

DEOPHAM & HACKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 6th September 2023, 7.30pm at Gralix Hall

Cllrs present:

Jacky Phoenix – Chair (JP), Chris Biggs (CB) – Vice Chair, Chris Coath (CC), Martin Skidmore (MS), Chris Chorley (CCh)

Absent:

Catherine Grand (CG), Eliska Cheeseman (EC), Cllr Josh Woolliscroft (JW)

Others present:

Jordana Wheeler (Clerk), Cllr Margaret Dewsbury (MD), Members of the public - 2.

1. To receive and accept apologies for absence
 - 1.1. Apologies were received and accepted from CG and EC.
2. To receive any Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensation
 - 2.1. There were no declarations of interest.

JP allowed an additional public participation to allow a visitor to address the meeting. See item 11.1 for the minutes of the discussion.
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 5th July 2023
 - 3.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2023 were received and read by Councillors prior to the meeting. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes.
4. To report on progress of matters arising from previous meetings
 - 4.1. Gralix Hall are considering installing a defibrillator. The Clerk has provided details of potential grants.
 - 4.2. The broken noticeboard at Hackford has been repaired and reinstalled by MS at no cost to the Council.
 - 4.3. The Council website has been updated to make it easier to navigate. Additional information about non-council run village activities has also been included to be a source of information to residents. This will be launched in the next few weeks.
 - 4.4. The external audit has been completed. Details are published on the website and noticeboards.
 - 4.5. The Council suggested items to include in the next article for The Net magazine.
 - 4.6. An application has been submitted for a grant from the District Councillor towards the

Draft minutes until approved at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 4th October 2023
 Chairman Signature: _____ Date: _____

new noticeboard. The final specification of the noticeboard was chosen. Approval for the installation has been requested from Norfolk County Council. It is hoped to have the noticeboard installed before the winter.

- 4.7. The Clerk noted she had reported some missing letters from road name signs in the parish. Norfolk County Council Highways team did not deem them in need of repair. MD suggested speaking directly to the area Highways Engineer.

5. Finance

- 5.1. To receive the bank reconciliation for July-Aug 2023 and to ratify or approve the following payments;

The Council considered the bank reconciliation, no queries were raised. The Clerk noted the payment for emptying the dog bins was 8 months earlier than expected. The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the payments.

	Description	Cheque Number	Amount
5.1.1	South Norfolk Council – Dog Bin Emptying 2023-24	100681	£400.80
5.1.2	Jordana Wheeler – Salary & Expenses (June 2023)	100682	£8.01

6. To receive an update on progress with the replacement play equipment and new car park
- 6.1. The Clerk applied unsuccessfully to the Norfolk Playing Field Association for a grant of £2000. The charity is currently not operating and therefore unable to issue grants. If the charity starts up again the application will be resubmitted. The Clerk noted it was the most complicated application process to date for the smallest amount of money. See item 10.2 for more details.
- 6.2. An application for a £10,000 grant has been submitted to the National Lottery Community Fund. A decision is expected in Oct/Nov.
- 6.3. JP reiterated the importance to be able to install the new fencing around the play park at the same time as installing some additional pieces of equipment. Funding available will dictate which pieces can be installed. It is hoped some further installation can take place in early 2024.
7. To consider and adopt the following policies:
- 7.1. Donation Policy – The Clerk summarised the policy noting that any request for a donation must be directly for the benefit of residents. The Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the Donation Policy.
8. To ratify a response to the following planning applications:
- 8.1. Application 2023/2042 - Erection of a glazed link infill extension, conversion of garage to utility room and erection of new garage with garden store. Meadowside, Mill Farm, Attleborough Road, Deopham
The Council had no objections to application 2023/2042. Comments were submitted noting the Councils planning policy in relation to external lighting.
- 8.2. Application 2023/2115 - Notification for Prior Approval for a proposed change of use and associated building works of an agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (QA and

QB), The Old Piggery, Hill Farm, Morley Road, Deopham
This application had been withdrawn prior to the meeting.

9. To consider a response to the following planning applications:

9.1. Application 2023/2530 – Rear and side extension with associated alterations, Arcady House, Low Common, Deopham

It was noted the proposed alterations were all low level and unlikely to impact on neighbouring properties. The Council had no comments or objections.

10. Correspondance

10.1. Correspondance from Gralix Hall – A letter of thanks was read out from Gralix Hall for the donation the Council had made towards the maintenance of the building.

10.2. Letter from Norfolk Playing Field Association – The Clerk summarised the letter, noting that due to a lack of trustees the charity was not currently able to function.

11. Opportunity for public participation – See after item 2

11.1. A Representative from County Broadband requested to address the meeting. JP confirmed that the representative had emailed requesting permission to attend to provide details of the broadband service they were offering to residents. The request was declined by the Clerk following consultation with the Chair. The representative claimed to have not received the email.

The representative provided details of how many houses in the parish, and surrounding villages, he had visited and how many were interested in the full fibre broadband service being sold. It was noted due to the rural location Openreach (who operate the current broadband infrastructure) had no immediate plans to upgrade the broadband in the area.

Councillors discussed the variability of broadband service across the parish.

A resident noted they did not believe the company to be reputable.

JP noted she had received reports from a number of residents who had felt anxious and concerned after visits from representatives from County Broadband, noting they felt pressured and that the information provided was misleading. MD noted any resident concerned can submit a complaint to Trading Standards.

It was noted that BT will be switching off the standard copper wire landlines by December 2025 and switching everyone to digital landlines which won't work without a broadband connection.

11.2. JP gave a summary of upcoming events at Gralix Hall

- Sept 30th – Bingo in aid of the church security system
- Oct 21st – Beetle Drive in aid of the play park project
- Oct 30th – Halloween trail around the village
- Nov 25th – Christmas Bingo in aid of the play park project
- Dec 2nd – Coffee morning in aid of the church security system

11.3. JP reported that the Rix Trust had successfully applied for some free hedging from The Woodland Trust to be planted at the southern end of the playing field where there is a gap in the hedge. It will include 150 saplings (mixed medium shrubs/trees) and 20 small hedging plants. Volunteers will be sought to help plant the saplings in Oct/Nov.

11.4. CC noted that there had been a reduction in traffic through the parish since the roadworks on the A11 had finished. National Highways had claimed that the increase in traffic was not in relation to the roadworks due to the parish being too far from the road but it was felt this was an incorrect assessment at the time.

12. To confirm the date of the next meeting

- 12.1. The next Council meeting will take place at Gralix Hall on Wednesday 4th October 2023, 7.30pm. The press and public are welcome to attend.

The public meeting closed at 8.40pm.