

MINUTES OF SEETHING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD DIRECTLY AFTER THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AT SEETHING AND MUNDHAM VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 28TH MAY 2025

Present: Dr Hudspith (Chairman), Mr Garnham (Vice-Chairman), Mr Stockdale, Mr Steward, Mr Parsley, Mrs Key and Mr Cowan

In Attendance: Mrs Andrews (Clerk) and 3 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence:

Mr Fuller (District Councillor) and Mrs Mason-Billig (County Councillor) sent their apologies.

2. Declarations of interest:

There were no declarations of interest made

3. Minutes of meeting 6th January 2025:

The minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting and were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from meeting 6th January 2025:

4.1 East Pye

Seething PC responded to Planning Inspectorate request for comments: wording unanimously agreed by PC and submitted 11th February. This is detailed within the Planning Inspectorate Scoping Opinion published 25th Feb 2025 (https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN0110014-000012-EN0110014%20-%20East%20Pye%20Solar%20Scoping%20Opinion_FINAL.pdf)

East Pye have subsequently published Consultation Report March 2025 (https://static1.squarespace.com/static/66bdc824a78f475ab65a5bd1/t/67da8ca8e6495b7295d010ad/1742376112711/East+Pye+Solar_Phase+One+Consultation+Summary+Report.pdf)

Review of Planning Inspectorate website indicates that the formal application is expected in Q4 2025

5. Planning:

5.1 New and amended planning applications

The following applications were received between meetings and responded to within the time constraints imposed.

2025/0356 – Proposed replacement of conservatory and new porch at Squirrels Grove, 6 Old Hall Park
There were no objections to this application.

2025/0844 – Proposed addition of 12 ground mounted solar panels to original application 2022/1697
There were no objections to this application.

Dr Hudspith and Mr Garnham attended the planning meeting regarding Seething Lagoons, which had been used without planning permission but with an Environment Agency permit. Both Councillors spoke against the usage. Foul odour considerations were not valid under planning but excessive vehicular movements were. The application was refused. There may be an appeal.

6. Highways:

6.1 Village signs

Mr Garnham reported that he had spoken with Gary Overton regarding the village signs. Mr Overton felt that the PC had reneged on an agreement regarding replacement of the existing signs with gateway signs. Councillors recalled that they had abandoned that notion when the costs were revealed by Highways which were excessive. Mr Garnham will return to Mr Overton and ask him to just replace the signs like for like.

6.2 Hobbs Lane

Mr Garnham spoke to Mr Overton regarding reclassifying Hobbs Lane, and whilst they sympathise with the situation regarding green laners using it for off roading, there is no appetite or budget to change its usage

6.3 Footpaths

The footpath on School road needs siding out. The Clerk has already reported it but Mr Stockdale will report it again. The surface of the path on Mundham Road towards Mill Lane is damaged. Dr Hudspith will report it.

7. Public Spaces:

7.1 Meres

There is nothing to report not already covered in the APM report.

7.2 Wildlife & Ecology

There is nothing to report not already covered in the APM report.

8. Finance:

8.1 Clerk's financial statement

The Clerk's financial statement had been circulated and was accepted as a true record of the current financial position of the PC.

8.2 Cheques to be authorised

The following cheques were approved for payment and signed accordingly:

£152.61	NALC	Annual subscription
£500.47	Clear Insurance Management Ltd	PC insurance
£94.64	J Andrews	Salary shortfall backdated to April 2024
£39.65	J Andrews	Clerk's expenses
£350.00	Seething & Mundham PCC	Churchyard maintenance grant

With regard to PC insurance, the Clerk is currently attempting to negotiate a more favourable premium so will not issue the cheque until negotiations are concluded. A new cheque may need to be raised.

8.3 Clerk's salary review

It was agreed at the last meeting in January that the Clerk would receive a pay rise in line with the hourly rate she receives as Clerk of Brooke Parish Council. The rate was to be confirmed. The Clerk now confirms that the new rate is £16.03 per hour (previously £15.64). The new annual salary will be £3334.24 (4 x £16.03 x 52 weeks). The Clerk will write to Natwest asking them to change the standing order to £277.85 per month accordingly.

9. Parish Council administration:

9.1 Land registration

There was no update to report.

9.2 Risk assessment

Dr Hudspith had reviewed the risk assessment and asked the Clerk to look in to setting up online banking for the PC accounts. The Clerk made enquiries with Natwest but was told that it is not available on this type of account. They were unable to offer any account which would facilitate the counter signatory option. The options now are to stick with the current system of cheques or move to another bank who can offer an online option. All present agreed to stick with the current system. The risk assessment can now be updated.

9.3 Annual audit

The annual audit must be submitted by 1st July. The Clerk will ask Laura Cowan if she is willing to carry out the internal audit. The next meeting date was agreed for 24th June. Mr Stockdale will check hall availability.

10. District and County Councillor reports

Please see the annual reports provided for the APM.

11. Correspondence:

An email had been received from a member of the public which upon review concerned matters outside the remit of the PC. The member of the public was directed to the appropriate authority.

12. Items for agenda of next meeting

Annual audit
Village signs
Footpaths on School Road and Mundham Road
School pond

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm