

Scarning Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2025 at Scarning Village Hall

Councillors Present: F Bradford (Chair) T Abel, M Blackburn, S Bunn, C Hewson, H Manning, M Steward. **In attendance:** N Hartley (Parish Clerk), one member of the public.

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs L Turner and P Hewett (Breckland Council) and Cllr W Richmond (Norfolk County Council).

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Hewson and Abel declared an interest as members of Scarning Playing Field Committee.

3 Minutes (September 2024)

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2024. The Chair signed the minutes.

4 Minutes (October 2024)

Cllr Bradford proposed amendments to the draft minutes of items 3 and 14. The full Council **RESOLVED** that these amendments were not necessary. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2024. The Chair signed the minutes.

5 Minutes (November 2024)

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2024. The Chair signed the minutes.

6 Minutes (December 2024)

Cllr Hewson said the meeting had closed at 7.07pm. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2024 with the time amended. The Chair signed the minutes.

7 Matters Arising

None.

8 Report from District Councillor

A copy of Cllr Turner's report is attached to the minutes

9 Finance

9.1 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following payments in accordance with the Budget:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £994.93

HMRC, clerk's PAYE, £6.80

NPower, unmetered street light energy, £466.46

Wensum Valley Electrical Ltd, install Christmas tree lights, £96

T T Jones Electrical Ltd, supply & fit LED at Cooper Terrace, £420

Norfolk County Council, legal fees re sale of land at Daffy Green, £126.84

9.2 The Council noted the following payments made in December 2024:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £994.93

HMRC, clerk's PAYE, £6.80

Nurture, grass cutting Scarning churchyard, £712.80 (Section 137)

A Glister, collect, purchase and install Christmas tree, £170

S Goldsworthy, reimbursement for plants for flower boxes, £10

TT Jones Electrical Ltd, street light maintenance and install LED at the Watlings, £486.28

Scarning Primary School, reimburse costs to replace battery and pads on defibrillator, £496.20

9.3 The Council noted the following payments made in November 2024:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £1,174.59

HMRC, clerk's Paye, £71.66

N Hartley, reimbursement ink cartridges for Council photocopier, £86.27

N Hartley, clerk's expenses, £148.50

Norfolk County Council, legal fees re sale of land at Daffy Green, £223.50

10 Budget Preparation

Cllr Hewson proposed that the full Council consider and agree the Budget for 2025/26 and not the Budget Committee. It was **RESOLVED** to agree to this.

11 Playing Field Committee Maintenance Grant

The Council considered the Committee's maintenance grant application for £5,500. Cllr Hewson, as Chair of the Playing Field Committee, was asked about the funds in the Committee's deposit account. He explained that some of this can only be spent on the pavilion, and that some has been allocated toward resurfacing one of the tennis courts. Concerns were expressed about the outdated play equipment. Cllr Hewson said there will be additional revenue this year from a second football team and that a fund raising event will be held. It was **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £5,500.

12 Grass Cutting Contractor

The Council considered three quotes regarding the appointment of a grass cutting contractor to cut the verges, Podmore Ford, Scarning Fen and Water Meadows play areas. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint KW Services.

13 Grass Cutting Contractor (Churchyard)

The Council considered three quotes regarding the appointment of a grass cutting contractor to cut Scarning churchyard. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Nurture Ltd.

14 Hedge Cutting

The Council considered two quotes regarding the appointment of a contractor to cut the hedge from Black Horse Close to Hill Rise. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Aon Services to cut the hedge in spring and to weedkill in the summer months, as necessary, with the landowner to cut the hedge again in the autumn.

15 Appointment of a contractor for Blackthorn Drive play equipment

Cllr Bradford said that due to circumstances she had not asked the three contractors to update their quotes as the quotes have a limited timespan. The Council was therefore unable to consider the appointment of a contractor.

16 Budget 2025/26

The Council considered a budget for 2025/26. Cllr Bradford suggested that the precept could be held at £44,000 and that some of the monies ringfenced for the Shipdham Lane Playing Field car park could be put toward the proposed increase in the Precept as it did not appear the car park project was proceeding at the present. It was noted that plans for a permissive footpath onto the Playing Field are proceeding and that the playing field car park will go ahead. It was **RESOLVED** to set the budget and precept at £47,000. Cllr Bradford did not vote in favour of the increase.

17 Items for Next Agenda

An update from Norfolk County Council on works in the parish.

18 Next Meeting

The next Council meeting will be in the Village Hall at 7pm on February 17.

The meeting was closed at 8pm.

The Chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 January in respect of items 3 and 4 were a correct record but her view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Signed Chair

Date

Cllr Turner's Report

New round of Household Support grants are available for those eligible – www.breckland.gov.uk/community

Debt Advisors – two advisors funded by Breckland Council – based in Citizens Advice in Dereham and Thetford

Breckland Healthy Homes Service – a new initiative to combat damp, mould and condensation – working with landlords. www.breckland.gov.uk/housing

Breckland Planning department is now inhouse with new software installed

Rough Sleepers – if you become aware of anyone in this difficult situation please email Streetlink – who will advise the appropriate local authority to manage. Accommodation continues to be provided for those deemed homeless, our new 31 room facility in Thetford (seen on BBC Politics East) is full, so Breckland has to bear the costs of further accommodation through b and bs etc.

Ward boundary changes – the recommendations have gone from Breckland to the Boundary Commission, who have accepted most of the suggestions. They have agreed that in order to even up numbers of electors across Breckland, that Shipdham should stand alone with one elected councillor as indeed would Scarning. It is proposed that Cranworth become part of the Upper Yare Ward. This would be effective from May 2027, unless of course other local government reorganisation overtakes this. At this time of writing, we have no other update on the proposal to abolish district councils in Norfolk, however we are absolutely astounded that we have not been included in any discussions on this proposal.

Are you ready for winter? See NCC website for gritting routes, floodline etc. Check on anyone vulnerable – do you have an escape plan for your household, and an emergency grab bag?

Please see the latest edition of Your Breckland Magazine for more news and info

Always happy to help

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