



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF REEPHAM TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2023 AT 7:30PM AT STIMPSON'S PIECE**

Present: P. Mitchell (Chair), M. Steel, G. Kular, A. Hazelwood, A. Herbert.

Town Clerk – Kirsty Cotgrove

2 members of the public

Russell Betts, who attended Town Council meetings for many years as a member of the public, passed away on 20th November at the age of 95. Russell was previously a trustee at the Bircham Centre and contributed much to the Reepham Community over his long life. The Council offers its condolences to Russell's wife, June, to whom he was married for 71 years, and his wider family. Cllr Mitchell will attend his funeral on behalf of the Town Council.

23/230. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were accepted for Jenny Harding, Sam James and Mark Lester.

23/231. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

23/232. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON 8TH NOVEMBER 2023

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 8th November 2023 had previously been circulated. The minutes were unanimously **AGREED** and signed.

23/233. INFORMATION ON MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Cllr James has circulated information about the World Café Training Information Sessions.

23/234. REPORTS FROM POLICE, DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

PC Colin Bailey – Not in attendance.

County Councillor – County Cllr Peck reported that the County Council voted for the County deal, with a large majority. This means that the next County Council elections in May 2025 will include a vote for a directly elected Leader, in addition to County Councillors. Confirmation of 100% funding from the Government for the Western Link has been received. Approximately £20 million will still have to be found for overspend and inflation costs, but this has been budgeted for. The route was discussed.

District Councillor – District Cllr Beadle was not in attendance.

23/235. TO CONSIDER CO-OPTION TO FILL VACANCIES CREATED AT THE ELECTION

No-one has come forward yet. This will remain as a standing item.

23/236. TO ADJOURN THE MEETING TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

23/237. FINANCE

(a) To approve list of payments made / to be made

The list of payments was circulated prior to the meeting. It was unanimously **APPROVED**.

(b) To receive the income & expenditure report to 30th November 2023

The Income & Expenditure report was received.

(c) To consider a reduction in hours for the RFO, from 1st January 2024, to be regularly reviewed

The RFO has requested a reduction in hours, by one hour a week. It was **AGREED** that this is acceptable, but to keep the additional hour aside for **use** if required in the future.

(d) To approve the 2024-25 budget

The budget was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The precept increase has been kept to just 3%, which represents approximately £2.10 extra per year for a band D property. The budget was unanimously **APPROVED**.

(e) To approve the 2024-25 precept

A precept of £88,580 was unanimously **APPROVED**.

(f) To approve the purchase of a new Town Council website, with associated gov.uk email addresses

The Joint Practices and Guidance's (JPAG) recommendation is that the Town Council should have a secure gov.uk website, and Councillors and staff should all have dedicated gov.uk email addresses. A quote has been received from Parish Online, who are experienced in dealing with local councils. All **AGREED** that the purchase of this would be sensible and would avoid the difficulties that some councillors have had with spam and phishing emails.

(g) To approve a Pride in Place grant application for £300 for litter pickers

An application for a grant to purchase litter pickers for use in organised community litter picks etc. was unanimously **APPROVED**.

23/238. ALLOTMENTS – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

Four tenants have received eviction notices, due to non-payment of rent.

23/239. MARKET PLACE – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

A further FOI request has been sent to Norfolk County Council regarding the ownership of the Market Place, and the right to issue parking tickets.

23/240. OVERTON WAY PLAY AREA - TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

Nothing to report.

23/241. TOWN HALL – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

None.

23/242. CEMETERY – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

The fallen tree has been removed. Another large branch fell today, and has been removed in time for a funeral tomorrow.

23/243. STIMPSON'S PIECE – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES, AND TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF A DEFIBRILLATOR, USING 50/50 MATCHED FUNDING

The Clerk put in an application for a grant, for a 50/50 match funding opportunity, and was successful. The Clerk will write to the local groups who use the Recreation Ground to ask each for £50 contribution towards installation.

23/244. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

(a) To report on feedback received from the feasibility study by Norfolk Highways regarding traffic management in Reepham

Feedback was provided last month. The Clerk is waiting to hear back regarding improved signage at the NDR roundabout to advise that the road is not suitable for HGV traffic.

(b) To update on the possibility of extending the 20mph speed limit along Norwich Road as far as the junction with The Moor and requesting that HGV vehicles over 3.5t unladen weight are prohibited from the Market Place and Church Hill except for access / deliveries.

Church wall –The agreement, which was originally signed between the Parochial Church Council and the then Parish Council, stated that the Parish Council would give 12 months' notice to return responsibility to the Church. However, as the churchyard had already been closed by Order in the 1890s, advice is that the agreement is null and void. The Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) advice is that the Town Council only need to give three months' notice to return responsibility, rather than twelve. Following discussion, it

was **AGREED** that the Town Council will return the responsibility in December, not March. This means that the responsibility will pass to Broadland District Council. The Town Council would look favourably on a service level agreement with Broadland District Council for grass cutting only.

23/245. PUBLIC TOILETS – TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES

Nothing to report.

23/246. PLANNING

(a) APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

2023/3337. Ivy House, Market Place, Reepham. The Town Council has no comment or objection.

20233427. Land of Green Ginger, Dereham Road, Reepham. The Town Council objects to this application, on the grounds of outside the defined settlement area, development of open countryside, Highways concerned that it is an unmade road with walkers, and a bad entrance to the road, no dedicated pedestrian access, only a permissive path, land drainage and sewerage concerns due to the proximity to the Wensum.

(b) APPLICATIONS DETERMINED

None.

(c) TO CONSIDER LATE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None.

(d) TO RATIFY PLANNING CONSULTATIONS RECEIVED BETWEEN MEETINGS

None.

23/247. TO CONSIDER A BIODIVERSITY POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

All local Councils must, by 1st January 2024, consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity, and as soon as possible afterwards, agree a policy and action plan. The Clerk distributed a draft policy prior to the meeting and is booked for additional training in February. It was **AGREED** to adopt the NALC model policy, with some amendments.

23/248. TO UPDATE ON WIND FARM CABLING CORRIDORS AND APPLICATIONS

Nothing additional to report. The Clerk is keeping an eye on grant funds.

23/259. TO NOTE CORRESPONDENCE, ITEMS OF INFORMATION & REFER TO FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

(a) The Church has requested a reader for the carol service.

23/260. TO CONFIRM THE DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING –10TH JANUARY 2024

The Town Council Meeting will take place on Wednesday 10th January at 7:30pm at Stimpson’s Piece.

23/261. TO CLOSE THE MEETING

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:10pm.

Minutes Agreed..... 10th January 2024