MINUTES
Ordinary Meeting
17th March 2025

at 7:30pm in the Village Hall, Back Lane, Hethersett, NR9 3JJ.

Members:

Cllr Jonathan Loome (JL)[Chair]
Cllr Leslie Dale (LD) [Vice-Chair]
Cllr Heath Dakin (HD)
Cllr Anne Edwards (AE)
Cllr Paul Everett (PE)
Cllr Kelsea Law (KL)
Cllr Jenny Walpole (JW)
Cllr Eileen Mulvaney (EM)
Cllr Habib Rehman (HR)
Cllr Claire Hankey (CH)
Cllr Robert Revens (RR)
Cllr Emma Flynn (EF)
Cllr Karen Prime (KP)
Cllr John Baker (JB)

Present:

JL, LS, HD, AE, PE, JW, CH, EF, KP
Members of the public: 6
Natalie Gould (Locum Clerk)

19:32 Meeting opened, with JL presiding

1 Apologies for absence, to receive

Apologies received from KL, EM, RR, HR

2 Declarations of interest, to record

LD, JW – Dispensation as VHMT Trustees
JL – Dispensation for staffing matters

3 Public participation questions for the chair, to receive

3.1 Members of the public.

Resident advised they couldn't find the GP surgery consultation document from South Norfolk that was provided in January and asked if it had been published.

3.2 District and county councillors.

- County Cllr David Bills provided a verbal report to advise on the local government re-organisation. The interim document sent on Friday went to cabinet today and was passed. The officers are in favour of a single unitary, however councillors are in favour of one or two. Norwich City would like to become a unitary council on their own, but in order to do this, they would need a larger population and have proposed encasing some of South Norfolk to do so. The county representative believes that the political choice would be to allow Norwich to have its own unitary council, however the best financial option would be for one single unitary council. There are still a lot of unknowns.
- District Cllr Kathryn Cross had provided a report in advance: *Government have started consultation on devolution Mayoral County Combined Authority, 7 set questions respond to. Deadline for responses is 12th April 2025.*
Proposed responses will be taken through Council Meetings for South Norfolk (18th March) agendas now on the council website so you can see what the councils are saying.
Link to devolution consultation here: Norfolk and Suffolk devolution consultation - GOV.UK
We are preparing an interim plan for Local Government Reorganisation which is due 21st March. Indicative plan will go through Councils, and lots of work to do before full business case

submission in September. We are asking for Stakeholder engagement over summer months, starting with an in-person summit on 2nd April. Sign up here: Town and Parish Council Summit, 2 April 2025
The recommendations being put to full council on March 18 are:
That Full Council:
1. Recommends to government the further development of a detailed proposal for a two unitary Norfolk.
2. Recommends development of a detailed proposal for a single county unitary in the event a two council unitary is rejected to the Minister.
3. Decides to submit the interim plan as outlined at Appendix B, alongside the vision document as outlined Appendix C.
4. Endorses the supplementary letter at Appendix D and delegates the final submission to the Leader of the Council.
5. Delegates to the Managing Director in consultation with the Leader the final submission of the interim plan.
6. Agrees to undertake public consultation
It also puts the case for the two unitary model – Norwich & East Norfolk, and West Norfolk, with boundaries to be worked on.
A summary of South Norfolk's current position is provided here:
"The proposed three-unitary model for Norfolk lacks a clear rationale, is financially unsustainable, and significantly disadvantages the remaining areas of the county. We believe that a two-unitary model offers a more balanced approach, effectively combining cost efficiency with the preservation of local identity."
Agenda and background papers are here:
https://democracy.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=1047&Ver=4
Youth Clubs and Services
We had a presentation by Catherine Watling of YMCA Norfolk to explain how they provide a number of packages to support youth clubs in Norfolk either 38-week term time or full 52 weeks. There are a number of ways of getting funding to support the service such as lottery etc. They also offer shorter 6 week programmes for more intimate sessions for young people who might find large clubs too daunting and intimidating. There are holiday programmes and also support for existing clubs in terms of guidance, policies, safeguarding and ways to promote your club.
Contact and more information at https://www.ymcanorfolk.org/contact-us/
Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy
The council is reviewing its strategy for supporting homeless and rough sleepers
Causes of homelessness include average private rents increasing, 1.75 housing register applications for every house available, domestic abuse increase, single person applications increase. But numbers of rough sleepers are coming down because they are engaging with our service, we are picking them up, and getting them into temporary accommodation, jobs and then homes.
Look out on the website for the launch of the public consultation which is due end of March.
Flooding
I've been liaising with our surface water draining officers about flooding on the Little Melton Road on the bends before the Crusaders Rugby Club which is affecting homes. This is an ongoing issue which I know has had various 'remedies' in the past but clearly needs some more work. I'll keep asking for updates.

