

WHISSONSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Whissonsett Parish Council held on Monday 13th November 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Sally Dye (Chair)
Cllr Charles Holloway (Vice Chair)
Cllr Caroline Edge
Cllr Sian Griffiths
Cllr Susan McGregor
Cllr Tristan Ireson

One Member of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr James Daniels were approved. Apologies were also received from County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2023.

Cllr Holloway proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Dye and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

4. Open Forum for Public Participation (15 minutes maximum).

There were no matters raised by the member of the public.

5. County & District Councillors Reports.

A written report was received from C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris and the Chairman highlighted the information regarding flooding, specifically the reporting procedure. Highway flooding (not ponding/temporary flooding) should be reported using the online NCC 'report it' system. Problems with sewage should be reported to Anglian Water on 03457 145145. Internal flooding of properties (not sewage) and serious flooding to property should be reported to the Norfolk Floodline 0344 8008013.

6. Planning Issues

a) Decisions to note (information only).

Council noted that no decision had been taken on the following two applications.

- **3PL/2022/0899/F** – Garden Plot to Chapel Cottage, off Tower Close - proposed Detached Bungalow & Garage on Garden Plot.
- **3PL/2022/0315/F** – Small Holdings Farm, London Street - conversion of existing agricultural barn to one residential dwelling with annex. Part demolition of existing agricultural lean too building – amended.

b) Applications to consider.

3PL/2023/1063/HOU – The Bungalow, Dereham Road - replacement of existing single-storey side projection by 1.5-storey side projection with addition of 1st floor accommodation and installation of Juliet balcony – Council raised no issues and a ‘no comment’ response will be submitted.

c) To receive an update regarding enforcement issues.

No update had been received from D/Cllr Thurbon and an update will be requested direct from Breckland.

d) To receive an update regarding the campaign against the proposed ‘New Town’.

No update was available although Council noted that Breckland Cabinet will be advised regarding potential sites in the near future and this will be monitored.

7. Highways matters.

a) To receive an update re matters previously reported.

Council noted the following updates:

- Mill Lane – Open Reach vehicles parking on road and the request for land reinstatement – boundaries established and area to be cleared – C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris will be requested to chase this up.
- New Road – flooding – Breckland will be asked again to sweep the road again to clear leaves from drains and Highways will be asked to clear the drains.
- Hedge obstructing highway visibility on Mill Lane – resident requested to cut hedge back – now with C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris to deal.
- Colkirk FP15 (Raynham Road) – broken sign – reported to Highways and will be replaced.
- Surface deterioration on High Street – Cllr Kiddle-Morris to request a highways survey be carried out.
- Wash Lane – pothole – reported to Highways and programmed for repair.
- Footpath 4 – completely impassable – reported to Highways.

b) To receive a report regarding the SAM II sign and related speeding issues.

The Chairman reported that the sign had been recently located on Mill Lane and no significant speeding issues detected.

c) To receive an update regarding wildflowers/bulbs to plant on highway verges.

Council agreed that tulip bulbs be purchased, up to the value of the £50 budget previously approved, with snowdrops also purchased early in the new year. Cllrs Griffiths, McGregor and Ireson volunteered to plant them. A Whissonsett sign, which had recently been donated to the Parish Council, will be mounted and sited with the flowers.

d) To consider flooding in the village.

Cllr Ireson outlined the recent problems in the Wash Lane area, with two properties flooding internally, and possibly at least one other. A meeting with a highways engineer will be requested, to consider possible solutions.

The road near Springwell was also discussed in that it appeared to be wet all the time and this will make the road icy when it turns cold. Council noted that a grit bin was sited in this location for this problem.

8. Play Area Matters - to receive a report from the Play Area Warden and to consider fencing quotes.

Cllr Edge reported that quotes were still awaited for the fencing. She also reported that she had attended a Play Area inspection course and was now fully up to speed on current procedures.

The Chairman outlined the issue of dogs coming out of a property which had a non-authorised gateway from their back garden into the children's play area. Dogs were not permitted in the play area and are a risk to children, particularly when they are off the lead. A letter will be sent to the resident informing them that the gate is to be removed and that dogs are not permitted in the play area under any circumstances.

9. To receive a report from the Allotment Warden and to consider any issues raised.

Cllr Ireson reported that no work had taken place on plots 2, 3, 4 and 7, despite an email sent to plot holders reminding them of their responsibilities. Cllr Dye proposed that the plot holders be advised that their tenancies will be terminated with effect from 1st January 2024 and that they are to clear their plots before that date.

10. To receive a report from the Tree Warden and to consider any issues raised.

Cllr Holloway had identified some non-urgent works and these will be carried out in the next financial year, using the allocated budget.

11. To receive a report from the Village Warden (council assets) and to consider any issues raised, including quotes for the refurbishment of Spring Well.

Council noted that quotes are awaited for the refurbishment of Spring Well.

12. To receive an update regarding the purchase of a plot of land at Church Close, the application to the Community Ownership Fund, and to consider a Public Works Loan.

Council noted that the application to purchase the land from the Community Ownership Fund did not meet the criteria of the fund, although the legal and project costs would. That being the case, Cllr Dye proposed that Council resolve to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £3,750 over the borrowing terms of five years for the purpose of purchasing the land at Church Close. The annual loan repayments will come to around £800. It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

This was seconded by Cllr Edge and unanimously agreed by Council.

It was also agreed that a widely-publicised meeting be held, commencing at 7.00pm, prior to the next Council meeting on Monday 8th January 2024. This will inform residents about the need, costs and benefits of the project, the total amount to be borrowed by Council to fund the project and the opportunity for residents to express their views in favour or against the project and borrowing requirement, with feedback shared with the borrowing body.

It was also suggested that some residents may wish to contribute financially to the project, helping to secure a green space for Whissonsett in perpetuity, with the aim being to register the land as a Village Green in due course.

13. To consider a policy to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Whissonsett, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

Council was advised to consider ways in which to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Whissonsett, both those which are carried out at present and any new ideas. These will then be brought together in a policy in the new year.

14. Correspondence

There was no correspondence to consider.

15. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To review the allotment rental fees.

Council agreed there was no need to increase the allotment fees.

c) To consider the draft budget and set the precept for the year ending 31st March 2025.

Council considered the draft budget and Cllr Edge proposed that the precept remain at £12,000, this was seconded by Cllr Ireson and unanimously agreed by Council.

d) To approve the following payments and note any receipts.

Cllr Dye proposed that the following payments be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Edge and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipt was noted.

PAYMENTS

P26	Clerk (Salary/Allowance) - October	£221.36 (SO)
P29	Clerk (Salary/Allowance) – November	£221.36 (SO)
P27	Grass Contractor – September	£749.26*
P30	Grass Contractor – October	£749.26
P25	Community Heartbeat – Defib Pads	£106.74*
P28	Mole Removal	£30.00*
P31	Poppy Wreath	£20.00
P32	Breckland – Election Fee	£75.00
P33	Mole Removal – Playing Field	£20.00

RECEIPTS

R4 Breckland – Precept (2 of 2)

£6,000.00

16. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

17. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 9.14pm.

Signed:

Date:

WHISSONSETT PARISH COUNCIL YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT - NOVEMBER 2023

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget 2023/24	To date	% Spend
PAYMENTS*			
Admin	2,495	1,024	41%
Salary	2,809	1,691	60%
Grass Cutting**	5,391	5,245	97%
Play Area	500	162	32%
Open Spaces (inc maintenance)	1,900	1,514	80%
Donations	100	-	0%
TOTAL	13,195	9,636	73%
RECEIPTS			Received
Precept	12,000	12,000	100%
Allotments	210	-	0%
Grants	-	-	
HMRC Refund	-	39	
TOTAL	12,210	12,039	99%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	(985)	2,404	

Bank Reconciliation	
Community Account at 01.04.2023	12,365.11
Plus Receipts at 31.10.2023	12,334.32
Less Payments at 31.10.2023	8,678.84
TOTAL	16,020.59
Bank Balance at 31.10.2023	16,020.59
Less any outstanding payments	-
Plus any outstanding receipts	-
TOTAL	16,020.59
Allotment deposit	100.00
Open Spaces	1,000.00
GENERAL RESERVE	£14,920.59

*includes payments as listed on agenda.

**payments include £749 relating to 2022/23 budget

also now includes £150 for play area hedge cut - approved July 2023