

**MINUTES OF THE GRESSENHALL PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 3RD DECEMBER 2024 AT 7:00PM IN THE READING ROOM**

11181 Present: Councillor Beazley – Chair Councillor Crisp
 Councillor Radford Councillor Reader
 Councillor Day District Councillor Atterwill
 District Councillor Duffield County Councillor Kiddle-Morris

6 members of the public

11182 To receive and accept apologies for absence – Councillor Kiedan and Councillor Melton.

11183 Declarations of interest – All Councillors in attendance (except Councillor Radford) declared an interest in The Swan Public House, Councillor Reader declared an interest in agenda item 11 - Gressenhall play park.

11184 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5th November 2024 – The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5th November were agreed by all councillors present and signed by the Chairman.

11185 To report progress on items not on the agenda from the last meeting (information only) –

- A response was received from RWE. It was agreed to respond to RWE stating that they made a commitment to share the results of the various reports and request a copy. It was also agreed to ask if RWE is a member of the Considerate Contractor Organisation as drivers have been noted as being ‘bolshy’ and ‘aggressive’.

11186 Open forum for Public Participation: an opportunity to hear from members of the public. The meeting was opened to the public at 7:07pm.

A resident informed the meeting that the Happy Bus collects residents from Gressenhall, Beetley, Longham, Wendling and Whissonsett. The bus is proving very popular and is able to transport two disabled/wheelchair users. The vehicle is fully accessible and drivers are able to assist ascent/descent from the vehicle.

That being all the meeting resumed at 7:10pm.

11187 Reporting of any Highways Matters including:

- Pot holes were reported along Litcham Road. Clerk to conduct a further survey of village.
- The clerk is in communication with Anglian Water with regard to repairs caused by the water leaks.

11188 To consider grass cutting quote from TTSR Limited – It was agreed to obtain two further quotes for the grass cutting.

11189 Update on Affordable Housing scheme – It is with great regret that Gressenhall Parish Council has learned of Hastoe Housing Association’s decision to withdraw the planning application for 10 affordable rental homes in Bittering Street. Hastoe cite problems regarding the legal agreement for the footpath together with viability challenges with restricted grants and nearly £100,000 of extra cost associated with nutrient neutrality issues. Like many other rural villages, Gressenhall remains in need of affordable rental properties for young families living and working locally.

11190 Update on the Gressenhall Community Car Scheme – The scheme bank is now charging monthly and transactional fees which will slightly impact the finances of the scheme. Thanks were given to driver Colin who has decided to step down. The scheme is in desperate need of drivers. Clerk to add request to News and View box.

- 11191 Update on the Elmham GP Surgery – The email system and triage is working well and most patients are satisfied. There is satisfactory work arounds for those not IT literate. The Christmas opening hours have been published in village magazines. The dispensary has new lead and new staff are being trained up. Swanton Morley surgery does offer GP appointments but not every day. Toftwood surgery is no longer viable and a public consultation under way.
- 11192 To receive update from Play Park Project – The equipment is being well used and there are lots of BMX bikes on Christmas lists. Phase two already has £15,000 of funding raised and further applications with Grantscape and Breckland have been submitted. Back up funding applications are in place if needed. The signage has been erected and the white lines will be painted in the spring when the weather is more suitable.
- 11193 To discuss and consider Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant 2025 Commemoration Fund – Not required.
- 11194 Planning applications - Westacre, 5 Gresley Close, Gressenhall, Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 4EL - Proposed Single Storey Flat Roof Extension to Rear – No objections.
- 11195 Report from County Councillor – The report was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. The Government will be issuing a white paper regarding Devolution proposing a Mayoral combined authority covering Norfolk and Suffolk and 2/3 unitary councils replacing district and county councils.
- 11196 Report from District Councillor Atterwill – Councillor Atterwill informed the meeting of a Local Boundary review for 2027 consultation starting today. A new National Planning Policy Framework is due in the new year. He advised to wait until this framework has been released to see if it will affect the affordable housing application. Breckland's new planning portal has a few issues and no weekly updates will be sent out.

Councillor Duffield advised regarding the affordable housing scheme, not to throw 8 years away and to perhaps contact another housing association to take forward the scheme. He also advised to carefully consider a grass contractor as some parishes have experienced issues with new contractors.

11197 **Financial Matters**

- To review 2025/26 budget figures and agree 2025/26 Precept requirement – All councillors agreed to apply for an increase of £250 (£1,750) in the Community Car scheme as the costs have continued to rise over the last few years. All councillors agreed to make a modest increase of £500 to next year's precept (£16,500). Clerk to complete and submit the request to Breckland.
 - To confirm payments for November: Clerk salary and expenses - £352.81, HMR&C - £84.20, Gressenhall Community Car scheme - £120.73, Gressenhall Community Car Scheme (Breckland) - £129.62. All councillors present agreed the payments. It was agreed that Councillors Crisp and Beazley would authorise the bank payments.
- 11198 Reports from councillors (for information only) – Councillor Kiedan informed the meeting that there will be a festive 5k fun run in the village at 10:00am on Christmas Eve starting and ending on the playing field to avoid the Litcham Road crossing.

The Chairman thanked all councillors, clerk, volunteers and attendees for their work and support over the year. The Chairman was thanked all his work over the past year.

- 11199 Correspondence (for information only) – None.

11200. To confirm the date of the next Meeting of the Parish Council – **Due to the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 28th January 2025 at 7:00pm.**

Signed: Councillor Beazley

Date: 28th January 2025