

LONGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Longham Parish Council held on Monday 20th November 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Susan Douglas (Chair)
Cllr Donna McLeod (Vice Chair)
Cllr Roddy McLeod
Cllr Clare Mitton
Cllr Paul O'Brien
Cllr Alan Farrell

District Cllr Richard Duffield
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris and District Cllr Roger Atterwill.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2023.

Cllr Douglas proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Donna McLeod and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

4. To consider the co-option of a new member to fill the one Council vacancy.

In the absence of the prospective Councillor, this item was deferred to later in the meeting.

5. Meeting open for public participation.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

6. To receive County and District Councillors reports.

Written reports were received from both County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris and District Cllr Roger Atterwill.

D/Cllr Duffield said that there was nothing to report from Breckland specific to Longham.

7. Planning Matters.

a) Applications for consideration.

There were no applications to consider.

b) Decisions to note.

Council noted that no decision had been made on the following application and that this was due to the nutrient neutrality issue.

- 3PL/2021/1460/F – Meadow, Hoe Road - change of use of land from Agricultural to residential & the erection of 1No. self-build home and provision of 1 No. Self Build Plot with associated car parking and landscaping.

8. Highway Matters.

a) To receive updates on matters previously reported and to consider any new highway issues.

Council noted the following updates.

- Request for SLOW signs on Litcham Road near two Hoe Road junctions – works programmed but not carried out and this will be raised with C/Clr Kiddle-Morris.
- Proposed 50mph speed limit on Litcham Road – C/Clr Kiddle-Morris taking this forward.
- Meadow, Hoe Road – Overgrown hedge – property owners contacted and hedge has been cut back.
- Obscured fingerposts – junction with Honeypot Lane & Chapel Lane & Village Crossroads – reported to Highways who advised that we contact landowners.
- Broken/Dirty street signs reported to Breckland:
 - Chapel Road – will be replaced.
 - New Road
 - Hoe Road (faded)
 - Hoe Road (dirty)
- Damaged speed limit signs – Dereham Low Road – reported to Highways with signs now cleaned and repositioned.
- Damaged warning signs - nr RB Watts and west end of Hoe Road – reported to Highways and will be resolved.
- Damaged speed sign – Nr Cats Protection, Hoe Road – reported to Highways and will be monitored; no action at present time.
- Faded fingerposts – Junction New Road & Honeypot Lane – reported to Highways and will be monitored; no action at present time.
- Flooding on Reed Lane nr to the Rectory – reported to Highways and will be resolved.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Mitton for taking the time to walk around the village and record all the highway defects.

b) To consider any application to the Parish Partnership Scheme.

No suggestions were raised for an application this year.

9. To receive a report in respect of the Playing Field and Play Area and:

- To consider a tree surgeon report on the trees overhanging the benches.
- To consider quotes to paint the play area fence, benches and bus shelter.

Cllr O'Brien reported that he had met on site with a tree surgeon who advised that the tree in question was substantial and best left alone; any tree works would be extremely expensive. Council agreed to move the benches to a location away from trees and Cllr Roddy McLeod volunteered to see if he can move them easily.

No quotes were available for the painting jobs, however, the works cannot commence until Spring so there is no urgency.

Cllr Roddy McLeod reported that a stone burier machine had been hired to bury the stones on the football pitch but the machine hired out was not fit for the purpose and three weeks later a replacement has still not arrived, this is being chased up. However, Council agreed that the works should wait until Spring when the weather will be more suitable for grass seeding.

10. To receive an update regarding the Clay Pits (a county wildlife site).

Cllr O'Brien reported that one days' maintenance had recently been completed, with the pathways cleared.

11. To consider the church grass cutting contract for 2024.

Council considered the quote for 2024 from the contractor and Cllr Douglas proposed approval of the quote, with public liability insurance included, of £1,370. This was seconded by Cllr Mitton and unanimously agreed by Council.

12. To receive an update regarding the proposed Village Appraisal.

There had been no opportunity to progress this matter and Council agreed to defer until March 2024.

13. To consider a policy to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Longham, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

Council noted that the policy will be available for consideration at the next meeting and, in the meantime, were advised to consider what can be included to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Longham.

14. Finance and Governance

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2024.

Council noted the financial report (attached).

b) To consider the draft budget and set the precept for the year ending 31st March 2025.

Council agreed the draft budget and Cllr Douglas proposed that the precept remain at £7,500, this was seconded by Cllr O'Brien and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To authorise financial payments as set out below and note any receipts.

Cllr Douglas proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Donna McLeod and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipts were noted.

PAYMENTS

P23	Clerk – Salary/Allowance (October)	£159.52 (SO)
P23	HMRC – PAYE	£2.40
P26	Clerk – Salary/Allowance (November)	£159.52 (SO)
P26	HMRC PAYE	£2.40
P25	Play Equipment Repairs	£197.40
P	Breckland – Elections Fees	£75.00
P	Grass Cutting at Church	£543.50

RECEIPTS

Breckland Precept (2 of 2)	£3,750.00
Bank Interest	£49.38

15. Correspondence for circulation

Council noted the following correspondence and no action was proposed.

- Zero Hour – support for climate and ecology bill.

Item 4 - At this point in the meeting the prospective councillor, Mr Sait, arrived and said a few words about himself. Cllr Donna McLeod proposed that Mr Sait be co-opted as new member of the Council, this was seconded by Cllr Douglas and unanimously agreed by Council. Mr Sait signed his declaration of acceptance of office form and joined the Council. The Chairman thanked him for his interest.

16. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received.

17. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 15th January 2024 in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted, the Chairman thanked everyone for their work during the year and then closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2024
FINANCIAL REPORT - NOVEMBER 2023

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget 2023/24	To date	% Spend
PAYMENTS*			
Admin	2,352	820	35%
Salary	2,019	1,214	60%
Open Spaces	3,528	2,419	69%
Donations	1,025	1,025	100%
Defibrillator	50	51	1.0198
TOTAL	8,974	5,477	61%
RECEIPTS			
Precept	7,500	7,500	100%
Bank Interest	-	90	
Wayleaves	-	-	
Salary/HMRC	-	-	
Recycling	100	246	246%
TOTAL	7,600	7,836	103%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	(1,374)	2,359	

*includes payments as listed on agenda.

Balance at 01.04.2023	8422.31
Plus Receipts at 31.10.2023	8293.2
Less Payments at 31.10.2023	4,544.48
TOTAL	12,171.03
Bank Balance at 31.10.2023	
Unity Trust Current Account	5,041.93
Unity Trust Instant Access	7,131.50
TOTAL	12,173.43
less outstanding payment	2.40
	12,171.03
including:	
Clay Pits Reserve	1,333.33
Village Hall Reserve	1,700.00
General Reserve	9,137.70
CLAY PIT PROJECT	
Income*	11,100.00
Expenditure to 31.03.2023	9151.67
Expenditure 2023/24	615.00
Balance	1,333.33

*Income includes £1,000 in 2023/24 budget