
Crimplesham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Crimplesham Parish Council, Thursday 18th January 2024, 6.45pm

Committee Members: Cllr Satur (Chair) Cllr Dodds (Vice-Chair) Cllr Carter, Cllr Ashman, Cllr Dowell

Those Present: Cllr Satur, Cllr Dodds, Cllr Carter, Cllr Ashman, Cllr Dowell, BCllr Moriarty, BCllr Devulapalli, CCllr Long
M Hilton Clerk

Public: six

Apologies: none

MINUTES

1. **Welcome and opening remarks:** Cllr Satur welcomed everyone to the meeting, and explained where the fire escapes were.
2. **To consider and approve apologies for absence:** none given.
3. **To declare any conflicts and pecuniary interests on any items on this month's agenda:** Cllr Dodds declared an interest in Village Hall matters, as his wife is a trustee.
4. **To approve the minutes from the last meeting:** these were approved and signed by the Chair.
5. **Public Forum (fifteen minutes only):** one parishioner asked the Chair three questions.
 - A letter was sent to the Council in September 2023 and she was not aware of it as a trustee? The Chair replied she should ask the trustees of the village hall and not the Parish Council.
 - She also said she had seen a draft newsletter, with a village hall report that she was not aware of, why was this as she is a trustee? The Chair asked how she had seen a confidential document and again said she should ask the trustees of the village hall.
 - She asked why the Parish Council Chair attended the village hall meeting? The Chair responded he attended as he is a parishioner of Crimplesham, he did not attend as a representative of the Parish Council.
6. **To receive an update of the Action Log:**
 - Repairs to playing field building: this has been cleared, in 2024 the building will be painted and the doors removed to make shelter for children to shield from bad weather.
 - Benches: A parishioner present was thanked for the purchase of a new bench which has been installed by the village sign. The old bench is currently being renovated. Once completed this will be sited at the bus stop. The bus stop bench will then be restored and put at the playing field.
 - Cutting grass around the village: the Council agreed to cut the playing field grass more often. They had also considered cutting the grass on the way out of the village towards Wereham, but as biodiversity is being discussed on a later item this may not happen. Highways had been contacted to help with the grass cutting but they do not have the budget in order to help with this.
 - Speed signs for the village: Cllr Dodds will contact the Police regarding if these can be sited around the village. Cllr Ashman said the SAM2 camera shared with Fincham Parish Council, is being used and the flashing speed sign is now working.
 - Playing field inspection: several items on last years play inspection have now been repaired, including the slide. Grass seed needs to be laid on the bare earth on the mound of the slide. The sign at the playing field needs contact details updating. The Clerk will contact suppliers and get this completed.

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7. To discuss correspondence from Parishioners:

- A parishioner contacted the Council regarding walking along Manor Farm footpaths. He was confronted by a lady claiming he is not allowed to walk along there. Cllr Satur has contacted the land owners Albanwise, who have confirmed they are happy for parishioners to use the paths. A document is currently waiting for approval from Albanwise, to confirm their ongoing approval for the parishioners of Crimplesham village to use this access road.
- A parishioner handed in a letter to the Council in September 2023 meeting regarding village hall matters. Points from the letter include whether to retain the current village hall or build a new one, maybe on the playing field, and what would the process be? From the Council's perspective a document would need to go to the Charitable Trust to see if a building could be placed on the playing field. Crimplesham Parish Council would use their Policy on Communication and Engagement, and visit every household in the village and ask what the parishioners want. The playing field trustees would need legal advice regarding two charitable assets joining together. All legal costs would be borne by the village hall and not by the Council.
- An email from a parishioner who was present, asked about a draft newsletter she had seen and the contents regarding the village hall. The Chair asked the Clerk to write to her and ask how she had seen a confidential document, which had only been given to Councillors. The Clerk asked the Chair as the lady was present to ask her directly, she responded with a question regarding another email she had sent. The Clerk will email the parishioner and ask the question again. This incident will be investigated as it is a breach of confidentiality.

8. To hear reports from County/Borough Cllrs:

BCllr Devulapalli had sent an email to the Council, it said

- the scheme for home improvements that has proved very successful in helping people upgrade their properties. There are several schemes running in parallel with most people being eligible for one or other scheme, so if in doubt it's best to contact the Borough Council and ask.
- an event in Downham Market which some Councillors have been involved in promoting showcasing wildlife in a Photographic exhibition called Wild Downham Market on Saturday the 3rd of February
- there is an International English language learners club in the library which meets once a week. Everyone is welcome, including native English speakers
- someone is collecting expired or unwanted medical supplies and equipment for Ukraine, sharing in case anyone else is able to help. If they contact the Borough Councillor Devulapalli, who can put them in touch. She also said she was happy to help with the Council's biodiversity schemes they may have.

BCllr Moriarty said

- there is much less money coming into the Borough Council. All services are being looked at and the funding for these services.
- He said planning training had been given recently. The Chair said he felt that comments from the Parish Council were not always considered by the planning department. Cllr Moriarty said he is always happy to listen to any planning issue the Council wish to raise with him.
- BCllr Moriarty will report on village hall matters at the next Parish Council meeting.

CCllr Long said

- there is a deficit at the Borough Council of £20 million and a deficit of £46 million at County. Some of this is due to the exponential growth of Children's Services. The Government settlement does not even cover pay increases.

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- He also said that in December there was 50% more rainfall than usual, and with an already wet October and November there had been several issues with surface flooding. As he has helped Crimplesham village with these issues in the past, he had been asked to help in other villages with the same flooding issues.
- Highways have kept monies back for basic maintenance. There is little to no monies though for traffic calming measures.

9. To discuss the Grants Policy: this policy makes a clear and fair process for anyone wishing to obtain a grant from the Parish Council. This policy was approved by the Council.

10. Reports from individual Councillors, Council groups and Clerk

i. To discuss Biodiversity Duty for Crimplesham Parish Council: The Councillors agreed it is a duty for the Council to improve Biodiversity. Cllr Ashman has many ideas on this. Firstly, she would like to start a working group to include parishioners. The group could consider installing a pond near the village sign, getting trees and native hedging from the Woodland Trust. Stack some logs for insects in a suitable location. To plant more trees at the playing field and using the discarded tyres as planters. To allow the grass to grow in certain areas. This would bring the community together.

Cllr Long said he knows of a company in Marshland St James that sells and can advise on wildflower propagation.

11. To discuss projects for the village for 2024/25: grant applications are being applied for a new swing and goal posts at the playing field. The defibrillator has been installed if a more central location is found this can be moved. A parishioner asked is details on how to use the defibrillator could be put into the next newsletter. The Council agreed to this.

12. To consider and receive reports on Health and Safety issues: Many of the recommendations from the playing field inspection have been completed.

Cllr Dodds made the Council aware of a large rut in the grass near Springfields.

13. Finance matters

i. To note and approve monthly expenditure. This was noted.

Payments for December 2023 Authorisation

Payee	Goods/Services	VAT	TOTAL	DD/EP electronic payment /direct debit	Supplier/Service
Melanie Hilton expenses	20.80	0.00	20.80	EP	working from home allowance, delivery of defib
Melanie Hilton	320.05	0.00	320.05	EP	21 Hours
HMRC	80.00	0.00	80.00	EP	Month 9
NALC	38.00	7.60	45.60	EP	Planning for Parish Councillor training
Action Play and Leisure	11191.00	2238.20	13429.20	EP	new equipment at the playing field
Lewis Bennet	90.00	0.00	90.00	EP	PC Service and supply backup drive
SSE	64.90	6.37	71.27	DD	Streetlight Energy
Cozens	75.00	15.00	90.00	SO	Street Light Maintenance
TOTAL	11,879.75	2,267.17	14,146.92		

- ii. To note income and expenditure balances reconciled from the previous month. This was noted.
- iii. To note the Quarterly Progress Against Budget: this was noted.
- iv. To discuss the quotes for ground maintenance: quotes have been received, the Council agreed to ask the present company if they wish to revise their quote, as a better quote has been received. This is a matter of courtesy, as they have working in the village a long time.
- v. To discuss the quotes for play equipment inspection: after a discussion it was agreed for a new company to take over the inspections.
- vi. To note the precept figures were agreed at the budget setting meeting: the precept was approved with a 5% increase. The precept has been set at £12,225.

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14. To propose agenda items for the next meeting. Please let the Clerk know at least a week before the next meeting.

- To discuss the new Biodiversity Green Group
- To discuss additional streetlights

15. To confirm the date and time for the next meeting of the Parish Council – 21st March 2024. The Parish Assembly starts at 6.45pm followed by the Full Council meeting.

16. Close: the meeting closed at 19.58pm

Signed by the Chair Date