



**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE DAVID MYHILL ROOM, YAXHAM VILLAGE HALL
at 7.30PM on THURSDAY 4th October 2018**

Present: Cllrs. Lowings (Chairman), Martin (Vice- Chairman), Crummett, and Goldsmith

In Attendance: 6 members of the public.

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all present for the meeting. He noted that our Locum Clerk, Pat Baldwin, had been unable to attend the meeting and invited a Cllr to volunteer. Cllr Crummett proposed that Cllr Martin take the Minutes for the meeting, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith. AGREED unanimously.

The Chairman explained that the meeting had been called because last Friday, 28th September 2018, it had become clear that the trees under discussion in Item 5 had to be urgently removed as they had become a danger to road users and pedestrians, and that the Yaxham Village Amenities Association (YVAA) were financially challenged in dealing with this further unplanned expenditure. To meet the urgency of the matter the motion for decision was then drafted with the Vice-Chairman. Further discussions with interested parties have followed. The YVAA has received now two quotes and applied to Breckland for agreement undertake the work.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Bennett.

3. Declarations of interest

Cllr Goldsmith declared an interest in Item 5 as a YVAA Trustee and employee. He had submitted the Application Form for a Dispensation to be allowed to speak and vote. NALC had advised that this was in order. The dispensations was AGREED unanimously.

4. Public Session.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for the public session. He stated he would only allow comments from the public relating to the motion for decision at item 5.

Members of the public expressed their support for the motion to be considered, because of the safety issues with the trees as they were on a bank with only half a root system; they welcomed the close working of the Parish Council and the YVAA on this matter and looked forward to the two organisations working closely together in the future.

The Chairman thanked the public for their contributions, and re-opened the meeting.

5. Motion for decision.

In the light of the advice of Hugh Coggles, Breckland Council Tree Officer, the danger to the users of the Norwich Road of the condition of the Cypress trees in front of Yaxham Village Hall, following one of the trees coming down in recent winds, and in the interests of all of the residents of the parish, the Parish Council resolves to grant the YVAA up to £2,500 to cover the costs of tree surgery to urgently remove the remaining Cypress trees. This grant to be permitted under the s137 budget heading, and that budget be increased to £2,500 by *viring* £1,500 from the Projects/Grants Earmark.

In the names of Councillors Lowings (Chairman), and Martin (Vice Chairman).

The Chairman called on Cllr Martin, as acting RFO, to propose the motion. Cllr Martin reiterated the reason for urgency i.e. the safety of the public, as both tree surgeons were concerned that the remaining trees were at risk following the loss of one of the trees. The YVAA with a number of unplanned commitments had therefore found this additional unplanned work, estimated at £2,000+, financially challenging. The Trustees had asked the Parish Council for help, and the Chairman called this extraordinary meeting. The proposed grant to only be made on sight of the full invoice. The use of the s137 budget was to ensure the Council has the power to make such a grant, which is capped by law at £5,079.47 for 2018/19. The 2018/19 s137 budget item was £1,000, hence the proposal to *vire* funds from the Project/Grants Earmark. The Council's earmarked funds are comfortably sufficient to cover this grant and other recent commitments.

Cllr Crummett asked why the YVAA found this work financially challenging. Cllr Goldsmith responded setting out the series of unplanned expenditures including other tree work; and re-storing the bar to meet existing village hall booking commitments, and decorating the new Community Rooms following the departure of the Social Club. The YVAA is seeking to recover monies from the Social Club, and legal proceedings may follow. In the meantime this additional unplanned tree work meant YVAA had a cashflow issue.

Cllr Crummett, asked if it was a cashflow issue could the grant be a loan. Cllr Martin said he would address loan versus grant question after the tree surgeon quotes. The YVAA had now received two quotes for £1,920 and £1,495 respectively. The YVAA will be paying the invoice so VAT is not recoverable. Also, the YVAA has applied to Breckland for approval for the trees to be removed. So, the proposed grant could be reduced from "£2,500" to "£1,500". Addressing the loan versus grant issue, Cllr Martin said a grant is simpler to make, and a loan raises more regulatory issues, requires the YVAA to raise the cash to repay the loan, diverting monies from other commitments. However, he said the YVAA had offered to waive the Council's room hire charges for a number of years. The Council is typically booking around 48 hours a year and at current rates this is around £300 a year. So, in five years the value of the waived charges would be £1,500 or more. Cllr Crummett expressed his satisfaction with this offer.

Cllr Martin then proposed, and Cllr Lowings seconded, the following amendments to the motion:

- a) Revise the proposed grant from £2,500 to £1,500, and reduce the *vired* amount from £1,500 to £500; and
- b) Add the following words to the motion:
The Council notes that the YVAA has kindly agreed to waive the village hall hire charges for the Parish Council for 5 years.

The amendments were AGREED unanimously.

Cllr Martin then proposed, and Cllr Lowings seconded, the amended motion. The amended motion was AGREED unanimously.

Cllr Martin also proposed that the cheque for the grant be only written and signed on sight of the full invoice following the completion of the works, and that this could be done outside of a Parish Council Meeting, up to the sum agreed. This was AGREED unanimously.

6. There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 7.55pm.