

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE LINCOLN HALL ON TUESDAY 04 APRIL 2023. THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7.30pm.

Present

Cllr Eldridge – Chairman

Cllr Amey – Vice Chair

Cllr Dunnett, Cllr Overton, Cllr Roberts and Cllr Thompson

Clerk – Alison Doe

There were 3 members of the public present including District Cllr Bendle and County Cllr Dewsbury.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Christien, Cllr Foord, and Cllr Sta Ana

2. Public participation session, (members of the public may make a statement or ask a question of not more than three minutes duration)

2.1 Concern was raised regarding a report that the proprietor of Chalfont's Café had been given notice to vacate the building currently used as the Café, reporting that the owner was intending to sell the building. It was expressed by the Council that this would be a loss to the town.

2.2 It was reported that a local business had expressed concerns regarding their ability to continue trading due to the rising electricity costs.

3. Declarations of interests with regard to items on the agenda and to consider requests for dispensations

There were no declarations of interest made with regard to items on the agenda.

4. To agree a Chairman to preside over any agenda items of this meeting, if both the Chairman and Vice Chair are unable to preside due to (agenda item 1) Apologies for absence and /or (agenda item 3) Declarations of interests

Cllr Eldridge confirmed he would Chair all agenda items.

5. To agree the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 07 March 2023

The minutes of the meeting of 07 March 2023 were agreed as correct.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Town Council meeting 07 March 2023 (and other updates contained in a written Clerks report circulated prior to the meeting – See appendix A)

No further points were raised.

7. Working Party Reports

There were no working party reports.

8. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group report

A written report was circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting as follows:

Work since last update

- Meeting of the steering group took place on 22 March 2023 (**minutes of previous meetings will be on the NP website when available – see minutes for further details of points raised/discussions undertaken, further to the points listed below**)
- Non-designated Heritage Assets, important view, local green spaces have been identified, consultation with owners may be required before the list can be finalised and included in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The steering group have completed more work on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, this is ongoing work to produce the draft plan for consultation.
- The site assessment work has been received from AECOM, the steering group have discussed the report and initial feedback is being sent to AECOM.
- An in depth discussion took place by the steering group following correspondence received from a resident regarding road safety on the Norwich Road, the correspondence suggested a detailed improvement scheme. The groups have worked together on a detailed response.
- A revised timetable for the plan has been drawn up and it is hoped that the draft plan can go out for public consultation mid-May 2023, after the parish elections have taken place.

Work ahead (over the next month or so)

- Undertake any required consultation on Green Spaces, Non Designated Heritage Assets, Important Views.
- Steering group to continue to work with the consultant to re draft the policies for the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan, and the overall plan content.
- Neighbourhood Plan accounts to be finalised and any excess grant money for 2022/23 returned to Groundworks
- Next Steering Group meeting 25 April 2023.

EVENTS: A Draft Neighbourhood Plan consultation event will be held during the consultation period – date to be confirmed.

It was confirmed that an update on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan would be given at the Annual Town Meeting.

9. Reports from representatives on external bodies/ attendees of external meetings/training

9.1 Cllr Eldridge reported that the Education Trust had held their AGM and they would soon be advertising for applicants for grants for further education. The trust want to help as many people as possible with grants, grants are means tested.

9.2 The Clerk advised that she had attended (online) the Greater Norwich Local Plan hearing regarding Nutrient Neutrality. The majority of the meeting was given over to discussion of the “credit” system that would enable developers to “buy credits” towards Nutrient Neutrality, credits could be accrued through mitigations off site, however these would have to have a close geographical relevance to the site. There was much discussion of septic tank conversions (but no real explanation of how this would work). Natural England advised that they would be running their own nationwide credit system which would be separate from any district credit system. It was also explained that installation of reedbeds would most likely play a crucial role in the credit and mitigation system, although these reed beds would take some time before they would become established enough to reach their potential. It was explained that to start off with the amount of credits available to developers would be limited and it would take time to build up the system. It was expected that larger developers would not need to buy into the credit system as they would have the means to establish their own Nutrient Neutrality mitigations for their development.

The Clerk advised that she had queried why the Hingham SSSI was not listed in the Nutrient Neutrality document, Natural England had explained that the Hingham SSSI only had a domestic rating not a European one, and that is why it was not included in the listing.

9.3 Cllr Roberts advised that he was continuing to attend the community events/Coronation organisation meetings.

10. General Correspondence (information/circulars etc)

10.1 Norfolk Lieutenancy Coronation Newsletters 002 &003 March 23

10.2 Norfolk ALC - New County Deal for Norfolk

10.3 South Norfolk Council - Community Awards 2023 - Nominations Open!

10.4 Norfolk County Council - Joint Statement on the One Year Anniversary of the Homes For Ukraine Programme

The Council queried as to whether there was any progress regarding bringing Moon Court into use, especially as the initial term for households hosting Ukrainians had now ended and there was concern that many would not want to continue to host.

District Cllr Bendle advised that there had been no further progress as the owners wanted too much money from the Councils to make it economically viable to use.

The Council asked Cllr Bendle to ask South Norfolk Council if making a compulsory purchase was an option.

County Cllr Dewsbury advised that the Councils (district and county) were busy talking to owners of other properties who were willing to work with the councils.

10.5 Norfolk County Council - Latest Repton development reaches key stage

11. Correspondence (not for public inspection) as addressed directly to Hingham Town Council (from residents etc. and may contain personal information)

None.

12. To discuss and agree any required responses/actions in relation to any item(s) of correspondence

No actions required.

13. District Councillor's report

District Cllr Bendle reported that there would be an Extraordinary Council meeting taking place to discuss the bids submitted for the old South Norfolk offices in Long Stratton.

Cllr Bendle reported that after the elections on 4th May SNC would need to appoint to the various Committees and a full Council meeting would take place on 24 May 2023.

Cllr Bendle advised that she was not standing for re election in the district Council elections.

14. County Councillor's report

County Cllr Dewsbury advised that Children's Services were implementing a new scheme asking for rooms within homes that could be offered to young people between the ages of 12 and 25 where they could receive help, support, advice and stability, this scheme is not foster care.

It was reported that to mark the 75th anniversary of the fire and rescue service, fire service museum equipment would be on display at the Norfolk Show and there would be events held at the fire stations.

15. Planning Decisions

2023/0051 - Agricultural Building At Lyngwhite Farm Hingham Road Hingham Norfolk
Variation of condition 1 of 2022/1922 - Design changes to plot 1
Approval with Conditions

16. Planning Applications (as notified by SNC for consultation)

2023/0493 - Proposed porch, cart lodge and access
Skylark Barn Watton Road Hingham Norfolk NR9 4NW
The Council agreed to recommend approval.

2023/0427 - Proposed drop kerb to front to make access for new driveway
17 Norwich Road Hingham Norfolk NR9 4LS
The Council agreed to recommend approval.

17. Information regarding other planning applications where the Town Council is not a consultee, (for information only)

2023/0732 - Re-Pollard to the existing pollard points at 5 m from ground level
10 Chapel Street Hingham Norfolk NR9 4JH

2023/0712 - Non material amendment to 2014/2606 - Internal layout and fenestration alterations and external landscaping
Flint Barn White Lodge Farm Hardingham Road Hingham Norfolk NR9 4LY

18. To review the Hingham Town Council Risk Policy and Risk Assessment

A copy of the risk policy and risk assessment was forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. It was agreed that the policy did not require any amendment. It was agreed to include PAT testing of equipment and a note that (as tenants) the Hingham Playing Field Association should undertake a risk assessment for the playing field.

19. Reminder of the date of the Annual Town Meeting, proposed date 18 April 2023

Noted. Cllr Thompson and Cllr Amey gave their apologies.

20. To receive and discuss/agree the offer by Norfolk County Council for Parish Partnership funding for village gates and signage

It was agreed to accept the terms of the offer of part funding from Norfolk County Council for the village gates scheme (50/50 funding between NCC and Hingham Town Council) and to forward the payment of £19,444.00.

It was noted that Hingham Town Council would require to be involved in the detailing for installation, signage and branding for the scheme.

The Council asked to formally record thanks to the Clerk for making the comprehensive application to secure the funding.

21. To consider any request (s) for permission for activities to commemorate the King's Coronation

The Clerk advised that she had been copied into an email discussion regarding decoration of lamp posts for the King's Coronation, although no one had formally asked to be able to do this. The Council agreed that there were no objections to the lamp posts being decorated provided that the

decorations were properly secured, did not interfere with any required maintenance to the lamp column and were removed (in a timely fashion) after the coronation weekend.

22. To consider a request(s) for stalls on the greens during the yard sale weekend

The Clerk had received a request from the Santa's Grotto Committee to have a cake and plant stall on the Market Place green in between the bus shelter and the Hingham town sign on 13 and 14 May to coincide with the yard sales. A gazebo would be erected each morning and taken down at the end of each day. Nothing will be left on site overnight.

The Committee had advised that a risk assessment and public liability insurance would be in place. This request was agreed.

FINANCE – ITEMS 23 - 33

23. To receive the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting, date 21 March 2023, (and discuss any points)

A copy of the draft minutes of the finance committee meeting were forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised that these would be agreed at the next committee meeting scheduled in July. The financial position of the council was noted. (The draft minutes are attached as Appendix B)

24. To note the Accounts for Payment as approved by the Finance Committee (as below)

Noted.

REF	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT	VAT
392	LINCOLN SOCIAL CENTRE	HALL HIRE	£100.00	
393	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	TOILETS	£466.39	
394	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	CEMETERY	£15.16	
		TOTAL FOR ALL PAYMENTS (TO DATE)	£581.55	
		TOTAL VAT	£0.00	

25. To consider grant applications received, for funds to support community activities to commemorate/celebrate the King's Coronation

Three grant applications had been received.

Hingham Santa's Grotto Committee, £500 for half barrel planters to be placed in several locations in Hingham.

Hingham Community Cupboard, £200 for picnic food items for the Coronation Picnic

Hingham Playing Field Association, £863 for entertainment, activities and items for the Coronation Picnic

It was agreed to award all three grants to support the community King's Coronation Celebrations

26. To agree the asset register for financial year ending March 2023

The Clerk advised that she was awaiting a figure for new lamp columns installed as the invoicing did not breakdown the relevant cost.

The asset register was agreed with the addition of the lamp columns to be added when available.

27. To agree the draft accounts for financial year 2022/23 (as able to be presented to date)

The Clerk advised that accounts presented were draft and had been prepared for the Annual Town Meeting, the final accounts would be prepared when the final bank statement had been received and would be agreed in May prior to be sent to the auditor.

28. To consider renewal of the subscription to NALC/Norfolk ALC

It was noted that the cost of the NALC/Norfolk ALC subscription had increased from £420.17 to £504.20 .

The Clerk had advised that she had queried why the substantial increase had been made and with no notice and was awaiting a response. It was noted that the NALC was the Nationally recognised advisory body and Norfolk ALC was the local branch, it was agreed to continue with the subscription as it would provide the Council with the most reliable source of advice, updates, legal topic notes and information.

29. To consider the renewal of the Hingham Town Council website as hosted by Norfolk ALC, including consideration of the website management service

The Clerk advised that the subscription to the Norfolk ALC website hosting platform had increased from £35 to £70.00. The Clerk advised that Norfolk ALC had updated the website to make it Accessibility compliant. It was agreed to continue with the subscription as it provided the Council with a .gov.uk website. The Clerk advised that the management service would not provide good value for money as all they would be doing is up loading documents, this would mean that agendas would have to be prepared at least a day earlier than usual to ensure they were published on the website with the three clear days' notice of the meeting. The Council agreed not to subscribe to the management service at this time.

30. To receive the 2022/23 AGAR external auditor instructions

A copy of the external audit instructions was forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting so that relevant dates and instructions could be noted by the Council.

31. To note the receipt of the notification of the Agency Grass Cutting 2023/24 Fee from Norfolk County Council

It was noted that the agency grass cutting agreement amount for 23/24 is £4863.32, and it had increased by 13.4%. This pays for the grass cutting contractor to cut the specified Norfolk County Council visions splays.

32. To note that The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has notified the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) that the appropriate sum for section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for parish and town councils in England for 2023/24 is £9.93.

(this enables the first tier of local government to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory power)

Noted.

33. To agree and approve the accounts for payment (as below)

The accounts for payment were agreed and the cheques were signed.

REF	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT		VAT
395	STAFF	WAGES	£1,001.67		
396	STAFF	WAGES	£1,150.36		
397	HMRC	TAX/NI CONTRIBUTIONS	£806.24		
DD	NEST	PENSION	£72.19		
398	COZENS (UK) LIMITED	STREET LIGHT MAINTENANCE	£240.00	VAT	£40.00
399	COZENS (UK) LIMITED	REPAIR STONE LANE	£474.00	VAT	£79.00
400	HINGHAM CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - HALL HIRE	£100.00		
401	LINCOLN SOCIAL CENTRE	HALL BOOKING	£50.00		
402	NOFOLK ALC	WEBSITE AND SUBSCRIPTION	£574.20		
403	COMPASS POINT PLANNING AND RURAL CONSULTANTS	CONSULTANCY FEE /MILAGE	£1,644.75		
404	R LEGGETT	CONSULTANCY FEE/MILAGE	£990.00		
405	GEOXPHERE LTD	PARISH ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION	£168.00		£28.00
406	EASTERN TREE CARE	TREE WORK	£5100.00		
DD	SSE	TOILET ELECTRICITY	£433.56		£20.64
407	A DOE	MICROSOFT365 FOR EMAIL STORAGE	£19.99		£3.33
408	NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL	PARISH PARTNERSHIP VILLAGE GATES	£19,444.00		
409	HINGHAM PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION	KINGS CORONATION GRANT	£836.00		
410	SANTAS GROTTO COMMITTEE	KINGS CORONATION GRANT	£500.00		
411	HINGHAM COMMUNITY CUPBOARD	KINGS CORONATION GRANT	£200.00		
		TOTAL FOR ALL PAYMENTS (TO DATE)	£32,268.96		
		TOTAL VAT	170.97		

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm

Signed..... Chairman 02 May 2023

Appendix A - Clerks report for 04 April 2023

Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Council Meeting of 07 March 2023

MIN 12.1	Problem parking at the top of Copper Lane was included in the Town Council report in the Parish Magazine. The Clerk has met with P.C Rance to discuss parking issues. P.C Rance to be formally invited to a future meeting
MIN 22	Letter has been sent to NCC and Abel Homes regarding the safety of the bank/verge between The Hops and Bears Lane
MIN 23	NCC Road Safety Feasibility Study, the team undertaking the study has not made contact with the Clerk.
MIN 25	Commonwealth War Graves Commission have been invited to install signage at the cemetery
MIN 32	Internal Auditor has been contacted, audit scheduled for beginning of May

Other Updates/Outstanding Issues

- The Clerk has asked Norfolk County Council if a grit bin for The Hops will be supported, no response.
- Paperwork for the new bank account is complete, certified copy of Standing Orders and Financial Regs required.
- A suitable place for a new Town Council notice board to be established.
- Tree works almost complete, works on Fairland and trees in the churchyard overhanging Church Street still to be undertaken, traffic management required.
- Skatepark resurfacing and repairs start date awaited when the field is drier.
- Town Clock, work has commenced
- Laptop to be purchased.
- The resident who has proposed to plant a Oak tree on the Market Place green has agreed to source an alternative species and will be in touch in due course.
- The street lighting contractor has been instructed to undertake the replacement of the churchyard pathway lighting; new lanterns are now ready to be installed during April.
- SNC and lifeways are now in correspondence regarding the Moon Court facility, following the November Town Council meeting, the Clerk has contacted both parties who advise conversations are ongoing, but no agreement has been reached. No further update.
- Letter to the Chief Constable and the Police Crime Commissioner regarding parking drafted photographs need to be added prior to sending.
- Quotations seeking letter being for improving/upgrading the footway lighting on Norwich Road and Watton Road sent.
- Market Place Bus Shelter renovations, the contractor advises the work to be undertaken in spring.
- Fairland Oak Tree stumps, advice has been sought regarding hollowing the stumps out, a suggestion has been made that a stump grinder will be required (cost approximately £500-600 per stump).
- Feasibility study for Fairland Cross roads and various parking, road and pedestrian safety issues in the Market Place and Fairland, NCC stated that “hopefully” there will be a draft issued in the new year. No further updates from the team undertaking the work.
- Tree samplings have been planted on the Fairland and in the cemetery, sapling Christmas trees will be grown on in pots before planting
- Applications for Assets of Community Value to be finalised, plans and ownership details are required.

- Parish Archives, the collection of the materials has commenced, appropriate written bequeathment will be provided by the family of the past Archivist. Town Council to appoint new Archivist
- Notice boards for the toilets to be purchased.
- Street Lighting, the contractor has been asked to undertake the renumbering of the footway lights which has been started. A condition report is awaited on all of the Council's footway lighting, (priority can then be assessed depending on the condition/safety of the light columns, for obtaining quotations for changing lights to LED). With regards to possible solutions to replacing the Tally Alley light, the contractor suggested the use of illuminated bollards, ownership of the alleyway needs to be established.
- Communications Policy, including social media policy is being worked upon. Cllrs are reminded not to comment on public social media pages making reference to themselves as Councillors, in a way that could give inaccurate information or be misleading or misconstrued as the Council having discussed and agreed something, when this is not the case. Staff/Cllr communication/relationship protocol to be drafted.
- The Clerk has been working on an overall Cemetery Fees Policy containing all points relevant to the fee structure including frequency and method of fees reviews. This is to be finalised and brought back to a future Town Council meeting with a review of the cemetery fees and cemetery terms and conditions.
- Extension of Cemetery Driveway and turning circle, the Clerk has spent some time in the cemetery looking at the area that would be required to extend the driveway. The area is very extensive and the clerk is concerned about the application of such a large area of tarmac , (environmental and cost). There may be other more appropriate solutions, including a shorter tarmac extension followed by "matting" under the grass surface (and possibly a tarmac path for better pedestrian/disability access), and leaving the existing grass as a driveway over the old cemetery area. Advice is needed from a funeral director with regard to vehicles used. The use of the driveway (as in frequency) for funerals is minimal therefore the grass should not become too worn from being driven on, this requires a lot of further thought to ensure the Council have a cost effective but long term solution for the future use of the cemetery .
- 2 steel liners for the Market Place bins to be ordered (liners available at a reasonable price are a slightly different size to the existing ones (by mm's) liners of the same size have not yet been found.
- Commemorative Plaque for the Fairland Bus shelter, to be ordered

Report prepared 03 April 2023 does not include Matters Arising when the item is on the forthcoming meeting's agenda

Crime Figures – latest February 2023

<https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/norfolk-constabulary/wymondham/?tab=CrimeMap>

on or near:

