

## HECKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of an Extra Ordinary meeting of Heckington Parish Council held in Heckington Village Hall, 11 High Street, Heckington on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 commencing at 1930hrs.**

Attendance:

Chairman – P/Cllr Mr R Higgs

Parish Councillors – P/Cllrs Mr T Atkinson, Mrs D Bell, Mr A Garlick, Mr N Stanley and Mr K Thorpe

Minute Taker – Acting Clerk, Mr A Garlick.

Press Representative – Mr A Hubbert

Members of the Public – 150 +

**1. To Formally vote in an Acting Chair if needed for this meeting**

No vote needed as the Vice Chairman stood in.

**2. To formally vote in an Acting Clerk if needed for this meeting**

Councillor Garlick offered to stand in. Voted Unanimously

**3. Acting /Chairman's Welcome and opening statement including advising of recording and reason for change of Agenda**

The Chairman acknowledged that there were people outside but noted that the hall has a capacity which we cannot exceed. He then went through Health & Safety, fire procedures etc.

**4. To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies received P/Cllr Mr C Spencer, Mrs J Wright.

**5. To receive a declaration of interest in accordance with the Localism Act 2011**

None received.

**6. To consider any requests for dispensations received at or before the start of the meeting.**

None received.

**7. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

The Chairman stated that those minutes will have to be deferred to the next full Council meeting.

**8. Public Participation**

The following questions were read out and answered by the chairman

Q Overall, who benefits from the land purchase and why was it kept out of the public domain as much as possible?

A Whoever uses it. It's as simple as that.

Q Were correct procedures followed when purchasing this land and what is it going to be used for?

A OK. It wasn't correct.

Q Would the money be better spent on youth clubs at the pavilion, as there's nothing for them?

A A different thing, shall I say this, that there is money that we have budgeted for and we have aside for a youth club, but we have tried, and it requires volunteers to run a youth club, it requires people to give up their time and effort and also to be checked by the police.

Q How much has this meeting cost?

A the cost of hiring this hall I think is either £25 or £30,

Q Viability of this scheme etc.?

At this point the lady concerned made a long speech giving her views on the purchase and viability of the scheme (Copy of speech attached if required)

Q What date will the business case for Star Fen be produced?

A At the moment, I cannot give a date, it is still fluid, there are so many inquiries that are being made, questions being asked and as I say.

Q What provision is going to be made for the disabled?

A Again you are in touch with the various organisations such as, as I say, the Woodland Trust, English NHS and they have put forward recommendations for disabled access.

Q Can this land be sold off? This is what the parishioners want.

A Is what the parishioners want. Yes it can be.

Q Can the land be resold? Was there a connection between vendor and councillors buying?

A Was there a connection? I mean the normal connection between a buyer and a seller and the research that was done when we were buying.

Q Who was the land bought from?

A It was bought from Morris Barnet.

Q When and how are residents going to get a say in what happens to the field now?

A Well as I say the whole idea, the plan was that we bought it, that we brought in the experts and they were going to produce everything and then we were going to have a public exhibition to show what could be done and how we've foreseen this, similar to the Boston's and the Bourne sites, but as I say, it's all been put on hold because of this vitriol.

Q Previous owner of the land please?

A I think I've just answered that one.

Q Why did you conduct a survey of people's views on Facebook and in a few shops? Why not a mail drop through everyone's letterbox?

A Although we did it, we now found that we can't do that. We can't do a straw poll. We can't take this as a definitive. If we need to go to the public, to the parishioners of Heckington, we've got to do it like a by-election. That's a cost. That's a cost. A big issue. About £900.

Q Is this money part of the levelling up cash?

A Yeah. The cash that we bought this land is our reserves that we've been putting a ring fence in for the last five years aside. That money you're talking about is somebody we might be able to go to, now that we own the land to develop it, but again, I'm not going to waste my time in filling out countless forms and doing this, if you know we go back on to the to the Parish Council meeting at the end of the month and say you know we're going to sell the land.

Q We are where we are need to move on. This can't be done without all sides being civil – which was not the case at the last PC meeting – How do councillors propose to do this and move forward?

There was not concise answer given to this question and the asker made a short speech expanding on his question

Q Will minutes be taken and how will they be shared?

A We're recording it and our fellow councillor is also making notes as best he can we will draw up minutes as best we can and they will be made available in the normal way that minutes of a council meeting are distributed.

Q Can each councillor let us know their take on this field?

A Each councillor present made a short statement giving their view on the purchase of this field

## **9. Star Fen Land acquisition; brief outline of events**

As most of these details had been discussed during public participation, no further information was given here.

## **10. To discuss officer and Councillor duties.**

A discussion took place regarding the current insecure email system in current use in the Parish Council.

### **Resolution**

It was decided to adopt .gov style emails and have separate accounts for the Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer.

Voted unanimously

Further discussion on Point 12, ii, 7. Of Parish Council Minutes from July 2021. Giving Chair and Vice chair permission to deal with legal services as and when necessary on the council's behalf.

**Resolution**

To remove this permission, requiring all such decisions to be made by full council.

Votes 5 for and 1 abstained

- 11. The next meeting will be on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July and will be held in the Village Hall**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 2056 hrs