

STOW BEDON & BRECKLES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Stow Bedon & Breckles Parish Council on Monday, 19 June 2017 at 7.30 p.m. in St Botolph's Church, Gravelpit Hill, Stow Bedon, NR17 1BX.

Present: Councillors: Lee Pilkington (Chairman), Phil Childs, Andrew Hayward, Paul Howe, Dawn Jessett.
Julian Gibson (Clerk)

- 1 **Apologies for absence.** It was resolved to accept the reasons for absence offered by Councillors Morfoot and White.
- 2 **Declarations of interest.** None
- 3 **Dispensations.** None.
- 4 **Public participation session.** The meeting was advised that the Fete the previous weekend had realised some £4,200 towards the funds of the two churches in the parish, and to other charities.
- 5 **Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, ^{15 May} 20 April 2017 were **confirmed** and **signed**.
- 6 **Matters arising.**
 - 6.1 [7.1.1] **Blocked gullies on A1075.** Norfolk County Council have refused to take any action, but said they would "continue to monitor the problem". The Clerk was asked to see if County Councillor Fabian Eagle could persuade them to actually do something about this.
 - 6.2 [7.1.2] **Missing 'studs' (cats' eyes) signs on B1111.** NCC highways have confirmed that it is intended to surface dress these roads. This should be in the next few months (weather permitting) and then the studs will be replaced and the signs removed.
 - 6.3 [7.1.4] **Grass cutting at junction of B1111 and A1075.** The Clerk has ascertained that this should be cut within the next two months as part of the verge cutting programme. It was confirmed that this was done shortly after the last meeting.
 - 6.4 [7.1.3] **Footpath signage near Breckles Grange.** The Chairman reported that he had met with Jody Thurston, who is one of only three footpath officers at NCC. She has put up some yellow arrows and allowed him to put up more as he knows the path route better than most. It is also intended to erect new sign posts. He also suggested that she walked the path between Breckles Church and Mere Road, Stow Bedon.
 - 6.5 [6.3] **Bus shelter graffiti.** Councillor Hayward reported that he had painted over the inside of the shelter, and therefore covered up the graffiti.
- 7 **Correspondence.** The following correspondence was **received**:
 - 7.1 Norfolk Constabulary: *Thetford & Attleborough Newsletter* - April 2017.
 - 7.2 *Clerks & Councils Direct* - May 2017.
 - 7.3 HM Revenue & Customs: *BACS Remittance advice* - VAT refund.
 - 7.4 The Pensions Regulator: *Automatic enrolment duties: Acknowledgement of declaration of compliance.*
 - 7.5 Norfolk County Council: *Better Broadband for Norfolk Information Sheet 26* - 26 May 2017.
 - 7.6 Seafarers UK: *Please fly the Red Ensign for Merchant Navy Day.*
 - 7.7 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Community Account statement* - 29 April - 31 May 2017.
 - 7.8 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Active Saver Account statement* - 1 April - 31 May 2017.
 - 7.9 Norfolk Constabulary: *Thetford & Attleborough Parish Newsletter* - May 2017

- 7.10 Norfolk County Council: *Local priorities top of the agenda for small highway schemes.*
- 7.11 Mr Martin Ripley: *Email regarding Honeypot Estate planning application.*
- 7.12 Norfolk County Council: *highway Rangers visit.*
- 7.13 Norfolk County Council: *Notice of road closure in Caston on 3 - 5 July.*

8 Planning.

- 8.1 **3PL/2016/0360/F: Prince of Wales Lodge, Cherry Tree Lane, Stow Bedon.** Erection of 8 dwellings with parking, garaging, amenity & open space & retain existing dwelling. Notice that the applicant has lodged an appeal (ref: APP/F2605/W/17/3169513) was **received**. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should write to the Planning Inspector reinforcing the objections, pointing out that the appeal seemed to be concentrating on the situation in Breckland as a whole, but that in Stow Bedon targets for future development have already been met. He will also point out concerns about the increased use of Cherry Tree Lane.
- 8.2 **3PL/2017/0650/F: Home Farm, Stow Road, Stow Bedon.** Application for New Office building. The Chairman said that, although it had no Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the property, as a previous owner he had a personal interest, and would therefore refrain from voting on this item. It was **resolved** that the Council objected to the proposals on the grounds that this is a very substantial, two-storey building of a not dissimilar size to the original house, which is to be constructed forward of the building line where it will be clearly visible from the road. Given the redundant farm buildings on the other side of the house the Council feels that conversion or rebuilding here should be considered as an alternative.
- 8.3 **3AG/2017/0012/AG: Honeypot Estate, Spring Lane/Mere Road junction, Stow Bedon.** Notice dated 24 May 2007 that Prior Approval is not required was **received**. It was also **noted** that contemporaneously the applicant had lodged an application for full planning permission for this development ref. 3PL/2017/0567/F (which was not advised to this Council). This has now been withdrawn as being invalid.
- 8.4 **3PL/2017/0428/HOU & 3PL/2017/0429/LB: Breccles Hall, Watton Road, Breckles.** Demolish twentieth century outbuildings & erect two new ancillary buildings. Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent dated 3 June 2017 was **received**.

