

Clerk Mr R Quick
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SEDGEFORD PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES 20th DECEMBER 2023

1. Welcome by the Chair.
2. One member of the public was present and it was agreed to start the meeting by discussing the River Heacham. The resident had kindly drafted some responses to the emails received from the Environment Agency and Anglian Water and also suggested that a meeting with all parties might be the best way forward. The Clerk will write to the Environment Agency and Anglian Water offering to set up a meeting. The resident then left the meeting at 19.15
3. Present: Cllr Crump, Cllr Ward, Cllr Clark, Cllr Wilce, Cllr Miller and Cllr Coleman. Borough Cllr Parish arrived at 19.30
 Apologies: None.
 Absent: Cllr Jamieson and CC Chenery
4. To receive declarations of interest on agenda items – Cllr Clark declared an interest in item 6.12.
5. Confirmation of the minutes – Parish Council Meeting 15th November 2023 proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Coleman, and agreed by all. Planning Meeting 5th December 2023 proposed by Cllr Ward, seconded by Cllr Clark, and agreed by all.
6. Matters arising:
 - 6.1 Precept – Cllrs had agreed the 2024.2025 budget at October's meeting, including the Precept figure of £ 10652.72. The Clerk has submitted the appropriate forms to the Borough Council.
 - 6.2 Assets of Community Value – Carried Forward
 - 6.3 Churchyard liabilities – Carried Forward
 - 6.4 River Heacham – Please see above.
 - 6.5 Former School – Meeting arranged with Borough Council Planning and Housing Officers on January 11th, 2024.
 - 6.6 Dates for meetings in 2024 – Circulated by Clerk. The Annual Parish and Parish Council meetings will both be held on Tuesday March 19th as the hall is booked the following evening.
 - 6.7 Highway Rangers – The Clerk has instructed Highways as to the tasks for the January visit.
 - 6.8 Street/Pavement Cleaning – The Clerk advised that he had requested a visit to clear leaves on Docking and Snettisham Roads. Docking Road has been completed and the Clerk will chase Highways regarding Snettisham Road.
 - 6.9 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Bids for 2024 – The Clerk explained that the next round of CIL bids will open on 1st January 2024, closing at the end of that month. The Village Hall Committee (VHC) would like to carry out some improvements to the Hall – CCTV (due to the recent vandalism); two top-locking bollards (as some users have difficulty with the current bollards and one has been damaged); remedial work to the carpark surface; two replacement noticeboards outside the hall. The total cost will be in the region of £3000/£3500. Cllr Ward and the Clerk will provide competitive quotes prior to the January meeting. The Clerk highlighted that the PC currently has £1264.36 of CIL money to spend, which would more than cover the required 25% commitment to this project. Cllr Ward confirmed that the VHC would contribute some matched funding. The Clerk will start to prepare the bid in advance of the January meeting so that the matter can be discussed further. There were no other suggested projects.
 - 6.10 Proposed speed reduction on Docking Road – The twisted sign on Docking Road has been reported and the painted warning signs on the road have been passed to Highways' contractors.
 - 6.11 Fring Lane – Cllr Clark has kindly produced a draft application for the PC to consider designating Fring Road as a Quiet Lane. Councillors asked the Clerk to contact Highways to ascertain details of the process and costs involved before this matter is taken further. Councillors also discussed the recent damage to the bridge on Fring Road. This is the second occurrence in a matter of months. They wondered if added protection needs to be put in place for the bridge in future. The Clerk has reported the incident to Highways and suggested some form of protection may be appropriate once the bridge is repaired.
 - 6.12 Paddock rental agreement – Cllr Clark recused himself from this item. Cllrs had agreed the 2024.2025 budget at October's meeting, part of which included a £40 rise in the rent for the Paddock. Cllr Ward proposed that the Clerk write to Mrs. McGinty and Mr. Clark advising them of the increased rent and asking if they wish to rent the Paddock for a further 11 months. This motion was seconded by Cllr Coleman and agreed to by all remaining Councillors.
 - 6.13 Grit Bins – As detailed at the November meeting, the grit bin at the top of Jarvie Close has a damaged lid and needs replacing, as does the bin on Mill View. The Clerk circulated price comparisons prior to the meeting. Ordering both bins together will reduce any delivery charges. However, prior to the meeting the bin at Jarvie Close had been replaced, possibly by Highways. The Mill View bin will see out this winter so the Clerk and Cllr Ward will continue to monitor.
 - 6.14 Cemetery – The water butt has arrived and will be installed early in the new year, and repairs to the path edging will be carried out.
 - 6.15 McAfee Renewal – As authorised at the October meeting the Clerk has renewed the McAfee cover on the council laptop, obtaining a further £10.00 discount so that the cost was reduced to £119.99.
 - 6.16 Footpath Warden – The current Footpath Warden has now moved out of the village and the Parish Council wanted to

register their thanks to him for his hard work, especially on the Circular Walks project. The Chair and Clerk will contact the deputy Footpath Wardens to see if they wish to take up the role moving forwards.

7. Standing Agenda Items:

7.1 Police report – Circulated as and when received by the Clerk.

7.2 Village Hall Rep Report – Cllr Ward advised that the VH Committee were concerned regarding the lack of volunteers to take up the soon to be vacant roles on the committee. Bookings for the hall continue to increase, with a local group hopefully taking two evening and the Saturday mornings slots soon.

7.3 Meetings Attended written/verbal – None.

7.4 Clerks training written/verbal – None.

7.5 Councillors training written/verbal – None.

8. Planning matters:

8.1 applications– None.

8.2 Planning outcomes

23/01609/F - 4 Parkside - Extension & Alterations to dwelling - Application Permitted - 1 December 2023 - Delegated Decision

To consider plans since publication:

Applications:

23/00265/TREECA - T1 - Silver Birch Tree - Fell / Remove. Replant 1x replacement Cherry Tree. Meadow House, Heacham Road. The Council noted this application.

23/02200/F - New Bi-fold doors to replace existing kitchen window in South Elevation at 4A West Hall Farm Barns, Church Lane. Councillors discussed this application. Cllr Miller proposed supporting the application, which was seconded by Cllr Coleman and agreed unanimously.

9. County Councillor update: None

10. Borough Councillors update: Borough Cllr Parish apologised for arriving late and for missing the last couple of meetings due to Borough Council responsibilities. He advised that the PC should receive details of the number of families on the waiting list for renting a council property in the northern part of the Borough early in the New Year. Cllr Parish provided updates on the following issues: Local Government peer review; Finance; Corporate Plan; New Labour Leader in the Borough.

11. To approve accounts and payments this month:

11.1 Approval and payment of invoices: Proposed by Cllr Clark, seconded by Cllr Miller and agreed by all.

Name	Business	Net	VAT	Gross	Recoverable VAT
K and M Lighting (STO)	Street Lighting Maintenance Dec	16.17	3.23	19.40	All
CGM Group (STO)	Grounds Maintenance Dec	304.45	60.89	365.34	All
npower (DDR)	Electricity – Street Lighting Dec	66.65	3.33	69.98	All
Parish Clerk	Payment Dec (See Log)	0.00	0.00	0.00	None
HMRC	Dec (See Log)	0.00	0.00	0.00	None
Parish Clerk	HP Ink	8.32	1.67	9.99	All
Parish Clerk	McAfee Renewal	119.99	0.00	119.99	None

11.2 Financial Statements for November 2023 – issued during month – Noted.

12. Correspondence, to consider any correspondence/communication received:

12.1 Cycle Storage – Councillors did not think this was appropriate for Sedgford.

12.2 Complaints regarding verge on Ringstead Road. The Clerk has written to the householder concerned and will monitor the situation.

13. To consider any Correspondence received after publication:

13.1 Complaint regarding the footpath from Church Lane to the cemetery. Unfortunately a lot of debris was left on the path after Ken Hill contractors had cut the hedges. A resident has very kindly used secateurs and cleared the worst. The Clerk has passed on thanks on behalf of the Council and other users of the path, who will now find the path more accessible.

13.2 Renewal Quote from CGM/Nurture Group – The Clerk advised that he had attempted to contact Norse a number of times to obtain a quote for grounds maintenance, without success. There are no other companies offering the scale of maintenance required. The Clerk held a meeting with the Regional Director and Area Manager of CGM/Nurture Group to discuss renewal, where he highlighted previous issues. Earlier this month, following some months of chasing, the PC received a refund of £1513.53 for work not carried out this cutting season. This was in addition to the refund of £311.42 received in September, totaling over 40% of the annual cost. The renewal quote is, as the Clerk had forecast, 10% higher, to take into account inflation and the fact that Nurture Group pay their employees the Fair Wage per hour, rather than the Minimum Wage previously paid by CGM. The Clerk suggested making a small saving by discontinuing the slitting/scarifying of the recreation ground and the weed killer on the cemetery paths, which can be tackled separately as and when required. The Annual contract is £3783 + VAT,

£417.00 lower than the agreed budget figure for 2024. Cllr Crump proposed the contract be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr Ward and the motion carried unanimously.

13.3 Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) offer of .gov.uk emails for Clerk and all Councillors – Councillors discussed this offer, which Cllr Ward said would improve the transparency, confidentiality, security and professionalism of the Council's communication. Cllr Miller proposed that the Clerk be authorised to accept the offer and sign the Council up. This motion was seconded by Cllr Coleman and agreed by all.

14. Any other business (for information only) and any items to carry forward to next month for the decision of the council: None

15. Any further public contributions to the meeting - None

16. Proposed Date of Next Meeting –January 17th 2024 at 19.00

17. Close – 20.28