

North Somercotes Parish Council
Minutes of the North Somercotes Parish Council held on
Monday 22 January 2024 at 7.00 pm in the St Mary's Church Hall

There was 1 member of the public present. Cllr Paul Rickett had given his apologies and was not present.

Public Session

a. Comments/updates from District and County Cllrs – none present, see emails

b. Comments from members of the Public on agenda items or issues for consideration for future agenda

i. report of further damage and attempted arson to the public toilets on 29 December 2023

Call from WPC on Friday 12th January when she said she would call visit to check the CCTV footage on the different cameras – see item 13 below.

ii. removal of redundant lights on Conisholme Rd (turned off 2016/17)

Short notice was provided regarding their removal by LCC on 15th/16th Jan. Resident complained on the morning of 16th January and had apparently made a number of complaints to LCC highways previously, especially regarding the one at the junction with Eau Bank, and the near misses – see 6 below.

The Chairman closed the public session and opened the meeting at 7.03pm

Monthly Meeting

22/1/24-1 a. Present: Cllr Stephen Brooks (Chairman), Cllr Neil Drewery (Vice Chairman), Cllr John Kennedy, Cllr Trisha Newman, Cllr Roger Maidens, Cllr Lynda Plater, Cllr Paul Walmsley, Cllr Shaun Smalley, Cllr David Wallis, Sheila Pearce – Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

b. Apologies for Absence – It was RESOLVED to accept Cllr Stuart Arundel's and Cllr Danny McNally's absence for the reasons given.

22/1/24-2 To receive any declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest on any item on the agenda in accordance with the Localism Act and the Council's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders – None.

22/1/24-3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 December 2023 – it was RESOLVED to adopt and sign the notes as accurate minutes, and they were dated and signed by the Chairman.

22/1/24-4 Clerk's Report on matters outstanding – for information only

a. Cemetery – changes to Cemetery Rules & Regulations – see 10 below, repair to the metalwork on the bell outstanding, mapping of grave spaces nearly completed, mapping of electric cable done **b. Setting up Work Email Addresses** – outstanding **c. Coastal Path** – still awaiting confirmation of route **d. Chapel Field Housing** – Platform visit has taken place tenant still cannot use their garden owing to clay soil so all turf needs replacing **e. Chapel Field Future Use** – neighbours to be contacted re trees, school to be contacted re growing project – outstanding, land cleared but trees/suckers still need dealing with **f. Donna Nook RAF/DIO Land and Buildings ACV listing** – ELDC have confirmed granted for a further 5 years **g. Defibrillators** – location map of each one in the parish to be done/check registration with EMAS – outstanding **h. Louth Canal lack of maintenance** – reply to EA response in draft as bridge still blocked with weed as at 4 January 2024 **i. Complaint to Police re ASB and criminal damage** – ongoing **j. Letter to District Cllr McNally re ASB/Criminal Damage** – ongoing **k. Public Toilets** – works has started to refurbish the toilets. A criminal damage and arson attack was carried out on the toilets around 8.30 am on 29 January. CCTV footage from different cameras provided to the police and other bodies; no contact until 12 Jan despite updating crime report via phone and email to force control. Stones were also thrown at Somercotes House Greenhouse, which was also reported to the police. **L. Oil order** – over 25,000 litres were obtained for members timed to catch the usual low in January, despite rebel activity and impact on shipping, at 58.99p per litre plus vat. Next order due around mid to end of March/April **m. Swimming pool roof** – chased again, still waiting for contractor to visit and provide quote. **O. Hedges on South Rd** – requested contractor to proceed to cut them back asap.

22/1/24-5 Budget Setting 24/25 – the Clerk's final proposals and options for the 24/25 budget and resulting precept were discussed and it was RESOLVED to proceed with Option 1 and request the sum of £44K from ELDC by 26 January 2024. Based on a reduced tax base from 573 to 570 band D equivalent properties this year, this results in an increase of just £4.25 pa or 8p per week to £1.49 per week for a Band D property. This is an increase of 5.83% which is below the RPI as at October 23 which was 6.1%.

North Somercotes Parish Council

22/1/24-6 To consider Planning applications received & RESOLVE the way forward on these/other Planning matters

- a. **Planning applications for approval:** None
- b. **to note planning applications granted:** None
- c. **Enforcement Issues/Actions:** None
- d. **Any other urgent planning matters/applications:** None

22/1/24-7 Highways, Paths and Lighting:

- a. **verbal update on problem log, including:**
 - i. **South Rd – programme date awaited**
 - ii. **Warren Rd drainage – programme date awaited**
 - iii. **Warren Rd – trees/hedge opposite the primary school** – the Clerk has provided Cllr McNally with a copy of the title deeds which indicate that some, if not all, of the trees which are overhanging the road appear to be growing in LCC Highways verge rather than the two properties.

b. any additional issues/other urgent matters to be reported

- i. **Removal of redundant LCC lights on Conisholme Rd** – The Clerk referred to the complaint raised in the public session and that she had checked with the Highways Engineer before the lights were removed who had confirmed it was not necessary to have lighting in a 30mph zone, so any future reduction to 30 from 40mph would not be affected. A request for the light on the corner of Eau Bank to remain and be switched back on could not be justified, as in the years since they have been turned off (2016/17) there have been no recorded incidents despite how difficult it is to emerge safely from this junction, especially during the day.

22/1/24-8 To receive reports from councillors who are representatives on Village Organisations/Committees

- a. **Playing Fields Association - Cllr Walmsley** – the work to repair the fascia, soffits and guttering damage caused by the arson attack is in hand. The impact on future insurance costs and the possibility of not being able to obtain insurance cover at all is of concern. There will be no Valentine's event, but an event later in the year is planned instead. The Playing Field will be proceeding with the improvements to the CCTV coverage, which will also include the additional coverage in and around the public toilets on a combined system, so arrangements for a proportion of ongoing annual costs will need to be agreed.

- b. **Police Panel – Cllr Newman** – Cllr Newman had attended the Neighbourhood Policing Team's quarterly meeting. Antisocial behaviour (ASB) was top of the agenda, and a number of ASB orders have been issued and actioned across the area. Increased media output across social media and newspapers is planned and the lack of police presence/numbers remains the main concern. The Chief Constable is retiring this month, and the present Deputy Chief Constable Juile Debenham will be Acting Chief Constable until a replacement is appointed. There has been considerable speculation in the media regarding an incident in Skegness and the police have referred themselves to the Independent Police Complaints Board so will not be issuing any further comments on the matter. Efforts are being directed towards dealing with electric scooters – stopping, confiscating, and prosecuting, and the significant problem of sexting amongst school children. It was noted that if anyone sees hare coursers in the area they should ring 999.

- c. **Emergency/Flood Planning – Cllr Newman/Clerk** – no action at present.

- d. **Village Hall Committee** – no report.

- e. **DTE Wildlife Group – Cllr Newman/Clerk** – Cllr Newman noted that the Seal season had seen 2,207 pups born with a 6.8% mortality rate and some 49,533 visitors logged and £2,744 Teddies sold this year. Car parking and traffic management had been broadly successful despite waterlogging and some issues with the one-way system as previously noted.

22/1/24-9 Finance

- a) the bank reconciliation for January 2024 was received, checked, and signed by the Chairman.
- b) It was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of receipts of £1,320 and payments of £3,173.77 for January 2024
- c) It was RESOLVED to agree the budgeted expenditure for the bench for Keeling St, one litter bin and two more planters, as per the Clerks proposals totally £1,500 plus costs of removal of the old bench/fitting the new one.
- d) to deal with any urgent financial matters – Swimming Pool Changing Room Roof. The Clerk noted that a second quote had now been received and she would therefore be looking to try and locate some grant funding for the

North Somercotes Parish Council

project. Cllr McNally has noted that some funds can be made available from the Cllrs Grant scheme and this was noted.

22/1/24-10 Cemetery Matters – to receive the following items, discuss and RESOLVE the way forward:

- a. The Clerk noted some of the main changes to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations** to clarify various matters, including the phasing out of plastic floral displays and floral oasis owing to microplastic pollution, and it was RESOLVED to adopt the Clerk's proposed changes with immediate effect.
- b. The report from the Clerk on potential unused spaces within the older sections of the Cemetery**, which had been compiled as the grave plots map was being checked and corrected, had been circulated. The Clerk noted that there was potential for quite a number of spaces to be recovered, even if only for ashes burials if they were a narrow space, and that she would bring this back to the meeting once the mapping exercise is completed so that the council can determine what action may be taken. There are also some potential problems with spaces that have been reserved under trees where the tree roots will now be quite considerable, and work was in hand to identify and resolve these.
- c. the Clerk's draft Cemetery Management Plan** – owing to the Clerk's absence this has been delayed.

22/1/24-11 To receive/note general Correspondence for January, Website Updates and Communication

Councillors were reminded that comments can be made on the Greater Lincolnshire Devolution proposals up until the end of January 2024. The National Grid - Grimsby to Walpole upgrade Consultation proposals/briefings have been received and the Clerk and the Chairman will aim to attend one of the webinars as the overland proposals could see significant negative effects to the £1b per annum rural visitor economy as well as the wider community than just those where pylons are proposed to be sited. It was noted that D-Day 80th Year celebrations are proposed across the country and the Council may wish to consider taking part in this activity.

22/1/24-12 Agenda items for the meeting to be held on 26th February 2024 in ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL

Confirmation of Precept request submitted on 23 January 2024, Auditors Report from Internal Audit on 12 Feb 2024, Response to National Grid Proposals.

22/1/24-13 Confidential Matters – it was RESOLVED that the Council would move into closed session by reason of the confidential personnel matters to be transacted – the member of the public present departed the meeting at this point.

- a. To discuss any updates on the action being taken following the recent spate of Anti-social behaviour/Criminal damage** and RESOLVE the way forward.

The Clerk noted that the response to the complaint to the Police about the time taken to investigate the arson incident was still awaited. A further incident at the Amvale Bus Depot last week, when it is alleged that windows were being smashed at 2pm in the afternoon, has also been reported to the Police and neighbours' CCTV is being checked.

- b. report of further damage and attempted arson to the public toilets on 29 December 2023**

i. The Clerk noted images from the 3 CCTV cameras was available for the Police, and she had spoken with the WPC last week regarding viewing these.

ii. The Chairman noted that he had received a complaint regarding the posting of these arson attempts and antisocial behaviour incidents on social media. The Clerk left the meeting, and the Chairman outlined the details of the complaint and the advice received from LALC. It was unanimously RESOLVED that the Chairman should proceed as outlined.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Sheila Pearce

Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer