

STOW BEDON & BRECKLES PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Stow Bedon & Breckles Parish Council on Monday, 15 February 2021 at 7.30 p.m. This was a Zoom on-line meeting.

Present: Councillors: Jonathan White (Chairman), Phil Childs, Dawn Jessett, Lee Pilkington, Hannah Reed.
Julian Gibson (Clerk).

Absent: Councillor John Morfoot.

- 1 **Apologies for absence.** It was **resolved** to accept the reason for absence offered by Cllr. Morfoot.
- 2 **Declarations of interest.** None.
- 3 **Dispensations.** None.
- 4 **Public participation session.**
 - 4.1 County Cllr. Fabian Eagle said that his council was proposing to set a budget with a 1.99% increase in Council Tax, with an additional 2% increase for Social Care. He also said that the individual councillors' allowance for Highways work had been increased to £10,000, and that this would also be able to be spent on environmental projects.
 - 4.2 District Cllr. Phil Cowen said that Breckland's share of Council Tax for a Band D property would amount to £98.73, and increase of £4.95. Both Councillors stressed the importance of sticking to the Covid rules.
 - 4.3 A member of the public spoke against the applications listed as items 8.2 and 8.3 on the agenda.
 - 4.4 A member of the public reported water being pumped out of a property in Mere Road onto the Highway. The Clerk said he would report it to NCC Highways.
 - 4.5 A member of the public said that more residents had outside lighting, which was causing light pollution. It was suggested that it be mentioned to the *Waylander* village correspondent.
- 5 **Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 18 January 2021 were **confirmed**, and **signed** by the Chairman.
- 6 **Matters arising.**
 - 6.1 [6.1] **Casual Vacancy.** The Clerk has posted the Notice of Vacancy in the parish as required, and Breckland has confirmed that the deadline for receipt of requests to hold an election is 11 February 2021. **Post-meeting note:** Breckland Council has now confirmed that no requests have been received, and so the Council may proceed to fill the vacancy by co-option as soon as practicable.
- 7 **Correspondence.** The following correspondence was **received**:
 - 7.1 Came & Company: *Insurance Renewal.*
 - 7.2 Came & Company: *Important information - Please Read.*
 - 7.3 AXA Insurance UK: *Certificate of Employers' Liability Insurance.*
 - 7.4 AXA Insurance UK: *Policy Summary.*
 - 7.5 AXA Insurance UK: *Your Statement of Fact.*
 - 7.6 AXA Insurance UK: *Changes to your Council Combined Policy.*
 - 7.7 AXA Insurance UK: *Your policy schedule.*
 - 7.8 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Business accounts - at a glance - Your balances on 29 January 2021.*
 - 7.9 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Community Account statement - 1-29 January 2021.*
 - 7.10 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Active Saver Account statement - 1-29 January 2021.*
 - 7.11 SAM2 Co-ordinator: *Monthly report - January 2021.*
 - 7.12 Norfolk County Council: *Introduction to your new Highways Engineer - Jack Griffiths.*

7.13 Wayland Partnership Development Trust: *Wayland Chamber of Commerce initiative to create new Digital Centre at Wayland House.*

8 Planning.

8.1 **3PL/2020/1479/F: Land Adjacent River Cottage, Lower Stow Bedon.** Proposed Dwelling. It was **resolved** that the Council objected on the grounds that this failed to meet criteria 2 of policy HOU 05 of the Breckland Local Plan, being out of scale in relation to other properties in the road.

8.2 **3PL/2021/0058/HOU: Harvesters, Mere Road, Stow Bedon.** Proposed Stables, and ...

8.3 **3PL/2021/0077/F: Harvesters, Mere Road, Stow Bedon.** Proposed change of use from agricultural land to equestrian. The Council **agreed** to comment on these applications as one. It was **resolved** that the Council objected to both on the grounds of non-compliance with policy COM 03 of the adopted Local Plan, in that there would be an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbours, as a result of visual dominance, noise, odour, dust, insects and vermin.

8.4 **3PL/2021/0161/HOU: 3 Hall Cottages, Rockland Road, Lower Stow Bedon.** Single storey extension to side of dwelling. It was **resolved** that the Council had no objection.

9 **A1075 Thetford to Dereham - Proposed Amendments to Speed Limit.** The Council considered the NCC proposals. The Council welcomed the proposals to extend the 50 mph limit southwards from south of the B1111 junction, and to reduce the limit to 40 mph through Stow Bedon. It had no objections to the other changes south of Wretham and north of Ovington. The Council was, though, surprised to learn that it was not proposed to change the 60-mph limit between Stonebridge and Breckles, which had been part of a speed limit proposal for the road in 2015, and the Council felt that this omission should be reconsidered. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should respond accordingly.

10 **Pingo-Trail Car Park.** Having received a point-blank refusal from the (now previous) Highway Engineer to consider any safety improvements here, the Chairman had been in discussion with Cllr. Eagle, who had been able to get general agreement to the enlargement of the car park from the inside, by cutting back and removing some trees, and also reducing the size of the bund which separates the car park from the lay-by to about a meter high and wide. However, he has now been advised that the car park also forms part of the Local Nature Reserve, and so the Norfolk Wildlife Trust and Natural England now need to be involved in the decision meeting. So, it is unlikely agreement can be obtained before the start of the bird-nesting season, which will result in a delay until October. He will keep on the case, and also keep the Council updated. Councillors also expressed their concerns about the drainage system at this point, which leads to standing water on the A1075. Cllr. Eagle said that he was working on getting this done.

11 **Maintaining the option of virtual meetings.** The Clerk pointed out that the COVID legislation permitting Parish Councils to meet virtually is due to expire at midnight on 6 May 2021. The National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks are known to be lobbying the Government asking for this to be extended, but are understood to be meeting resistance. It was **agreed** that in view of the Prime Minister's anticipated update next week, the matter should be carried over to the next meeting, by when the future may be clearer.

12 **Clerk's Annual Appraisal.** Confirmation from the Chairman that he has carried out an Annual Appraisal of the Clerk's performance, assessing it as being fully satisfactory was **received**, and his recommendation that, as a result, w.e.f. 20 September 2020 he is awarded an additional Spinal Column Point to take him to SCP 17, which would increase his pay rate by 25p/hour (£79.50 p.a.), making the total salary £4,048.14 p.a., was **agreed**.

13 Finance

13.1 **Clerk's salary.** It was **resolved** that cheques numbered 100832 & 100837 totalling £1,110.58 (salary for 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021: £1,012.04; Back-pay following appraisal: £20.24; payment for use of home as office: £13.50; Mileage Allowance Payment for 10 December 2020 - 8 February 2021: £46.80; Telephone Allowance

Payment: £18.00) to the Clerk and HM Revenue & Customs be signed. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 112(2)*)

13.2 **Clerk's reimbursement.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100834 for £48.84 (Postage & Telephones: £45.84; Other (HM Land Registry search): £3.00) to the Clerk be signed, as reimbursement for items paid on behalf of the Council for 8 December 2020 - 8 February 2021. (*Local Government Act 1972 s.111*)

13.3 **Insurance.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100835 for £338.40 to Came & Company be signed, being the annual premium for renewal of the Council's insurance policy for the second year of a 3-year fixed agreement. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 111 & 140(1)*)

13.4 **Other.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100836 for £96.00 (£80.00 + £16.00 VAT) to Westcotec Limited in settlement of invoice no. 11941 for a replacement battery for the SAM2 sign). (*Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s. 72*)

13.5 **Monthly Financial Report.** The report for the month ending 31 January 2021 was received.

14 Matters for consideration at next meeting.

14.1 Casual vacancy.

14.2 Maintaining the option of virtual meetings.

14.3 Issues with traffic on Chalk Lane.

15 Next meeting. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Monday, 15 March 2021**, at **7.30 p.m.** via **Zoom video link**.

Confirmed:


Jonathan White, Chairman

15 March 2021

Scheduled future Meeting dates:

Monday, 15 March 2021	Monday, 16 August 2021*	Monday, 13 December 2021
Monday, 12 April 2021	Monday, 13 September 2021	Monday, 17 January 2022*
Monday, 17 May 2021	Monday, 18 October 2021	Monday, 14 February 2022
Monday, 14 June 2021	Monday, 15 November 2021	Monday, 14 March 2022
Monday, 12 July 2021		

*If needed