

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE LINCOLN HALL ON TUESDAY 02 APRIL 2024. THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7.30pm.

Present

Cllr Thompson – Chair

Cllr Anthony, Cllr Barnard, Cllr Dunnett, Cllr Eldridge, Cllr Foord, Cllr Hardy and Cllr Roberts

Clerk – Alison Doe

There were 5 members of the public present, including County Cllr Dewsbury and District Cllr Woolliscroft.

AGENDA

1. The newly Co-opted Town Councillor to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form

Cllr Anthony signed the Declaration of Office Form.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Amey and Cllr Christien.

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

The public are invited to give their views and questions to the Town Council on items on the agenda or raise issues including those for the consideration of inclusion at future meetings.

The Chair gave an update to the public to advise that a meeting had taken place with the Norfolk County Council Highways Engineer, which had included a site visit to Low Road. It was advised that NCC had undertaken some remedial works to reinstate the road edges where they were falling into the ditch. It was also reported that a resident of Low Road had undertaken works to clear pipe work to enable surface water to better flow away. The Chair and Clerk had highlighted the poor state of the road surface to NCC, the damage to the reflector posts and asked if the road could be restricted to residents only, to minimise the road being used as a through road, no commitment to this was made by NCC. NCC had advised that the HGV sign at the Attleborough Road end junction would be replaced.

Residents of Low Road present, raised concerns regarding the frequent burst water pipes and subsequent road closures in order to undertake repairs.

Concern was also raised that highways budgets were not being used effectively, being that the installation of reflector posts was anticipated by NCC to take 3 days (according to a letter sent to residents) however, they were only on site for half a day. The Clerk suggested to County Cllr Dewsbury that there should be some way for residents to feed back this sort of information.

The residents present thanked the Council for trying to help resolve the issues in Low Road.

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

There were no declarations of interest made.

5. 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 2) Apologies for absence and /or (agenda item 4) Declarations of interests

Cllr Thompson confirmed he would Chair all agenda items.

6. To agree the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 05 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting of 05 March 2024 were agreed as correct.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Town Council meeting 05 March 2024 (and other updates contained in a written Clerks report circulated prior to the meeting – See Appendix A)

In addition, Cllr Eldridge advised that there hadn't been an opportunity to meet with the representative of the Community Car Scheme.

The Clerk advised that she and Cllr Thompson had met with the South Norfolk Council Tree Officer to discuss the trees at the former Rectory, with reference to potential of a footway.

8. To consider any applications for co-option onto Hingham Town Council

There were no applications for co-option.

9. Working Party Reports

9.1 Highways, Transport and Environment Working Party

A written report from the Working Party meeting of 26 March 2024 was forwarded to all Cllr prior to the meeting, which reported the following:

Cllr Amey was elected as Chair and William Anthony was introduced as the new Cllr member of the Working Party.

The Working Party had been observing and noting numbers of parked cars around the Fairland and Market Place, observations noted so far:

- 7.30 am no significant problem
- Quieter on the Fairland on a Monday as the café and hairdressers are not open
- Busiest time on the Fairland is between 11 am and 5.30pm
- Highest number of cars counted on the Dereham Road was 8
- Numbers of parked cars on the Fairland reduce after 6pm
- In the Market Place there is regularly 6 cars parked across the carriageway (between chip shop and churchyard entrance, it was witnessed that this blocked the route for an ambulance)
- Busiest parking area south side of the Market Place south green
- Busiest day is a Thursday in the Market Place
- North of the north Market Place green does not appear to be as busy
- Parking appears to be quieter than had previously been noticed in summer months
- There appears to be a number of vehicles that park all day

The working party will continue observing and noting parking trends. Formatting of the information is needed so it can easily be referred to and analysed.

It was noted that:

- Less "car clutter" would make the town visually more attractive and could improve footfall for businesses and encourage visitor numbers (but off highway car parking is the key to this).
- Businesses would need to be encouraged to get on board with reducing their staff reliance on parking all day in the Market Place and Fairland (this is likely to need timed parking restrictions paired with provision of an off highway car park)

Survey

The survey had been designed into an A4 trifold leaflet, the wording was adjusted where needed, especially on the front to give a positive message to encourage survey returns.

- The return date was agreed as 31 May 2024 (due to Easter and need to deliver all of the leaflets when printed).
- The survey will be made available online, a QR code will be added.
- Aim to get the survey printed by 13 April.
- Returned paper surveys will need to be input online by the Working Party.
- A member of the working party will visit businesses to encourage them to return the survey.

Incident record

The Working Party has started to compile the data on a spread sheet, two more incidents had occurred since the last meeting. One on Attleborough Road (single vehicle left the road) and one at the crossroads (2 vehicle accident), no injuries were reported in either accident.

Parking permits

NCC had provided information regarding parking permit schemes as follows:

- Previously South Norfolk wrote to Parish and Town Councils in their District asking if resident permit schemes would be something that those organisations would be interested in supporting. Feedback to them made it clear that Towns/Parishes were actually in need of parking management schemes as not all issues could be fixed by permits alone. So a combination of restrictions would work better.
- Parking management schemes are very consultation heavy as it is a very emotive issue which generates a lot of conversation and correspondence. Developing a proposal can take several years to gain reasonable consensus from a community.
- There needs to be evidence to prove there is a historical problem preventing residents from parking outside/near their homes, or that there is a congestion/safety issue that needs addressing? – this could be complaints to the Town Council, County/District Councillors or directly to NCC.
- There needs to be sufficient support from local residents and businesses for NCC to reasonably take a proposal forward as a legal order. If residents/businesses are divided on a proposal it will take much longer to implement a scheme and be more costly.
- What will happen to currently parked vehicles, where will they displace to? – could a parking scheme in one area just be moving the problem elsewhere.
- Nearly all parking restrictions, yellow lines, parking bays or resident permits will impact residents in some way so the community needs to accept there will be some compromises related to any proposal.

Specifically in relation to resident permits:

- There is no obligation to join a permit scheme, especially if residents can contain all their parking off street including any visitors, so a scheme may fail to get anyone join it and therefore not be economically viable. Similarly if a resident zone is too small then it won't be economically viable to enforce, administer or maintain it.
- Permit prices are set by the highway authority and are not split by the number of residents they affect. They are reviewed on an annual basis against the Consumer Price Index so do change annually.

The Working Party noted that a parking permit does not guarantee a parking space and a permit scheme in operation does not guarantee it will be enforced regularly enough to be effective.

Wig wag sign

Information on the Wig Wag sign in Barford had been received, however costs would be out of date as the sign was purchased in 2014. NCC had advised:

- ❖ Wig Wag signs are supported through the Parish Partnership scheme .
- ❖ A custom made “scheme/sign” can be designed for a specific safety purpose, this could potentially work for the Fairland crossroads.

More information is needed regarding the possibility of use of Wig Wag signage for the crossroads.

Next meeting proposed for 30 April 2024.

10. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group report

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

The Hingham Neighbourhood Plan and associated documents was submitted to South Norfolk Council for examination, on 15 February 2024. South Norfolk Council have accepted the submission and have given the approximate timescales as below for the next stages of the Neighbourhood Plan, as follows:

- Hingham Neighbourhood Plan to go to Cabinet for consideration – April 2024
- Reg 16 consultation (to be run over 6 weeks) – May-June 2024
- Independent Examination – July/August 2024
- Consideration by Cabinet – September/October 2024

- It is expected that a referendum could potentially be held towards the end of 2024. However, SNC have raised concerns regarding the inclusion of Ladies Meadow as a Policy (HIN9) allocating land for community uses as follows:

“South Norfolk Council previously commented on this policy during the Reg. 14 consultation, where planning concerns were raised regarding the deliverability of the site, as well as issues relating to vehicular access and the achievability of pedestrian access. Whilst officers are supportive of the principle in relation to this aspiration, these planning concerns still remain and will need to be reflected within the Council’s response to the forthcoming Reg. 16 consultation. Responses to the Reg. 16 consultation are forwarded directly to the independent examiner and they will recommend on how to proceed, with all of the relevant evidence to hand. They may well question the NP steering group at this point, to see if any further evidence is available to support the deliverability of the policy. There is a possibility that they may recommend the deletion of the policy if such supporting evidence is not available. In addition, they may determine that this should form a ‘community aspiration’ within a separate section of the plan, rather than a planning policy.

However, Hingham Town Council has been awarded a Pride in Place grant to conduct a feasibility study into the development of Ladies Meadow for a car park and mixed community uses. There may well be an opportunity here for the Town Council to use this study to add further support to the HING9 policy (assuming the study results come to a favourable conclusion as regards this site), exploring the constraints we have identified and whether there are ways they can be addressed. However, this would mean deferring the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to a future date, following the conclusion of the study”.