- 9 **Pension Automatic Enrolment.** It was **noted** that the Clerk has now been able to complete and submit the required Declaration of Compliance and that the Pensions Regulator has acknowledged receipt.
- 10 **Annual Parish Meeting.** The contents of the draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday, 15 May 2017, to be confirmed and signed at the next Parish Meeting were **agreed**. There were no matters arising on which action was needed.
- 11 **Village Appraisal.** Councillor Jessett said that she had now finished editing the Appraisal, and it was **agreed** that the working group should have one final meeting to confirm the contents and layout before going to print and distribution.
- 12 **Transparency Fund.** The Council **approved** an application prepared by the Clerk for a grant of £386.64 to cover the cost of the Council complying with the Transparency Code in 2017/18.
- 13 **Reserves.** The Council had a detailed discussion about whether the level of reserves being held in recent years was correct. In doing so they acknowledged that the document *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England - A practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and*

governance statements - March 2016 points out that councils have no legal powers to hold revenue reserves other than those for reasonable working capital needs or for specifically earmarked purposes. Suggested levels are often made in terms of a percentage of the Precept, sometimes at 50%, or 100%. However, while this may work for larger councils, with very small councils with a relatively small precept, it was considered that this is inappropriate. The Council felt that it always had to bear in mind possible unplanned expenditure, like a contested by-election (which could occur an unlimited number of times in a year), or the event of the Clerk being ill and the Council having to pay Statutory Sick Pay in addition to paying for a locum clerk (who could virtually charge as much as he liked). It was also pointed out that the cost of a single park bench (a regular sort of parish council expenditure) could wipe out much of the present reserve figure. It was **agreed** that the Council would continue to follow the existing process, but that when setting the Precept for 2017/18 it might be wise to take a less pessimistic view of the likely expenditure in the remaining part of 2016/17 than in previous years.

14 Finance.

- 14.1 **Clerk's salary.** It was **resolved** that cheques numbered 100724 & 100725 totalling £719.02 (salary for 1 April 2017 to 30 June 2017: £628.02; Mileage Allowance Payment for 30 January 2017 - 6 June 2017: £91.00) to the Clerk and HM Revenue and Customs be signed. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 112(2)*)
- 14.2 **Clerk's reimbursement.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100726 for £38.60 (Postage & Telephones £7.82; Stationery £1.00; Hire of venue £1.00; Audit & Election costs £20.00; Other (share of new voice recorder) £8.78) to the Clerk be signed, as reimbursement for items paid on behalf of the Council from 10 February 2017 to 6 June 2017. (*Local Government Act 1972 s.111*)
- 14.3 **Subscriptions.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100727 for £37.75 to the Society of Local Council Clerks be signed, being this parish's share of the Clerk's Annual Subscription. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 143*)
- 14.4 **Monthly Financial Report.** The report for the month ending 31 May 2017 was **received**.

15 Matters for consideration at next meeting. None.

16 Next meeting. The next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as Monday, 17 July 2017, at 7.30 p.m. in St Botolph's Church, Gravelpit Hill, Stow Bedon.

Confirmed:



Jonathan White, Vice-Chairman

17 July 2017

Scheduled future Meeting dates:

Monday, 17 July 2017	Monday, 16 October 2017	Monday, 22 January 2018*
Monday, 14 August 2017*	Monday, 20 November 2017	Monday, 19 February 2018
Monday, 18 September 2017	Monday, 18 December 2017	Monday, 19 March 2018

*If needed