Southburgh Lane - Criminal damage and arson 1

Frost Row - Criminal damage and arson 1

Muir Drive – Other theft 1

Fleeters Hill - Violent and sexual offences 1

Lincoln Avenue – Vehicle crime 1

**Appendix B DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE LINCOLN HALL ON TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2023. THE MEETING
COMMENCED AT 7.30pm.**

Finance Committee Membership

Cllr Amey, Cllr Dunnett, Cllr Eldridge, Cllr Roberts and Cllr Thompson

Present

Cllr Eldridge, Chairperson
Cllr Amey, Cllr Dunnett, Cllr Roberts and Cllr Thompson
Clerk, Alison Doe

1. Apologies for absence

None received.

2. Declarations of interests with regard to items on the agenda and to consider requests for dispensations

None.

3. Public participation

No members of the public were present and no points were raised.

4. Accuracy of the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 15 November 2022

The minutes were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

5. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 15 November 2022

The Clerk confirmed that the forms for the new bank account were complete, but required signatures. A certified copy of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations is required.

6. To approve any accounts for payment required for payment within the current financial year

The following accounts for payment were approved and the cheques were signed:

REF	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT	VAT
392	LINCOLN SOCIAL CENTRE	HALL HIRE	£100.00	
393	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	TOILETS	£466.39	
394	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	CEMETERY	£15.16	
		TOTAL FOR ALL PAYMENTS (TO DATE)	£581.55	
		TOTAL VAT	£0.00	

7. Proposal to seek quotations for insurance cover (current agreement expires 01 Sept 2023), and discuss/agree any other actions regarding insurance

Cllr Roberts volunteered to review the current insurance policy, it was agreed to seek quotations for a new policy to commence in September 2023.

8. To undertake a review of the budget 2022/23 (see Appendix A for full budget monitoring figures)

The Clerk had produced a budget spreadsheet for the meeting showing all payments made and money received (to date) in figures and percentage against the agreed budget figure for the year. The Clerk explained that there would be additional interest to be added and she was expecting some cemetery income.

The Committee analysed the budget figures line by line noting where the figure was significantly over or below the agreed budget figure.

Notable examples included:

- A greater than expected income from the cemetery, the clerk explained that there had been interments of non-residents for which a higher fee is payable.
- A greater than expected income from interest, due to an increase in interest rates.
- A greater than expected expenditure on metered printing, sundries and stamps, the Clerk advised that the budget had been set following a year when meetings were held via Zoom when less printing was undertaken, this and the additional printing having been done for the Neighbourhood Plan had increased costs and paper use, the Clerk also advised she was ensuring the costs of stamps were reclaimed (more so than in previous years)
- A greater than expected expenditure on the electricity, water and sundries for the toilets. The Clerk explained that the cost of utilities (especially electricity) had increased, as had the cost of toilet paper and other cleaning products. (It was noted that a new electricity contract was due to start and the 2023/24 budget figure reflects the quoted costs).
- A greater than expected expenditure on street lighting repairs and replacements, the Clerk explained that these were ad hoc repairs and replacements required due to failure of the aging lighting stock.

It was noted that some budget items had no expenditure against them and that most of these would have an expected budget of £ZERO in the 2023/24 budget, as the Council had agreed that reserves would be used for ad hoc work.

It was also noted that reserves would be used to pay for known projects such as the skate park repairs (to be paid with CIL), bus shelter renovations, clock repairs, replacement street lighting and the village gates parish partnership scheme project.

It was noted that the balances to date were as follows:

ACCOUNT

1 £26,941.00

2 £218,864.42

3 £38,850.50

4 (dormant account) £186.80

Total £284,842.72

9. To undertake the internal financial check

The financial check was undertaken for months December 2022 to March 2023, cross referencing the minutes, cashbook, invoices, bank statements and paying in book.

All income transactions were checked and a random sample of payment transactions were checked. No accounting errors were found.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm