

Bressingham and Fersfield Parish Council

Clerk: Mike Mortimer, Lime Tree Farmhouse, Common Road, Shelfanger, Norfolk IP22 2DR
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Summons to: All Parish Councillors

Copy: Cllr Weeks, SNDC, Cllr Spratt, NCC

Meeting of the Parish Council Monday 4th of November 2013 at 7.30 at the Village Hall AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Declaration of Interests
- 3 To agree the minutes of the meeting of the 2nd of September
- 4 Matters arising from the minutes
- 5 Report from County Councillor Spratt
- 6 Report from District Councillor Weeks
- 7 Request from Mrs Webb
- 8 Highways
- 9 Donations Policy
- 10 Correspondence
- 11 Planning
- 12 Finance
To agree a budget and precept for 2014/15
- 13 Parish Charity
- 14 Allotments
- 15 Any other business
- 16 Date of next meeting

Mike Mortimer
Parish Clerk

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Bressingham and Fersfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 4th of November 2013

The meeting opened at 7.30 p.m.

Present

Councillors – Chair, Mr I Cattermole, Councillors, Mrs J Delasalle, Mr B Claybrook, Mr R Hewitt and Mrs L Holly. Also present were County Councillor, Mr B Spratt, District Councillor, Mr K Weeks, Mrs J Harvey, two representatives of the Allotment Association, Mrs B Webb and the Clerk, Mike Mortimer.

1 Apologies

Mrs L Pearce and Ms P Dowling.

2 Declaration Of Interests

None

3 To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd September 2013

The Minutes were agreed.

4 Matters arising from the minutes

None.

5 Report from County Councillor Spratt

Mr Spratt reported that the new Highways contract with Lafarge and Mouchel which starts in May will save 4.2 million pounds and that he is fighting to get the money saved spent on further road improvement.

He said the time had come when members of Norfolk CC would have to choose between a cabinet or committee system. Despite reservations about the cabinet system he felt that the committee system would be too cumbersome to cope in today's world. Asked about the incinerator at Kings Lynn he said he had always been for it and hoped it would still go ahead.

Mr Hewitt expressed concern over the state of the county's education performance – 3rd from bottom in the league tables. Mr Spratt was in agreement that it was nowhere near good enough and suggested the PC write him a letter expressing its concern which he could use as "ammunition" in trying to improve the situation.

6 Report from District Councillor Weeks

Mr Weeks reported on the leaf clearing initiative and suggested requests for areas to be cleared were best processed through the chair or clerk. He clarified the position on road gritting explaining that the policy was to grit the main road into a community but not necessarily any more. Mr Weeks made a request for volunteers from the public to apply to become members of their Neighbourhood Board.

7 Request from Mrs Webb

Mrs Webb presented plans and costs for new staging at the Village Hall and asked the PC for funding. Councillors wanted assurance that the improvement was for the benefit of the community and not for those hiring the hall for business activity. Mrs Webb said improvements would mean that hire charges could be increased and that organisations like the drama group were non profit making and were parish based. Mr Cattermole asked Mrs Webb to provide a written request for consideration at the next meeting.

8 Highways

Mr Hewitt drew attention to two ongoing problems, the sinking of the raft beneath the roads and that of metalworks. The utilities which dug up the roads often did an unsatisfactory job of repair afterwards and the Highways department seemed to have abdicated responsibility for ensuring that the work be done properly. A number of councillors referred to specific potholes and Mr Hewitt agreed to write to Highways regarding them. He reported that four of the overgrown hedges had been cut back.

Mrs Holly asked about the history of an overflowing ditch in High Road. The problems regarding ditch clearance were discussed with other specific examples being referred to.

The inconsiderate driving of some farm vehicles was raised. Mr Hewitt agreed to obtain a list of farmers using the parish roads so that the clerk could write to them.

Mr Claybrook invited people to visit a Facebook page he had created on ideo for road safety.

9 Donations Policy

Mr Claybrook was thanked for the considerable work, and its excellent result, in preparing a potential donations policy document. There were views expressed that its demands, whilst taking full account of the need for the PC to be scrupulous in handing out public money, might put off some perfectly deserving causes from seeking financial help. A motion that “Bressingham and Fersfield Parish Council should have written guidelines and a code of practice for the distribution of Parish Council funds” was carried unanimously.

Mr Claybrook and Mrs Holly agreed to look again at the document and consider the practicalities of using it for the provision of funding.

10 Correspondence

Councillors had already seen Mrs Handy’s letter of resignation. There were thanks from both Bressingham and Fersfield PCCs for the money for burial ground maintenance. Mrs Delasalle passed on a message from Michelle Lanchester that the jumble sale had raised £200.

11 Planning

A report was made available.

12 Finance

A report was made available.

The budget for 2014/15 was agreed.

13 Date of next Charity Trustees meeting

Mrs Delasalle agreed to arrange a meeting of the trustees.

14 Allotments

Mr Traynier from the Allotment Association raised concerns over the quantity of weeds on the land at the bottom of the allotments as it was having an effect on the allotments themselves. The clerk was asked to contact the tenant and ask him to attend the next meeting to discuss the situation. The maintenance of the hedges and ditches surrounding the allotments was discussed and Mrs Delasalle was asked to liaise with the AA to establish some costs. Mrs Pearce had sent a proposed agreement for handing over greater autonomy to the AA but not all councillors had had a chance to read it. Mrs Delasalle agreed to work with Mrs Pearce to produce a document for consideration at the next meeting..

Date of next Meeting

6th of January 2014 at 7.30 in the Village Hall