likely to be 3rd June -12th July.
- g) **The Council unanimously authorised the Clerk to engage to Vicky Warple at a cost of £180, plus any travelling costs, as the internal auditor.**
- h) Councillors agreed to meet on 3rd June to approve the year end AGAR once the internal auditor has completed their work.

13. Finance

- a) **The Council authorised the payments in the table and approved the financial statement dated 14.05.2024 with a proposal from Daren Lond, seconded by Rob Clay with the support of all councillors.**
- b) Rob and Tom have been authorised to use the bank accounts.
- c) Council is owed refund from a tenant who underpaid by £18.30 in error-
Action: Clerk

14. Open Forum for Parishioners to make comments or raise items

The council was asked to reduce the number of grass cuts to save funds and encourage biodiversity. The church is only cutting part of the churchyard The

Nature recovery group would talk to the council in November when the budget is set, and contractors are approached.

15. Items for the next meeting's agenda on 9th July 2024

Contractors look at ditches leading to the river. The council's contract for power form street lights ends in September.

Agenda for the Hildersham Land Management

This meeting follows the Parish Council meeting on 14th May 2024\.

1. Minutes of the meeting – The Trustees agree the minutes for the last meeting are an accurate record of the last meeting.

2. Maintenance of the new plantation- Hire of brush cutter (£86/day) in the Spring to tidy up the plantation should happen when it is dryer. Darren suggested the equipment be hired and delivered in June, with all the Trustees agreed to.

3. Allotment

a) Update on surrendered plots offered to people on the waiting list. The Huntsman family has decided to retain half of their exiting plot. The area will be measured once the new fencing and gates are installed and an annual bill issued after deducting the amount they have already paid.

b) Quote has been received to clear the abandoned plot next to Rachel Fosberrys allotment. **Trustees unanimously authorised the amount quoted to clear the plot- £720.00. It was suggested the that the Trust manage the allotment more strickly to catch poor maintenance earlier and write warning letters, by doing quarterly inspections.**

Creating access to allotments by reducing the size of the surrendered plot and others agreed by existing tenants. **Trustees unanimously authorised the amount quoted to clear install the central path and new gates- £596.00.**

d) Asbestos removal from one plot-action Clerk.

e) Plant material is still be left near the barn. All tenants have been advised that no plant material should be left outside their plots and that there is not a community compost heap by the barn.

f) Proposed changed to the allotment tenancy to include was agreed using the following wording: "On termination of the tenancy the allotment should be handed back to the Parish Council, i.e cleared of any temporary structures, unless otherwise agreed with the Council" or something like that? When updating the allotment agreement change the heading to Trust and remove all references to the Council.

4. South Holding

a) Replacing stolen bollards from the entrance to the South Holding. No news

5. Finance

a) Update – Clerk to as internal auditor & NALC how to do the year end now the Trust has a new current account, although there have been no transactions in the account.

Meeting ended at 8.50pm

DRAFT