

SNETTISHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Snettisham Parish Council held on Thursday 18th April 2013 at 7.30 p.m. in the Methodist Church Hall, Snettisham

Present:

Cllr E Langford – Presiding

Cllr J Bailey, Cllr N Burchett, Cllr T Cannon, Cllr I Devereux, Cllr E Fountain, Cllr M Fountain, Cllr D Snelgrove, Cllr E Steinacker

Alistair Skipper - RFO

County Cllr John Dobson was present for some of the meeting

Also in attendance: Approximately 10 members of the public

Minutes taken by Simon Bower (Clerk to the Council)

Prior to the meeting being opened Cllr Langford reflected on the previous meeting (3/4/13) and apologised for the repeated interruptions and the over-running of the public participation time. He also requested that Cllrs should stand to speak if possible to make hearing easier for all.

Meeting commenced 7.33pm

2013.04.18.01 – **Apologies** for absence received from Cllr Bradshaw & Cllr Gascoigne. Borough Cllr Christopher also sent apologies.

2013.04.18.02 – **Declarations of interest** received from Cllr Devereux (ref: 11f) & Cllr Steinacker (ref:10a [Chair ruled not needed]; 13a) [Clerk reported view that there was no issue for Council as a whole regarding 13a]

2013.04.18.03 – Meeting suspended for **public participation**. No questions.

2013.04.18.04 – **Co-option** of Councillors; no-one had put their names forward.

2013.04.18.05 – **Chairman's Report**. Cllr Langford reported that £3125 had been banked from Car Park "Discount Week" sales. All appeared to be running smoothly at the Beach.

2013.04.18.06 – **Minutes** of meeting on 3rd April were confirmed as correct.

2013.04.03.07 – **Matters arising** from above minutes. Southgate Lane issue was "in the hands of the Clerk". re: 2013.04.03.11.b.i – phrase "never been dealt with" referred to latest instance, not historically.

2013.04.18.08 – No reports for **County** or **Borough Cllrs**

2013.04.18.09 – No report from Norfolk **Constabulary**.

2013.04.18.10 – **Finance:**

- a) RFO apologised for layout of income sheet: wrong name etc for car park receipts though overall figures correct. Data commissioner legal requirement, rates for Council assets and Witley cheques included some from 2012 not previously billed. *Cheque payments approved.*

Prop: Cllr Bailey; 2nd: Cllr Snelgrove; unanimous

- b) *Council agreed to continue membership of Norfolk Rural Communities Council at "gold" level.*

Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd: Cllr Steinacker; unanimous

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- c) *Council agreed to close separate Play Area account and transfer funds to the general Council current account.*

Prop: Cllr Steinacker; 2nd: Cllr M Fountain; unanimous.

2013.04.18.11 – **Support Groups:**

- a) **Planning** – Cllr Devereux
i. Nothing to report
- b) **Amenities and Services** – Cllr M Fountain
i. There will be an amenities meeting shortly
- c) **Beach** – Cllr M Fountain
i. Nothing to report
- d) **Governance** – Cllr Devereux
i. Cllr Devereux referred to items which the Governance SG would like to have covered but for time, and others which would need urgent attention – VAT/donations; harmonisation of staff contracts etc. Main work had been on policy and frameworks.
ii. & iii. *Council approved change of wording to clarify proposed standing order 82 to read "...and to the RFO..."*
Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd: Cllr Bailey; unanimous
*Council considered adoption of **email policy** into Standing Orders, with adjustment of Standing Orders as required. Motion tabled and Held Back to next meeting (ref S/O 79).*
Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd: Cllr Burchett; held over.
*Council considered **email policy** amendments. (Possible adoption of "pull not push" email system [Clerk to consult Dersingham Council]; publication of Cllrs own email addresses were addressed). Motion to approve amendments tabled and Held Back to next meeting (ref S/O 79).*
Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd Cllr M Fountain; held over.
iv. & v. *Council to adopt revised **Members' Code of Conduct**, and incorporate into Standing Orders. Motion tabled and Held Back to next meeting (ref S/O 79).*
Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd Cllr M Fountain; held over.
v. *Council to request Governance SG to make recommendations for a protocol dealing with persistent **complainants** and persistent **nuisance** for inclusion in Standing Orders.*
Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd Cllr E Fountain; 1 abstention
vi. & viii. *Council to request Governance SG to make recommendations for protocols for a) **complaints** by Councillors (against Councillors or members of staff) and b) dealing with Councillor **non-compliance** with Standing Orders; both for inclusion in Standing Orders.*
Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd Cllr M Fountain; unanimous.
ix. Council considered paper presented. Extensive discussion of nature of Business Model. All Cllrs asked for opinions individually. Consensus towards a hybrid model, with mix of Committees and Support Groups, maintaining working parties as currently exist. *Council agreed to ask Governance SG to produce recommendations incorporating Cllrs' wishes as expressed for **revision to Business Model**.*
Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd: Cllr E Fountain; unanimous

- e) **Personnel** – Cllr Langford
 - iv. Nothing to report
- f) **Beach Footpath Working Group** – Cllr Langford
 - iv. Nothing to report

2013.04.18.12 – **No reports** from other groups attended

2013.04.18.13 – **Correspondence:**

- a. [Clerk reported reference of several questions regarding **Townland** Charity, Cllrs as Trustees, etc to Charities Commission (CC) – awaiting a response]
Council to repay £2300 removed from Charity account on 28/3/2007 to Townlands Charity – motion rejected.
Prop: Cllr Steinacker; 2nd: Cllr Snelgrove; 6 against, 2 for, 1 abstention.
- b. *Council to consider **charitable request** from Memorial Hall Trustees (MHT).*
[Meeting opened and closed repeatedly to allow clarity from secretary to MHT who was present as member of Public] Issue of gifts from Holding Trustee raised; item deferred pending written confirmation that this is/is not possible.
- c. *Council agreed to allow use of Beach Car Park by Round Norfolk Relay on 14th September 2013.*

Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd: Cllr Bailey; unanimous

2013.04.18.14 – Cllr **agenda** items etc. Cllr Steinacker presented three items for consideration.

2013.04.18.15 – **Public comments.** Issues raised were: agenda item referring to persistent nuisance; chairman's remarks March meeting; content of Clerk's letter to CC; charity trustee status; drainage issue affecting Playing Field.

2013.04.18.16 – **Next meeting** confirmed as 7.30pm, Wednesday 1st May, Memorial Hall.

2013.04.18.17 – Reminder of **Annual Parish and Council** Meetings – 15th May.

2013.04.18.18 - At this point (9.45pm) the Public left the meeting for Council to consider matters in private, as officially recorded in agenda.

Additional item: Cllr Langford reported to Cllrs that following a recent enquiry by a member of the Public, the RFO had been investigating the VAT status of Council income. It appeared that the Clerk at the time had de-registered the Council from VAT in 2005, which should not have been allowed by HMRC. Earlier that afternoon confirmation had been received from HMRC by the RFO, communicated to Chair and Clerk, that they would be pursuing repayment of VAT owed for the period since de-registration. A possible figure of £60,000 maximum was quoted. Discussion ensued over options, but general opinion was that clarity was required and expert help needed. *A motion to allow the RFO, Chair and Clerk to continue with investigations, including seeking such expert help as was required was proposed.*

Prop: Cllr Burchett; 2nd: Cllr M Fountain; unanimous.

2013.04.18.19 – Cllr John Dobson addressed the Council on questions of public perception of the Council. He had observed the Council for four years, and was concerned about the Council's image. He pointed out that the meetings of Council were not Public Meetings and that this was a major issue. He proposed two possible improvements. First that there should be only one Public comments section – to be restricted in time, content (planning and agenda items only) and with no exchanges between individuals. Second that Cllrs should show proper respect for one another in discussion. He commented on how much hard work was being put in by Cllrs, and that Council participation should never exclude the element of fun. [Cllr Dobson then left; Cllr Snelgrove left at 10.30pm]

Signed: _____ (Chairman) Date – 18th April, 2013

2013.04.18.20 – Ken Hill had written to Council requesting a large increase in Car Park rent, with remark that they could take over if Council did not accept. Possible approaches were discussed and *Council approved Chair to continue negotiations with assistance from Solicitor and Land Agent if necessary.*

Prop: Cllr Devereux; 2nd: Cllr Cannon; unanimous

2013.04.18.21 – Maintenance Operative. No job description yet, and other issues affecting this appointment. Clerk observed that decision to appoint had been made at prior meeting - rescission would be needed to discuss. However, as implementation had been delegated to Clerk, he would delay implementation & write to applicants explaining delay.

2013.04.18.22 – not discussed beyond issues of time for Clerk to do the job required, in view of possible Committees etc.

Meeting concluded at 10.38pm

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