LITTLE DUNHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Little Dunham Parish Council held on Thursday 9th May 2024, at 7.30pm in the Village Hut.

Present: Cllr Simon Fowler (Chair)
Cllr Malcolm Parker (Vice Chair)
Cllr Jane Harding
Cllr Alice Rossi
Cllr David Walker
Cllr Paul Dennis

Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Election of Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Cllr Parker took the chair and thanked all councillors for their hard work and commitment and thanked Cllr Fowler for his chairmanship. He then asked for nominations for the role of Chairman.

Cllr Harding proposed that Cllr Simon Fowler be re-elected as Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Dennis and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Fowler duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

Election of Vice Chairman and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

Cllr Fowler then took the chair and proposed that Cllr Malcolm Parker be re-elected as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Harding and unanimously agreed by Council. Cllr Parker duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Forsyth were approved, with apologies also received from County & District Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris.

To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th March 2024.

Cllr Parker proposed that the minutes, with a minor amendment to item 14, be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Walker and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

Open Forum for Public Participation.

A member of the public had previously requested an Open Calendar on the Parish Council website. Cllr Harding said that at present anyone can forward an item to her, and she will arrange for it to be published on the website. An open calendar is open to abuse and it will be difficult to ensure all entries meet council standards. Council noted that events could also be advertised using facebook and the village email system and agreed not to proceed any further with this matter.

County/District Councillor reports.

Council noted that written reports for both County & District matters had been received at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting. A further report had been received from D/Cllr Kiddle-Morris updating Council on the Local Plan, a Boundary Commission review and grant funding.

To discuss Highway and Footpath matters.

Matters previously reported to Highways and any new issues.

Council noted the following updates:

- Roadside degradation, from Great Dunham to A47 – survey to be carried out once weather improves. Some pothole repairs have been carried out.
- Speed Roundels – Highways requested to repaint them – works to be carried out in Spring.
- Two new SLOW's – works to be carried out in Spring.
- Ditch opposite new development – the landowner asked to clear the ditch as it is currently blocked and the water runs onto the road – a site meeting is planned.
- The s-bend sign is missing from just before the Sporle Road bridge – this will be reported to Highways.

To receive an update regarding the Footpath and Trails Cutting for 2024.

Council noted that all routes are in good order but, as the season progresses, some cuts will be needed.

To receive an update on the Community Speed Watch Scheme.

The Speedwatch Team had reported:

'The Speedwatch Team is still operating but at a minimal level as previously reported. We just about have the required number of active members to meet Norfolk Constabulary's guidelines. The long-term viability of the team remains in doubt.

I would like to thank the leadership of Great Dunham school, who responded positively to our request last summer to issue a communication to their pupils' parents regarding the issue of speeding traffic during school run times. We made a similar appeal to Litcham School but did not receive a reply.'

Confirmation was also received that the SAM II sign would continue to be moved around the nominated sites and fitted with a charged battery. Data will also continue to be collected, whilst the associated laptop remains compatible. The sign is the property of the Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked the team for their hard work.

To receive an update on the Vattenfall Community Fund and Wind Farm.

Council noted that the Statkraft Greener Grid application has been approved. There was no update in respect of the Community Fund.

To discuss Planning matters.

Applications to consider:

There were no applications for consideration.

To note any planning decisions.

Council noted the following application had been approved.

- 3PL/2023/0986/F & 3PL/2023/0987/LB – Cannister Hall, Palgrave Road - conversion of former golf workshop and store to two residential dwellings and diversion of public footpath.

a) **To receive an update regarding the approved application for a 190-acre solar farm at Church Farm, Newton and ongoing landscape mitigation matters.** There was no update in respect of this matter.

b) To receive an update in respect of the Breckland Local Plan and consider any action. Council noted that the next consultation is due and should be available for consideration at the July meeting.

11. To receive a report regarding the Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field and Play Area.

Cllr Dennis confirmed that all is in good order although there is some graffiti on the climbing wall and he will investigate further.

A local tree man will be requested to advise on the overhanging tree.

12. To receive a report regarding the Amenities (Conservation) area.

The Chairman reported that a local farmer will be requested to assist with a damaged tree.

Cllr Parker said all was in good order and the wood chip had been put down. There was an option to replace some of the grass, and save on grass cutting, with wood chip. Cllr Parker will look at costings for the next meeting.

He also reported that a dead hedge has been build, which is excellent for wildlife and stops the need for bonfires.

13. To receive a report regarding the Village Hut and Phone Box.

The Chairman reported that the phone box is in good order and four of the new trees have survived.

Cllr Parker reported that £385.00 has been donated to the Village Hut from those attending events and proposed that £300 be diverted to the Hut Fund, with the remainder being used for electric/water bills. This was seconded by Cllr Harding and unanimously agreed by Council.

Council agreed to investigate the position of VAT/Insurance etc in respect of the use/hiring of the hut. Council also agreed to ensure that the insurance covered events which included the use of the kitchen for cooking and whether any hygiene certificates are required.

13. To receive a report from the Working Party regarding a replacement for the Village Hut.

Council members considered a report from the working party, however, as it had only just been received, the Chairman proposed that Council wait until the July meeting to allow time to digest the content. A counter proposition was made by Cllr Parker that a decision be made now. Cllr Rossi seconded by the proposition made by the Chairman and this was then put to the vote, with five in favour and one abstention. The proposition was carried.

14. To consider any correspondence received.

There was no correspondence to consider.

15. Financial and Governance Matters

To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2025. The financial report (attached) was noted.

a) To consider the final reminder re the challenge to the Election Invoice May 2023. The Chairman proposed that the invoice now be paid, this was seconded by Cllr Harding and unanimously agreed by Council.

b) To note the Council insurance renewal (year 3 of 3).

Council noted renewal of the annual insurance policy, the final year of a three year agreement.

c)To receive the internal auditors report and consider any recommendations. Council considered the recommendations made in the report and the advice was noted, with no necessity seen to have separate e-mail accounts. Council was reminded of the their duties under data protection.

d)To approve the annual governance statement in the 2023-24 Annual Return. Cllr Fowler proposed approval of the governance statement, this was seconded by Cllr Dennis and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

e) To approve the Statement of Accounts in the 2023-24 Annual Return.

Cllr Fowler proposed approval of the statement of accounts, this was seconded by Cllr Dennis and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the statement.

f) To approve the certification of exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

Cllr Fowler proposed approval of the certificate of exemption, this was seconded by Cllr Dennis and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the certificate.

g) To authorise financial payments as detailed below and note any receipts.

Cllr Fowler proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Rossi and unanimously agreed by Council. The receipts were noted.

PAYMENTS		
P41	Water Plus (amendment from previous meeting)	£45.87
P2	Clerk Pay & Allowance (Apr) (includes contracted incremental salary increase)	£148.33 (SO)
P2	HMRC – PAYE	£26.40
P3	Clerk Pay & Allowance (May)	£161.13 (SO)
P3	HMRC – PAYE	£13.60
P4	Water Plus	£6.00
P5	Internal Auditor	£35.00
P6	Council Insurance Renewal	£504.29
P8	TTSR	£575.04
P9	Breckland – Election	£75.00
RECEIPTS		
R1	Precept 2024/25 (1 of 2)	£2,875.00
R2	Breckland Recycling	£113.62

The Chairman reported that he had been in contact with Water Plus re the low bills and whether the Hut could be considered as a 'special case' and receive free a water service but this had been rejected.

16. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

17. To note the next meeting of the parish council will be held on Thursday 4th July 2024 at 7.30pm, in the Village Hut.

Council noted the date of the next meeting, and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.28pm.

Signed: Date:

LITTLE DUNHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025						
Financial Report - MAY 2024						
BUDGET UPDATE	**Budget**	**To date**	**%**		**Bank Reconciliation**	
	24/25		**Spend**		**Balance at 01.04.2023**	**5,691.64**
					Less expenditure @ 31.03.2024	6,749.05
PAYMENTS					Plus Receipts @ 31.03.2024	8,238.20
Admin	1,340	616.79	46%			**7,180.79**
Salary	2,095	329.46	16%		**Bank Balance at 31.03.2024**	
Village Hut	405	6.00	1%		Current Account	2695.34
Playing Field	115	0.00	0%		Savings Account	4,485.45
Open Spaces	190	0.00	0%			7,180.79
Grass Cutting	1,917	0.00	0%		less outstanding payments	0.00
Donations	200	0.00	0%		plus outstanding receipts	0.00
Defib	25	0.00	0%			**7180.79**
TOTAL	**6,287**	**952.25**	**15%**		including:	
VAT		*0.00*			Defibrillator	25.00
					S106 - Play Area	255.56
RECEIPTS			**Received**		Village Hut Reserves	1272.47

Precept	5,750	2,875.00	50%		Highway Reserves	1807.54
Interest	30	0.00			**General Reserve**	**3820.22**
Elections	240	0.00				
Recycling	150	113.62	76%			
Grants/Donations	0	0.00				
HMRC Refund	0	0.00				
TOTAL	**6,170**	**2,988.62**				
Surplus/Deficit	-117	2,036.37				