The steering group was given from 27 March to 02 April to consider the following options:

- Proceed as we are with HING9. There is a danger that the examiner deletes the policy. They may include it as a ‘community project’ instead, but it would not be part of the set of policies
- Slow down the Neighbourhood Plan process to receive further information on the site

The steering group raised concerns that the time to respond is very limited, especially as it is Easter Bank Holiday weekend, and although SNC have made reference to the feasibility study, they have not noted that the funding support given is over £19,000 and question why SNC would support the feasibility project (to such a financial degree) if they did not consider that there was a good probability of the study having a positive outcome. The steering group also raised that there could be the potential for alternative vehicular and pedestrian access to the site, which SNC Neighbourhood Plan officers have not considered.

The steering group preference is to not delay the Neighbourhood Plan.

Work to be completed :

Year-end financial reconciliation, including the return of any unspent Locality/Groundwork Grant Funding (if any remains unspent)

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

- 11.1 Cllr Roberts reported that the HPFA were looking at ways to reduce their electricity bills which are extremely high, a meeting with an electrician is due to take place.
The HPFA are also looking at the repairs/replacements needed to the play equipment at the sports field and Welcomme Space, as the RoSPA report has highlighted several issues. The work is likely to be very costly and the HPFA will be looking for funding streams to help with the cost of the work.
The HPFA will be meeting with Abrahams (sports and social club) to ensure that Abrahams is being effective in working for the benefit of the community.
- 11.2 Cllr Hardy reported that the Community Cupboard continues to support many households in Hingham, and donations have enabled Easter eggs and meat vouchers to be given for the Easter period.
- 11.3 Cllr Hardy reported that the Lincoln Hall AGM took place on 20 March and that there is a new booking clerk for the Lincoln Hall. The Lincoln Hall committee is looking to increase their bookings on a Friday and Saturday.

The Cllrs asked the Clerk to write to the previous booking clerk to thank her, for her years of volunteering.

- 11.4 Cllr Dunnett reported that the Education Trust do not receive many applicants and there is concern that the fund is not well enough known about within the community. Grants are given for further education and applications are assessed based on household income. The fund has recently received positive feedback from a student it has supported.

12. General Correspondence (information/circulars etc)

- 12.1 Transport east - Travel Behaviour Survey for the East is now live
12.2 South Norfolk Council - Play Streets Grant Now Open
12.3 Adoption of Greater Norwich Local Plan: South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils

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

- 13.1 Chair of St Andrews Close Residents Association – Parking and access issues to Copper Lane
The Clerk advised that a plea for considerate parking is included in the parish magazine regularly. It was noted that businesses are now putting out their own signage within the Market Place parking area (B1108), however some business staff parking all day is contributing to the parking congestion, and concern was raised regarding getting businesses onboard to help resolve the parking issues. District Cllr Woolliscroft suggested investigating if a business forum would work and/or asking businesses to sign up to a parking pledge.

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

The Clerk had replied to the St Andrews Close Residents Association.
No further actions/responses required.

15. District Councillor's report

District Cllr Woolliscroft reported that South Norfolk Council had agreed an increase in the Council Tax (3%). More households are needing support with the cost of living crisis. SNC still provide leisure centres and refuse/recycling bin emptying, rather than outsourcing. The Community Action Fund has increased and the maximum grant has now increased to £20,000, in order to provide more support to communities. SNC have a dedicated ditch walker to assist in getting under maintained ditches cleared to help to prevent flooding issues.

It was reported that the Greater Norwich Local Plan has been adopted and the Village Clusters Plan is likely to be adopted by the end of the year.

The Town Council raised concerns that nothing further had been heard from SNC regarding their enquiry as to whether the Town Council would take on a proposed green space to the south of the Hops and adjoining land allocated in the GNLP, and that there had been no resolve of the issues with the “missing link” footway between The Hops and Bears Lane. It was suggested that development should bring more to the community than houses, and perhaps this could include some help for the HPFA. Cllr Foord offered to contact Abel Homes. Cllr Woolliscroft advised that now would be a good opportunity to open a dialogue with Abel Homes prior to a planning application being submitted for Norwich Road, and as such has discussed facilitating this, with the Chair and Clerk, a meeting with Abel Homes will be arranged by Cllr Woolliscroft.

16. County Councillor's report

County Cllr Dewsbury reported the following:

The Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Scheme provided two weeks of activities, for the Easter School Holidays, for children aged 4 -16 years. There will also be a Summer Holiday Fun Scheme.

Libraries

Libraries have been giving out a variety of packs over the last few years including sanitary products and items to help people keep warm in winter. School Readiness bags are available for borrowing by children

who will be starting school in September. This is to encourage an interest in looking at books and listening to stories.

Norfolk Western Link

In October 2023 NCC received Outline Business Case approval from the Department of Transport. NCC had been talking to Natural England about acquiring a protected species licence, which is required to permit construction in an area where Barbastelle bats are present, and they had said they would reply by March 15th but before that, on March 8th, they then published new guidance which seems to put the licence in doubt. NCC are awaiting clarification from the Government.

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Plan

The council already has a Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Kings Lynn, Gt Yarmouth and Norwich. It is now looking to extend this idea to 20 more towns, including Wymondham, Hethersett, Attleborough and Watton, to encourage and enable people to walk, wheel (using wheelchairs or mobility aids) or cycle, when making short local journeys. This is to encourage people to stay active and healthy and help reduce the emissions from cars, by having fewer on the roads.

The Town Council raised concerns regarding the poor state of the paintwork on Hingham Library, when many other libraries are undergoing renovation and redecoration. Cllr Dewsbury advised she has been requesting repainting.

17. Planning Decisions

- 17.1 2024/0126 - Proposed disabled toilet block and store . Three Willows Lakes Low Road Hingham Norfolk. Approval with conditions

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

- 18.1 2024/0631 - Conversion of existing garage to annex
Elm Farm The Fields Hingham Norfolk NR9 4JG
The Council did not raise objections to this application.

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

None

20. Reminder of the date of the Annual Town Meeting 16 April 2024

Noted

FINANCE ITEMS 21 TO 31

21. To note the notification of retirement (in September) of the wages administrator

Noted, the Clerk advised that she would contact the wages administrator to see if she will give training on how to administer the wages, so that this can be done within the Clerk role.

22. Receive the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 19 March 2024 (and discuss any points)

The draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 19 March 2024 (see appendix B) were forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting, and contents were noted. The Clerk advised that there would be some further interest to be added to the receipts in the budget monitoring and cashbook, when bank statements are received.

23. To note the Accounts for Payment as approved by the Finance Committee on 19 March 2024
Noted

REF	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT	VAT
D	SSE	STREET LIGHT ENERGY (DD DUE 28/03/24)	£1,085.99	£53.85
532	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	CEMETERY STANDPIPE	£19.10	
533	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	TOILETS	£291.07	
534	THE COMMUNITY HEARTBEAT TRUST	DEFIB ELECTRODES/LIGHT	£80.34	£13.39
		TOTAL FOR ALL PAYMENTS	£1,476.50	
		TOTAL VAT	£67.24	

24. To note:

- a) the Finance Committee's receipt and acceptance of the grant offer from South Norfolk Council for Pride in Place funding for a land feasibility study (community uses including car parking)
- and,
- b) to formally agree, the Finance Committee's "agreement in principle" that the Town Council would part fund the project if Pride In Place funding was not sufficient to cover feasibility study work undertaken (projected funding by the Town Council based on the feasibility study quotation, £5000)

(NOTE – the funding offer letter was received from South Norfolk Council on 14 March 2024, the acceptance of the offer had to be returned to South Norfolk Council by 26 March 2024 with a risk register.

As per advice from South Norfolk Council, the application for grant funding was submitted on the basis that Hingham Town Council would part fund the project if the full scope of the feasibility study was required.

Quotation (full scope of the feasibility study) £24,750

Funding applied for and granted £19,750

Funding from Hingham Town Council £5000)

It was noted that the acceptance of the terms of the Pride in Place funding had been required by 26 March 2024, and the Council agreed to ratify the Finance Committee decision to agree to those terms in accepting the grant funding, and making a commitment for the Town Council to provide £5000 to the project if required.

25. Proposal to have the SAM2 sign serviced and calibrated by Westcotec

(£170+VAT - parts that are required would also be in addition, note Westcotec are the manufactures of the sign)

Cllr Thompson explained that the sign appeared not to be registering speeds correctly, (noted by PC Busfield while undertaking speed enforcement checks). It was agreed to have the sign serviced and calibrated.

26. To agree the asset register for financial year ending March 2024

The Clerk had prepared the asset register and forwarded it to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised that information regarding cost of replacement street lighting needed to be added when the contractor had supplied the information. The asset register was agreed noting the cost of replacement lighting would be added.

27. To agree the draft accounts for financial year 2023/24 (as able to be presented to date)

The Clerk had prepared the draft accounts and advised that some interest would be added when the final bank statements were received. The draft accounts were agreed, noting they are required for the Annual Town Meeting.

28. To consider renewal of the subscription to NALC/Norfolk ALC, noting the previous agreement of the Council to take up the Norfolk ALC offer of a .gov.uk website and email addresses.

It was agreed to renew the Norfolk ALC/NALC subscription, noting the access to advice and information by a recognised organisation.

29. To consider one year membership to the RSN Rural Market Town Group (RMTG) through Rural Services Network (RSN) (£100 plus VAT)

It was considered that this could be a valuable resource for being more recognised as a town and providing information on Market Town initiatives and campaigns, and information on funding opportunities for securing community facilities for the future. It was agreed to sign up for a one year membership.

30. To receive the 2023/24 AGAR external auditor instructions

The email containing the External Audit instructions and links was forwarded to all Cllrs, the Clerk asked Cllrs to note the key dates in the audit process.

31. To agree and approve the accounts for payment

The accounts for payment were agreed and the cheques signed.

PAYEE	DETAILS		AMOUNT	VAT
STAFF	WAGES	£1,064.86		
	CLEANING PRODUCTS	£10.28		
	BINBAGS	£7.16		
	TOTAL		£1,082.30	
STAFF	WAGES		£1,551.20	
NEST	PENSION		£78.63	
HMRC	TAX/NI		£1,688.46	
B FOREMAN	WAGES ADMIN		£108.00	
COZENS (UK) LIMITED	STREET LIGHT MAINTENANCE		£150.00	£25.00
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH	HALL HIRE/NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN		£150.00	
PARISH ONLINE	SUBSCRIPTION		£168.00	£40.00
NORFOLK ALC	MEMBERSHIP/WEBSITE PROVISION AND DOMAIN		£529.61	
COZENS (UK) Ltd	REPLACEMENT LANTERN THE FIELDS		£564.00	£94.00
LINCOLN SOCIAL CENTRE	HALL HIRE		£75.00	
NORFOLK ALC	WEBSITE		£84.40	
	TOTAL (to date) FOR ALL PAYMENTS		£6,145.20	
	TOTAL VAT		£159.00	

32. To consider the Exclusion of the Press and Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss the following matters:'

The following agenda refers to staff details and is therefore considered confidential.

It was agreed to exclude the public. The public were thanked for attending the meeting.

33. To review the increase in paid working hours for the Clerk (as agreed in December 2023)

The Clerk advised that the increase in hours was helping with work management in light of the increased workload due to Highways working party, and the need for the archives working party to meet soon, and new policies needing to be adopted (and reviewed), as well as general email traffic for day to day tasks. It was noted that some months the workload was higher than others due to additional meetings, and reporting back to Council meetings and the allocation of 100 paid hours a month still allowed for some flexibility as to using those hours to accommodate additional work load and reduce hours worked to compensate in quieter times, as often unexpected issues arise which can be time consuming to deal with. It was agreed to review the hours later in the year to ensure they are at the correct level.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm

Signed..... Chair 07 May 2024

DRAFT

Appendix A Clerks report for the Town Council Meeting of 02 April 2024

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Town Council meeting 05 March 2024

MIN 31 The internal Auditor wishes to undertake the Audit week commencing 22 April 2024

