

Draft Minutes of an Emneth Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 26th November 2024 at 6.30pm in the Committee Room at Emneth Central Hall

Parish Councillors present: Councillor Pearson, Councillor Howard, Councillor Fry, Councillor Kok, Councillor Finnis, Councillor Purchase, Councillor Curtis, Councillor Wiles, Councillor Burgess-Lee, Councillor Groves (Chair) and Councillor Tingley Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk) and Borough Councillor Crofts
Apologies: County Councillor Dawson and Councillor McCourt

Minutes (draft)

1 Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received as listed above and the reasons for such approved.

3 Members' Declarations of Interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations required considered

No declarations of interest were given or dispensations requested prior to the meeting.

4 Open Forum for Public Participation (fifteen minutes only); no report.

5 a) To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th October 2024

It was resolved with all in favour to approve the Minutes of last month's Ordinary Meeting and these were signed and initialled as a true record of the meeting by the Chairman.

b) To approve the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 14th November 2024

It was resolved with all in favour to approve the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting and these were signed and initialled as a true record of the meeting by the Chairman. This meeting was convened to consider making a financial donation to Central Hall Committee for resurfacing works to the car park¹.

6 Clerk to provide an update on any matters not included on this month's agenda:

- a) It was noted that the financial contribution of £1,500.00 from County Councillor Dawson's Members' Fund at Norfolk County Council for the new bus shelter recently installed at Hollycroft Road has been requested.
- b) The faulty sensor unit in the light at the bus shelter on the A1101 outside Morrisons is under investigation by Westcotec.

7 Finance

- a) It was resolved with all in favour to approve the November 2024 Payments List as presented. Councillors Howard and Fry to authorize on the Unity Trust website after the meeting.
- b) In the absence of a meeting next month, it was resolved to delegate approval & authorization of the December 2024 Payments List to the Finance Working Group. It was noted that Councillor Finnis is not yet an authorized signatory; Clerk to progress.
- c) Income received since last meeting:
 - £2,520.04 land rents (still one payment outstanding)
 - £364.00 – Borough Council; cycle rack funding
 - £200.00 - Cemetery
- d) It was resolved to approve expenditure of £87.50 to carry out hedge cutting works at the Gosmoor Lane end of the old canal towpath.
- e) It was resolved to approve expenditure of £495.00 to have a tree survey carried out next year along the old canal towpath.
- f) After careful consideration of the 2025/26 projected budget figures it was resolved to increase the annual parish precept from £43,000.00 to £45,000.00 for the next financial year. This should allow for the increase in employer national insurance liabilities, parish service contracts i.e. grass cutting &

¹ See Item 16 of these Minutes.

grounds maintenance at the cemetery/churchyards, playing field and old canal towpath, street light maintenance & energy costs, insurance costs, dog waste bin emptying, weekly refuse collection from the church, playing field and central hall, staff salaries, professional services and consultancy fees (solicitors and National Association of Local Councils). This is an increase of 4.65% providing an average Band D council tax charge of £47.35, an overall annual increase of £1.20 per tax payer for the year.

g) Councillor Tingley considered the bank statements for internal audit purposes.

8 To receive a report from Norfolk County Council; no report.

9 To receive a report from the Borough Council

- a) £1.4m has been paid out to date in funding for infrastructure projects in the Borough from Community Infrastructure Levies from developers.
- b) The Local Plan is expected to be approved by the Inspector early 2025.
- c) The 100% council tax premium for second homes comes into force 1st April 2025 i.e. those owning a second home will pay double council tax.
- d) £11,600.00 has been raised by Mintlyn Crematorium this year from recycling and has been donated to charity.
- e) A local unlicensed dog breeding enterprise has been fined £4,700.00 in costs and ordered to carry out 300 hours of community work and banned from trading for 3 years.

10 Planning

- a) To consider any planning applications since last meeting; no report.
- b) To note any planning decisions and/or appeal notifications since last meeting:
 - Planning application 24/01597/F single storey rear extension at Laburnum Cottage, 164 Hungate Road, Emneth; approved.
 - Planning application 24/01708/F partial replacement of existing metal perimeter fencing and gates at Emneth Academy, 1 Hollycroft Road, Emneth; approved.
 - Planning application 24/00141/FM conversion of hotel and associated ballroom to 19 flats at Elme Hall Hotel, 69 Elm High Road, Emneth; approved.
 - Planning application 24/01660/F continued use of temporary access road at Hunters Rowe, Elm High Road, Emneth; approved.
 - Planning application 24/01644/F variation of condition 2 to 23/02041/F proposed detached garden room and garden store at Lane Cottage, 44 Church Road, Emneth; approved.

Not all decisions on planning applications for the Parish are resolved upon at a monthly meeting; some are considered during the course of the month and resolved upon online. Details of all planning applications considered by Emneth Parish Council can be viewed on the Borough Council's planning portal by visiting <https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/> and referencing the relevant *planning application number* or a *key word* into the *Search bar*.

11 Parish Matters

- a) Maintenance works along the towpath are due to be carried out 2nd December 2024. This includes the cutting back of some willow trees at the Pocket Park end of the path and flailing towards the Collett's Bridge end of the path.
- b) The provision of further bus shelters in the Parish was discussed. It was reinforced that all decisions must be made at monthly meetings and not by a handful of members of any given working group that may meet at another time i.e. not a monthly meeting. The new installation is now in place at Hollycroft Road and discussions took place surrounding the provision of a further stop at Hungate Road (this is an unofficial stop at the moment for school children only), a new shelter at Gaultree Square with the current shelter here being relocated to Scarfield Lane (which is another unofficial stop for school children only). It was agreed in principle for the working group to further investigate

the feasibilities surrounding these ideas and to report back at the next meeting in January 2025. Clerk to obtain a quote for a suggested new shelter for the Gaultree Square location. Councillor Tingley to further investigate the suitability of hard-standing at the Hungate Road location. A discussion ensued surrounding the provision of some benches in the Gaultree Square area, currently where the grassed areas are. It was resolved to initially provide one and monitor its usage. Clerk to inform local residents of these plans and invite any comments.

Borough Councillor Crofts left the meeting.

- c) A trailer, reportedly dumped on Parish Council-owned land at Elmside, was noted. Clerk to monitor the situation and report accordingly.
- d) It was resolved to not pursue the joint defib training initiative with neighbouring parishes at this time due to an apparent lack of appetite for such an event.
- e) The Clerk had attended some recent tax base training hosted by the Borough Council. For the purpose of the Minutes the current tax base for Emneth is 950.3 i.e. the number of residents in the Parish paying 100% council tax rates.

12 To discuss Playing Field issues

- a) Bowers Solicitors have provided a copy of an updated Lease between the Parish Council and the Playing Field Committee from 2004 to add new trustees to. The Lease does not appear to have a map / plan with it. Clerk to provide details to the solicitor and progress with updating the Lease as soon as possible to ensure the Charity (Emneth Playing Field Committee) remains compliant with its governance.
- b) A discussion took place regarding the annual £3,000 donation to the Playing Field Committee and how, in future, this can be monitored / managed a little more closely; further discussion required next month.

13 Cemetery Issues

- a) Following receipt of an email from a resident, it was noted that repairs to the church wall are imminent.

14 Agricultural Holdings Issues

- a) It was noted that just one annual land rent invoice is overdue for payment; Clerk to chase the tenant.
- b) Councillor Burgess-Lee had met with one of the tenants at Grays Lane holdings and confirmed that the track here is in need of repair. It was suggested that the planings from the imminent works at Central Hall car park could be used to fill some of the holes. Further discussion required once the Chairman of Central Hall has investigated further with his contractor. It was noted that the one scrap vehicle left on land at Grays Lane is embedded thick into the undergrowth and until repairs to the track are carried out, it is unlikely that this can be removed.
- c) It was noted that one of the tenants at Grays Lane has given notice for two acres of land. The Clerk, Councillor Burgess-Lee and Councillor Tingley to arrange a convenient time to meet with the tenant to demarcate the boundary lines to these plots; A20 (1 acre) and A23 (1 acre).

15 To discuss Central Hall issues

- a) It was noted that at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on 14th November 2024, it had been resolved to approve a financial donation from parish funds of £10,500.00 towards resurfacing works at the car park.

The Hall's position regarding health and safety concerns with the current condition of the car park had been taken into account and the urgent need to have resurfacing works carried out before the cold, wet weather sets in once more. The Hall Committee has had three insurance claims against

the car park in the last two years; two involving trips and another involving the barrier. Concerns had been raised surrounding maybe needing to close the car park if improvements were not carried out soon. It was noted that once resurfacing works have been carried out there is also a need to upgrade the lighting and the barriers in the car park.

The car park has an estimated 30,000 vehicle visits per year being used by various visitors to the village; not just hall users but those visiting local businesses and of course the school and nursery located just around the corner. There is a lack of off-road parking in the village and many visitors use the hall car park as an overflow.

The quote for works was £35,869.30 inc. Vat²; funding of £22,299.00 had already been granted, the Hall Committee can contribute £3,070.30 from their fund-raising balance leaving a shortfall of £10,500.00.

Central Hall is considered to be the biggest asset the Parish of Emneth has; it can potentially benefit all the inhabitants of the Parish (and neighbouring parishes) and the Parish Council is keen to support the Charity in order to ensure its viability for years to come for the residents of Emneth.

Resurfacing works to the car park are due to commence 9th December 2024.

16 To discuss Norfolk County Council issues including highways

- a) Residents are reminded to report pot holes directly on the Norfolk County Council website by following the links to *Roads and Transport*, then *Roads*, then *Report a highways problem*.

17 To note any communications from the Police since last meeting

- a) The Community Engagement Officer for Emneth is Paula Gilluley paula.gilluley@norfolk.police.uk
b) Residents are encouraged to report anti-social behaviour issues to the Police by dialling 101 or emailing sntdownhammarket@norfolk.police.uk

18 To note general correspondence received since last meeting; no report.

19 If required to consider excluding the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the items being discussed; the Chairman agreed to speak with the member of staff in question to request further detail on certain administrative tasks.

20 Items for the next meeting agenda

- To provide an update on suggested new bus shelters/stops in the Parish
- To provide a report on an updated Lease between the Parish Council and Emneth Playing Field Committee
- To discuss notice given on two acres of agricultural land at Grays Lane by a tenant
- To consider the condition of the track at Grays Lane agricultural holdings
- How to manage / monitor the annual £3,000 donation to the Playing Field Committee
- To provide an update on repairs to the church wall

21 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 28th January 2025 at 6.30pm at Emneth Central Hall.

² The quote is for 46 car parking spaces including more disabled spaces (currently 48 spaces)

Meeting closed at 7.55pm

Chairman's signature

DRAFT