

Pre-Meeting Business: Before formally opening the meeting, the Chairman presented a gift on behalf of the Councillors to Mr John Lee in grateful appreciation of over 10 years of unstinting service as Clerk to the Parish Council. The Chairman also read out a letter from Mr Colin Groom thanking the Councillors for the gift presented to him at the June meeting.

Public Participation: Mrs Linda Richmond gave a brief update regarding progress on the Parish Plan. Design of a suitable questionnaire to canvass the views of parishioners is ongoing. A grant application for £1000 to Breckland Council has been successful; 50% will be received shortly with the other 50% due on completion of the plan.

New Clerk: The Chairman took the opportunity to introduce and to welcome Mr Kevin Webb, who would observe proceedings for this meeting and take over fully from the August meeting onwards.

North Elmham Parish Council

**Minutes of the
MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
held at 7.30pm at the Sports Pavilion on
Wednesday 1st July 2009**

052. Those Councillors Present Were:

Mrs C Payne (Chairman), Mr J Brown, Mr R Don, Mr B Fletcher,
Ms A Ketteringham, Mr N Lowe, Mrs E Marsh, Mr R Neve, Dr P Wade-Martins

Also In Attendance:

Mr J A Lee (outgoing Clerk), Mr K Webb (incoming Clerk),
Mrs J Smith (Newspaper Correspondent), 3 Parishioners.

053. To Consider Apologies for Absence:

Resolved to accept apologies from Mr C Smith (Vice-Chairman), Mr C Groom (Parish Councillor) and Mr W Borrett (County & District Councillor).

054. To Receive Declarations of Interest:

The Chairman reminded the meeting that, should the occasion arise, interests should be declared by Councillors as soon as this was realised, and the interest would be minuted.

055. Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd June 2009:

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record.

UPDATED INFORMATION & MATTERS ARISING

056. Anglian Water (item 033):

No further developments.

057. Pavilion & Playing Field Matters (item 034):

(a) Grounds Maintenance. Although the playing field grass is now being cut to a satisfactory standard, the grass and weed control around the play area and the pavilion appears non-existent. It was agreed that a site meeting between the contractor and all Councillors who have responsibility for areas of ground in the parish (i.e. Mr Brown, Mr Smith, Mr Lowe and Mr Neve) should hold a face-to-face site meeting with the contractor to resolve these problems once and for all. Mr Brown agreed to arrange a date and time suitable for all.

(b) Abandoned Car. With the Mobile Police Office due to visit on 2nd July, Mr Brown undertook to press the police for more help in contacting the owner with the aim of getting the car removed.

058. Land Management Matters (item 035):

(a) Village Green. Mr Lowe reported some vandalism to the gate at the Eastgate Street entrance which, for safety reasons, he had repaired immediately. The Chairman thanked him for this prompt action. The Clerk reported that, after initially positive progress, the date for renewal of the lease (1st July) had arrived with no document being received. He will ask our new County Councillor, Mr Borrett, to chase progress on the Parish Council's behalf.

(b) Cathedral Ruins. With the impending retirement of Mr Marsh as caretaker, a job specification and advertisement has been prepared and published in the July issue of the *Elmham News*. Applications are awaited. Mr Jack Hubbard has recently done a significant amount of work to cut the grass in the moat.

(c) Cathedral Meadows. The Parish Council has received guidance from Natural England on the best way to reinvigorate the wild flower meadow. This entails sheep grazing followed by weed killing and work is in hand. In view of this season's rapid growth, Natural England has also given permission for the grass in the main meadows to be cut earlier than specified in the Countryside Stewardship Agreement. The Clerk was asked to inform the grazier, Mr Fish, accordingly.

(d) Broom Green. Mr Neve reported that, following discussions with the contractor, the grass around the pond has now been cut satisfactorily.

(e) Millennium Wood. Mr Allsop is maintaining the wood to a very high standard and the area is looking very good.

059. Safe Route to School (item 036):

There seems to be very little sign of progress on resolving the access problem to the rear of the school. The Clerk was asked to check the situation with Norfolk County Council. At the same time, he was asked to seek clarification on the schedule for weed spraying on the village green on either side of the path.

060. Street Lights (item 037):

The Clerk reported that he had still been unable to make any progress with regard to a possible insurance claim for the damaged (and subsequently replaced) street light in High Street. Based on the limited information and evidence available, it was considered that the chances of success were very slim and it was agreed to abandon the claim.

061. Highway Matters (item 038):

Mr Fletcher reported on the forthcoming pavement works, full details of which have been published in the July issue of the *Elmham News*. Problems are still being encountered in Cathedral Drive with inconsiderate parking by parents dropping off school children. However, it was acknowledged that the Parish Council has no powers to address this situation. Overhanging shrubs in Oak Avenue are causing problems for pedestrians trying to pass along the pavement. Mr Fletcher will inform Norfolk Highways, who have the power to instruct homeowners to trim back such obstructions.

062. Sign to Village Facilities (item 039):

No further developments.

063. Youth Activities (item 040):

The Youth Club is suspended until the autumn.

064. Condition of Village Post Boxes (item 041):

All post boxes appear finally to have been repainted. With regard to the necessary refurbishment of Parish Council-owned street furniture (bins, seats etc), it was agreed to accept a quote of £445 from Mr Mark Latham which had been received by Mr Lowe. Although the Parish Council had only budgeted for £100 in the current year, it was agreed that this extra level of expenditure was justifiable and affordable from part of the unbudgeted surplus received for the annual Recycling Credit. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Latham accepting this quote.

065. Norfolk Minerals & Waste LDF (item 042):

Ms Ketteringham reported that site specific details are expected to be published shortly as part of the ongoing consultation process. However, it is not known how long parishes will be given to respond. In view of our County Councillor's potential declaration of interest in the process, the Clerk was asked to contact Mr Borrett asking how North Elmham's interests and views could best be represented at County Hall.

066. Parish Plan (item 043):

The NECPG had enquired about the possibility of holding a 'sub-float' from petty cash for small purchases. After discussion with the Clerk/RFO, the Chairman felt that, as with other small purchases made by various people on legitimate Parish Council-related business, it would probably be sufficient for the Clerk to reimburse individuals directly, either in cash or by cheque, as long as a supporting receipt was produced each time. This proposal was approved by the Parish Council. In the current absence of a written policy on the threshold above which competitive tenders would be required for services or materials, the Chairman reported that a figure of £1000 had been generally adopted on the advice of the Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC). It was agreed that this could be a suitable benchmark for work relating to the Parish Plan although the Clerk advised the NECPG to check if any specific limits were enshrined in the various grant applications or awards which had been made. It was agreed to produce updated Financial Standing Orders, based on a model to be obtained from NALC, so that this threshold could be formalised. Finally, it was agreed that - as an aid to communicating information as widely as possible - the Parish Council would consider publishing its minutes on the website.

067. Local Development Framework (item 044):

The Clerk was asked to check progress with Breckland Council.

068. Donation to FEPOW Association:

Mr Fletcher asked the Parish Council to consider supporting a donation to a flag fund for the Far East Prisoners of War Association which was being organised by Dereham Town Council. A donation of £100 was approved unanimously.

069. Accounts for Payment & Schedule of Income:

(a) Resolved to approve the following Accounts for Payment

11.06.09	e-on Energy (Street Lighting: May - D/Debit)	362.48
01.07.09	Veolia Environmental Services (Refuse Collection)	75.46
01.07.09	SPL Print (NEPCG Letterheads)	204.70
01.07.09	NALC (Parish Councillor's Guide: 4 copies)	62.00
01.07.09	E-On Energy (Pavilion Electricity)	83.55
01.07.09	P Wade-Martins (Wood Preservative:Meadows Gates)	37.54
01.07.09	Cash (Petty Cash)	100.00
01.07.09	J A Lee (Clerk's Expenses)	36.06
01.07.09	B Howard (Litter Picking)	91.68
01.07.09	P Lambert (Pavilion Wages/Materials: 2 months)	152.04
01.07.09	G Marsh (Keykeeper/Work in Ruins/Petrol)	138.17
01.07.09	Dereham Town Council (Donation to FEPOW Flag Fund)	100.00

(b) Schedule of Income

12.06.09	Norfolk Rural Community Council (Parish Plan Grant)	1000.00
23.06.09	Quarterly Charity Investment Interest (1)	18.52
23.06.09	Quarterly Charity Investment Interest (2)	29.96
01.07.09	Pavilion Lettings (Various)	14.00

070. To Consider Planning Applications & Determinations:

(a) Applications

i) 3PL/2009/0536/F

Mr Brown & Mrs Bristow, Park House, Brisley Road, North Elmham.

Conversion and alteration of existing outbuilding and bedroom to Bed & Breakfast.

The Parish Council raised no objections to this proposal.

(b) 3PL/2009/0554/F

Mr Wilton, 22 Eastgate Street, North Elmham.

Erection of a single storey conservatory (lean-to) to rear of property.

The Parish Council raised no objections to this proposal.

(b) Determinations

None received since last meeting.

071. Correspondence:

(a) NALC - *Norfolk Link*: May 2009 - Issue 171.

(b) Norfolk RCC - Invitation to AGM.

(c) Norfolk Constabulary - Crime Figures for North Elmham.

(d) Breckland Council - Withdrawal of Planning Application: Mr Woods (Broom Green).

(e) Norfolk County Council - Dereham to Fakenham Bus Stops Improvements.

(f) Norfolk County Council - Change to telephone numbers.

072. Announcements:

- (a) Dr Wade-Martins offered to show the new Clerk around the parish, as required.
- (b) Mr Neve offered to show the new Clerk around the Annie Mary Smith land, as required.
- (c) Mrs Marsh apologise for missing the recent trustees meeting at the Eastgate Centre.

073. Items for Next Agenda:

None.

074. Next Meeting:

Wednesday 5th August 2009 at 7.30pm in the Sports Pavilion.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.47pm.

Chairman

Date

JAL/10.7.2009