- District Cllr Kathryn Cross also gave an updated verbal report: The district is currently in favour of two, one as a fall back, but not three unitary councils. They feel that villages like Hethersett could lose their identity if swallowed up by a greater Norwich unitary council. There will be opportunities for a public consultation. As the timescale is very tight, there will be some decisions that need to be made before a public consultation takes place.
  South Norfolk have suggested that there is an interest to create a new town in South Norfolk, with the caveat that the villages are spared from the additional growth needed to cover the housing number requirements.
- District Cllr John Morland had provided a written report in advance: *Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation -It is disappointing that a confidential document provided to the councils was published in the EDP before consideration by Councillors. Looking at the options for Local Governance I think the three District Councillors can agree*

that none of us want to end up in a Greater Norwich. As for the Mayoral role, I certainly need to see where scrutiny will come from, because at the moment it seems like there could be just four people to hold them to account. At the last full council meeting I was assured by Daniel Elmer that the money allocated to our new surgery will be spent before SNDC is replaced.

- District Cllr John Morland also gave an updated verbal report: There is a cross party agreement on the two unitary councils approach

4 Minutes of the previous meeting, to resolve

Held on 17th February 2025.
Resolved as a true account.
Proposed: JL, Seconded: HD, Vote: Unanimous.

5 Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee

5.1 Draft minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2025, to receive

Item 9 Great Melton Close fence staining, to agree: Resolved to select Kerb Appeals for this work for sum of £140
Item 10 office supplies: 10.1 Purchase of new kettle, toaster and tea towels Resolved to spend £60.45 on these items.
10.2 Purchase of book – the Law of Allotments
Resolved to purchase the book cost of £38.50
Proposed: PE, Seconded: HD, Vote: Unanimous

6 Planning Committee

6.1 Final minutes of the meeting held on 17th February 2025, to adopt
Proposed: HD, Seconded: JL, Vote: Unanimous

6.2 Draft minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2025, to receive
Received and noted

6.3 Verbal summary of the meeting held on 17th March 2025, to receive
Received and noted

7 Remaining committees, working groups, and external meetings

7.1 Final minutes of the HEAT Committee held on 10th February 2025, to adopt
Proposed: AE, Seconded, JL, Vote: Unanimous

7.2 Minutes of Memorial Playing Field Trust 15th January 2025, to receive
Received and noted

7.3 Minutes of Memorial Playing Field Trust 12th February 2025, to receive
Received and noted

7.4 Minutes of Village Hall Management Trust 4th March 2025, to receive
Received and noted

7 Leave of absence by councillor, to consider

KL has asked if a leave of absence could be granted until the summer as she is struggling to attend meetings due to personal reasons.
PE suggested that an interim vice chairman of the finance committee be put in place to cover her absence.
Proposed: LD, Seconded HD, Vote: Unanimous

8 Consideration of CUA (Community Use Agreement with Hethersett Academy) and Woodside, (Joel Pailes, Community Infrastructure Officer at South Norfolk Council), to discuss

Joel attended to give some information and answer any questions councillors may have. Joel advised that there is a provision drafted for a multi-use games area – with flexibility that with agreement of all parties that the developer build there, or the S106

money be commuted for use on another MUGA project. The S106 money will likely to be around £150k. A strategic decision needs to be made for the older children's games area and what would be best for the parish so it can be built into the developers plans.
If a community area is to be placed on the school site, then there would need to be an agreement in place that allowed the public use of such a facility.
If the MUGA is placed on a school site, the school would be the owner of such a site and they would be liable for the insurance.
A standard agreement would include things such as access rights and accountability.
If the MUGA is placed on the strategic gap, the maintenance would then sit with the parish council. There may also be further surveyance costs etc if it's placed on parish land.
Once the S106 is signed and an agreed figure is communicated, a public consultation could then take place.
The maintenance monies already agreed to coming through are not currently set to cover this new MUGA maintenance. If it is placed, there would be an uplift to this figure.
HD commented that he prefers the idea that the MUGA is placed on the strategic gap so that it is closer to the north side of Hethersett.

9 Consideration of Strategic Gap MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) - report, to discuss
The annual parish meeting is next month, the questions of what the community would like can be put to the members of the public at this event.
Some examples of skate parks built in other areas were given to give guidance. They varied between £170k to over £800k.
There was also a range of prices for a MUGA, from £85k to £200k.
A MUGA is also accessible for disabled and wheelchair users.
Developers need to know by June.
Some councillors felt that members of the public should be spoken to, for some views to assist in the decision making.
LD, resolved that councillors will seek insight from the Greater Hethersett population of the placement of the MUGA on the strategic gap and the activities within it.
Proposed: LD, Seconded: CH, Vote: Unanimous.

11 Policy Review Working Group

11.1 Recommendations to review and policies to adopt

- Standing orders amendments
  Resolved to adopt amendments:
  Proposed: JL, Seconded: CH, Vote: Unanimous.
- Code of conduct
  Resolved to adopt amendments:
  Proposed: CH, Seconded: JW, Vote: Unanimous
- Habitual and Vexatious policy-
  Resolved to adopt amendments:
  Proposed: CH, Seconded: AE, Vote: Unanimous

12 IT issues, to decide

12.1 Domain hosting:
Resolved to select quote 2
Proposed: LD, Seconded HD, Vote: Unanimous.

12.2 IT Support – Ad-hoc or block hours

Resolved to select the option of ad-hoc support
Proposed: AE, Seconded: JW, Vote: Unanimous

13 Progress reports, to receive

13.1 Street lights led phase 2 upgrade

Upgrades will continue when parts are in stock.

13.2 Tennis Court quotes

Quotes to go to F&GP to be voted upon.

13.3 Burnthouse Lane, Chair of HPC and Little Melton PC meeting update

It has been advised that the speed limit would not ever be reduced to be 30MPH as there are not enough houses to allow this. It may be possible to campaign for a 40MPH limit however.

13.4 Speeding/ parking, Harness Maker Way, Brickmakers Lane, outside Rowan House

- Brickmakers Lane has a 30MPH sign.
- Harness Maker Way, the police have carried out speed check with the speed gun and spoke with a number of drivers. The housing developers have been informed of concerns over developer vehicles breaking the speed limit and have sent communications to their trade teams
- Rowan House – the local police officer is aware of issues here and has been in contact with the school.

13.5 Gardener

- A gardener has been hired, from within the village, due to start in April.

13.6 RFO support £25/hour

The RFO support, hired to help with the end of year financials whilst the clerk is not in attendance, is meeting the Deputy Clerk on 28th March.

14 Unitary Authority Proposal updates, to receive

A pack was received from Norwich City Council. It gives an idea of financial benefits of the one, two and three unitary council models. If there are three, there are no financial benefits.

There is a concern that no clear plan has been made for parishes.

Resolved to write to Mike Stonard at Norwich City Council and Kay Mason Billig at Norfolk County Council to invite them to a meeting to discuss the concerns the councillors have. Also ask at which point the parish council would be invited as part of a consultation.

Proposed: JL, Seconded: PE, Vote: Unanimous

15 Village matters

15.1 Traffic issues Coachmaker Way

Concerns about speeding outside Woodside school.

Resolved to contact Adam Mayo at highways and arrange a meeting with the school to discuss the road issues.

Proposed: JL proposed, all in favour.

15.2 Traffic issues Admirals Way

Residents have asked for help to find a parking solution.

Resolved to create a working group to involve the school and Cllr David Bills with a view to finding solutions to traffic issues around the school. CH and JL indicated their intent to be part of the working group. All councillors are to be invited to join the group.

Proposed: JW, Vote: Unanimous.

16 Appointment of Councillors to:

16.1 Village Hall Management Trust.

LD advised that this is just one meeting a month and no specific requirements of skills needed to join. No councillors indicated intent to join.

16.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee.

CH indicated her intent to join the committee

17 Correspondence, public consultations, and changes to legislation, to note

17.1 Hornsea 3 Progress update February 2025

Noted

17.2 Hornsea Abnormal Loads

Noted

17.3 CPRE Opposition to the proposal of a new town

Noted

18 Chair's report, to receive

Software in the office is in the process of being updated, Microsoft has been purchased. One new riser desk is in place and the Health and Safety risk assessments will continue this work. All councillors were thanked for their attendance during the year and JL said he looked forward to the rest of 2025.

19 Public participation, to receive

A resident queried the instruction of a part time RFO for 4 hours a week and if they would be suitably qualified.

20 To exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 during the discussion of item 23

Vote: Unanimous

21.25 – JL left the meeting due to conflict of interest.

21 Staffing Matters, to resolve

22 Date of the next ordinary* meeting, to note

Annual Parish* Meeting on Wednesday 23rd April 2025 6.30pm in the Village Hall, Back Lane, Hethersett, NR9 3JJ.

Meeting closed at: 21.50

These minutes have been resolved as a true account.

Name:

Signed:

Date: