

Hoe & Worthing Civil Parish



Minutes of Parish Meeting

Date: 26th October 2022	Day: Wednesday	Time: 7pm – 9.30pm	Venue: Village Hall, Hoe
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In attendance: Celia Daniel (Chairman) Sharon Colk, Alec Crisp, Danny Danson, Graham Lewis, Johanna Lewis, Gary Palmer, Harriet Palmer, Margaret Barrett, Philip Barrett, Bill Borrett (departed 8pm,) Beverly Kidd, Dick Malt, Sue Malt, James Sayer, John Tuckwell, Glenys Watling, Carl Watling, Jane Whitcher, Trevor Wood.

Also in attendance: Miranda Smith (Worthing) Minutes

1	<p>Apologies for absence received: James Keith, Katie Mayes, Tracey Green, Ted Sansom, Mick Dunn, Penny Dunn, Philip Stroulger, Krystyna Stroulger, Jenny Tuckwell.</p>
1a	<p>Welcome everyone & Introduction:</p> <p>Before the meeting began, Celia shared with everyone that sadly David Knight – once of our longest and well respected neighbour in Worthing passed away just before the weekend. David had been very ill for some months. On behalf of the Parish, we offered our condolences to Val his wife and family.</p> <p>Celia reported that she had received an invitation to meet up with Bill Borrett recently to review how the Parish had become unsettled and how we might resolve this. It has been unsettling for two reasons, in the main, (1) due to nobody coming forward to take up the Chairmanship position and (2) In the absence of No Chairman, the Parish ultimately accepted the offer of help from DC Roger Atterwill to convene and chair the next meeting in May. It was regrettable that Bill was not able to attend either meeting otherwise the whole matter, a breach of constitutional legislation, could have been averted. After several interventions in recent months stating that Roger although could convene a parish meeting, he could not Chair a meeting consequently this had been described as unlawful. Although Celia consulted with NALC who agreed that the Parish was placed in an untenable situation, there was no choice but to proceed with the help of Roger. With Breckland District Council – our Trustees confirmed that Roger should not chair any meeting, Celia reviewed with Bill, that the Parish in May, was in breach of constitutional legislation. As the minutes of the May meeting, the 26th cannot form part of our constitutional records, to resolve this part of the proceedings, Celia <u>proposed</u> and hoped everyone will accept that those minutes although cannot be published and entered onto the website, a file hard copy will remain on the Parish Minute file for future reference, should it be deemed necessary to re-open them. Celia asked someone to carry this proposal forward, John Tuckwell and 2nd Graham Lewis everyone in favour. This unanimous vote was carried forward, thank you.</p> <p>To continue, during the meeting with Bill, he then began identifying and wanting to edit/strike out completely specific items/records from the minutes of the July & August meetings, Celia could not endorse that action. In July, the Parish considered and approved the May minutes, also ratified again in July what had taken place in May. It is only here in a parish meeting that everyone has a voice and what each person says or agrees/disagrees, this should be recorded in the minutes. And where necessary, amendments or changes happen collectively at a Parish Meeting. Both July & August meetings were constitutionally correct. Celia hoped everyone would agree and that we can now move on to item 2 below.</p>

	<p>Conversations continued focusing on the May meeting and RA chairing that meeting.</p> <p>Parishioners were concerned that it could look like no meeting had taken place particularly if the minutes were not published. Overall the comments were to draft a brief description to the effect that a discussion took place on 25th May and a hard copy of this discussion, as a record of those minutes, would be filed for future reference.</p> <p>Although Trevor raised his concerns that the meeting was in breach of constitutional regulations by the interim chairman RA, Celia proposed a record of his concerns could be separately filed with these minutes and kept on record. Parishioners need to draw a line under this incident and John proposed this being the best outcome. All were in favour.</p> <p>Trevor Wood pointed out that ahead of the meet at which the vote was taken for the local review, the chairman had provided every household with a clear indication of the choices they could make, that the matter would be decided on a show of hands and anybody who could not make it to the meeting could write to the chairman with their views if they wished and they would read to the parish. The time to challenge that process was clearly before the meeting had taken place and not afterwards.</p> <p>Celia confirmed that all items discussed in July were agreed and including the May minutes, and all items ratified once again.</p>
2	<p>Minutes of the Parish Meeting 06.07.2022 to be considered:</p> <p>These minutes were not approved because final amendments yet to be adopted.</p> <p>Bill Borrett asked for a vote of thanks to Councillor RA be entered for all his work.</p> <p>Minutes of the Parish Meeting 25.08.2022 to be considered:</p> <p>Some Parishioners were concerned that the voting process incorporating 4 options was not fully understood by everyone and in particular, the actual count was not recorded. Graham stressed that the Parish needed to vote on either staying as current or to split the villages and each become independent parish meetings. From the count that took place it appeared 14 votes to 10 concluded that the villages remain together and not split. John mentioned that as a group, can we not just agree, we were all there and so know what took place. All agreed to bring closure to the past and move on for the benefit of the community.</p> <p>Sue highlighted that the naming of the village hall is incorrect and needs amending. Celia thanked her for bringing this to her attention.</p> <p>Celia asked whether everyone was ready to adopt these minutes, all agreed.</p>
3	<p>Matters arising from the meeting 25.08.2022, which as agreed closed at 9pm: due to time constraints, item 8 Compliments & Complaints was not reviewed therefore carried forward for completion.</p>
4	<p>The Parish: How do we move forward? Local Governance Review – Community Spirit (H122 v W84 = 206)</p> <p>Since the meeting in August where some votes were taken regarding the status of the Parish Meeting, Celia reported that she had received a few comments, indeed complaints from across the parish that the process of voting by a show of hands in the room, on this particularly important issue was unfair or transparent. How can a very small number of Parishioners present vote on behalf of those Parishioners who were not able to attend the meeting, therefore not able to submit their vote, consequently we question was the vote binding? Did you now agree with the results? <u>What took place was simply an expression of views. It did not take into account the expression of views from the whole Parish.</u></p> <p>Celia raised this concern with Breckland District Council who fully understands people's feelings and advised we may wish to start afresh with a Local Governance Review, this issue. With that in mind, Breckland suggested a Poll. Another suggestion is having a questionnaire to help identify the needs of the Parish.</p>

The Parish could demand a Poll - Breckland would provide the necessary paperwork/guidelines to hold a Poll however, the process is different from Election rules, timetables, opening & closing times, no Poll cards and no postal votes.

Referring to the document received from BDC, "Parish Polls, the Parish & Communities Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987." Celia mentioned a copy could be sent to anyone who was interested. If we went ahead Poll costs would be charged to the Parish. Estimated at £500 and the outcome of the poll **may also not be binding but an expression of views.**

We discussed and shared views further:

Gary asked how did both villages become a parish meeting in the first instance? We learnt that around the early 1970's, as both villages were too small in number of parishioners and properties, it was not viable to maintain separately. BDC merged both villages to form one Parish meeting. Gary Palmer mentioned he was away on holiday at the time, so unable to read the letter and vote.

Harriet said she felt postal votes would have been better and convenient for people that work or who could not get to the Hall and vote or had mobility problems and unable to drive to attend the polling.

All agreed one single vote for either option from Hoe or Worthing. Celia mentioned there may have been some Hoe parishioners not present but would have wanted to attend the voting.

A Parish member asked if a personal name and address was given, could someone else be voting for them to check the correct vote is cast. Celia said that postal votes and email voting is not permitted.

Some thought does that mean every issue raised during a meeting we need to ballot on every matter? This could occur until we got a final decision on what we ultimately want.

Debbie asked if there was a way a voter can tell someone else their decision and they vote for them. Celia responded again, there is no proxy voting, the voting process should be transparent and individual votes made must be private and secret.

Bill Borrett mentioned as a Parish meeting, you need to be present at the meeting to vote. He also mentioned if each village separated, they would take on their own costs.

Alec said he felt some parishioners are not interested and don't care.

Graham said the fundamental point to remember is how we want to govern and make decisions. Celia said she felt uncomfortable with the close result as it did not fully represent both villages, only the minority.

Celia suggested we could prepare a draft questionnaire and send out to hear from every member of the Parish their views on how we manage and function our affairs. Each question to be answered simply with yes/ no answers.

Such questions could be e.g. Would Worthing want to be separate from Hoe? Would Hoe want to be separate from Worthing?

Or are we saying, you want to be a parish council?

Others mentioned it could be better to remain together. This was the result of the vote, do parishioners still feel the same now?

Beverly asked if Worthing wants to go on our their own.

Trevor mentioned when this is circulated, the information to be reviewed, it would need to be discussed at a later date. Celia fully understands. Beverly proposed that a draft questionnaire be worked on and Harriet 2nd the proposal. All in favour.

	<p>A Parishioner raised that with Hoe having 122 electors and Worthing 84 electors how can that be a fair vote as Worthing has less voters, it's a none starter. Celia said it would not be a fair vote however, we did agree at the last meeting to re visit this in the future.</p>
5	<p>Parish Meeting format & function including Election of officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vice Chairman position discussed. It was agreed to have a temporary chairman as and when chairman was absent/unable to attend any meeting. Unanimously agreed. - - Secretary VACANT Jo said she was happy to do it on a rota basis. Miranda to also help however, it would be appreciated if a volunteer from Hoe also came forward to help. - Independent Examiner, Graham Lewis confirmed. - Parish Treasurer Jane Whitcher confirmed in post till April/May 2023. Jane will then step down and a replacement would be needed please. Graham offered to informally help Jane and see what is involved. <p>and named Parishioners wishing to take a lead on:</p> <p>Crime prevention & Highways, Carl Watling confirmed dealing with maintenance / verge cutting, bus stops, street & road signage & traffic calming measures Carl spoke of neighbourhood watch and Norfolk crime statistics. He suggested the Parish needs a system to improve awareness of any impending threat of crime before it hits an area. Newsletters usually inform after a crime has been committed i.e. fuel theft from tanks in North Elmham. Ideas needed, further discussion to follow.</p> <p>Environment REMAINS VACANT, maintenance of Sewage & Mains Water, Drainage and street cleaning, litter pick</p> <p>Public Spaces, Dick Malt confirmed dealing with Hoe Common & Maintenance, Tree planting.</p> <p>Website and public information, Danny Danson confirmed, with Worthing holding almost 100 % email and Hoe Celia holds 50% of email addresses. All to remain confidential.</p> <p>Public Buildings (including burial grounds & war memorials)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) St Margaret's Church, Worthing – Celia Daniel, Church Warden 2) St Andrew's Church, Hoe – James Keith, Church Warden – Village Hall Management under review led by – The Rev'd James Rosie/Chairman, Beverley Kidd, Graham Lewis & Sue Malt. <p>The Parish was notified that the Rev James Rosie is to retire 7th November. Celia mentioned until a replacement is found, contact would be through the Team Minister for Dereham, The Rev'd Cannon Paul Cubitt.</p> <p>Planning - Danny mentioned at previous meetings about having a specific subcommittee, has this been disbanded? Originally this passed through to the chairman. Firstly, Celia (Chairman) advised parishioners it was not recommended or legal that individuals approach applicants or indeed investigate applications, this was the role of BDC. The local authority will notify in writing to those neighbours directly affected by any planning application.</p> <p>Celia receives weekly notifications from BDC, this information is distributed across the parish by letter, email and discussed during parish meetings. Parishioners are able to view and submit their own comments online only. After a parish meeting, taking into account what was raised, objected to or approve an application, a final response from the Chairman is submitted to BDC on the parish behalf. A subcommittee is not necessarily required but will be kept under review.</p>

	<p>A Parishioner enquired about a road junction and that it had been previously discussed. Although Alec said he was told it was his own responsibility, ultimately it is Breckland and County Highways who deal with these matters.</p>
6	<p>Drainage & Flooding across the Parish – update:</p> <p>a) Worthing – Celia Daniel</p> <p>In brief, the hydraulic testing report expected in July was finally drawn up in September. The testing showed that raising the levé by the floodplain would give little effect or protection to Worthing therefore this will not be implemented. However, Worthing residents met with EA, NCC and Contractors to discuss Dec 2020 flood details, what occurred and who was directly affected. The outcome was: Site/Village tour took place and photos taken to record current lie of the land. Flood alert failings i.e. level of alert and timings to be investigated. Gressenhall water gauge to be checked, it may be set too high hence flood response too late. Maintenance Work to begin Reed / Weed cutting from the Mill and upstream. Contractor to begin detailed site survey early 2023. In conjunction with EA & NCC this will determine what work is required along the river / floodplain to reduce flood risks. A decision will be made based on cost benefits. Either work being carried out or update Property Flood Resilience protection. It's possible this may be resolved within the next 3-5 year timescale. Worthing maintains regular contact with various agencies although we hope to receive progress Spring 2023. In the meantime, homes to maintain their flood guards and the Floodplain owned by Mr Goff will arrange to have temporary bales installed along the top and bottom boundary line of the floodplain, ending close to the property of The Old Manor House. Should any repeat of flood happen, this temporary arrangement ought to redirect any flood water back into the river.</p> <p>Comments from the meeting:</p> <p>Emily was concerned that EA had not completed the full work on reducing reeds in the river. CD to check and report back.</p> <p>Danny enquired what pressure had been placed on the authorities? Graham commented contact has been constant throughout and still ongoing, he applauded Celia for all her work with regards to the flooding. Celia also wanted thanks extended to Trevor for all his time and effort in dealing with this problem for both villages.</p> <p>b) Hoe – Dick Malt</p> <p>Dick had not heard anything further with the pond or to restrict the bridge. He had asked James Keith, they had 2 or 3 drains being constantly flooded. Trevor Wood had been in contact with the Highways Department, not Dick Malt. The Highways Department had not responded due to the political situation. <i>(Trevor Wood to email Celia with correct information - pending)</i></p> <p>Trevor mentioned that the Inland Drainage Board, may consider some sort of holding area for excess water but nothing has been decided.</p>
7	<p>Planning Applications as notified via Breckland District Council to be discussed at Parish Meeting to either approve or receive objections. Listed below are current BDC status.</p> <p>3PL/2022/0803/LU Oaklands, Gorgate Road HOE Proposed single storey Extension-Refused</p> <p>TRE/2022/0210/TPO Oaklands, Tree Preservation Order Consent given 13.09.2022</p> <p>3PL/2022/1029/LB Mill House, Mill Lane Withdrawn DUPLICATION/ 1028 FOR SAME WAS APPROVED, TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN 3 YEARS.</p> <p>3PL/2022/1057/HOU "Springfield" Gorgate Road Decision by 10.11.2022 / applicant Roxton Gardner. The property would appear not to be listed on electoral roll register. It was noted that the applicant was not present at this Parish Meeting.</p> <p>4 objections to date received on BDC planning system – The floor was open to discuss the application and decide either to propose and accept or reject the application.</p> <p>Objections from the floor were:</p>

	<p>Parishioners stated that nobody lives there, the property has been empty for years.</p> <p>Celia passed round the plan showing views of how the property would look from different viewpoints . 6 No bedrooms discussed and sanitation. Foundations not visible.</p> <p>Several parishioners felt very strongly that the building was oversized and was not in keeping with the look in the village. Immediate neighbours overlooked and concerned with privacy issues.</p> <p>Dick proposed, The Parish Meeting to object to this application, seconded by Mr and Mrs Sayer. Celia as Chairman would formally respond to BDC with Parish Objecting to this application.</p> <p>Breckland Local Plan Update – In the absence of DC Roger Atterwill, Celia briefly mentioned:</p> <p>Council have extended their calls for site developments from landowners & developers i.e. Garrod & Sexton to 01.12.2022 10K homes initially needed, now revised to 5K homes. Some villages may be affected i.e. Nth Elmham, Billingford & Bintree.</p>
8	<p>Compliments & Complaints Draft Guidelines /Celia Daniel: (TW Outstanding item)</p> <p>I would like the meeting to consider ‘how the parish meeting deals with complaints?’</p> <p>The conversation spoke around how to make a complaint more easily and how does the Parish deal with complaints handling. Discussed how to reshape the complaints procedure i.e. a draft complaints form reviewed.</p> <p>Need to acknowledge the complaint and every effort should be made to resolve and settle the matter with minimum delay.</p> <p>Beverly said that all looked fine but when a complaint is about the chairman and at the final stage, this needs to be reviewed and brought to the Parish meeting for resolution. Final stage on form to be amended.</p> <p>Graham suggested that any individual complaint be time allocated. This would clear up any historical problem and only deal with current.</p>
9	<p>Finance to 31.03.2023 Parish Treasurer & Budget Setting 2023/2024 :</p> <p>Jane our parish treasurer, would you like to go through with everyone the finance statement taking us to the end of September 2022, thank you.</p> <p>Treasurer’s Report as at 30th September 2022</p> <p>As Celia circulated the accounts to everyone prior to the meeting I hope that you have all taken the opportunity to review them, so this will be brief.</p> <p>This report is for the 6 months to 30th September 2022.</p> <p>There have been a few more transactions in the last 6 months, as groups are getting back into their routines. The income for the period was £2,507.51. This was £1,800 for the precept and £707.51 from hires of the hall. The expenses for the period are £1,209.51. For the Parish this was mainly the annual costs for insurance and memberships. For the Hall it was utilities and septic tank emptying. There were 3 emptying’s of the tank which is why the cost is increased.</p> <p>The electricity contract remained with Scottish Power payable by a fixed monthly direct debit. I was unable to find a fixed tariff deal that did not have a large exit fee, so it is on a variable tariff, which means that the monthly direct debit has increased. The actual cost for electricity used during the period is £159.72. The meter is registered as a domestic meter as far as Scottish Power are concerned, so we will receive the £400 discount under the Energy Bill Support Scheme over the next six months.</p> <p>The water meter needs to have a reading taken, as Anglian Water have been estimating the readings, but I need someone to help me to do this as the meter is too deep for me to see it.</p> <p>The balance in the bank account at the end of September was £7,044.73. For the Parish £4,776.66 and for the hall £2,268.07. This split does not take account of the £2,000 that was requested to be ring-fenced for a year for repairs to the hall, at the meeting this time last year.</p> <p>Taking into account the estimated expenses through to 31st March 2023 being the Chairman’s expenses for the last six months and bank charges, leaves an estimated balance for the Parish of £4,597.69.</p> <p>For the Hall, the estimated upcoming costs through to 31st March 2023 total £585.00, so there is an estimated balance for the hall of £1,683.07. The estimated costs are Electricity, Water, hall insurance and bank charges.</p>

	<p>Sue and Dick both highlighted their concerns that maintaining the Hall and repairs required, financial support is increasingly difficult to obtain, particularly when applying for grant aid. As mentioned above, the ring fencing of £2K for one year (19.10.2021-22) is also a major concern and this needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Due to the demands placed on Parish finances and future spending it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.</p>
10	<p>Any other URGENT business: None</p> <p>Meeting closed at 9.30 pm, next meeting set for 30th November 2022</p>
11	<p>Date of next meeting: 22.02.2023* / 24.05.2023 AGM / 30.08.2023* / 25.10.2023 FINANCE ETC</p> <p>IF STARRED & SUFFICIENT AGENDA ITEMS NECESSARY REQUIRING URGENT ATTENTION, MEETING WILL BE DIARIED OTHERWISE A NEWSLETTER MAY ONLY BE REQUIRED. TO KEEP YOU ADVISED.</p> <p>Lastly, just a reminder, could you please forward to me your email addresses so I may update our mailing list. This information will of course remain confidential, thank you.</p> <p>Just to mention: St Margaret's Church this Saturday 29th, 2-4pm Halloween Afternoon Tea, all invited.</p>
12	<p>Agenda items for next meeting:</p>

Signed:

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Mrs Celia Daniel - Chairman

Date: Tuesday 22nd November 2022