

Hockering Parish Council

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MINUTES of the **Parish Council Meeting** held on Tuesday 9th April 2024 at the Village Hall, Hockering.

Cllrs Present at the Meeting: J Blackwell (Chair), P Cocker, L Parker and B Higgins

Also Present: Parish Clerk, District Councillor Gordon Bambridge, and 6 members of the public.

- 1. Welcome and apologies for absence** – Apologies were received from Cllr R Neave.
- 2. Hornsea Three Project** – The Chairman welcomed three members of the Hornsea Three Project which is a scheme to run an underground cable from Weybourne in North Norfolk to a substation at Swardston to carry electricity from the North Sea to the National Grid. They explained that there were no construction lorry routes through Hockering as the cable will run along the A47, through the Ringland area to Easton and on to Hethersett. It is anticipated that the groundwork will be completed by May 2026 and be fully operational the following year. Any road closures in the area will be advertised ahead of time and work will mainly be undertaken overnight with any work during daylight hours being completed by the end of the working day. When the work is completed, the sites will be reinstated and there will be no detrimental effect on the landscape. The Project are working with farmers and landowners to ensure that any access that would be helpful to them will be retained, subject to appropriate planning permission, and any verges damaged by lorries would be repaired. Cllr Bambridge commented that Norfolk is short of electricity and none of this will be of benefit to Norfolk. It was pointed out that unfortunately most of the sub-stations in Norfolk were unable to cope with additional power output. The Hornsea Project website provides information on eligible funding for the local area. The representatives were thanked by the Chairman for their useful information and for attending the meeting.
- 3. To receive any declarations of interest** – there were no declarations of interest.
- 4. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12th March 2024** – having previously been circulated to all councillors, Cllr Cocker proposed, and Cllr Parker seconded that they be approved and signed. All agreed.
- 5. To receive County/District Councillor reports** – District Cllr Bambridge said that he had hoped to be able to tell the PC about the Greater Norwich Local Plan, but this had not yet been agreed. He will give an update when this is available. He was asked by the Chairman if he could approach the District Council to ask if a refund would be available now that Hockering will be cutting their own verges. Cllr Bambridge advised contacting the District Council as soon as possible with a date for a village clean-up so that equipment could be booked. He also advised that the County Council Highways Dept should be clearing banks which are encroaching on footpaths soon and to inform them if this is not being done.
- 6. To receive updates from:**
 - a) **Hockering Life** – Cllr Cocker reported that the new edition of Hockering Life had been printed and distributed. She suggested that the print run should be increased as there were very few copies left after delivering to village properties.
 - b) **Village Hall** – There was nothing further to report at the moment.
 - c) **Village Church** – Cllr Neave had sent a report saying that financial difficulties continue. Both Mark and Tori will be leaving the Parish this summer.
 - d) **Primary School** – A representative of The Friends of Hockering School spoke about their plans for a school garden which will be used for growing flowers and vegetables and as a nature area

for wildlife. Volunteers would be welcome to help with this project. It is also hoped to start a Baby & Toddler Group monthly meeting which could also use the area.

7. Open Forum for Public Participation – maximum of 3 minutes per person. A resident congratulated the editorial committee on the excellence of the revamped Hockering Life magazine. Concerns were also voiced about the erection of Internet G5 masts in the area and the adverse effects these could have on livestock and children, in particular.

8. To consider updates on the following Working Parties:

- a) **Neighbourhood Plan** – The Chairman said that there had been very little response from residents to setting up a committee to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan and it was suggested that an article be put in the next edition of Hockering Life to promote interest. Cllr Bembridge pointed out that when the A47 is upgraded Hockering would be a very desirable option for developers, and it was important that the present residents of Hockering have as much influence as possible on any new housing development in the village.
- b) **Play Area** – the Secretary of Hockering Football Club reported that plans are in place to update and upgrade the site over the coming years. The first priority is to upgrade the parking facilities and then improve the changing and toilet facilities together with a refreshment area. He said that the site and boundaries had been cleared and future plans included a MUGA (multi-games area) on the tennis court area which would benefit the whole community. The football pitch is used 7 days a week from April to September by up to 220 children and is the largest Football Club in West Norfolk. Volunteers are needed to help maintain the area and also to raise funds for future projects. The Parish Council pledged to help with joint fund-raising applications and support in any way they could.

If any residents are interested in helping any of these Working Parties, they would be warmly welcomed and should contact the Parish Council for more information.

9. To discuss updates on the following:

- a) **Parking in the Village** – Cllr Cocker had attended the recent SNAP (South Norfolk Area Police) meeting and confirmed that Hockering is getting special attention from the Police to try to eradicate unsafe and dangerous parking. A Neighbourhood Watch Pilot Scheme has been set up in our area, starting in April. If a Speedwatch Team was to be set up in the village this would need at least 6 volunteers for 2 hours per week, or we could liaise with neighbouring councils to share resources and personnel. Cllr Blackwell reported that there is one SAM2 speed machine available for use in Hockering at the moment, but a second machine may be available shortly.
- b) **Grasscutting in Village Public Areas** – A new ride-on mower has been purchased and Cllr Higgins said that he is happy to store this and use it to cut the verges and communal areas in the village.

10. To consider future Village Events – The Friends of Hockering School are arranging a Village Fete on the 18th August and it was agreed that the Parish Council would be happy to liaise with them and possibly provide some of the facilities needed, such as First Aid. A joint planning meeting will be arranged soon.

11. Correspondence for circulation - All correspondence had been circulated and dealt with as required. Cllr Blackwell said an email had been received from a resident giving ideas as to how the facilities in Hockering could be improved. Cllr Blackwell commented that unfortunately there is considerable misunderstanding as to the responsibilities of the Parish Council and that an article in Hockering Life might be helpful. Cllr Blackwell will respond directly to the resident after circulating his response to all councillors. He pointed out that anyone with ideas for the village is welcome to attend a Parish Council meeting to express their views, but also volunteers for projects are always needed.

12. Planning Matters –

- a) No applications for consideration had been received since the last meeting.
- a) Any other applications received after the publication of the agenda are available on <http://planning.breckland.gov.uk/OcellaWeb/planningSearch>
- a) To note any planning decisions/appeals – Planning Application 30B/2023/0051/VOB to modify the planning obligation, Schedule 3 of the S06 agreement on 3PL/2016/O to reduce the affordable housing from 40% to 25% on land to the West of Heath Road – Application has been

APPROVED.

13. Finance & Governance Matters

a) All councillors agreed to approve the following payments and noted the bank account balance:

PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL THIS MONTH: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK COMMUNITY ACCOUNT					
BALANCE AS AT 12.03.24			£17,836.19		
PAY TYPE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL AMOUNT	VAT	
BACS	M Ridgwell	Mar Salary & Exps	359.80		
BACS	HMRC	PAYE to Period 10	85.80		
BACS	Harlequin Colour Print	Printing Hockering Life	386.02		
			Less	831.62	
Receipts					
BALANCE C/FWD			£17,004.57		

b) Councillors had seen and approved the end of year figures and confirmed that they agreed with the Bank Statement to the 31st March 2024. The accounts will be forwarded to the Internal Auditor for her comments before the AGAR is signed at the next meeting. The current Internal Auditor will not be carrying out audits next year so a new Auditor will need to be found.

c) The current Asset Register had been updated with the new mower and the Clerk confirmed that this valuation had been added to the Parish Council's Insurance Policy. All councillors approved the updated Register but suggested that the Asset Register should be considered later in the year to ensure that it is accurate.

14. To make arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting. The Clerk agreed to send to all councillors a suggested list of invitees to this meeting, asking if they would like to give or send a report on the activities of their organization.

15. To receive any new items for the next agenda – To progress and receive updates on matters raised above.

To note the next meeting of the Parish Council – This Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall to be followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed