

## STOW BEDON AND BRECKLES PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Jonathan White  
Church Cottage  
Breckles  
Attleborough  
NR17 1EW

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

### Minutes of Stow Bedon and Breckles Parish Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at Caston Village Hall.

**Present:** Councillors J White (Chair), H Reed, L Pilkington, C Allen, J Morfoot, J Bush, District Councillor Phil Cowen and J Preston (Parish Clerk).

**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 were received from County Councillor Fabian Eagle.

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

No declarations of interest were made.

**4. To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

The minutes were duly signed.

**5. To agree the minutes of the meetings held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025.**

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

**6. Matters arising from the minutes not included in this agenda.**

**Annual Parish Meeting Item 6f:** Councillor Pilkington was asked if he had completed the risk profile questionnaire required by Lovewell Blake regarding the Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment Investment. He required assistance from Councillor Reed to finish completing the questionnaire which she proceeded to do during the meeting.

**Annual Parish Meeting Item 6g:** The clerk was asked if there had been any progress in changing the bank accounts for the Fuel Allotment and Village Hall Charities from Barclays Bank to Unity Trust Bank. She advised that she had yet to contact Unity Trust Bank to arrange this.

**Parish Council AGM Item 10:** The clerk was asked if the charger and batteries required to get the deer sign operating had been obtained. She replied that they had been received, payment had been made from Fabian Eagle's Members Budget and the sign was currently with one of Wretham Parish Council's members.

**Decisions: It was agreed that,**

**a).** to find out the location of the poles that were in situ so that one of these could be used to get the sign up and running for the first six months before handing over to Wretham Parish Council for them to move and manage the sign for the following six months as already agreed.

**Parish Council AGM Item 10:** The Chair advised that there had been further developments regarding the fly tipping complaint by a resident in Lower Stow Bedon. Having been advised of Highways

Department's decision to take no action, the resident had responded expressing their dissatisfaction with that decision. The Chair advised that he had sent a reply to the resident but it was clear there was still disagreement about this situation having received a further reply stating it would be regrettable if any unfortunate accidents should happen.

**Parish Council AGM Item 12:** The Chair advised that he had been in touch with Norfolk Wildlife Trust advising them of the planning application to build a new dwelling and garage on Plot 6, Mere Farm, Stow Bedon Road. They had responded by placing the recommendation that certain measures be taken if the site is developed due to the plot being so close to a protected County Wildlife Site. As the parish council had already objected to any development at all on that plot for that reason, the Chair advised that he had requested Norfolk Wildlife Trust to amend their comment to state that it is not a suitable place to build at all.

## **7. Public participation (30 minutes).**

There was no public participation.

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

County Councillor Fabian Eagle was not present but had advised that there was a small community fund available to all parishes within the Brecks division that could be used in supporting village fetes.

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

Phil Cowen began with local government reorganisation and devolution and advised that the elections for the Mayor will be in May next year. The Mayor will be in charge of the strategic authority for Norfolk and Suffolk dealing with large infrastructure projects as well as much smaller issues such as taxi licensing. Once the mayoral office is established the county council and district councils will start to wind down some of their functions and eventually all the districts and the county council will cease to exist. This will unfortunately take away local level involvement with decision making. There are currently three different proposals regarding the number and size of unitary authorities for Norfolk which should be decided by the end of this year.

### **Report of the Chairman**

Items for the Chairman's report are included in the agenda.

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

The clerk requested that BACS payments agreed and set up on the Unity Trust Bank website for payment be authorised as soon as possible after each parish council meeting. She also advised that she will be on leave between 21<sup>st</sup> June and 28<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

## **9. To receive and discuss planning applications.**

Planning applications to discuss are itemised separately on the agenda.

## **10. Local Plan Update.**

District Councillor Philip Cowen advised that despite local government reorganisation and devolution a new local plan is still being worked on. When the new unitary authority/authorities are in place, they will be taking on the contracts, policies and liabilities of the existing authority which will probably mean that one unitary authority will merge two, three or five local plans using different components of those to make one local plan for the new area. As a result of the government's mandatory 40% uplift in the housing target for Breckland to 903 houses per year there has been a second and third call for available sites that can be developed. Officers are currently going through the sites that have been submitted to try and achieve this target which cannot include all the ongoing development in Thetford and Attleborough because this was delivered through the last local plan. Round table meetings have been arranged for discussion with parish councils about the preferability of proposed development sites in towns and villages but invitations to attend these have been focused on locations where the proposed development sites are larger because of the need to meet the government's housing target. The Chair advised that he had enquired from Teresa Smith at Breckland if it was possible for our parish council to put in a written submission about the site put forward in Stow Bedon instead of attending the round table

meetings. She advised that the parish council should submit their written comments which will then be considered during the upcoming period of statutory public consultation.

**Decisions: It was agreed that,**

- a). The parish council should submit a written objection to the possible development of the site in Stow Bedon put forward by the Ackermans which will need to be done before the end of this month.
- b). Councillor Reed should attend one of the round table meetings on behalf of the parish council.

**11. To approve and sign audited 2024/25 annual accounts.**

The audited accounts were formally approved and signed by the Chair and the Parish Clerk.

**12. Completion and approval of AGAR.**

The AGAR was discussed with information submitted approved and duly signed by the Chair and the Responsible Financial Officer.

**13. Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment.**

The clerk advised that she had collected all the files relating to the Stow Bedon Fuel Allotment from Ex-Councillor Philip Childs. These were passed to Councillor Pilkington for his safe keeping as he is taking the lead on how the invested funds are managed going forward. The clerk advised that there was still information being requested by Fidelity in addition to the completed questionnaire required by Lovewell Blake. This included the provision of identification and verification for signing parties on the account.

**Decisions: It was agreed that,**

- a). The Chair will contact Matthew Harrington at Lovewell Blake to ascertain what information is still required from the parish council.

**14. Village Hall Fund.**

The clerk advised that she had collected all the Village Hall Fund documentation from Ex-Councillor Philip Childs but this was not complete or up to date. The Chair offered to take the file and obtain the financial information that was needed in consideration of the approach for funds from Breckles Community Group to adapt St. Botolph's Church for use as a community centre. There was further discussion about the proposed venture between Stow Bedon and Breckles Community Group and St. Botolph's Church, Stow Bedon.

**Decisions: It was agreed that,**

- a). The Chair will bring the file as up to date as possible.
- b). The Chair and the clerk will make enquiries about the legality of the charity providing funds for the creation of a community centre which will at the same time benefit the church.

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

District Councillor Philip Cowen informed everyone that the Planning Committee Meeting had now been postponed twice due to over two thousand letters of objection being received to the two different planning applications. The council is currently checking the validity of these so that they can be posted onto the website which will probably delay going to committee until September 2025. An enforcement notice has been served on Cranswick Country Foods to stop the process of time running out before a Planning Committee Meeting can be held. The enforcement notice is requiring Cranswick to either rectify what has been done or make an appeal and the delay that has been caused to the decision process is allowing Cranswick to continue operating as before. The Chair updated everyone about the parish council's representations to be made at the Planning Committee Meeting whenever it is finally held. One representation is complete, he will construct a script for the second representation and circulate both to all members so that if he is not available on the date the meeting is held, another councillor will be able to step in and present them.

**Decisions: It was agreed that,**

- a). The Chair will forward copies of the two presentations to be read at the Planning Committee Meeting to all councillors.

#### 16. Hook Two Sisters Poultry Farm.

District Councillor Philip Cowen advised that the council has inspected the site and eleven sheds have been demolished. Further action may be warranted and any information regarding the site should be given to the enforcement team. The Chair advised that he had been in contact with Steve Hunt (Assistant Planning Enforcement Officer) who had confirmed that planning permission should have been sought to knock down the sheds and planning permission is required to rebuild on the site. It seems that the intention was probably to rebuild and then apply for retrospective planning permission.

#### Decisions: It was agreed that,

- a) The parish council should be watchful of future developments on the site.
- b) Wait for an update from Mr Hunt regarding further action.

#### 17. To present the financial statement and approve any expenditure.

The clerk presented the statement of finances to date.

**Balance Unity Trust Current Account 4 June 2025** **£1,419.07**

#### Invoices due for payment

Parish Clerk salary May 2025	£296.62	
Parish Clerk expenses (Apr-June '25)	£187.09	
L M Wellbelove (internal audit)	<u>£ 50.00</u>	
	<b>£533.71</b>	<b>£ 885.36</b>

**Balance Unity Trust Saver Account 4 June 2025** **£5,000.00**

#### 18. Remaining Councillor Vacancy.

There was discussion about approaching possible prospective candidates. The clerk advised that as requested by Councillor Reed she had produced flyers advertising the vacancy that would be distributed during the village fete on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

#### 19. Any other relevant matters not included on this agenda.

There had been notification from Norfolk Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group of a proposed woodland creation project at Church Farm, Stow Bedon which is being submitted for funding through the England Woodland Creation Offer which all agreed was legal and beneficial to the parish. The Chair advised that over two years ago damage had been caused to hedges and trees during the nesting season on land by Hockham Common about which he had made several complaints with no reply from the perpetrator.

#### Decisions: It was agreed that,

- a). The Chair would write to Simon Wood asking him to address the issue.

#### 20. To receive items for the next agenda.

None received.

#### 21. To confirm the date of the next meeting as Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

The next Parish Council Meeting will take place on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

Signed .....Chairman      Date.....

Future meeting dates:

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.