

Wormegay Parish Council

Minutes of the additional Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21st January 2025, commencing at 7.00 pm in the Mission Room, Wormegay

Present: Cllr Michael Chopping, Cllr David Davenport, Cllr Andrew McAdam (chairman), Cllr David Parker, Cllr Dawn Payne

Locum Clerk: Sharon Sweet

Borough & County Councillor: County Cllr and Borough Cllr Jim Moriarty

Members of the Public: 4

1. To receive apologies for absence

None

2. To receive Declaration of Interests and any requests for dispensation

None.

3. To agree the minutes of the last meeting on 9th December 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2024 were amended at item 1 to remove 'all in favour' and at item 7(c) to remove cut and paste error 'none card from group.' With these amendments, the minutes were **AGREED** as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4. To note that all members have filed their Register of Interest forms and signed the Declaration of Office, and that the Elections Department has confirmed no by-election was requested for the two vacated seats, which are now being advertised with a closing date of 28th February

Noted by members.

5. Public forum

a) **To receive update from Norfolk County Councillor** – County Councillor Jim Moriarty sent a written report prior to the meeting that was circulated to all. Cllr Moriarty gave a verbal update to the meeting which included:

- An overview of the Government White Paper on Devolution.
- Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils exploring formation of a Strategic Authority.
- County elections in May 2025, possibly being postponed.
- Over time, BCKL&WN and other district/borough councils to be replaced by Unitary Authorities.
- Timelines and further details pending further information from Central Government.

b) **To receive update from Borough Councillor** – apologies received from Borough Cllr Pallavi Devulapalli. Borough Councillor Jim Moriarty informed the meeting of recent changes in how central government collates house-building data, which could impact the Borough's planning decision making process. To date, there had been no reported impact at the parish level. A meeting between the Borough and relevant government departments was scheduled to discuss a way forward.

c) **To hear from members of the public** – no matters raised.

6. Administrative and Governance Matters

a) **To consider the whole council training quotation from Norfolk Parish Training & Support** – It was **RESOLVED** to organise whole council training with NPTS, cost £295. To be held at Tottenhill Village Hall. Topics selected were: Roles & responsibilities; Powers and duties; Meetings, Minutes & Agendas; Governance and financial management; Risk management and insurance; Data Protection.

b) **To approve the payment of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) registration fee of £40, as required for data protection compliance** – payment of the registration fee was **RESOLVED**.

c) **To note that payroll has been set up with Ewing Accounts, commencing December 2024, and that any backdated payments due to HMRC will be researched by the Clerk** – noted by members.

Chairman signature.....

Date.....

- d) **To note that council records currently stored locally are being retrieved and will be returned to the Clerk prior to their deposit at the Norfolk Records Office** – Cllr McAdam had retrieved the records and these were handed to the Clerk.
- e) **To approve the following policies and documents:**
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following policies and documents with no amendments:
- i. Standing Orders
 - ii. Financial Regulations
 - iii. Code of Conduct
 - iv. Co-option Policy
 - v. Planning Application Policy
 - vi. Publication Scheme & charges
 - vii. Reserves Policy
 - viii. Internal Controls Statement & checklist 24-25
 - ix. General Risk Assessment 24-25
 - x. Data Audit
 - xi. Data Protection Policy
 - xii. Retention of Documents Policy
 - xiii. Privacy Notice
 - xiv. Grants Policy & application form
 - xv. Complaints Policy
 - xvi. Biodiversity Policy
- f) **To note advice on ‘Complying with the Biodiversity Duty’** – noted by members.
- g) **To agree member responsibility for complying a draft Biodiversity Action Plan during 2025** - Cllr Chopping offered to draft a Biodiversity Action Plan during 2025, and it was **RESOLVED** that he would take responsibility for this.
- h) **To note the Unity Trust Bank accounts have been opened, but the opening deposit cheque has not cleared due to a request from Lloyds for additional information before re-presentation** - Members noted that the accounts have been opened, but the opening deposit cheque has not cleared due to a request from Lloyds for additional information. An ex-councillor, still recognised as a signatory, kindly offered to visit the branch to explain the cheque’s purpose and request that Lloyds process the fund transfer.
- i) **To note new Lloyds bank charges commencing 14th Jan 2025, £4.25pm** – noted by members.
- j) **To approve adding the Locum Clerk as a ‘full signatory’ (with authority to speak to the bank and set up payments but not sign cheques) and to update the business address to the Locum Clerk** - It was **RESOLVED** to add the Locum Clerk as a full signatory (with authority to speak to the bank and set up payments but not sign cheques) and to update the business address to the Locum Clerk. While the ultimate aim would be to move banking away from Lloyds, this interim step was intended to expedite dealings.
- k) **To agree on the closure of the Lloyds current account and the transfer of remaining funds to the Unity Trust bank account** – It was **RESOLVED** to close the Lloyds account and transfer all funds to the Unity account at the earliest opportunity.
- l) **To reconsider 9th December 2024 resolution to apply for a Unity Trust Bank card, in light of new information on charges (£50 setup, £3/month ongoing)** - Following new information on charges (£50 setup, £3/month), the Clerk advised that these had not been known at the time of the 9th December 2024 meeting. Members discussed the cost implications and it was **RESOLVED** to reverse the decision; the card is not required.
- m) **To discuss and agree on which banking card should be linked to the Wix website for annual subscription** - The Clerk explained that the Wix website requires a bank card for its annual subscription and requested a Councillor temporarily link their card while an alternative solution is explored. Cllr Chopping offered in the short term. It was **RESOLVED** to link Cllr Chopping’s card.

7. Parish Council Assets

- a) **To review progress on the asset register and discuss any amendments** – members reviewed the register, compiled by the Clerk so far, it was noted the council no longer own litter bins and these should be removed from the register.
- b) **To confirm member responsibility for asset maintenance checks** – It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Chopping as responsible for asset maintenance checks.
- c) **To confirm member responsibility for SAM2 (traffic speed monitor)** - It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Davenport as responsible for the SAM2, with Cllr Chopping in reserve if needed.
- d) **To approve the SAM2 risk assessment and consider any training needs** – It was **RESOLVED** to approve the risk assessment. No training needs were identified.
- e) **To receive report on cemetery management** – The Clerk circulated a report prior to the meeting detailing matters requiring attention. The Clerk advised that updated Burial Fees, Cemetery Regulations, and the required forms would be ready for the council to consider as soon as possible, potentially requiring an additional meeting in February.
- f) **To confirm member responsibility for conducting cemetery general health, safety, and maintenance inspection using the provided checklist** - It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr McAdam as responsible for general health, safety and maintenance checks at the cemetery.

8. Finance

- a) **To note the submission of a VAT refund claim to HMRC for £1,888.86, covering invoices dated 01/04/2021 to 31/03/2023** – noted by members. Councillors thanked the Clerk for completing this process.

- b) **To authorise payments and note any monies received since the last meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:

Description	Type	Payee	Amount
Mission room hire 06.24-03.25	chq	Wormegay PCC	£ 150.00
Office supplies	chq	Hodson Office Supplies	£ 9.26
Registration Fee	chq	ICO	£ 40.00
Dog bin waste 2024-25	chq	BCKL&WN	£ 439.92
Clerk wages, PAYE, employer NI (Dec 2024 and Jan 2025)	chq	S Sweet & HMRC	£ 1,613.67
NALC Subscription (reimburse)	chq	M Chopping	£ 51.24
Maintenance supplies (reimburse)	chq	M Chopping	£ 90.41

- c) **To review and sign cash book reconciliation** - The cash book reconciliation was reviewed and confirmed as reconciled against the bank statement to 31st December 2024. The Chairman signed the reconciliation.
- d) **To appoint a member responsible for internal control** - It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Davenport as responsible for Internal Control checks for 2024-25.
- e) **To review reserves and consider recommendations** – the Internal Audit (2023-24) noted that the general reserve was too high, and some funds should be allocated to specific purposes. Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated a report with reserve recommendations as follows:

- **General Reserve:** Maintain a General Reserve equivalent to approximately 12 months' Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE), around £11,000.
- **Earmarked Reserves:**
 - Parish CIL** (£734.40): Reserved for new infrastructure projects.
 - Election Costs** (£2,500.00): To cover future election expenses.
 - HR Fund** (£2,500.00): For HR-related costs (payroll, recruitment, locum clerk).
 - Cemetery** (£0.00): Save burial fees for long-term maintenance.
 - Asset Maintenance/Repairs** (£2,500.00): For repairs to council assets.

It was **RESOLVED** to establish the above earmarked funds in the council cashbook accounts.

- f) **To agree the budget 2025/26* and set the Precept 2025/26**

Chairman signature.....

Date.....

Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated the draft budget for 2025-26. The prepared budget was £11,603.00, members discussed the budget and agreed this was required based on the planned expenditure for 2025-26. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft budget as presented.

Members discussed the recommended precept of £11,403.00, which would result in a Band D tax equivalent of £81.57 per household per annum. They noted that the precept had remained static at around £6,100 for many years, during which inflation had risen by over 30%. After a discussion members agreed that the precept should reflect the budget requirements. It was **RESOLVED** to set the precept for 2025-26 at £11,403.00

9. To receive information from the SLCC on VE Day 8th May 2025 and discuss any further actions

The Clerk circulated an article about the VE Day 80th Anniversary national plans. Members discussed whether this event may be led by residents, as in previous years. A member of the public, who had helped organise past village events, confirmed that residents could take the lead. Borough Cllr Moriarty suggested he might have access to a small grant, and the member of the public agreed to contact him directly.

10. To receive update regarding Tree Preservation Orders for trees within the village

Cllr Payne had attempted to contact the Tree Preservation Officer at the Borough for an update but had not received a reply. Acknowledging the Officer's busy schedule, Borough Cllr Moriarty offered to follow up and request that the Officer contact Cllr Payne.

11. To consider planning applications received from Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

None.

12. To note planning decisions and other planning information from Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk:

- a) 24/02062/F – Dene Lodge at Caste Dene, Castle Road, Wormegay: Extension and alterations to dwelling. Application PERMITTED

13. To receive items for inclusion on the next agenda

- Equality Policy

14. To confirm meeting dates for 2025: 4th March, Annual Parish Meeting 22nd April, Annual Parish Council Meeting 20th May, 29th July, 16th Sept, 18th Nov

It was **RESOLVED** to set the meeting dates as above for 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972) to exclude the public and press from the meeting for item 15, on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information.

The members of the public and County/Borough Councillor left the meeting.

15. Staffing

The recruitment of a permanent Clerk was discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recruitment assistance quote from Norfolk Parish Training and Support for desk-based support at a cost of £200.00. It was further **RESOLVED** that Cllr Chopping, Cllr McAdam, and Cllr Parker will sit on the recruitment panel and handle interviews.

Meeting closed: 8.50pm