

## STOW BEDON AND BRECKLES PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Hannah Reed  
Deer Cottage  
21 Mere Road  
Stow Bedon  
Attleborough  
Norfolk  
NR17 1DA

Clerk: Jackie Preston  
Pear Tree Cottage  
Magpie Lane  
Rockland St. Peter  
Attleborough  
Norfolk  
NR17 1UU

### **Minutes of Stow Bedon and Breckles Parish Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at Caston Village Hall.**

**Present:** Councillors L Pilkington, C Allen, P Childs, J Morfoot and J Preston (Parish Clerk).

#### **1. To open the meeting and welcome those present.**

Councillor Lee Pilkington took the position of Chair in the absence of Councillor Hannah Reed and welcomed those present.

#### **2. To receive and approve any apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Dist., Councillor Phil Cowen, Councillors H Reed and J White.

#### **3. To receive any declarations of pecuniary interest from members and consider requests for dispensations.**

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **4. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024.**

The minutes were agreed by all present and signed by the Chair.

#### **5. Matters arising from the minutes not included on the agenda.**

There were none.

#### **6. Public Participation.**

No members of the public were present.

#### **7. Report of County Councillor Fabian Eagle.**

Councillor Eagle was not present and no report had been received.

##### **Report of District Councillor Phil Cowen.**

Councillor Cowen had forwarded a report prior to the meeting. In it he detailed the implications of Norfolk County Council's intention to seek postponement of the county elections in May and the likelihood that Norfolk County would seek to become a single unitary authority taking on board all the functions of the seven district and borough councils within the county. This would result in the dissolution of the seven at some time before or at the next district council election cycle in 2027. Government has indicated that if the counties wish to seek a devolution deal that government will only discuss the opportunity with the county concerned; the effect being that the districts that provide the local knowledge and widespread service provision at the local level are excluded from any discussion to shape and guide a restructured local government model. His report also confirmed that Government has re-instated compulsory housing targets, reversing previous policies that allowed for flexibility. This change aims to ensure local authorities meet specific housing needs. The target for Breckland has increased from 625

to 903 houses to be delivered per year. There will also be an increase in the Band D council tax of £4.95 per annum that would see the Breckland portion of the Band D Council Tax increase from £113.58 to £118.53 per year equivalent to £2.28 per week.

#### **Report of Chairman.**

Councillor Pilkington did not have anything further to report.

#### **Parish Clerk including any correspondence not previously circulated.**

The clerk referred to the HMRC advice of a credit balance on the Parish Council's PAYE account that had been discussed at previous meetings. She advised that she had written to HMRC requesting that the sum of £242.42 be refunded into the Parish Council's bank account, as requested by councillors, and would advise when a response was received. The clerk then advised that she had recently responded to a request from Breckland District Council to complete an 'Open Space and Playing Pitch Survey' concerning the small areas of grassland in the parish. A query had come back about the grassland at the end of The Close and whether this is publicly accessible? The clerk was advised to respond to Breckland informing them that it is accessible and is owned and dealt with by Breckland District Council. The councillors present knew nothing more other than it backs onto the sewage works which presumably would require freedom of access.

#### **8. To receive and discuss any planning applications.**

The clerk advised that no notices had been received.

#### **9. Review progress with the Pig Unit, Cherry Tree Farm.**

There had been no response from MP George Freeman to the letter sent from Stow Bedon and Breckles Parish Council requesting his support to get enforcement action instigated by Breckland Council and the Environment Agency against Cranswick plc. Similarly, there had been no response to the letter sent to Mr Freeman requesting same sent from Ann Cuthbert. It was decided to send MP George Freeman a follow up email to check that he had received the letter from the parish council as the council was a bit surprised not to have heard back from him. Also there had been reports of a lot of mail going astray over the Christmas period which could be a reason for his lack of response. As the parish council's letter had been signed and sent from Councillor Reed, Councillor Pilkington advised he would email Councillor Reed requesting her to do this. There was also discussion about an Ammonia Air Pollution Report on the pig unit at Cherry Tree Farm carried out by Michael Bull and Associates Ltd at the request of Ann Cuthbert. The parish council had been asked by Ann Cuthbert if they would be able to contribute towards the cost of the report amounting to £900 + vat. It was agreed by all present that her actions should be supported and that the parish council would contribute £200 towards payment of Dr Bull's invoice for carrying out the report. The clerk was requested to advise Ann Cuthbert accordingly and to arrange payment.

#### **10. Agree budget for 2025 - 2026.**

The budget proposal for 2025 - 2026 circulated at the last parish council meeting was agreed as there were no amendments requested.

#### **11. Agree required precept for 2025 - 2026.**

Having agreed the budget for 2025 - 2026, the amount of the required precept for 2025 - 2026 was discussed and it was agreed that it should be increased slightly from £6,500 last year to £6,750. The clerk completed Breckland Council's precept request Form B which was authorised by the signature of the chair of the meeting.

#### **12. Allocation of funds from Fuel Allotment Charity.**

Councillor Allen had spoken to the resident in the village with an offer of financial assistance from the Fuel Allotment Charity which had been received with much gratitude. Councillor Childs issued a cheque for the agreed amount and Councillor Allen requested the clerk to type an accompanying letter. The

clerk advised that she would do this and take the letter to Councillor Allen's home address so that he would then be able to deliver it in person to the parishioner.

**13. Review current insurance cover pre-renewal of policy.**

The clerk advised that the renewal date for the insurance cover with Hiscox Insurance Company Ltd is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and that a Pre - Renewal Questionnaire she had received had been forwarded to all the councillors for their information. There was discussion about the amount insured under Street Furniture which was thought to be higher than necessary because amendments had been made to the Asset Register at the last meeting. The clerk had updated the register as far as currently possible and it was agreed to review the sum insured under Street Furniture and complete the Pre - Renewal Questionnaire at the next meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**14. Review asset register.**

The clerk advised that she had made enquiries about a deer sign thought to have been a joint purchase with Wretham Parish Council in 2020 but not included on the Asset Register. Councillor Pilkington had raised the issue because the deer sign had not been seen for a long time and its whereabouts were unknown. Having contacted Wretham Parish Council, the clerk advised that the sign is on the A1075 but was thought to have been a purchase solely by Wretham Parish Council. It was agreed that this required further investigation by checking Stow Bedon and Breckles Parish Council's financial records and liaising with Councillor White for any further information. The clerk agreed to send Councillor White a copy of the deer sign's purchase invoice and request his assistance when he is available.

**15. To present the financial statement and approve any expenditure.**

The clerk presented the statement of finances to date.

<b>Balance Unity Trust Current Account 6 January 2025</b>		<b>£6,164.66</b>
<u>Invoices due for payment</u>		
Parish Clerk salary Nov 2024	£392.17	
Parish Clerk salary Dec 2024	£296.62	
Parish Clerk expenses Oct-Dec '24	£ 12.15	
	£700.94	<b>£5,463.72</b>
<b>Balance Unity Trust Saver Account 6 January 2025</b>		<b>£ 0.00</b>

**16. Any other relevant matters not included on this agenda.**

Councillor Pilkington suggested that a litter pick should be organised and proposed Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March but it was too late to put the item on the next agenda. He advised that he would liaise with Councillor Reed to hopefully get it organised and advertised in the Waylander if possible.

**17. To receive items for the next agenda.**

Items received were Pig Unit Cherry Tree Farm, Insurance Policy Renewal, Asset Register.

**18. To confirm the date of the next meeting as Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025.**

The next Parish Council Meeting will take place on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

Signed .....Chairman Date.....

Subsequent meetings booked at Caston Village Hall: Mon 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025  
Mon 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025