

## 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 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Caston Village Hall.**

**Present:** Councillors H Reed (Chair), L Pilkington, C Allen, J Preston (Parish Clerk) and One Member of the Public.

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

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present.

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

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

#### **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 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**

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

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

Item 12: The clerk advised that she had typed the letter to the recipient of funds from the Fuel Allotment Charity and taken same to Councillor Allen's home address. Councillor Allen confirmed that he had hand delivered the letter with enclosed cheque which had been received with gratitude.

Item 14: The clerk advised that the issue regarding the deer sign had been resolved. Enquiries had led to an existing Memorandum of Understanding between Wretham Parish Council and Stow Bedon and Breckles Parish Council being found detailing the cost, how funded, ongoing costs and list of sites where the deer sign should be moved between. Copies of the Memorandum were distributed to councillors present.

Item 16: The litter pick proposed by Councillor Pilkington for Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March had not taken place as it could not be arranged in time.

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

Ann Cuthbert spoke to everyone present with an update of the current situation regarding the Pig Unit, Cherry Tree Farm. Prior to the meeting she had emailed points for discussion with suggested responses by the Parish Council and copies of this information had been circulated to everyone present. The first item was the lack of response from our MP George Freeman to many communications requesting his support. The Chair had written to Mr Freeman on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025 with no reply so the parish clerk was asked to write to Mr Freeman about this on behalf of the parish council. The clerk was also

requested to write to District Councillors Philip Cowen and Sarah Suggitt from whom there had been no response to requests for updates on the action taken by our councillors to address the lack of enforcement measures by Breckland LPA and the Environmental Health Team. Ann Cuthbert had already submitted an objection to 3PL/2021/0932/VAR Variation of Condition No2 on 3PL/2017/0878/F: Variation to reflect the as-built appearance and layout of the pig sheds, feed silos and manure store cover and proposed amendments including revised materials and the addition of chimneys on 31-01-2025 and it was agreed that the parish council should also send a strong objection to this which the parish clerk was requested to submit. A meeting has been arranged for Councillor Reed and Ann Cuthbert to meet Simon Wood on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to discuss Natural England's deficiencies in their assessment and response to this planning application based on information supplied by Breckland. Much discussion followed regarding the failure of all the agencies: Breckland LPA, Environmental Health Team, Natural England, Environment Agency, and the Health & Safety Executive to fulfil their statutory duties and their failure to take enforcement action. All these agencies need to be chased for not operating correctly. The ongoing concern is that the site in Stow Bedon will be expanded with or without planning permission. The current site has not had planning permission for four years which has still to be decided.

## **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. The Chair summarised the report which detailed at length the issue of Devolution and Local Government reorganisation. The government is proposing to introduce LGR and institute Unitary Authorities that will see district councils and county councils abolished and Breckland, working with other districts in Norfolk is preparing a response to this.

### **Report of Chairman.**

Councillor Reed did not have anything further to report.

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

The clerk confirmed that bookings had been made for the hire of Caston Village Hall for future bi-monthly parish council meetings and the dates of these had been circulated. She also advised councillors that she would be preparing the year end accounts and have these internally audited prior to the next parish council meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 so that the AGAR could be approved and signed. At this point Councillor Reed advised that she will be standing down from her position as Chair. The clerk went on to advise that she will be on leave from 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

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

There was general dis-satisfaction with the new IT system being used to advise about planning applications with difficulty being experienced by everyone in getting required information.

### **Planning Reconsultation: 3PL/2024/0303/F River Cottage, Rockland Road.**

A new set of plans have been submitted for River Cottage. This latest variation changes nothing in respect of the parish council's previous objection to building to the rear of existing properties within a ribbon development. It was agreed that the parish council should submit another objection to this application. Councillor Allen recommended that another Lower Stow Bedon Residents Petition be carried out similar to the one already submitted in August 2024 to show the continuing strong local concern about this proposed development.

### **Planning Notification: PL/2025/0239/VAR Plot 5, Mere Farm, Stowbedon Road. Variation to allow changes to the design of the dwelling**

The required information was not available to determine what the proposed changes are to the design of the dwelling and a decision could not be made. The clerk was asked to contact the Case Officer to get an explanation of what was being proposed.

**Planning Notification PL/2025/0277/DCA Plot 5, Mere Farm, Stowbedon Road. Discharge of Conditions 3,4,8 & 9 on 3PL/2023/1166/F**

The required information was not available to enable a decision to be made on the discharge of these conditions. The clerk was asked to contact the Case Officer to get an explanation of this notification.

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

This matter was fully discussed at Item 6.

**10. Asset Register and Insurance Renewal.**

The clerk advised that the Asset Register was now up to date and that an amendment to the insurance policy was required before the renewal on 31<sup>st</sup> March concerning the total sum insured. Replacement values were discussed and an amended total agreed. The clerk advised that she would liaise with the broker to amend the policy and submit payment.

**11. Councillor Resignation.**

Since the last meeting in January the Chair had received an official resignation from Councillor Childs to take effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. Councillor Childs has been a member of the council for twenty-five years and his colleagues expressed their appreciation for his hard work and dedication during that time. The Chair advised that she will write a letter of thanks to him. There was also a request to step down from the parish council from Councillor Jesset who has been absent by agreement for some time for personal reasons. A recruitment process will now begin to fill two vacancies on the parish council. The clerk advised that she will inform Electoral Services and when a Notice of Vacancy is issued it will be displayed on the website and notice boards.

**12. Agree revised signatories for Unity Trust Bank.**

Due to the resignation of two councillors, two new authorised signatories need to be set up with Unity Trust Bank before 31<sup>st</sup> March. Councillor Reed and Councillor Allen agreed to do this in the absence of the remaining councillors due to the shortage of time available to get this organised before the clerk starts her leave on 26<sup>th</sup> March. The clerk advised that she will get an Account Management Submission Form from Unity Trust completed and this will require signature by the current signatories as well as the new signatories for the bank mandate to be amended.

**13. Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment Charity – Councillor selection to manage investment.**

The clerk advised that there had been no progress in selecting the councillors responsible for making decisions on the funds invested in the Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment Charity. These councillors will need to provide specific means of identification and complete a risk profile for the investment portfolio. It was agreed that in the light of recent councillor resignations it would be preferable to wait until new councillors had been appointed before completing this task so that the best selection of councillors would be involved with management of the funds.

**14. Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment Charity – Submission of information required to complete January review.**

This matter had already been discussed in Item 13. The information required to complete the January review included the risk profile and agreement of terms that had been forwarded by Matthew Harrington of Lovewell Blake Financial Planning Limited. The clerk advised that she will contact Mr Harrington to explain why the information and necessary paperwork had not been forthcoming and that this will be attended to as soon as possible.

**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 5 March 2025</b>		<b>£5,251.72</b>
<u>Invoices due for payment</u>		
Parish Clerk salary January 2025	£296.62	
Parish Clerk salary February 2025	£296.62	
Parish Clerk expenses January-March 2025	£ 20.95	
Caston Village Hall Charitable Trust	£130.00	
NPTS Subscription 2025/26	£ 67.50	
Gallagher Insurance	<u>£695.67*</u> <i>will reduce when policy amended</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,507.36</b>	<b>£3,744.36</b>

**Balance Unity Trust Saver Account 5 March 2025** £ 0.00

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

The range of items and workload in this meeting’s agenda prompted a discussion about the benefits of having more regular parish council meetings. It was agreed by everyone present that another meeting should be held prior to the AGM of the parish council on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 when the year end accounts will be on the agenda as well as the process of councillor recruitment. Discussions led to a proposal of going back to monthly parish council meetings which would assist the Parish Clerk, reduce the length of meetings, improve communication and improve the attendance levels at meetings. With everyone in agreement the clerk was requested to arrange a booking for the next meeting to be held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April and arrange for additional meetings to be held in June and October this year and February and April next year.

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

Councillor Pilkington requested that the management of the deer sign be put on the agenda annually every July meeting and that the organisation of litter picks be put on the agenda annually every January meeting.

**18. To confirm the date of the next meeting as Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025.**

Reference Item 16: The date of the next meeting will be brought forward to Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April. Confirmation will follow when booking of Caston Village Hall in place.

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

Proposed dates of future meetings:

14<sup>th</sup> April 2025, 12<sup>th</sup> May2025, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026 and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026.