

**SAHAM TONEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 8th JANUARY 2024**

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on the 8th January 2024 at 7.30 p.m. at the Wells-Cole Community Centre, Saham Toney.

Present – Mr. J. Baldwin in the Chair supported by Messrs D. Freeman, R. Harrold, L. Rees-Murphy, S. Rees-Murphy. and A. Wilson, Ms. K Avery and Ms. M. Baldwin. Ms H. Crane and Mr. P. Bate (District Councillors) were also present.

Ten parishioners were present.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Apologies received and accepted from Councillors N. Creek and G. Morton.
- 2. To Receive declarations of Interest from Members on Items on the Agenda:** There were no declarations of interest in the Agenda items.
- 3. To Confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 4th December 2023:** The Minutes of the meeting were proposed by Ms. K. Avery, seconded by Mr. L. Rees-Murphy and unanimously agreed.
- 4. To report matters arising from the minutes:**
 - Repairs to the Council's shed at the Community Centre – this is still ongoing.
 - Dog Signs for the Playing Field and Community Centre land – Breckland hadn't invoiced for all 4 signs so another invoice has now been sent and paid and delivery of the signs is awaited.
 - Defibrillator for Hills Road – The defibrillator was received in December but due to problems with fixing this to the Chapel wall and concerns raised by the Chapel stewards, the defibrillator has been installed at the Caravan Park on Hills Road with 24-hour access by the public. The need to get the defib installed within 4 weeks (10th January), or lose it, meant the decision had to be made quickly.
 - Road sign missing on Richmond Road –still not replaced – Clerk has reported this online twice and will email the street naming department at Breckland.
 - Pot holes in Ploughboy Lane – As a result of erosion of the verges, there are now even more pot holes and the Clerk will report these.
 - Walk around took place on the 19th November and several houses were sent letters asking pointing out their responsibilities as riparian owners. On Agenda to arrange a meeting with riparian owners in Cley Lane.
 - Emergency Plan – on Agenda.
 - Biodiversity Policy – a sub-committee will be formed after Ms. Avery has attended the NALC Biodiversity online meeting in February.
 - Meeting with Steve Hall re Allotment Flooding – Mr. N. Creek has spoken to Steve Halls and a meeting will be arranged in due course.
- 5. Reports from District/County Councillors:** Ms H. Crane reported as follows: -

At cabinet this morning the draft budget for medium and long term planning was presented ahead of the final budget setting in February. The budget is out for consultation at present.

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The final quarter of the household support fund has now begun. The remaining funds are for the January to March 2024 period. The fund is there to support residents unable to afford essential costs, which could include utilities, food, housing related costs and other essential costs such as clothing and the purchase of fridges and ovens. If there is a resident who is in need and gives consent, I can make a referral.

D-Day 80 grants to commemorate 80 years since the D-Day landings have been made available and are similar to those we ran for the Jubilee and coronation.

The person of interest page is now live on the Breckland website, located under 'My Environment' section. There will be new fixed penalties for environmental crime which includes fly-tipping and littering. The persons of interest page will show photos of culprits that we can identify as having committed a crime but we have no name to put to the face. We are asking for residents help in identifying these people.

Mr. P. Bate reported as follows: -

From the council meeting 14/11/23

The labour group asked questions about the disposal of small sites and what the criteria was. i.e. was the motive purely financial or were other values considered. They were particularly worried about the disposal of green spaces. The reply was that money was not the deciding factor and that value to the community was considered as well.

The independent and Green group asked whether the ruling group approved the devolution deal approved by NCC. This deal is controversial in all parties and will be until it is seen how it affects the district councils with the distribution of money and influence. The reply was, the deal has been done in the correct way and involves Norfolk being in charge of its own money. There is concern about the strength of voice of district councils, this is also a green party concern.

1. There will be an estimate of when the car parking survey comes out at the beginning of 2024.
2. Breckland did not receive levelling up money we are not poor enough to get it but not rich enough to do it on our own.

6. **Time allocated for members of the public to speak (maximum 20 minutes):** A parishioner said that due to a diversion caused by a water leak in Brandon Road, Watton, the verges of Cley Lane and Chequers Lane had been eroded. This is also a problem in Ovington Road and the Clerk will report this to Highways.

A parishioner thanked those councillors who had introduced themselves to her following the December meeting.

A parishioner asked if, before work commences, it was the Council's intention to have another survey of the Bird Sanctuary as the Wildlife Group has been recording the birds that visit the site.

7. **Correspondence:**

- Emails in connection with Coburg Lane footpath (Ashill FP7) -In response to an email from a parishioner, the Clerk contacted the Countryside Access Officer to ascertain the position with regard to this footpath. If names of landowners are supplied, they will contact them about the fence which has recently been installed. The ruts in the path could be levelled but the area would need to be rotavated to level and compact it and there would be period of time before the surface vegetation would reestablish. The work would need to be carried out during dry period. The Chair will find out the name of the new tenant of land in Coburg Lane and

the Clerk will advise the Countryside Access Officer.

- Email from Gallagher Insurance with update on the accident at the Playing Field advising of a change of the person dealing with the claim. They plan to review the case at the end of February 2024 but are still saying that the policy does not respond and should proceedings be issued these will be defended.
- Email from George Freeman MP forwarding email from a parishioner in connection with Flooding and Speeding. Mr. Freeman had sent a reply to the parishioner but asks that the Parish Council give consideration to the points raised. The Clerk had replied to Mr. Freeman pointing out that Parish Councils do not have any authority to do anything with regard to flooding and speeding.
- Email from Breckland Council re the Local Plan. There will be an extra phase of consultation to consider key issues and this will run from Monday 8th January to Monday 10th February. There are several Consultation Events being held and the Clerk will provide details if anyone is interested in attending.

8. To Approve Accounts for Payment: The following cheque has been paid between meetings:

- Breckland Council - £149.40 – for the remaining 3 dog notices that were previously not invoiced.

The following account is due for payment: -

- Mrs. J.S. Glenn - £544.93 – salary

The payment of these accounts was proposed by Ms. M. Baldwin, seconded by Mr. D. Freeman and unanimously agreed.

9. To Consider Planning Matters: - The following plan was discussed: -

- 3PL/2023/1189/F – provision of additional office space utilising existing mezzanine floor at Su Bridge Pet Supplies. An amendment to this plan has also been received – Removal of existing portacabins and the provision of additional office space utilising existing mezzanine floor. There were no objections to either the plan or the amendment.

10. To Agree and Adopt the emergency Plan and Householder Leaflet: - Ms. K. Avery had circulated both the Plan and Householder Leaflet to all councillors. The adoption of the Plan was proposed by Mr. S. Rees-Murphy, seconded by Mr. D. Freeman and unanimously agreed. It was agreed that the Householder Leaflet could be printed and distributed with the Saga and the Clerk will get a quote for this from the Editor. Mr. L. Rees-Murphy suggested that it could be put on the front cover of Saga that the edition contained the Householder Leaflet to encourage people to read it. Ms. K. Avery and Mr. T. Bunce were thanked for their part in producing the Emergency Plan.

11. To discuss the Flooding at the Entrance to the Community Centre: - Mr. A. Wilson and Mr. N. Creek had inspected the drains at the entrance to the Community Centre. Mr. A. Wilson outlined the problems which had been caused when the car park was resurfaced. Mr. Wilson will draft a letter for the Clerk to send to Trell.

12. To discuss work to the ditch and trees at the back of the Community Centre land: -

The Chair said that there is a lot of dead wood on the Council's side of the ditch which needs to be

removed. This will need to wait until later in the year when the ground is dry as a large digger will be needed to do the work. The Chair will liaise with Mr. P. Baldwin about this and the cost.

13. To Discuss the Boundary at the Bird Sanctuary: The Clerk said that when the original Planning Application for the development of the Sanctuary Meadow site was submitted there should have been a 6ft close boarded fence erected to protect the Bird Sanctuary. Unfortunately, this condition had not been carried forward by Breckland when the planning permission for the individual houses was given. It was suggested that the Council should put a 6ft close boarded fence on their side of the boundary with Sanctuary Meadow to comply with the original Planning Permission. Mr. L. Rees-Murphy said this change to the environment could affect the wildlife as it has been used to a fence/ hedging not being there. A discussion took place as to the benefits of either a fence or a hedge and because of the difficulty of installing a fence, it was agreed to look at planting well-established hedging plants – the Chair will get some prices. This will be on the February Agenda.

14. To discuss ways to introduce Councillors to the parish by: A long discussion took place and no agreement was reached. Clerk will contact the NALC and other Parish Councils to see how they proceed at meetings.

- Putting a “Know Your Councillors” article in the Saga
- Wearing name badges at meetings
- Keep things as they are at present

15. To arrange a date for a meeting with riparian owners in Cley Lane to discuss ownership of the ditches: - It was agreed Mr. D. Freeman will meet with the owners to discuss ditch ownership on Cley Lane. Clerk to arrange a meeting on a Sunday morning. The Clerk read short piece about responsibility for watercourses and it was agreed this be put in the Saga and at the same time give a date for a parish meeting with flooding updates. Hopefully Steve Halls and Liz Witcher would be able to attend. The Clerk will book the Main Hall for a date in March.

16. To receive Reports from: -

16.1 Wayland Partnership – no report – next meeting will be held next week.

16.2 Wells-Cole Community Centre – The Committee met on 19th December. This meeting was only to confirm details for the New Year’s Eve party. The party was attended by 48 people including some new people, where the evening was enjoyed by all who attended and the evening went well. Since the last meeting the Chair has received a letter, that was sent to an ex-committee member, from Barclays declining the request to transfer funds. This letter clearly shows Barclays do not hold up-to-date records. (RS and LRM) will plan a date to meet at the Banking Hub or branch in the hope to move forward. The Clerk said if there is anything the Council, as Custodian Trustees, can do to help please let us know.

16.3 Playing Field – the next meeting is due to be held this month.

16.4 Wells-Cole Trust Fund – The balance on the account is £35,608.68 with another £2500 due on the 15th January. A meeting of the Trustees will be held on the 17th January.

16.5 Play Park Inspector – all in good order as of the end of December.

16.6 Bird sanctuary – A meeting was held on 6th December.

There are still a few issues to iron out regarding the new entrance, but progress is being made. It was agreed that the original gateway from Cley Lane should be reinstated with a lockable gate which will need to be purchased. The keys would be held by the Parish Council. Hopefully this can be done in the near future.

The pond was discussed and all agreed that it would be nice if it was returned to how it was, holding more water could encourage the return of frogs and toads and perhaps water fowl. There is some tree work that needs to take place but this will have to remain on hold until we can get machinery in to do the heavy work.

We will arrange further works party when the weather improves.

16.7 Any Other Reports – There were no other reports.

17. Items for the next agenda (not for discussion): Emergency Plan – To agree a Co-ordinator for the Plan and Printing of the Plan and Householder Leaflet; Bird Sanctuary -To Discuss the Cost of a Gate to the Bird Sanctuary from Cley Lane and to agree the reinstatement of a hedge at the boundary of the Bird Sanctuary with Sanctuary Meadow and To Discuss Introduction of Councillors at Meetings.

18. To confirm the date and time of the next Parish Council Meeting –Monday the 5th February 2024 at the Wells-Cole Community Centre, Bell Lane.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Parish Matters

A councillor said hedges from adjacent properties are blocking the pavements from several houses on Richmond Road – Clerk will mention in the Saga.

A councillor said he had walked around the village last week looking at the ditches. The ditch in Ploughboy Lane has been cut back causing the water to dome over the road. There is also a concrete block in the ditch. More water is flowing to the lower part of the village as parishioners in the Hills area have cleared out their ditches.