

INGWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Ingworth Parish Council held on Thursday 16th November 2023 at 7:00pm, in the Reading Room, Ingworth

Present: Gill Chambers, Belinda Northey, Ian Sims, Tracey Yardley
0 members of the public

In attendance: John Toye (NNDC), Saul Penfold (NCC), Colin Studholme (Clerk)
Angela Brook (NT), Fiona Fletcher (NT)

Prior to the start of the meeting Angela Brook and Fiona Fletcher from the National Trust updated members on current activity. Angela had recently started as Volunteer and Community Manager with the National Trust, and as well as managing volunteers was developing a new role to involve and engage with local communities around the Estate. This was still in the planning stage, and there was discussion about the kind of involvement and projects the Parish Council and the Trust could develop together, such as walks linking the Estate with the Parish and a focus on local churches. It was agreed that the two would stay in touch.

23/65. Apologies for absence – none received.

23/66. Declarations of Interest & dispensation to speak – None.

23/67. To agree the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 31st August 2023 – The minutes of the meeting on Thursday 31st August 2023 were approved and signed.

23/68. Matters arising, not covered on the agenda – None.

23/69. To consider reports from District and County Councillors

Councillor Toye updated members on current activity at NNDC relevant to the Parish Council. This included an update on windfarm development affecting the County and the District's challenge to Anglian Water on cleaning up local rivers as a priority in their forward planning. He had recently produced a newsletter for residents in the parishes that he covers and the Clerk was to circulate this.

Councillor Penfold updated members on current activity at NCC relevant to the Parish Council. This included news about a new fleet of road gritters to be deployed this winter, the County Council's Warm and Well campaign and the on-going scrutiny of government funding proposals for local authorities.

23/70. Open Forum for public participation - None present.

23/71. To consider items referred from previous meeting – None.

23/72. Updates and discussion on Standing Items

- (a) Reading Room – the cupboards and Perspex window noticeboard were in place and the room looked much better.
- (b) Playground – Mrs Chambers reported that the dead tree caught in the fence had been sorted. She had obtained quotes for a replacement “springy rabbit” which was between £300 - £600. Councillor Toye said that NNDC’s Sustainable Communities Fund could fund playground equipment, and this was to be investigated.
- (c) Village Green – the village sign was reported to be looking in need of cleaning, but Mrs Northey said that the sign was made of copper and that the green ageing look was natural.
- (d) Highway Issues/SAM2 – Mrs Yardley had attended a meeting on 29th September about Speeding on Rural Roads convened by Duncan Baker, MP. Mrs Yardley had emailed notes to Councillors after the meeting, and these are appended for reference. Mr Sims is now in possession of the SAM2 spare battery and the battery charger, along with the operating manual and SAM2 cover. Mr Sims and Mrs Yardley will now endeavour to change the location of the SAM2 on a regular basis.
- (e) Windfarm Projects – the Vattenfall meeting scheduled for 14th September had been cancelled. There was some confusion around the future of windfarm projects in the area following the announcement by Vattenfall that they were stopping the development of the Boreas offshore wind project. Mr Sims had not yet heard from Murphys regarding the location of their construction compound and was to contact them again.
- (f) Friends of St Lawrence Church, Ingworth – a further meeting had been held and information was being collected to develop an application to the Norfolk Churches Trust to repair the church and re-thatch the roof.
- (g) Website – the Clerk had arranged an online training course with NALC to help with the updating and general use of the website.

23/73. Correspondence, Reports and External Meetings – A communication had been received from Epic (Exercising People in Communities) regarding the rescheduled Blickling half-marathon, which was now to take place on the morning of Sunday 4th February 2024. Councillors thought that the proposed road closures within the Parish were unacceptable. The Clerk was to check with County Highways on the procedure and permissions regarding road closures. The Chairman was then to respond to EPIC about the Council’s concerns.

23/74. Policies - Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit. This had been discussed at the previous meeting and some changes had been made. The revised policy was agreed by Councillors and signed by the Chairman.

23/75. Finance Report

- (a) Budget and Precept 2024/25 - The budget for the next financial year was agreed. It was further agreed that the precept should remain unchanged at £2830.00.
- (b) Cashbook and Bank Reconciliation – The cash book and bank reconciliation had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. It was duly approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (c) Schedule of Payments for Authorisation - The schedule of payments for authorisation was approved. The Chairman signed the Schedule and Invoices. The Council also agreed the following future payments to be paid between meetings:

Clerks' contracted salary and allowance (December and January).

(d) Approval of new Direct Debit – Information Commissioner's Office. The DD was agreed and the mandate signed by the Chairman and Mrs Northey.

(e) Update on the Appeal to HMRC – HMRC had accepted the appeal and the fine due was reduced from £300 to nil. The Clerk was to contact HMRC regarding a refund.

23/76. Planning Applications – none

23/77. Date of Next Meeting – preliminary dates for 2024 were 22nd February, 9th May, 8th August and 14th November.

23/78. There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed by:

(Chair)

Date:

*Colin Studholme
Clerk to the Council
24th November 2023*

APPENDIX - Notes taken by Councillor Yardley at the Speeding on Rural Roads meeting held on 29th September 2023.

1. The time from starting an application to reduce a speed limit in a parish/area takes approximately 18 months and with a cost of around £5000 (this is just the administration sum, not for any equipment/measures put in place if an application is successful). This was explained by Grahame Bygrave as due to the governmental lead procedures in places which have to be followed from start to finish to allow for the successful reduction of a speed limit in an area or Parish. There is nothing which the highways department can do to speed the process up at present without change at central government (which is something Duncan Baker will feed back to government in his role as MP to see if any change can be effected)
2. The cost of installing infrastructure to reduce speeding was discussed at some length, again with Grahame Bygrave, who highlighted that Parish Councils should make use of the Parish Partnership Schemes and Road Safety Community Fund mentioned at the meeting.
3. Noise and nuisance from vehicles was also raised as an issue in many parishes in addition to speeding, with particular mention made of numerous delivery drivers/vans.

4. Various community speedwatch groups were in attendance and the overall plea from them is that they need more powers and greater respect from the driving public (they are regularly verbally abused and there are incidents of them having things thrown at them from moving vehicles) Duncan Baker highlighted at this point that the community speed watch are volunteers, and that similar volunteer roles such as the Community First Responders, the Fire Service or RNLI, also volunteers, are given the respect and power that their roles require to allow them to do their jobs.
5. Westco Tec advised that they have a number plate recognition camera which can be added to existing speed awareness equipment already installed in parishes (cost of around £4000) which have seen success in areas where these have been installed - they particularly mentioned a speed reduction around an airport and RAF base. I believe the data collected can be used to issue fines.
6. Grahame Bygrave confirmed a £4 million highways budget available per annum, but that this has to be carefully managed and does not cover in reality many highway projects per annum - the proposal for a roundabout at Holway Road in Sheringham was used as an example as this alone has a price tag of £3 million.
7. The issues of the cutting back of vegetation to keep speed signage visible in Parishes and the cleaning of signage was raised. Also, the replacement of damaged signage (there is a budget to allow for this).
8. The Chief Constable confirmed that the limited resources available to the Police has allowed for the purchase of further Safety Camera Vehicles, these include smaller vehicles more suited to rural roads and also motorbikes also being used for the same purpose. Also, some proportion of revenue raised by speeding fines does remain within the local constabulary and is not all hived off the central government. However, there are considerable funding shortfalls in all Police force budgets so they are working within their current capabilities. The Police approach to speed reduction is summed up as a) Enforcement b) Education and c) Engineering - all three being debated at some length.