

HILGAY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting held at 7.00pm on 2nd March 2017

DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED BY THE CHAIR

Present: G Carter (Chair), P Bates, P Carter, A Charlesworth, C Dawe, J Evans, E Hall, T Hall, G Harris, R Houghton (Vice Chair), V Martin.

In attendance: J A Taylor (Clerk), County Councillor Martin Storey, two members of the public.

Absent: A Holmes, R Martin (Item 2 refers).

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

1. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The Chair reminded the meeting of the emergency evacuation procedures.

2. Accepted apologies for absence (LGA 1972, s85(1)(2))

A Holmes (ill health), R Martin (ill health).

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Houghton, Item 9. Cllrs G Carter, P Carter, R Houghton, Item 20.

4. Declarations of recording and social media use

Those present were asked if anyone would be recording or using social media to report the meeting. None declared.

5. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

It was proposed that the Minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd February 2017 be approved. Proposed: Cllr E Hall; seconded: Cllr Houghton. All in favour.

Resolved 17/03/02/5.

7.05pm

Public Participation

A member of the public reported streetlights at Ten Mile Bank not functioning - opposite the Church, and at Modney Bridge corner.

7.07pm

6. Reports (items not otherwise covered in the Agenda)

Chair's Report

There had been a number of incidents of theft in Hilgay; the police had attended.

The public were asked to report any suspicious activity to the police.

There is an allotment available to rent. Cllr Bates will advertise the fact. **Action:**

Cllr Bates.

Concern had been expressed about a potential fire hazard at the scrap metal facility in the centre of Hilgay. Clerk to contact the appropriate authority at King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council. **Action: Clerk.**

Clerk's Report

Clerk would place a notice in the Riverside News requesting reports from village organisations for the Annual Parish Meeting on 4th May, and notices would be placed on the noticeboards. **Action: Clerk.**

No response yet from Barclays Bank on changing details to the new clerk; former clerk had kindly printed out bank statements so that a reconciliation could be produced.

Insurance claim: insurers were awaiting final statement from solicitors.

Highways: Clerk reported no success in contacting Highways to deal with the numerous ongoing issues. Clerk will continue to pursue. Councillors confirmed that the potholes on Stock's Hill, Hilgay, had not been filled in. **Action: Clerk.**

CGM had confirmed that they are contracted for 2017 to mow the recreation ground and river field only.

Rented farmland needing draining: location of field had been supplied to the NCC land agent.

K&M Lighting: contract for streetlight maintenance. An issue had arisen with the contract: councillors agreed a change. **Action: Clerk.**

Maintenance Report

The paperwork for three new dog bins was being progressed. Re the door to the toilets which cannot be shut: the Chair confirmed he had obtained a new door and would liaise with the maintenance contractor re installation. **Action: Chair.** There are moles active on the playing field and cemetery. Clerk to contact exterminator.

Action: Clerk.

Councillors' Reports

Several councillors reported nuisance and potentially unlawful motorbike riding both on public footpaths and on the highway. Chair requested that details be noted of times and number plates, and incidents reported to the police.

7. Correspondence

UK Power Networks had requested parish council assistance in identifying those residents who would benefit from being placed on a priority register for action during power cuts. It was agreed that a notice be placed in the Riverside News, together with the relevant form. It was suggested that copy information be sent to the Chair of the Good Companions. **Action: Clerk**

8. Planning

A resident had queried why the objections to planning application 16/02155/F Pembroke House Hubbards Drove, Hilgay, had been overridden by the Borough Council Planning Committee. Clerk was asked to investigate with Planning Department. **Action: Clerk.** County Cllr Storey commented that if the Parish Council was not happy with the procedures followed by the Planning Department, it could contact the Director, Mr G Hall. Cllr Martin, together with Cllr Holmes, would produce a report from the Planning Conference they had attended held by Suffolk Association of Local Councils. They had concluded that, although the production of a Neighbourhood Plan was likely not appropriate for the parish, consideration should be given to forming a planning policy committee, in order to build up expertise to enable the Council to deal effectively with planning issues, and to produce an overall planning policy for the villages.

9. Finance

i. Bank Balance and Reconciliation

Balance was provided by Clerk, but could not be reconciled as access to the bank statements was not possible: Calculated bank balances at 2nd March 2017: £65,568.75.

ii. Payments

Payee	Item	Net £	VAT £	Gross £	Chq/DD
NCC	Practice Room, Hilgay, land rent	91.25	0.00	91.25	102906
K&M Lighting	Lighting maintenance 13/1 - 12/2/17	94.47	18.89	113.36	102907
Hilgay Riverside Academy	Reprographics, Riverside News, Issues 7&8	112.60	0.00	112.60	102908
Thurlow Nunn Standen	Machinery service & repair	183.63	36.73	220.36	102909
E.ON	Lighting electricity	191.50	38.30	229.80	DD
Hodson Office Supplies	Printer cartridge	4.99	1.00	5.99	102910
K&M Lighting	Lighting maintenance 13/2 - 12/3/17	94.47	18.89	113.36	102907
Raymond A Houghton	Riverside, seat repair, sign placement	84.65	16.93	101.58	102911
Mr C Wills	Salary and expenses, February 2017	200.63	0.00	200.63	102913
Mrs J A Taylor	Expenses	79.37	2.42	81.79	102912
Mrs J A Taylor	Salary, February 2017 (28 hours)	279.97	0.00	279.97	102912
Totals		1417.53	133.16	1550.69	

The payment to Cllr Houghton was considered separately. Cllr Houghton left the meeting. Clerk reported that the maintenance contractor had confirmed the work invoiced for had taken place. Proposed: that the payment to Raymond A Houghton be approved. Proposed: Cllr T Hall; seconded: Cllr J Evans. All in favour.
Resolved 17/03/02/9.ii.a. Cllr Houghton returned to the meeting.

Proposed: that the remaining payments be noted and approved. Proposed: Cllr Martin; seconded: Cllr Dawe; all in favour. **Resolved 17/03/02/9.ii.b.**
Cllr T Hall commented that the cost of producing the editions of Riverside News was good value.

iii. To consider draft Budget format

In the absence of the Chair of the Finance Committee, it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

10. Policies - To review Financial Regulations

In the absence of the Chair of the Finance Committee, it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

11. To consider Burial Fees/Cemetery income and expenditure

Cllr Houghton reported that the costs of maintaining the Cemetery in good order was more than the income received, and questioned whether the fees should be increased. Consideration was taken of fees in other comparable cemeteries, and the necessity of aiming towards a balanced budget for the Cemetery. It was proposed that an across-the-board increase of 5% be implemented from 1st April. Proposed:

Cllr Evans; seconded: Cllr Houghton. 10 in favour, 1 against. **Resolved 17/03/02/11.**

12. SAM2 sign – report on training, and consideration of Bluetooth enabling
Cllr T Hall reported on the useful training provided by Westcotec. Bluetooth enabling for downloading the data would preclude the need physically to connect councillors' laptops to the device, with the health and safety risks that would entail. Cllrs Hall and Holmes already had the appropriate app on their phones, whence the downloaded data could be emailed to the Clerk for analysis. Westcotec had quoted £160 plus VAT for the enabling. It was proposed that the quote be accepted. Proposed: Cllr T Hall; seconded: Cllr Dawe. All in favour. **Resolved 17/03/02/12.**
Action: Clerk.

13. Riverside News – to consider advertising rates
It was agreed to keep the rate at £12. The Chair asked if any councillors were available to distribute copies of the News. Several councillors volunteered.

14. To consider action re the football hut
Cllr Dawe reported that the most effective method of dealing with the hut would be to remove all the non-burnable fabric, and hire a skip to remove this material. Cllr Houghton confirmed there was no asbestos within the structure. The remaining, burnable wood could be disposed of via a controlled fire. The estimated cost would be in the region of £500 to £700. It was noted that the defunct football club held an in funds bank account which could be accessed by a former member. Cllr Dawe would contact to request the moneys be released to be used to fund the disposal of the hut. **Action: Cllr Dawe.** It was agreed that should the football club ever resurrect, it could revert to the parish council to request a return of the funds. The Chair reported that Cllr R Martin had offered to break up the adjacent concrete boulders. Chair would contact a resident who may be able to take away the broken-up boulders. **Action: Chair/Cllr R Martin.**

15. To consider quote for stainless steel dog signs
Cllr Dawe provided samples of several different wordings. One was selected, and Cllr Dawe agreed to obtain an example of the actual sign for the next meeting. It was agreed that 10 would be needed, five per village. **Action: Cllr Dawe.** Chair commented that the dog bin between the playing field and Avenue Close was overflowing. Clerk to contact Borough Council. **Action: Clerk.**

16. To consider donation to Church lychgate
Despite further enquiry by councillors, the ownership of the lych gate remained obscure. Clerk confirmed the Local Government Act 1894 Section 8, para 1(i) precluded a parish council from funding "property relating to affairs of the church or held for an ecclesiastical charity". Cllr Martin mentioned Section 137 funding, which power cannot override other statutory prohibitions (Local Government Act 1972 Section 137 para (1A)).

A wide-ranging discussion took place, and it became evident that the issue of ownership could take some time to resolve. It was therefore suggested, in light of the condition of the lych gate, that the Parochial Church Council fund urgent repairs such that the gate is made safe, and that it insure the gate. It was suggested that

Cllr Bates contact the fundraiser at Ely Diocese to see if he could research potential funding for a complete refurbishment of the gate. Cllr Martin informed councillors that Cllr Holmes had drafted a letter from the parish council to the Diocese with the aim of clarification, which would be circulated for councillors' comments. The parish council would, in the meantime, continue efforts to establish ownership, and explore other possibilities for assistance such as fundraising.

17. Report on Hilgay School parking arrangements

Ongoing.

18. Report on Ten Mile Bank School

County Cllr Storey reported little recent activity. Cllr Dawe reported he would be meeting with MP Elizabeth Truss to discuss the situation further, but that little seemed to have changed. It was suggested that Cllr Dawe draft a letter to be sent to DEMAT's liaison officer Jeremy Somerill requesting an update, copied to the DEMAT assistant director and chief operating officer, and to Cllr Storey. **Action: Cllr Dawe.**

19. To receive information or suggested items for consideration at the next meeting.

Cllr Martin: consideration of a planning policy committee and plan.

Cllr P Carter reported that speeding in Hilgay was still a problem and the SAM2 sign did not appear to be a deterrent. Chair commented that it was possible to request that the police attend with a mobile speed camera.

County Cllr Storey reported the decision by Norfolk County Council to increase council tax by 4.8%; 3% would be funding adult social care. The increase represented an additional £57pa for a Band D property. His perspective was that the funding was targeted at those most in need throughout Norfolk, and that most residents would agree this was appropriate. He also reported that the Borough Council had increased its precept by 1%, which represented an additional £4pa for a Band D property.

The Chair expressed the Council's appreciation for the hard work under difficult circumstances which the ward's County representative undertook.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 6th April at 7.00pm in Hilgay Village Hall.

Exclusion of Press and Public (Standing Order 3d)

20. Briefing on complaint against councillor

Further information anticipated at the previous meeting had not been received. A further email from the complainant with additional queries had been received and was read to the meeting. The Council noted that no councillor directly or indirectly associated with the complaint had been appointed to the Committee tasked with resolving the complaint. Although great efforts were made to clarify and resolve the complaint, it proved impossible to do so. It was proposed to note that the Committee had considered statements from the complainant and councillor, and had put forward recommendations to the Council, but that the Council had been unable to come to a conclusion on the matter. (Those councillors directly or indirectly associated with the

complaint did not vote.) Proposed: Cllr Evans; seconded: Cllr Martin. All in favour.
Resolved 17/03/02/20.

The Clerk to respond to the complainant with the outcome of the complaint process,
and with responses to the further queries. **Action: Clerk.**

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

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Chair

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Date

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