



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF YAXHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 23rd MAY 2023 AT 7.30PM IN THE DAVID MYHILL ROOM AT YAXHAM VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs Maggie Oechsle (MO) (Chairman), Ben Conway (BC), Bob Gust (BG), Chris Couves (CC), Gary Davison (GD), Graham Howe (GH) and Paul Bone (PB)

In attendance: Clerk and District Cllrs Paul Claussen and Paul Plummer and 6 members of the public
Declaration of office forms were signed by all Councillors prior to the meeting commencing.

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everybody and introduced the members of the Parish Council and informed the Council and public that the meeting was being recorded.

2. To elect the Chair for the coming year and the signing of the acceptance of office

It was unanimously agreed to elect Councillor Oechsle as Chair. Proposed by GD and seconded by CC and the declaration of office was signed.

3. To elect the Vice-Chair and the signing of the acceptance of office

It was unanimously agreed to elect Councillor Conway as Vice Chair. Proposed by GH and seconded by BG and the declaration of office was signed.

4. Co-option of Paul Bone

The Chair welcomed Paul Bone and introduced him to the Councillors. BG proposed that Paul Bone be co-opted seconded by GD and all agreed. The Chair invited him to take his place on the council and sign his acceptance of office.

5. Apologies for Absence

NCC Councillor Ed Connolly had sent his apologies.

6. To acknowledge the contribution made by previous Chairman Peter Lowings for his years of service to the Council and the Yaxham Community.

The Chair acknowledged his long service to the Council and the Community – please see the attached appendix.

The Chair presented Peter Lowings with the Freedom of the Parish.

Peter was invited to give a speech. He thanked the Chair for her words and reminded the Councillors that the decisions they take affect people's lives in the village and asked them to always remember that.

7. Declarations of interest

None.

8. Public Session

There were no matters raised.

9. Reports from County and District Councillors

DC Paul Plummer reported that the food bus has been updated and is back on the road.

DC Paul Plummer also requested the Clerk to add if present to reports from County and District Councillors on the agenda.

10. Minutes of Previous Meeting

10.1. To approve the minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14.4.2023.

The Minutes of the meeting were approved without amendment and signed as a correct record. All agreed.

10.2. To receive the Clerk's Report on matters since the last meeting.

- A resident of Yaxham informed the Clerk of a blocked field drain on Station Road, this was reported to Highways who have inspected and have agreed to resolve the problem
- The accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023 have been prepared and reviewed by the Internal Auditor.
- The Clerk has circulated the insurance renewal paperwork, this had been reviewed and will be finalised later at the meeting.
- Highways have repainted the white lines on the corner of Well Hill and the Zig Zags outside the school have been extended towards Spring Lane.
- The Clerk has raised a new invoice for the NCC Service Delegation Agreement for 2023 by 7.1% to account for inflation and updated our new account information. The SDA is for reimbursing the Parish Council for vegetation cutting and clearance of public rights of way and promoted trails.

The Chair thanked the Clerk and asked had there been any response from the school regarding the Zig Zag lines. BC reported that it has made it much clearer to parents. The white lines opposite were sometimes infringed upon but were more visible now and it had made parents aware of safer parking.

10.3. To consider matters arising from minutes of previous meetings not considered elsewhere on this Agenda.

None.

11. To agree the appointment of Councillors to the following:

- 11.1.** Internal Audit Control Officer for the coming year - PB
- 11.2.** Neighbourhood plan steering group – PB, GH and MO
- 11.3.** Staffing committee (3) – The Chair, CC, and GD
- 11.4.** Councillor responsible for Defibrillator - GD
- 11.5.** Councillor(s) responsible for Playground inspections – CC and BG
- 11.6.** Councillor responsible for Sam2 - BG

- 11.7. Councillor responsible for planters - GD
- 11.8. Councillor responsible for grass and hedge cutting – BG and BC
- 11.9. YVAA Representative -BG (lead) and CC
- 11.10. Yaxham Church of England (VA) Primary School Representative - BC
- 11.11. Council appointees (3) to Townlands Charity – The Chair, BC and Peter Lowings

12. Planning

12.1. To receive and consider any new planning applications - None.

12.2. To note any planning responses made since the last meeting.

3PL/2023/0356/TPO - Support remedial work to retain the Oak Tree

12.3. To note any planning decisions.

TRE/2023/0123/TPO - St Peters Close Oak Tree reduce canopy by up to 2m radially from 7.5m to 5.5m all round. Reduce height from 16m by up to 3m to 13m – **TPO WORK CONSENT**

12.4. Other planning issues.

Tree and Countryside officer report.

The Chair reported they have received notification of TPOs for three Ash trees, a copse and three Oak trees. The Chair also noted when the Neighbourhood plan public session was held there was interest in having that land as a green space.

To note the Clerk submitted the responses agreed by councillors for Breckland's Issues and Options consultation. The Chair also confirmed the NP4 Yaxham review group had also submitted the Issue and Options consultation.

12.5. To receive an update from Yaxham's neighbourhood plan review

The Chair reported there is a meeting arranged with Andrew Darcy at Breckland. The question of funding needs to be addressed as there are no grants currently available for local plan reviews. Another question that needs to be answered is after having the review and the villagers giving their responses does the Local Plan have any weight with the planning inspectorate? The Chair to ask Breckland with the 50% match funding for the grant does 50% have to come from locality?

PB reported the results of the questionnaire have been collated and will be published soon.

13. Play Area Report

CC reported the ground underneath the seesaw and the two springers would need matting placed on the ground to prevent further erosion of the ground whilst still allowing the grass to grow through. CC will continue to monitor and obtain some costings for matting and report back at the next meeting.

BG reported one of the bearings on the swing had seized up. CC to have a look at it and arrange any required repairs.

14. Defibrillator

The Clerk to forward all relevant information regarding the village hall defibrillator to GD.
GD to find out a price for a new defibrillator for Clint Green and report back at the next meeting.
It was felt the school would be the most suitable location. BC has asked the school whether they would be happy for a defibrillator to be sited there and is waiting for a response. BC will chase a response and report back at the next meeting.

15. Highways and Footpath issues

BG has reported the manhole cover at the top of Spring Lane again which he feels is dangerous to cyclists. Highways have not repaired it.

BG also reported the Wig Wag lights heading towards Clint Green are not working again. The Clerk to reported to Linda McDermott at Highways.

BG reported the school hedge is infringing on the footpath that runs alongside it. BC to inform the school.

CC reported the footpaths are overgrown especially the one at Mouses Bridge. BC to see what needs to be done.

The Chair informed the meeting a resident had emailed wanting to bring to the attention of the Parish Council the lack of grass cutting throughout the village. It was said this was due to No mow May and noted that the grass had started to be cut again.

The Chair asked the Clerk how much it would be for an extra cut of the football pitch. The Clerk reported that was £75 plus VAT.

16. Finance

16.1. To agree the following items for payment (May)

To Pay	Detail Invoices available for viewing	£ Total	VAT	Ex VAT
Robin Goreham	Internal audit fee	60.00	-	60.00
Amazon	Parish S.137 payment	15.00	-	15.00
Clerks and Councils Direct	Parish S.137 payment	108.66	18.11	90.55
Clerk	Clerks net wages for May	510.00	-	510.00
Clerk	Clerks expenses for May	55.59	4.26	51.33

Proposed by BC, seconded by BG and all agreed.

16.2 To note any receipts

Detail	£ Total	VAT	Ex VAT
NONE			

16.3. To receive the Internal Auditor's report and consider his recommendations

The internal auditor was happy the standing orders, financial regulations, and financial risk assessment had been reviewed and recommended that these continue to be reviewed regularly.

The Clerk also reported that the internal auditor had suggested that items on the asset register should be valued periodically. PB to see if he can arrange someone to value the assets on the register.

The report concluded, "I am satisfied that this Parish Council is functioning well and is fully discharging its legal and statutory responsibilities." The Chair thanked the Clerk for her work on this.

16.4. To approve 2022-23 Annual Governance Statement

The Chair signed the statement.

16.5. To approve 2022-23 Statement of Accounts

The accounts were approved.

16.6. To agree the re-appointment of Robin Goreham as Internal Auditor for 2023-24

BC proposed, The Chair seconded and all agreed.

16.7. To confirm the signatories for the Unity Bank account

It was agreed GD would be added as another signatory. All agreed.

16.8. To agree Annual Insurance quote

The Clerk explained she had three insurance quotes. It was agreed to go for the quote from BHIB and the Clerk would see if she could negotiate the price further in advance of the 1st June renewal date.

The Chair asked the question whether the war memorial was covered and for how much. It was noted that it was covered but the Clerk would increase the cover to £60,000.

16.9. Bank position as circulated

This had been circulated prior to the meeting.

17. To consider Training for the Councillors and the Clerk

The Clerk reported that planning training was for two and half hours and that the cost would be £350. The Chair suggested a session inviting Councillors from Whinburgh and Westfield Parish thereby splitting the cost. All agreed and the Clerk to arrange.

The Clerk had already sent round the link for new Councillor training and would ensure that all had booked this.

18. To consider a possible change in meeting days

The Chair suggested a change to Wednesdays and all agreed on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

19. Correspondence Received since last meeting

NALC, NPTS, CPRE, emails from residents. Correspondence received from NWL/A47 local liaison group received but not circulated as this was sent to previous Councillor Richard Whadcoat. GH agreed to receive these in future.

20. Urgent Business

BC raised CPRE event at Eastern College.

BC also raised all bus rides are currently £2 and it has been extended to October but there has been limited publicity.

21. To note the next meeting dates of the Parish Council

28th June apologies from BC and CC

26th July and 27th September

The meeting closed at 9.02pm.

APPENDIX

The Parish Council has reached a landmark in its history with Peter Lowings' decision not to seek nomination again to the Council. For 29 years he has given the village his time, his service and huge commitment and for all this we thank him enormously.

He became a councillor in 1994 and went straight into a very contentious issue at the time – a new battery chicken farm application for Cutthroat Lane – and we have to be grateful this once for the potential flood risk because this was the main reason the application was turned down at appeal. The next hurdle was the saga of the helicopters being restored at Yaxham House and tested at weekends. How the Church survived the vibrations of those old machines was quite miraculous. The sale of Breckland Garden Centre was the next hurdle for the Council and a long battle was fought for a good few years as Yaxham Waters came into being.

However, above all I remember the support and friendship that Peter as Chairman of the Parish Council gave to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group in 2015. He joined the WG and was the only parish councillor to support the project from the outset. He accurately read the view of the parish that small and rural was how people wished the village to remain and we can only thank him for being there when he was needed.

So to acknowledge his commitment to the village, we have great pleasure in awarding him the first ever Freedom of the Parish and I'm sure Peter will be the first to say – “fine, but where are the pubs for my free beers!” Once there were about 7 hostelries in Yaxham, 2 post offices, the mill, corner shop and even in the 1990s there were still 2 pubs remaining. So we need to make the most of what we still have as a community and make good use of this village hall where there is sometimes a good draught beer to be had.