Other Updates/Outstanding Issues

- A meeting with Safer Neighbourhood Policing Officer PC Busfield took place on 06 March 2024, discussed parking issues, and anti-social behaviour at the public toilets
- A meeting with the Director of Property Services, Diocese of Norwich took place 07 March 2024 to discuss land at the former Rectory, a land valuation is needed. Permission was given to meet with the South Norfolk Council tree officer to discuss how a pathway could be created with regard to the are Tree Protection Order in place, the Clerk and Chair met with the tree officer who recommended that a tree survey be undertaken.
- New Hingham.gov.uk website and email addresses should be arranged for April
- Vehicle damage Incidents at the cemetery, awaiting outcome through the insurance company. Information has been sent to Norfolk County Council with a request for the speed limit to be lowered. The Highways engineer will refer to the safety team (no updates). Awaiting contact from companies regarding safety bollards
- Quotation for tree works to be sought
- Regarding the Hingham History Centre request for the Town Council to take over assets and funds, the Clerk has spoken with the with History Centre representative, the History Centre paperwork and items stored in the Lincoln Gall store room need to be tidied and rubbish removed, this should allow for enough room for and other paperwork/items to be stored, funds have been confirmed as a little over £10,000 the History Centre are arranging a cheque so funds can be transferred to Hingham Town Council.
- The clerk has been in touch with SNC and will set up a zoom meeting to discuss what is needed for a Community Emergency Response Plan. The Council will need to make a decision regarding if an Community Emergency Response Plan should be implemented and if so agree responsibilities for its implementation and monitoring/reviewing, and the responsibilities regarding holding of any associated personal data.
- Methodist Church tree planting on The Market Place is due to take place on 17th April 2024,
- Norfolk County Council have been advised that the Town Council consent to a survey being undertaken to assess the suitability of the sports centre for an Electric Vehicle charging point, but that the actual installation of such a charging point has not been agreed – no further communication from NCC
- Moon Court facility, SNC have now confirmed they will investigate issues raised regarding Moon Court i.e if a change of use was required for the units to be let on the open rental market and issues with the secondary “emergency vehicles only” access track being used by residents/delivery vehicles for vehicular access. No further communication from SNC.
- Awaiting Raddiramps report on defects at the skate park.
- Raised bank between The Hops and Bears Lane no resolve from Norfolk County Council to undertake any action to implement measures to prevent access to the bank.
- “Re-dedication” of the bus shelter to be organised.
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission have been invited to install signage at the cemetery
- The Clerk has asked Norfolk County Council if a grit bin for The Hops will be supported, no response.
- A suitable place for a new Town Council notice board to be established.
- The resident who has proposed to plant an Oak tree on the Market Place green has agreed to source an alternative species no further correspondence received.
- Letter to the Chief Constable and the Police Crime Commissioner regarding parking drafted photographs need to be added prior to sending.
- 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).
- Applications for Assets of Community Value to be finalised, plans and ownership details are required.
- 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 Clerk will meet with the contractor to discuss solar bolar lighting options

- 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 bought back to a future Town Council meeting with a review 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 and Market Place bus shelter, to be ordered

Report prepared 02 April 2024 does not include Matters Arising when the item is on the forthcoming meeting’s agenda

Crime Figures –January 2024

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

Watton Road - Violent and sexual offences 2

Lonsdale Crescent - Criminal damage and arson 1

Bond Street - Violent and sexual offences 2

Chapel Street - Violent and sexual offences 1

Copper Lane Violent and sexual offences 1, Public Order 1

Fleeters Hill - Violent and sexual offences 1

Norwich Road - Violent and sexual offences 1

Hardingham Street - Other theft 1, Anti Social Behaviour 1

Lincoln Avenue - Violent and sexual offences 2

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN THE LINCOLN HALL ON TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2024. THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7.30pm.

Present

Cllr Roberts, Chair

Cllr Thompson, Cllr Dunnett

Clerk, Alison Doe

There were no members of the public present.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Amey and Cllr Eldridge.

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

There were no declarations of interest made.

Public participation

There were no members of the public present and no points raised from Cllrs.

Accuracy of the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 21 November 2023

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

Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 21 November 2023

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 21 November 2023.

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

The following accounts for payment were approved, and cheques were signed.

REF	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT	VAT
D	SSE	STREET LIGHT ENERGY (DD DUE 28/03/24)	£1,085.99	£53.85
532	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	CEMETERY STANDPIPE	£19.10	
533	ANGLIAN WATER BUSINESS	TOILETS	£291.07	
534	THE COMMUNITY HEARTBEAT TRUST	DEFIB ELECTRODES/LIGHT	£80.34	£13.39
		TOTAL FOR ALL PAYMENTS	£1,476.50	
		TOTAL VAT	£67.24	

To receive the grant offer from South Norfolk Council for Pride in Place funding for a land feasibility study (community uses including car parking)

The grant funding letter has been sent to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

- a) to consider/agree acceptance of the funding package, and
- b) agreement in principle that the Town Council would part fund the project if Pride In Place funding was not sufficient to cover feasibility study work undertaken (projected funding by the Town Council based on the feasibility study quotation, £5000)

NOTE – the funding offer letter was received from South Norfolk Council on 14 March 2024, the acceptance of the offer MUST be returned to South Norfolk Council by 26 March 2024 with a risk register.

As per advice from South Norfolk Council, the application for grant funding was submitted on the basis that Hingham Town Council would part fund the project if the

full scope of the feasibility study was required.

Quotation (full scope of the feasibility study) £24,750

Funding applied for and granted £19,750

Funding from Hingham Town Council £5000

Noting that the acceptance of the funding offer was required before the next Town Council meeting, The Committee agreed to accept the terms of the grant offer, noting the dates for reporting back to South Norfolk Council on the progress of the project.

The Committee also agreed in principle, that if required the Town Council should provide part funding for the feasibility study (£5000). It was agreed that this should be placed on the agenda for the Town Council meeting of 02 April 2024, for full agreement by the Council.

The Clerk confirmed that she would complete the required risk register, and return this and the signed agreement form before the deadline of 26 March 2024.

To undertake a review of the budget 2023/24

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.

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 an interment of a non-resident for which a higher fee is payable.
- A greater than expected income from interest, due to continued high interest rates.
- Ad hoc receipts not within the budget were also noted, these included grant funding for the Neighbourhood Plan, Parish Partnership funding from Norfolk County Council for the village gates, and the passing over of charity funds from the closing down of the Hingham Society.
- A greater than expected expenditure on water for the toilets (estimated billing needs to be checked).
- A greater than expected expenditure on website costs, as Norfolk ALC increased the cost for 23/24 after the Town Council budget had been set and agreed.
- 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 have been used to pay for projects such as the skate park repairs (to be paid with CIL), bus shelter renovations, clock repairs, replacement street lighting, grant funding to organisations and the village gates parish partnership scheme project.

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

ACC 1	£11,338.43
ACC 2	£80,338.91
ACC 3	£39,220.37
ACC 4	£85,000.00
TOTAL	£215,897.71

Total receipts (to date) £107,009.90

Total payments £175,903.13

Note, £650 grant funding was not required by Hingham Playing Field Association, therefore the payment was not banked, and funds added back into the cash book by means of a minus figure payment.

To undertake the internal financial check

the financial check was undertaken for months November 2023 to March 2024, 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 8.20pm

APPENDIX A - BUDGET MONITORING

RECEIPTS

(note these are to date for banks statements available at the time of the meeting)

ITEM	AGREED BUDGET FOR 23.24 - AGREED BY HTC ON 03 JANUARY 2023	TOTAL ACTUAL RECEIPTS	% OF BUDGET
Precept	£77,000.00	£77,000.00	100.00%
Interest	£400.00	£1,199.20	299.80%
Cemetery charges	£4,000.00	£5,160.00	129.00%
HPFA rent	£100.00	£100.00	100.00%
Fee from NCC for grass cutting	£4,368.43	£4,863.32	111.33%
Investment fund	£40.00	£28.62	71.55%
NCC COMMUNITY CAR CONTRIBUTION. ADD BACK IN FOR 23/24	£180.00	£180.00	100.00%
TOTAL	£86,088.43	£88,531.14	102.84%
ALLOCATION OF RESERVES FOR BALANCED BUDGET	£76.97		
BUDGET 2023/24	£86,165.40		

ADHOC RECEIPTS NOT IN BUDGET	
SSE TOILET ELECTRIC CREDIT	£482.48
GROUNDWORKS NP GRANT	£4,836.00
HINGHAM SOCIETY CLOSED CHARITY FUND	£4,337.81
PARISH PARTNERSHIP NCC /BUS SHELTER	£5,525.00
CIL	£2,647.47
ADHOC TOTAL	£17,828.76

OVERALL TOTAL RECEIPTS £106,359.90

TO NOTE:

£650.00 FUNDS ADDED BACK TO CASHBOOK FROM UNUSED GRANT HPFA

PAYMENTS

ITEM	AGREED BUDGET FOR 23.24 - AGREED BY HTC ON 03 JANUARY 2023	ACTUAL TOTAL PAYMENTS EXCLUDING VAT	VAT	ACTUAL TOTAL PAYMENTS INC VAT	TOTAL PAYMENTS INC VAT AS PERCENTAGE
CONTINGENCY	£3,000.00	£546.82	£108.76	£655.58	21.85%
STAFF COSTS					
hmrc/employer contributions	£4,319.40	£1,838.04		£1,838.04	42.55%
pension (@3%)	£940.00	£443.05		£443.05	47.13%
wages caretaking/gardening	£10,000.00	£10,274.08		£10,274.08	102.74%
wages clerk	£17,000.00	£17,540.00		£17,540.00	103.18%
wages toilets	£4,300.00	£4,494.91		£4,494.91	104.53%
ADMINISTRATION					
advertising/publicity	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
allowance chairman	£374.00	£374.00		£374.00	100.00%
allowance clerk WORK AT HOME	£312.00	£312.00		£312.00	100.00%
audit	£750.00	£636.00	£84.00	£720.00	96.00%
elections	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
hall hire	£450.00	£450.00		£450.00	100.00%
information commission fee	£40.00	£40.00		£40.00	100.00%
insurance	£3,000.00	£2,178.46		£2,178.46	72.62%
payroll admin fees	£100.00	£108.00		£108.00	108.00%
printing (lease/metered)	£550.00	£453.08	£90.61	£543.69	98.85%
stationary/stamps/sundries	£150.00	£102.45	£15.72	£118.17	78.78%
storage hire	£250.00	£250.00		£250.00	100.00%
training and subscriptions	£1,200.00	£692.20		£692.20	57.68%
website	£35.00	£70.00		£70.00	200.00%
FOOTWAY LIGHTING					
churtyard lights energy	£60.00	£60.00		£60.00	100.00%
energy	£14,000.00	£12,731.64	£1,827.42	£14,559.06	103.99%
maintenance	£3,500.00	£1,875.00	£375.00	£2,250.00	64.29%

repairs/USE RESERVES	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
replacements (unplanned) USE RESERVES	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
TOILETS					
cleaning products/sundries	£600.00	£390.30	£66.72	£457.02	76.17%
electric	£1,600.00	£1,097.92	£54.88	£1,152.80	72.05%
holiday cover	£330.00	£78.47		£78.47	23.78%
repairs/other	£300.00	£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
water	£600.00	£988.78		£988.78	164.80%
OPEN SPACES AND AMENITIES					
bus shelters	£0.00	£17.59		£17.59	0.00%
cemetery & Fairland standpipes	£150.00	£112.59		£112.59	75.06%
cemetery general maintenance	£100.00	£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
cemetery memorial repairs	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
Christmas tree, lights	£300.00	£241.67	£48.33	£290.00	96.67%
church clock	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
churtyard maintenance	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
community car scheme	£3,000.00	£2,222.00		£2,222.00	74.07%
defibrillator	£320.00	£66.95	£13.39	£80.34	25.11%
dog waste bin emptying	£575.00	£584.50	£116.90	£701.40	121.98%
grass cutting	£12,000.00	£11,909.84	£2,382.00	£14,291.84	119.10%
maintenance/equipment and holiday cover	£250.00	87.65	£7.28	94.93	37.97%
replacement bins (dog/litter/grit)	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
signs	£60.00	£0.00		£0.00	0.00%
skatepark (Rospa & maintenance)	£600.00	£500.00	£15.00	£515.00	85.83%
town sign (repairs/refurb)	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
trees/ditches/planting USE RESERVES. Tree survey	£400.00	£405.00	£81.00	£486.00	121.50%
GRANTS/DONATIONS					
General USE RESERVES	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	N/A
Citizens Advice	£600.00	£600.00		£600.00	100.00%
S137					
general	£50.00	£40.00		£40.00	80.00%
TOTAL AGREED BUDGET	£86,165.40	£74,795.40	£5,287.01	£80,082.41	92.94%

ADHOC PAYMENTS NOT IN BUDGET	EX VAT	VAT	TOTAL INC VAT
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN			
CONSULTANTS FEES/EXPENSES	£9,997.55		£9,997.55
ROOM HIRE	£250.00		£250.00
RETURNED GRANT	£1,237.61		£1,237.61
PRINTING	£423.30	£84.66	£507.96
PARISH ONLINE	£140.00	£28.00	£168.00
CIL			
SKATE PARK RESURFACE	£11,848.00	£2,369.60	£14,217.60
EVENTS			
CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATION CRAFT	£93.87	£18.78	£112.65
UNBUDGETED REPAIRS/MAINTENANCE USING RESERVES			
LIGHTING REPLACEMENTS AND REPAIRS	£16,336.88	£3,267.38	£19,604.26
TREE WORK	£7,890.00		£7,890.00
TOWN CLOCK REPAIRS/MAINTENANCE	£2,745.00	£549.00	£3,294.00
GRANTS/DONATIONS			
KINGS CORONATION	£1,536.00		£1,536.00
BROWNIES	£200.00		£200.00
C/CUPBOARD	£973.60		£973.60
HPFA	£0.00		£0.00
OTHER			
DOG WASTE BIN EMPTYIND 22.23	£520.80	£104.16	£624.96
COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME CONTRIBUTION 22.23	£2,982.75		£2,982.75
PARISH PARTNERSHIP VILLAGE GATES	£19,444.00		£19,444.00
BUS SHELTER RENOVATIONS	£11,050.00	£2,210.00	£13,260.00
	EX VAT	VAT	TOTAL INC VAT
ADHOC TOTALS	£87,669.36	£8,631.58	£96,300.94
OVERALL TOTALS	£162,464.76	£13,918.59	£176,383.35