

THE MINUTES OF THE BANHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE BANHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE, THURSDAY 2nd November 2023 AT 7:30PM

**Present: Mr Brendan Sparks, Mr Keith Drewrey, Mr Jeff Burrell,
Dr Jo Dalton, Mr Keith Drewrey, Mr Rob Plom**

Item	Details
1.	<u>Welcome:</u> The Chairman welcomed Councillors and members of the public.
2.	<u>Apologies for Absence:</u> There was an apology for absence from Mrs Pam Spicer.
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest:</u> The Chairman declared his interest regarding a cheque issued to him. There were no other declarations of interest.

PUBLIC SESSION

Meeting adjourned to receive comments from the Public

Villager 1 queried the situation in respect of the primary school hedge. The Chairman advised that progress is slow to date due to differing opinions. Villager 1 confirmed that a dustbin vehicle does get up the lane, but this is a smaller vehicle with one man, and he has also complained about the minimal access on Church Lane. Delivery drivers aren't aware that they can't turn around on the lane, and only a few days before a vehicle knocked down her fence post and crushed her rose bush. Villager 1 advised that due to the size of the hedge, the lane is narrowing and making it much harder for vehicles to access and exit the road. The Chairman asked Mr Stephen Askew if there was any way that we could enforce keeping the hedge to a certain height, and Mr Askew advised that if it is a privately owned hedge, then there would be an expectation for the hedge to be kept in a way that does not cause an obstruction. Mr Askew advised that initially, a letter should be written to the owners of the hedge, and if this does not work, then the County Council should be contacted with details of the 'issue', and they would then look to make contact with the owner. If, the problem is still not resolved, then the County Council may then look to deal with the hedge and then bill the owner for the work carried out.

Villager 1 reiterated as per previous meetings, that the hedge requires cutting, and as things stand, drivers are refusing to enter the lane and provide services to the residents.

It was agreed that the hedge is causing an obstruction to the highway, and Mr Askew advised that when considering the evidence, he would put an email together and send this to Highways and see if someone can inspect the site, and then we can proceed from there.

Signed..... Dated:

Villager 2 advised that on the turning into Wayland Way, there is a strange pipe situated on the bank. There is concern that if someone attempts to mow the grass there then it could cause problems. The Chairman agreed he would go and inspect the pipe and see if he could work out what kind of pipe it is.

Villager 3 wanted to speak about the flooding on Heath Road. Villager 3 is a resident on Heath Road, and advised that the flooding has occurred every year since she has lived there, and despite speaking to, and writing to people, nothing has been done to try and correct the problem. The villager also referred to the very recent flooding at the junction with Crown Street. Villager 3 advised that the flooding is affecting her property from the front and back, and confirmed there is substantial run off from the fields.

Villager 4 confirmed that he felt, simply clearing the ditches on this road would not fix the problem, and he advised that there needs to be more drains on Crown Street and further, that these should be spaced evenly, particularly on the corner of Crown Street. It was suggested that Anglian Water are contacted, and an application filed to request this.

Mr Stephen Askew advised that it would be the responsibility of Highways to keep the drains clear and to ensure sufficient draining, but that it would be the responsibility of the owners of the ditches to clean these out. The Chairman asked whether Highways would get involved in clearing the ditches and then 'billing' the landowner, and Mr Askew advised this was unlikely unless there was a 'disaster'. Mr Askew advised that the PC would need to contact the landowners and ask them to assist in clearing the ditches, and only if this request isn't acted upon should we contact Highways and they will then inspect the area and see if they are able to assist.

The Chairman advised that it his intention to 'attack this from all angles', and arrange a meeting with all the relevant authorities to try and deal with the flooding issue once and for all. The Chairman confirmed he felt it was necessary for all the relevant authorities to walk the area and actually see what is causing the flooding issues. Mr Askew suggested that we do attempt contact with the private landowners to ask that the ditches are cleared. Villager 4 advised that he would be able to assist in identifying the owners of the land, and so the Clerk agreed that she would be in contact with him shortly to request assistance with this. The Chairman advised that the water isn't reaching 'Butchers Pit', and as such this needs to be addressed in a way that the water is forced to the pit. It was acknowledged that we need to identify the owners, and those responsible for the drainage and proceed from there. Finally, the Chairman made reassurances again that he is doing all he can to arrange a dedicated meeting with all relevant authorities, and hopefully this will be arranged sooner rather than later.

Villager 5 is a resident of Wash Lane and she confirmed that at 6:00am the ditch started to fill up, and then the stream followed rather rapidly and started to flow down Wash Lane around 8:00am. The banks didn't break but the water was flowing like a river. Villager 5 advised that she spoke with Stephen Halls of Highways on the phone, and he agreed to come straight out with a representative from the internal drainage board. The water was again starting to threaten the homes along Wash Lane. Villager 5 got onto Anglian Water who explained that they would be out within 7 days, and they were told that they needed to come out today as the pump station was failing and sewage was starting to back up. Anglian Water came out within an hour and inspected the pump station. It was confirmed by Anglian Water that the pumps all need to be upgraded as it could not cope with the amount of water, and as a result was forcing the water back out. The drainage board came out with machinery and started to pump out of the ditch, across the lane, and into the stream. Once this was done, the machinery was moved to another property. As a temporary measure, this has worked, but if this machinery had not been made available then there is no doubt that the properties would have been flooded again.

Signed..... Dated:

The sandbags provided by the PC were utilised, and the pumps were still running at the time of the meeting.

The Chairman advised he had walked along the ditch with the landowner, and the far end is full of brambles, fallen trees and wood work adding to a slow flow of water. The landowner has confirmed that if he can get permission from the authorities to take down the surrounding hedges then he will look to clear the ditch as required, but this can only be done once permission has been granted.

Villager 5 asked that all those that have been affected by flooding report the issue to the local flood authority on the Breckland Council Website. Photos and videos should be included where possible. It is vital that anyone that has experienced flooding on their property register the complaint, as the authorities need to know of the severity of the issue before they will agree to grant funding to the Council to deal with the problem.

Villager 3 then raised issue with the speed of vehicles travelling along Heath Road. Despite the 30mph speed limit and signs, vehicles are still travelling along this stretch much quicker than they should. It was acknowledged that due to health and safety issues, the Community Speed Watch Team are not able to monitor this road. Mr Askew suggested that the issue could be raised at the Safer Neighbourhood Team (local police) meeting to see if we could get assistance with this. There is a website, and so the PC should make contact with their concerns, and see if any help can be provided.

Finally Villager 3 advised that the street light outside her property is permanently on, and so the Clerk agreed that she would make contact with the PC contractors, and ask that they look at this.

MEETING RECONVENED

Item.	Details.	Action.
4.	<p><u>Previous Minutes:</u></p> <p>Previous Minutes of 5th October 2023 meeting were approved, and signed</p>	<p>Chairman</p> <p>Clerk</p>
5.	<p><u>Allotments:</u></p> <p>The Vice Chairman acknowledged that the allotments are starting to 'wind down' due to the time of year, The Clerk advised that there is now a further available plot, and confirmed she would be in touch with the next person on the waiting list to advise of availability. It was noted that some of the plots have unfortunately been somewhat neglected this year, and an email will be sent reminding people of the required maintenance for next year.</p>	<p>Vice Chairman</p> <p>Clerk</p>

Signed..... Dated.....

6.	<u>Children's play area:</u> The Vice Chairman confirmed the required parts have been received, and that the work will be carried out in February next year before Spring 2024 begins.	Vice Chairman
7.	<u>Village Green:</u> It was acknowledged that the trees have been cut back on the green, and the Clerk advised once the invoice is received, this will be paid as previously agreed.	Clerk
8.	<u>Dog Bins:</u> The final dog bin has now been fitted at the 'kissing gate' on Church Hill. Thanks to the Chairman for dealing with this.	Chairman
9.	<u>Primary School Hedge:</u> Please see 'Public Session' for full details. The Clerk is to contact Mr Stephen Askew with details of the 'complaint', and Mr Askew is going to draft an email and send this to Highways in order that the area may be inspected, and further steps taken from there.	Chairman Clerk
10.	<u>Village Community Hub:</u> Mr Spicer advised 'The Hub' is going well, and they have recently received funding from 'Go Smart', and have also applied for further funding from 'Hot Spot'. 'The Hub' have teamed up with the Baby & Toddler Group.	Mrs Spicer
11.	<u>Flooding:</u> Please see the 'Public Session' for full details. The Chairman is in the process of arranging a meeting with all the relevant authorities, and the Clerk is to look to identify the landowners in respect of the ditches, and reach out for these to be cleared if required.	Chairman Clerk
12.	<u>Banham Daffodils:</u> Mr Spicer advised that 1000 native, natural daffodil bulbs have been sourced to be planted around Banham in readiness for Spring 2024. The total cost of the daffodils is likely to be £130.00, and the PC agreed to fund 50% of the total cost, up to £65.00.	Mrs Spicer Clerk

Signed..... Dated.....

13.	<p><u>Winter Litter Pick:</u></p> <p>The Chairman proposed a ‘winter litter pick’ to be carried out in January 24. It was proposed that the Clerk applies to Breckland Council for the ‘litter picking kits’, and approach the primary school to see if the Children would like to get involved with this.</p>	Clerk
14.	<p><u>Village Green Christmas Tree:</u></p> <p>It was confirmed that the Christmas Tree has been ordered and will be put up on the green on the 2nd December 23. The total cost of the tree is £320.00.</p>	Chairman Vice Chairman
15.	<p><u>Remembrance donation:</u></p> <p>A £100.00 donation was proposed by the Chairman. The Vice Chairman felt confident that the donation for 2022 was higher, and so it was agreed that the Clerk would check the amount of donation from last year, and the Parish Council would agree the amount and continue from there.</p>	Clerk
16.	<p><u>Highways:</u></p> <p>It was acknowledged that the light on Gaymer Close has been fixed. In respect of Footpaths, this is to be added to a future agenda to see whether a ‘group’ can possibly be formed in respect of this given the failure of Highways to deal during this year. The Clerk confirmed there is no update as to when the replacement street light will be installed on Grove Road but that she will chase this. Mr Plom also pointed out that there is still not footpath, and the Clerk agreed to chase in respect of this also.</p>	Clerk
17.	<p><u>Planning:</u></p> <p>Ref: 3PL/2023/0970/HOU – 16 Fallow Drive, Banham The Parish Council considered the application and documents related to this matter and advised there was no objection to the application filed.</p> <p>Ref: 3PL/2023/1002/LB & 3PL/2023/1001/HOU 7 Grammar School Yard, Banham The Parish Council considered the application and documents related to this matter and advised, there was no objection to the application filed.</p>	Clerk

Signed..... Dated.....

18.	<p><u>Accounts:</u></p> <p>The Chairman proposed the approval of items for payment. There was a unanimous agreement from the Parish Council in favour of payment of these as follows:</p> <p>£ 44.00 – Street Light Maintenance – K&M Lighting (DD) £ 50.00 – Storage of PC property – Mr Rob Bensley (DD) £ 50.00 – Hall Hire – Banham Community Hub</p>	Clerk
19.	<p><u>Chairman's other business:</u></p> <p>The Chairman advised on the Christmas Fayre and asked whether the Parish Council would be prepared to sponsor 'Santa's Grotto' this year. This would mean that Banham's Children are able to see Santa for free and receive a present. The proposal was seconded by Mr Drewrey, and there was a unanimous agreement from the rest of the Council.</p> <p>The Chairman referred to the floods which occurred a few weeks back, and advised that in order to assist residents during this period, emergency sandbags were purchased to assist. The total cost of the sand bags was £196.32 and an invoice was available, The Chairman proposed this amount to be covered by the Parish Council. This was seconded by Dr Dalton, and the remaining Parish Council members were unanimous in favour of this. It was also agreed that the Clerk would contact Mr Mathers to query the cost of the sand bags he provided, and once evidence is received, then the cost of this will be considered also.</p> <p>Finally, the Chairman suggested that we seek someone new to cut the 'grassed areas' in Banham in 2024, and made a suggestion as to whom he would approach in this regard. The Parish Council had no objection to the Chairman proceeding as he sees fit.</p>	Chairman Clerk
20.	<p><u>Next Meeting:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday 7th December 2023 The Small Hall, Banham Community Centre</p>	

Signed..... Dated.....