



# RINGSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Chair: Cllr Bill Jacob  
Clerk and RFO: Simon Lee  
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**MINUTES** of the meeting of Ringstead Parish Council held on Monday 9 December 2024 at 7.00pm at the Village Hall.

Present:

Cllr Jacob (Chair), Cllr Barnett, Cllr Crowfoot, Cllr Little, Cllr Shelley and S. Lee (Clerk).

1. **Apologies for absence.**

Cllrs Everitt and Rice, County Cllr A. Jamieson and Borough Cllr T. de Winton.

2. **Declarations of interest and requests for dispensations by councillors.**

None received.

3. **Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 November 2024.**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 November 2024 were approved.

4. **Matters arising from the above minutes not discussed elsewhere on the agenda.**

There were no matters arising not included in the minutes.

5. **Allow Public Participation (10 mins).**

None were present.

6. **Finance.**

**a. Bank Balances and Reconciliation.**

The Clerk noted there was currently £42,269.73 in Unity Trust Bank including additional ringfenced CIL funds now amounting to £17,066.42.

**b. Consider payments and invoices November 2024.**

The meeting approved the payments and receipts for November 2024.

**Accounts**

Bank Account	Dec-24	Dec-23
Current	3524.22	3395.99
Deposit*	38745.51	29848.74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42269.73</b>	<b>33244.73</b>
Difference vs. last yr:	£9,025.00	

\*CIL funds 2024/25 £7153.77

\*CIL funds 2023/24 £9912.65

## Ringstead Parish Council Transactions November 2024

A/C	Description	Supplier	Period	Payment Type	Gross (£)	VAT (£) portion
<b>Current</b>	Clerk's salary (including backpay)	Clerk	Nov	BACS	665.68	0.00
	Tax	HMRC	Nov	BACS	166.40	0.00
	Clerks Expenses and mileage	Clerk	Nov	BACS	18.09	2.27
	Grounds maintenance services	HHA Grds Mtc	Nov	Standing Order	317.00	52.83
	RPC Nov Meeting Item 7.e Donation	Village Hall Charity	Nov	BACS	800.00	0.00
	RPC Nov Meeting Item 7.e Donation	St Andrew's PCC	Nov	BACS	800.00	0.00
	Service Charge	Unity Trust Bank	Nov	Direct	6.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>					<b>2773.17</b>	<b>55.10</b>

**c. Consider any late payments.**

There were no late payments.

**d. Approval of the budget for 2025/26 and set the precept for 2025/26.**

The Clerk had circulated a spreadsheet updating the outline budget projections for 2024/25 and the proposed budget for 2025/26 noted at the previous meeting. The Clerk introduced the item and explained that a quotation had now been received for the grounds maintenance contract for 2025/26, together with updated salary estimates reflecting the nationally agreed salary increase for local government officers.

It was estimated that total payments for 2025/26 would be £22,480.00 and receipts would be £2430.00, requiring £1050.00 to be taken from reserves if the precept were retained at £19,000.00. The Clerk advised that £6730.00 had been set aside as earmarked reserves in 2024 for playing field/equipment and that it was estimated that by 31 March 2025 the Council would have general reserves of nearly £13,500.00 in addition to the ringfenced £17,066.42 CIL funds.

As a result of the second home premium introduced by the Borough Council for 2025/26 the Council Tax base for Ringstead had increased from 172.10 to 207.10. If the precept were retained at £19,000 the Council Tax Band D charge would reduce from £110.40 to £91.74 a saving of almost 17%.

On that basis it was proposed by Cllr Shelley, seconded by Cllr Little and unanimously

**RESOLVED:**

- i. to approve the proposed budget for 2025/26;
- ii. that the net expenditure requirements for the fiscal year to 31 March 2026 for the annual precept be set at £19,000.00, which, based upon the Borough Council's revised Council Tax base, would require a Council Tax Band D property to contribute £91.74 towards the precept, a decrease of almost 17% on the contribution for 2024/25.

**7. General Agenda Items.**

**a. External Reports.**

The December 2024 report from Cty Cllr Jameison was received.

**b. Parish Clerk's report.**

The Clerk advised that he would be attending a Norfolk PTS networking session in Swaffham on the 10 December 2024.

**c. Village Hall report.**

Cllr Rice had circulated a report advising that the Race Night held on the 16 November 2024 was well attended and had raised £1358.00. The Carpet Bowls Group were still actively using the Hall. It was confirmed that a further social event was also being planned early in the New Year.

The Chair raised the question of the Parish Council replacing the dead ash tree that had been removed by the le Strange Estate on land by the Village Hall at the corner of Docking Road and the High Street. Although initially there was some concern that it was the Estate's responsibility to plant a replacement tree, it was proposed by Cllr Jacob, seconded by Cllr Shelley and **RESOLVED:** that the Clerk be instructed to write to the Estate seeking permission for a Quercus robur (English oak) to be planted to replace the dead ash tree that had been removed earlier in the year.

In response to a question about the possibility of installing solar panels on the roof of the Village Hall, Cllr Barnett advised that having attended two courses organised by Community Action Norfolk, it had been confirmed that before any consideration could be given to the proposal, work would be required to insulate the Hall.

**d. Highway related items.**

The Clerk advised he had requested that the Highways Department clear the groups, particularly along Docking Road. The Chair had seen a digger clearing groups along Hunstanton Road earlier that day. Concerns were raised about the use of a digger for this operation, with rainwater causing erosion and undermining the edge of the roadway. The Clerk was asked to report the concerns to the County Council.

A request had been received that the hedge alongside the footpath adjacent to the pond at Sedgeford Road Farm be cut back. The Clerk agreed to photograph the overhanging vegetation and report it through the County Council's website.

Concerns had been raised about the height that the 'No Through Road' sign had been installed at the entrance to Chapel Lane, and that it could not be seen by drivers. The Clerk agreed to follow-up with the County Council.

**e. Heacham Recycling Centre.**

The Clerk reported on the anecdotal evidence that use of the facility had declined significantly since the introduction of the booking scheme and concerns raised by the Borough Councillors that it would result in more bonfires and fly-tipping. There were also concerns that it could jeopardise the viability of the Heacham Recycling Centre. The concerns were noted. A Councillor advised that they had used the booking system without any issue.

**f. Note receipt of the Ringstead Woodlands Gardens and Walk Group PLI**

The Council noted the receipt of the Ringstead Woodlands Gardens and Walk Group Public Liability Cover for the period November 2024 until November 2025.

**g. Bus Service**

The Council discussed concerns raised by a parishioner about the response received from Lynx to re-routing a bus service through Ringstead. Very recently the double decker bus was required to be re-routed through Ringstead because of an incident on the A149 and photographic evidence had been provided.

There was a general discussion about the bus service and there remained concerns about whether it would be a viable service, previous operations had been cancelled because of the lack of passengers utilising the service. There were also concerns about a regular service utilising Peddars Way North near the junction with the A149 which was very narrow with high steep banks.

The Clerk advised that The West Norfolk Community Transport Project's Dial-a-Bus does serve Ringstead with their Dial A Bus service every Thursday into Fakenham, this is a door-to-door service. To be eligible, parishioners would need to become a member of West Norfolk Community Transport. Membership is £10 for the year starting in April, and individuals would also have to pay for each journey that they travel. This service is bookable through their office on 01553 776971. They also have volunteer drivers that can take people at specific times to appointments which is a chargeable service of 45p/50p per mile, depending on where the driver lives. The Chair confirmed that this had been included in the winter newsletter and it was also agreed to provide notices publicising the service on the noticeboards in the village.

**h. Consultation on remote meetings and proxy voting at local authority meetings.**

The Council noted the consultation being undertaken by the Government on the ability to hold remote meetings and the ability to use proxy voting.

**i. Update on Playing Field and receipt of the annual independent playground inspection.**

Cllr Little had undertaken a further inspection of the play area and reported that moles were still very active and had counted over 20 mole hills. It was agreed to contact other pest control companies to obtain prices to undertake control of moles.

The independent play area inspection report for 2024 was received, it was noted that, given the maintenance works undertaken during the year, there were no actions arising.

The Clerk confirmed that he still needed to obtain a price to undertake maintenance works in the car park from the grounds maintenance contractor. Concerns were raised that the depressions in the entrance to the car park were returning and that further maintenance work would be required.

**j. Policies, procedures and risks – Internal Control Policy.**

The Clerk had previously circulated a copy of the updated Internal Control Policy for 2025. It was proposed by Cllr Little, seconded by Cllr Barnett and **RESOLVED:** to approve the Internal Control Policy for the ensuing year.

**8. Planning matters.**

a. **Planning Applications.**

**Planning Application 24/01813/F - 9 Burnham Road:** the Clerk had previously circulated revised drawings and additional information on the proposed building. It was noted that according to the planning consultant the building had been reduced in width by 0.6m, although it was not possible to confirm this, as the revised plans had no measurements. It was noted that the large, glazed frontage had been removed, together with the dormer windows, however, a series of rooflights had been installed and there was concern that this would introduce more light pollution, contrary to the Dark Skies policy within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. There was no plan showing the footprint of the revised building within the development plot and there remained concerns about the ability to conform to Building Regulations for the drainage field required to service the septic tank/cesspit.

Overall, it was agreed that the scale and massing of the proposed building was still unacceptable. The CGI images prepared by the applicant demonstrated the detrimental impact the development would have on the entrance to the village from Burnham Road compared to the existing bungalow. It was noted that the new properties on the southern side of Burnham Road were masked by the former farm buildings.

The Clerk was instructed to advise the local planning authority that the previous objection remained and augment comments with those discussed at the meeting. It was also agreed to ask Cllr T. de Winton to continue to 'call-in' the application.

**Planning Application 24/01714/F - Poachers Gap 21 Peddars Way South:** The local planning authority had confirmed that the building in the rear garden conformed with permitted development regulations. The application for the new cart shed was still outstanding.

**Planning Applications 24/00225/TREECA and 24/00226/TREECA – carrying out works to reduce the crown spread of a sycamore at Hillside 60, High Street and reduction of the crown of a red oak at Easterly Lodge 68 High Street within a Conservation Area:** - these had been permitted.

**Planning Application 24/01811/F Ringstead Westgate House 17 Chapel Lane Ringstead Hunstanton Norfolk PE36 5JX - RETROSPECTIVE-** Partial infilling of pit and raising ground levels (Retrospective) – the application had been permitted.

b. **Update on Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Dr Jacob**

The Chair advised that the Borough Council had issued a Decision Statement confirming that the modifications proposed by the Examiner's Report had been accepted. Accordingly, the draft Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan has been amended, taking into account these modifications. The Borough Council had therefore reached the decision that the Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2036 should proceed to referendum. It was hoped that the referendum would take place early in the New Year.

9. **To review any correspondence.**

There was no correspondence.

10. **Agenda items for next meeting.**

It was agreed to include refurbishment of the parish noticeboard on the next agenda.

11. **The date** of the next meeting of the Parish Council meeting was confirmed as 7:00pm at the Village Hall on the **13 January 2025**.

**The meeting closed at 20:02hrs.**