

BOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2024 IN THE ALL SAINTS CHURCH, BOUGHTON**

Present:

Parish Councillors: Cllrs Neil Matthew (Chair), Phil Boyle, Sarah Miller and Sue Pogmore.

Apologies – Cllr Tam Payne.

Parish Clerk – Mike Inder.

Borough Councillor – B Cllr Sue Lintern.

County Councillor – C Cllr Martin Storey.

Absences – Nil.

Public – 2.

76/24 **Opening and Apologies for absence:** Cllr Matthew opened the meeting and welcomed those present, apologies were given and accepted.

77/24 **To receive declarations of interest for items on the agenda.** None declared.

78/24 **Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd Sept 2024:** Having been previously circulated, the minutes were proposed as an accurate reflection of the meeting by Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Boyle, and approved. Minutes signed by the chairman.

79/24 **To consider Co-option to fill Cllr vacancies.** No candidates present, deferred.

80/24 **Reports from visiting officers:** County Cllr Storey provided a report of County Council business including the NCC budget public consultation (accessible via the website, email or phone), savings need to be identified in addition to a number already earmarked. The Household Support Fund will be available by application via organisations such as Age UK and CAB. The 'Norfolk Deal' that was terminated by the new Govt continues to be reviewed to see how NCC might revive it in a form that is acceptable. There is a fund for improving and modernising public transport bus services and communities can request new bus stops, which will in turn, if approved, be considered when planning new or amended routes. The focus on the hazardous A134 Methwold/Northwold crossroads is to be revisited following another serious collision. The proliferation of solar farms on arable land, albeit grade 3 or 4 was stated as a concern, pointing out that grade 3 and 4 land is no less important as it is where the majority of the UK root crops are grown, this is seen as conflict between Energy and Food Security for the future and Norfolk continues to press for agricultural land to be given more protection from change of use.

B. Cllr Lintern provided a report on Borough Council news, she also echoed the solar farm concerns and mentioned that she had raised it when meeting the MP recently. She reported that Mr Jermy has chosen to focus his funding on providing aides with specialist knowledge that will help him respond quickly and effectively to constituents' questions and concerns, this more local focus and undertaking to meet with B Cllrs on Teams on a quarterly basis was seen as a positive approach to local engagement. The Govt has announced a long term plan for town regeneration, that is to include King's Lynn.

81/24 **To hear from the public:** 2 members of the public were invited to speak, one had sent an email to the Chair in advance expressing concerns regarding a planning application adjacent to the Boughton Fen SSSI, the Chair suggested as the matter was to be debated under the Planning agenda item as late planning, that SOs could be suspended to allow him to comment at an appropriate juncture.

A second point was raised regarding whether the PC had a maintenance plan for all village assets, as he had observed that the village sign on the Green was in a poor state of repair. The Chair

responded that there were bespoke plans for annual and routine checks on some assets such as the play park, green and pond as well as street furniture, indeed the benches had been repaired and treated and the picnic bench is due to be replaced having reached a point where it is beyond economic repair. The posts around the green have always been maintained and replaced as required and that is continuing with a recent initiative to replace them with a new stock of matching posts that will make grass cutting easier and look more pleasing. The Village sign has been looked at previously as the condition was noted to be deteriorating, however, the historical decision to apply a treatment rather than allow the oak to silver naturally has made it more difficult to find a suitable renovation method. It was agreed to revisit the sign's condition and add it to a future agenda.

82/24 Financial Matters:

- a. Reconciliation of accounts – Cllr Miller conducted a sample check of invoices/receipts, bank statements and cashbook summaries and countersigned the RFO's reconciliation check.
- b. Payments approved and paid since the last meeting: Proposed by Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Pogmore and agreed.

Date	Name	Ref	Voucher	£ Total
28-Aug-24	Andy Beeston	Marquee Repair inv 25382333	28	BACS 12.93
03-Sep-24	Phil Boyle - B&Q	Play Park Refurb materials	29	BACS 59.39
06-Sep-24	Phil Boyle - Sign Shed	No Smoking sign SHED773527	30	BACS 9.57
10-Sep-24	Tamar Telecommunications	Virtual Phone Line 4046148	31	DD 6.94
18-Sep-24	HMRC	PAYE mth6	32	BACS 77.60
24-Sep-24	Clerk	Salary Sep and Home Work Allowance	33	BACS 127.22
21-Sep-24	PKF Littlejohn	External Audit fee SB20242465	34	BACS 378.00
10-Oct-24	Tamar Telecommunications	Virtual Phone Line 4061437	35	DD 6.94
18-Oct-24	HMRC	PAYE mth7	36	BACS 77.60
23-Oct-24	Clerk	Salary Oct and Home Work Allowance	37	BACS 127.22
10-Oct-24	RBL	Poppy Wreath 013	38	BACS 25.00
13-Oct-24	Bolt World Fasteners Ltd	Bolts for Pond Fencing Reimburse Tpayne	39	BACS 47.03
13-Oct-24	Stoke Ferry Timber	Fence Posts (Pond) 145132	40	BACS 328.83

- c. Annual External Audit: The RFO reported that the notice of conclusion of audit had been received. In addition the transposition of figures in sect 2 2023/24 cell 5 and 6, that had already been noted and corrected, there was a matter raised that had not been previously identified by the auditor that the internal auditor had not ticked the objective A and H boxes on the form; the RFO explained that the IA narrative report clearly stated that these items had been scrutinised and were sound. It was agreed that this was an oversight, probably due to the reduced size of the tick box and that there were no actual omissions to the scope of the internal audit. The restated AGAR Section 2 was signed. The Chair reiterated the appreciation for the RFO's additional work and time expended in responding to the External Audit questions and matters raised.
- d. The contracted salary increase in line with the NJC pay scales was noted.
- e. The RFO having circulated a draft budget for 2025/26 with an explanatory narrative asked if there were any queries or comments? The Chair remarked that it was logically explained and the seemed to be in line with expectations, reminding cllrs that if there were any projects likely to be proposed next year then this was the time to highlight them for consideration in the budget before it is finalized and approved at the January meeting.

83/24 Review of Orders, Regulations and Policies. Except for the policies below the rest were extant and proposed for en-bloc approval by Cllr Matthew, seconded by Cllr Pogmore and agreed.

- a. [Financial Regulations](#) new NALC 2024 model, differences were minor, and procedures have already been amended to reflect best practice. Proposed by Cllr Matthew, seconded by Cllr Miller and approved.
- b. [Dignity at Work Policy](#) amended to include a statement and risk assessment to comply with the requirement for 'positive duty' towards [sexual harassment](#) in the workplace from 26 Oct 24. Proposed by Cllr Matthew, seconded by Cllr Miller and approved.

84/24 **Correspondence:** circulated between meetings requiring further consideration:

- a. A request from the Norfolk ALC President for member councils to call for an EGM following the recent dismissal of the County Officer had been received, it outlined areas of the business that he believed were of concern. The Clerk and B Cllr Lintern, a former Norfolk ALC Board member, provided background to the events leading to this and some of the nuances that make the Norfolk ALC situation unusual. The Clerk recommended that the Council keeps an eye on how this situation plays out and that whilst there are alternatives to Norfolk ALC, they remain a key asset as part of the National body for support to Councils. There is a meeting in January when hopefully they will make progress to putting the organisation back on a good footing.

85/24 **Planning Consultations.**

- a. Applications: None as consultees. However, reference **24/01891/F** relating to 'Variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission 21/02247/FM: Use of land for standing of shepherd's huts for holiday use with a reception hut, recycling/waste storage and bike storage, landscaping and water treatment plant' had come to light. The application raises a number of material concerns with the change from small shepherd huts to large holiday cabins increasing the capacity to sleep 4-6 rather than 2, and the impact that has on increased sewage and drainage outflow. The change of locations of the buildings is closer to the boundary of the SSSI at the Boughton Fen and watercourse (an area that was originally proposed in layout plan 210823-01-03 of 21/02247/FM and changed as the result of the Flood risk assessment – see appendix 1 and 2), causing concern regarding flood risk, light pollution (more windows radiating light), noise disturbance (more people and closer) to rare wildlife on the SSSI and County Wildlife site, with much of the screening no longer evident in the plan. It was considered that the scale of the variations and re-siting in the flood risk area with the mitigation noted of raised huts no longer in place, is significant and that should be treated as a new application so that the relevant consultees could assess the environmental concerns with due diligence. Council asked Borough Cllr Lintern to enquire with the Planning Officer as to the status of the application as it has an /F code which is thought to be for full applications and whether this is to be addressed as such? Also, it was requested that if the Planners were minded to approve this application that she 'calls in' the application to committee, she agreed to do so.
- b. Decisions since last meeting: None.
- c. To comment on Borough and County Planning Consultations:
 - i Local Plan [Major Modifications part 2](#) – Gypsy and Traveler sites. No comment.
 - ii NCC Minerals and Waste Plan [Major Modifications](#). No comment.

86/24 **Highways Matters:** Cllr Matthew reported that the latest SAM2 data had a time stamp glitch, he had reset it and is monitoring. It was agreed that if there is a recurrence then he can consult with Westcotec for a diagnostic report with the fee of c£45 pre-approved.

87/24 **Cllr and Clerk's report on ongoing matters:**

- a. To receive quotes (email 4 Sep) and decide on replacement picnic bench for the Green. The timber option SKU#KDM-RBS for £545 was approved for purchase.
- b. To receive update on pond maintenance. Cllr Payne had reported that there was die-back on some areas of Flag Irises, this was thought to be due to the illegal application of herbicides next to the water without approval of the EA. It was suggested that if cllrs could provide photographic evidence then it could be reported for prosecution to be brought.
- c. Update on post replacements around the Green. Cllr Payne has started the phased replacement and Cllrs commented on the improved appearance and gave a vote of thanks to Cllr Payne.
- d. Update on the development of the Biodiversity Plan. Cllr Boyle reported on the extended Bat Survey and is continuing to work on developing the plan.
- e. Play Inspection updates: Gate chain replaced, and gap considered the resolution cost to be disproportionate to the low risk identified.

- f. Wishing Well options consultation report. Cllr Boyle reported that he had not received strong opinions either way. It was agreed to review the options again and if in the meantime the condition becomes unsafe then the roof can be removed.

88/24 **To receive new reports from cllrs and propose agenda items for the next meeting:** there were no additional reports and the new agenda item to address the village sign at the pond was previously agreed.

89/24 The Chair thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

Chairman

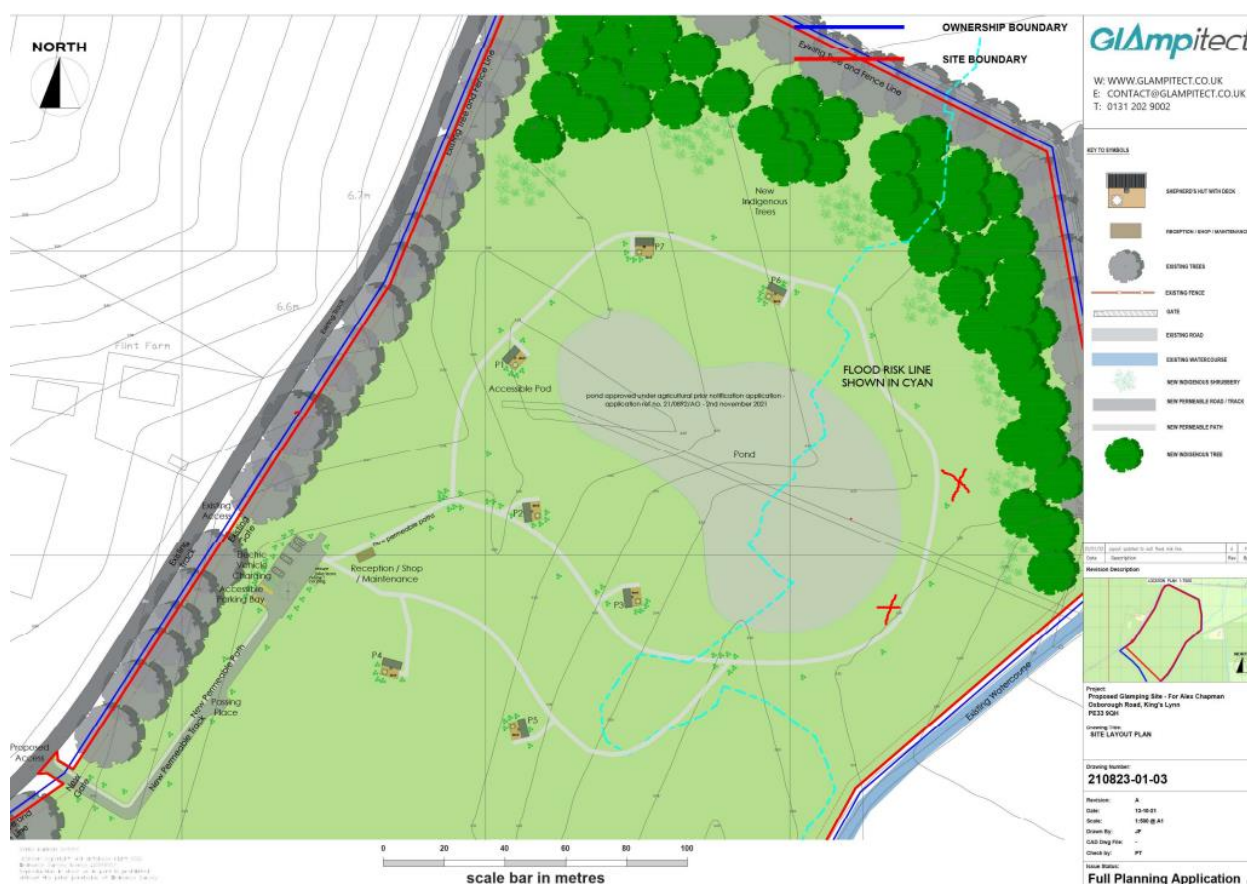
Prepared by

Mr Mike Inder

Date

Clerk to Boughton Parish Council

Appendix 1



The red crosses indicate the original application that was changed due to them being in the flood risk area marked by the cyan line. The variation in this application puts 2 cabins back in this area.

Appendix 2

