**Minutes of a Meeting of Paston Parish Council held on**

**Thursday 4th January 2024 at 7.00pm in**

**St Margaret`s Church, Paston.**

Present: Nick Bardswell (Chairman), Boo Tumber (Vice-Chairman), Maggie Brett, Pip Clabon, Denise McKeough, Dee Holroyd (clerk), Cllr Ed Maxfield (NCC), Cllr Pauline Porter (NNDC), Duncan Baker MP

1 **Apologies for Absence**: Jessel Manricks, Ashlee Cotter.

2 **Declarations of Interest**: Pip Clabon, item 6, Hemp Lane.

**4 Cllr EM**: had sent his report. He asked for further thoughts on making Bears Road one way. Costs would be high and could not be met from EM`s allowance. There was concern that a one way system might lead to speeding. A survey of residents` opinions would be completed

**Cllr PP** asked what planning application by the Holiday Village was being referred to – the banked area immediately to the south east of the the Holiday Village. See item 7 “planning”

**5 Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November**: were agreed and signed by the chairman, proposed MB, seconded DM.

6 **Matters Arising from the Minutes**:

Bears Road one way system: covered(see item 4 E M report

Hemp Lane: to be discussed

Road flooding from Green Farm pond: County Council Highways had cleared the blocked pipe but said they would not do it again as it was not their responsibility but that of the owners who would need to deal with future ongoing maintenance

Playground gazebo: would be painted when weather permitted.

Grant for polytunnel: received

Sam sign – installation of new battery: in hand

3**. Duncan Baker MP** joined the meeting (having been delayed) andwas welcomed. He dealt with two topics.

(i) Reinstatement of historic rights of way. DB summarised an on line discussion earlier in the day attended by NB PC EM PP and representative of the County Council. The restoration of `historic rights` was causing issues and problems of many kinds all over north Norfolk which has intensified due to a rush of applications to the County Council to register footpaths and tracks ahead of the 2031 cut-off date (after which any track not registered would cease to be a public right of way “ROW”). Current legislation obliged County Councils to reinstate any alleged ROW that passed the test in s53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which required only that a ROW was “reasonably alleged” to exist – solid evidence not needed.

This was the problem Paston had – on appeal against the County Council’s rejection of the application to register Hemp Lane they had been ordered to register it on the flimsiest suggestion it was a ROW.

Amending legislation to put right this situation in place but had not been brought into effect.

The other problem identified by the online meeting (EM in particular) was that the council could not take into account the views of local residents in the way that the planning system allowed.

DB would table a question in Parliament.

(ii) Windfarm cabling The German energy giant company RWE had bought from Vattenfall the rights to develop the Norfolk Boreas and Norfolk Vanguard wind farms from which Vattenfall had withdrawn. So the development was now to go ahead. 40% of green energy already came from wind and this would be increased though gas and nuclear generation would still be required for when there was insufficient wind. Cables coming ashore at Weybourne were under construction. The cable to be laid coming ashore at Happisburgh would pass through the southern part of Paston parish.

DB outlined a number of environmental, ecological and landscape disasters with the Weybourne cable many of which could have been mitigated. To avoid hopefully the same mistakes being made and minimise damage in Paston we would need to engage with RWE to discuss their plans, DB offered to help arrange meetings and dialogue..

The offshore ring which had been put forward as a way of minimising the amount of cabling on land was not going to happen, – the technology was not there.

7. **Planning:** Banked enclosure adjoining and belonging to Mundesley Holiday Village: two applications had been submitted, one for holiday lodges - withdrawn, one for car parking - refused. Both applications had been put forward as for a change of use from building storage yard. But that use had never had planning consent – the area had been undeveloped green area in an AONB Whatever the H V wished to do with the area, including the present use for storage of building materials and dumping waste, they would need planning consent.

NB would complete the on line submission to planning enforcement explaining this.

8. **Financial Report, Budget Approval, Setting of Precept 2024/25 appointment of internal auditor.**

Budget had been circulated showing anticipated income £7,300, expenditure £6,800. Cash book circulated showed a current credit balance of £11,967. All accepted the budgetandagreed the precept should remain at £7,264. The internal monitor had seen and approved bank statements and reconciliation.

All agreed to the appointment of Roger Cornwell as internal auditor.

December payments: Clerk/office £287.50

Unity Trust Bank £18.00

9. **Parish Councillor`s Reports:**

BT Village Gates: had been made, installation date awaited.

BT had contacted Denise Revell (whom she knew professionally), who is qualified to inspect playgrounds and would meet parish councillors to show them what to look for. BT to contact DR to arrange a suitable date in March.

MB confirmed that a new, robust village flagpole by the pond was now in place and her team were thanked.

DM: Playground inspection: this had shown up some problems. The monkey bars had been taped off and could be removed at a cost of £100. A lot of the equipment was old and in need of cleaning, repair or removal. If a date for this work was selected, people would come and help.

PC: confirmed that the electric fence by footpath FP5, about which there had been some complaints, had been moved back from the path.

**10. Appointment/re-appointment of trustees of the Sir William Paston Charity:**

The Charity Commission scheme provided for the PPC to appoint the trustees each for a four year term.,

Jonathan Care had been appointed to July 2023, Nicky Emberson to January 2024. Both had indicated they were happy to be re-appointed. A third trustee was needed. Robert Digby had agreed to act.

The PPC having appointed trustees they, the trustees, “got on with it” and the PPC had no right or duty to involve themselves in any way in the day to day management of the charity.

It was pointed out however that nobody had much information about what was being done with the almshouses and it was considered that the PPC had to act responsbibly in fulfilling their duty to appoint or re appoint trustees and should ask the trustees to bring them fully up to date and provide some accounts. And while the proposed new trustee Robert Digby appeared suitable those members who had not met him said they would like to before appointing him.

It was agreed that the trustees be invited to meet with the PPC possibly at the next meeting in March or separately and Robert Digby to introduce himself.

11. **Date and time of next meeting:** Thursday 7th March at 7.00 in Paston Church.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm