

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Stow Bardolph Parish Council

Held at Stow Bridge Village Hall on Tuesday 12th March 2024

The meeting commenced at 8pm

In attendance:

Parish Councillors: Derek Barnes (Chair), Mark Brighton, Stephanie Dent, William Esse, Raymond Hudson, David Brighton, Susan Clanfield, Gary Bishop & Richard Gilbert

Borough Councillors: None

Norfolk County Councillors: Brian Long & Chris Dawson

Clerk: Vicki Howling

1. To receive apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Borough Councillors' Colin Rose & Vivienne Spikings

2. To receive any declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

2.1 None.

3. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held 9th January 2024

3.1 The minutes of the meeting were approved without amendment and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3.2 It was noted that Cllr Gilbert had in fact sent apologies by email ahead of the January meeting, however, but the email was not received by the Clerk.

4. Clerk's report (for information only)

4.1 All matters are covered by the agenda.

4.2 Correspondence not needing action was tabled (and had been forwarded to Members of the meeting).

5. To receive updates from Borough and County Councillors

5.1 An update from Cllr Spikings had been emailed to members ahead of the meeting and is attached at appendix i.

5.2 Cllr Long gave the following updates:

- Norfolk County Council have set their annual budget at £528m
- The County Devolution Deal has been accepted and is expected to bring £600m extra funding to the county, along with additional powers
- 27 new gritting lorries have been ordered
- Consultation on the county's recycling centres is currently taking place
- Disabled people are now entitled to free bus travel across the county
- Cllr Long is now a member of the Patient Participation Group at Watlington Surgery

5.3 Cllr Dawson confirmed that he is sitting on an advisory group reviewing current County Council contracts, which includes looking at new methods of working; however, this is a lengthy process, so any benefits may not be seen until 2025/26.

Cllr Dawson also confirmed he continues to lobby NCC Highways around various matters affecting the West of the county, including the issues around road closures, not least the inadequate signage, causing detriment to residents and businesses.

6. Open Forum for public participation

6.1 No members of the public were present at the meeting.

7. To discuss any Highway Matters

7.1 A report on all previously identified issues is attached at appendix ii.

7.2a Hazards placed on the verge at a property on West Head Road will be reported to Highways.

- 7.2b Two village name signs appear to have been removed, it is unknown whether these have been stolen or removed due to damage; the Clerk will seek clarification with Highways.
- 7.3 Cllr Bishop suggested installing signage to remind people to take litter home, as he has noticed a marked increase in fast food packaging litter in Barroway Drove.
- 7.4 Correspondence from a Stow Bridge resident regarding various Highways related matters was noted; the correspondent has been invited to meet the Clerk to discuss the concerns raised in more detail, so that they can be address through the proper channels.
- 7.5 Correspondence was also received regarding frequent road closures and how inadequate signage impacts local residents. It was agreed that this is an ongoing issue for the whole community, with both residents and businesses being affected. After discussion it was suggested that bespoke signage, stored locally, could alleviate this problem; it was agreed a working party be formed to look at the matter in more detail, and to make contact with other relevant authorities as appropriate. Cllr Mark Brighton and Cllr Richard Gilbert put themselves forward and Cllr Dawson offered to work with them on this matter.
- 7.6 Correspondence regarding opposition to the Western Area Link Road was noted.

8. To discuss any Street Light Matters

- 8.1 No new issues were identified.
- 8.2 The energy price review concluded that the current tariff is the best value at the present time.

9. To discuss Planning Matters

- 9.1 The Council noted the results of previous applications and the responses from the Planning Advisory Group to applications received for consultation since the last meeting (see report attached to March 2024 agenda).
- 9.2 There were no new planning applications for review.
- 9.3 In the last month a concern regarding a breach of planning regulations was reported to the Clerk; this was immediately passed on to the Borough Council to investigate.
- 9.4 It was agreed that correspondence from CPRE, requesting that parish councils consider including a Standard Light Pollution Clause when responding to any planning application, be reviewed by the Planning Advisory Group, to use at their discretion.
- 9.5 Correspondence from the Borough Council regarding the Local Plan Review was noted.
- 9.6 It was agreed that the SBPC Planning Policy review should be deferred until July 2024, so that any changes in legislation can be taken into account.

10. To discuss and agree Finance Matters

- 10.1a The following payments were approved:

Date	Payee	Details	Amount	Cheque no.
19/02/24	Cozens Ltd	Street light maintenance	144.00	#101227
19/02/24	Barroway Drove Village Hall	Room Hire	70.00	#101228
19/02/24	Stow Bridge Village Hall	Room Hire	21.00	#101229
19/02/24	B L Hawkins	Allotment Tenancies	480.00	#101230
19/02/24	Norfolk ALC	Training	36.00	#101231
12/03/24	Mrs V Howling	Salary & expenses	1172.08	#101232
12/03/24	HMRC	Tax on salary	281.60	#101233

- 10.1b Norfolk County Council provided a further breakdown of the additional costs in relation to the invoice for the footway extension in Barroway Drove, as requested; however, after reviewing this information, Council Members did not feel it provided sufficient explanation for the final amount of £68,015.22 versus the December 2022 predicted costs of £62,000.

After discussion, the Council **RESOLVED** that a payment of £62,000 should be made against the invoice; however, Council Members asked that a meeting with representatives from Norfolk County Council should be requested, to discuss in more detail the additional costs of £6,015.22, which were not budgeted for; the Council instructed to Clerk to request a meeting take place as soon as possible.

- 10.2 The Council reviewed the Reserves Policy in conjunction with the predicted end of year-end accounts, and agreed that no changes would be made to the policy, with the reserve amount continuing to be set at £14,000.
- 10.3 There were no requests for donations.

11. To review and approve the Council’s Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan

- 11.1 The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the new Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan.

12. To review and approve updated policies and procedures

- 12.1 The following policies were reviewed and approved:

- Action Plan 2024-25
- Financial Regulations
- Risk Assessment
- Equality

13. To discuss cycle storage grant funding opportunity

- 13.1 It was agreed that, providing full grants can be obtained, an application for two storage units (one for each village hall) should be made; however, the village halls will be responsible for installation, maintenance and insurance.

14. To discuss and agree membership of support organisations

- 14.1 The Council **RESOLVED** to continue membership with Norfolk ALC for 2024-25
- 14.2 The Council **RESOLVED** to continue membership with Norfolk PTS for 2024-25

15. To receive items for the next agenda

- 15.1 None

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.08pm. The next meeting is scheduled to take place is the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 14 May at Barroway Drove Village Hall, commencing at 7.30pm

Chairman

Date/...../.....

Appendix I (Report from Cllr Spikings)

Here is a brief report for you as I cannot attend but will be at the next meeting.

I wish to thank the Chairman , Councillors and Vicki for the hard work they have put in over the past year.

Since the election in 2023 there has been a change in the administration from Conservative to a collective of other parties.

For the first six months it has been a bedding down experience for them and not much has happened .

I still sit on Planning but I am no longer Chair , but still remain to speak on residents behalf. Fewer plans seem to be coming forward at the moment.

The pot holes everywhere are a big challenge for the County and our Ward.

The budget has been set last month and Stow is £2172.19 for a band D property.

The Councillor Community fund is still available and if any groups need a small grant through me then I ask they get in touch with me please.

I supported Wimbotsham with a grant for their Christmas tree, a water heater for Welney residents using the Church for a weekly community coffee morning, who in just under a year had 1000 people attending, and metal gates refurbishing for Barroway Drove.

Cllr Vivienne Spikings March 2024

Appendix ii

AREA	ISSUE	LATEST UPDATE/STATUS
Stow Bardolph	White lines faded on Give Way Triangle	Previously reported – no updates
	White lines on junction with A10 faded (both sides of road)	Previously reported – no updates
	White lines at junction of Stow Bridge Road and The Causeway	Previously reported – no updates
Stow Bridge	2 pot holes outside Landymores	Previously reported – no updates
	The Causeway from junction with Stow Bridge Road to junction with Holme Road – road surface in generally poor state, white lines and SLOW signs also need repainting	Previously reported – no updates
	Junction of Runcton Road and The Causeway is extremely smooth and dangerous in wet weather	Previously reported – no updates
	Conifers overgrown on The Causeway (Woodbine Cottage)	Previously reported – no updates
	Overgrown hedges outside Woodlakes Park on Holme Road (towards Runcton Holme)	Previously reported – no updates
	White lines at junction of West Head Road and Low Road faded	Previously reported – no updates
	White lines at junction of West Head Road and Wards Chase faded	Previously reported – no updates
	Verge and road edge on High Bridge Road damaged by heavy traffic	Previously reported – no updates
Barroway Drove	Positioning of fence outside The Old School	Previously reported – no updates
	Trees in garden of 118/120 The Drove subject to Preservation Order are overhanging road and footway	Previously reported – no updates
	Pothole outside 194	Previously reported – no updates
	Pothole outside Taylors Row 281 The Drove	Previously reported – no updates
OTHER	Potholes on Outwell Road	Previously reported – no updates
	Various potholes on Lady Drove beyond 40mph zone (and outside our parish)	Repairs completed