

# Necton Parish Council

Minutes No: 2016/11/1

Minutes of Council Meeting held Monday, 06 March 2017 7.30 pm in the Necton Rural  
Community Centre



## Parish Councillors (6) present:

David Matthews (Chairman), Frank Woodward (Vice-Chairman),  
Joe Sisto, Phil Hayton, Jean Bass, Ian Thompson

## Also in attendance:

Gabrielle Joyce (Clerk)  
32 members of the public  
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris (Norfolk County Council)  
Cllr Nigel Wilkin (Breckland Council)

## Ahead of the meeting, Cllr Matthews registered the sad passing of Mrs Sue Boldero during the previous week.

Sue along with her husband, Peter, contributed much time and energy to volunteering within the village, in particular their long-term involvement with the community centre.

### 1. To receive apologies for absence

Received from Cllr Axham (personal commitment)

### 2. To note the resignation of Cllr Cheshire, effective 14 February 2017

This was noted and it was agreed to send a letter to Mr Cheshire, thanking him for his commitment whilst a serving member.

### 3. To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensation

Received from Cllr Woodward & Cllr Sisto in relation to item 12.5 (non-pecuniary). Received from Cllr Thompson in relation to item 7.2 (non-pecuniary). Received from Cllr Haydon in relation to item 17 (pecuniary). Cllr Matthews clarified the procedure for those with non-pecuniary interests is to not engage in the discussion on that item, whilst those with a pecuniary interest is to leave the room before the item is discussed.

### 4. To approve minutes of Council meetings held on 06 February 2017

The minutes were **agreed** by all and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

### 5. Matters arising

#### 5.1 progress on matters arising from last minutes

**Abandoned car:** reported to Breckland Council (online 7 Feb). Car was removed before 16 February.

**New street names for new developments:** Both proposed names have been submitted and added to the Necton name list. Following publication of our draft minutes, Mr Bell contacted us to ask if the Boldero family would be remembered. Mr Bell also suggested Trevor Meen as a person to be remembered in a future street name, ahead of Mr Bell.

**Dementia Awareness & becoming a Dementia Friendly community:** this topic was raised at a previous meeting. Georgie Bell from the Merle Beryl Centre in Swaffham, delivers dementia awareness workshops and offered her services to the Parish Council. The Council wish to pursue this initiative, wishing also to extend to the community in general.

#### 5.2 Clerk's report

**Damage to play area caused by ongoing drainage system:** NCC Highways (Jon Winnett) attended the site on 02 March to discuss resolution options. It was identified that soakaways are not a sustainable solution, given the early failure of the existing system. A scheme to install a full pipe run from the existing soakaway network through to the ditch at the far end of the playing field will be costed out. This scheme will take into consideration the proposed path to school PPS scheme and car park refurbishment plans. The Clerk will be working closely with Jon and Paul Sellick (taking over in April) to combine all three elements for the best

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financial and practical outcomes. We will be aiming to conclude this combined scheme within 2017/18.

Meanwhile the current overflow of water from the drains is washing top soil away, creating a slip risk at the gate entrance and undermining the gatepost causing the gate not to lock securely. This gate access to the play area has been closed whilst remedial action is taken. There is signage to direct people to the alternative gate on the playing field site.

**New pedestrian crossing on Hale Road by shop:** This work has been scheduled by NCC and will be complete by end of March.

**Outdoor table tennis:** The equipment and installation have been commissioned from Fenland Leisure (previously commissioned) and installation is anticipated during week commencing 20 March 2017.

**A47 bus shelters:** Installed! However, reports of the X1 not stopping at the westbound shelter continue – the Clerk has contacted the bus company (23 Feb). They advised that passengers should give a clear signal to the driver. It does appear that the leading hedge-line is blocking the view for both oncoming bus and waiting passengers. This is the responsibility of the owner of the development site.

**Bus Shelter damage:** Cllr Sisto reported damage found on the new shelter on the eastbound side. This has been reported to police (crime reference 36/21809/17) and Westcotec made repairs on 2 March. This news made the Watton & Swaffham Times. Cllr Hayton confirmed that there would be no charge for repairs made by Westcotec on this occasion.

**Necton Festival 2017:** Tickets have gone on sale via Eventbrite - £15 for age 15 and over. Free for under 15s. The website is expected to be live by the end of the coming week.

**Community Centre car park refurbishment:** Howard Cardus has provided an options sketch plan and now we are discussing with NCC Highways (as noted above).

**Statoil update:** We received an email from the project manager on 02 March advising that construction work is almost complete. Electricity generation has started; with 10 of a total 67 turbines having been installed and 8 turbines are presently producing renewable power.

**Vattenfall update:** The next public consultation is 24 March. Simon Wood, Breckland Council, has replied to an earlier email from us inviting some co-operative work as consultees in this process. He has confirmed that there have been some meetings between Vattenfall and Breckland and he would be happy to meet directly with us to discuss. We have a meeting booked for 14 March.

## 6. Reports from:

### 6.1 Norfolk County Council, Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris:

- The NCC budget was confirmed as reported at previous meeting.
- There is a lot of news in the media about the state of Children's services, however there are improvements, for example 89% of our schools are now good or outstanding across the county, compared with 63% three years ago.

### 6.2 Breckland Council, Cllr Nigel Wilkin:

- Devolution & unitary discussions still ongoing, a movable feast. If this were to happen, Breckland could be a reduced council and he would aim to be involved as a member.
- The recent telecoms mast planning application has considered a number of concerns raised by individuals and officers are requesting a reposition of the mast. It is unclear if this will be dealt with as an amendment or re-application.
- A resident has reported that there is a light permanently illuminated on the A47, for perhaps the last 3 years or so. This is a Highways England matter, but perhaps the Parish Council might submit a fault report on the resident's behalf.

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## Public Participation Session opened at 7.54 pm

- There were a number of questions and comments about the planning application for Hale Road (3PL/2017/0048/0). The primary concern relates to the risk of flooding. Residents along Chantry Lane have previous experiences of flooding. It was reported that this site itself is prone to flooding and it is currently a field with trees.
- A resident who lives adjacent to the site explained her concern as their property sits below the level of the site.
- A resident raised a concern about the number of houses on the application for the old school site (3PL/2017/0190/0).
- A resident expressed anger at the waste of money on Trods, which are already damaged by traffic. The Clerk explained that the damage on the North Pickenham Road was reported today to NCC Highways. Cllr Matthews explained that damage on highways is an ongoing concern and cited the recent damage at the corner of Chapel Road towards Ivy Todd as another matter that has been reported to NCC Highways.
- A resident expressed concern about the extra properties adding pressure to our road network. Another resident expressed anger at the apparent apathy of the village over the past 10 or more years to get a roundabout on the A47. Cllr Wilkin explained that there is no apathy on this matter, it has been a significant concern for all who live here and all parties are working to achieve a solution.
- Cllr Matthews explained that the housing allocation for Necton is being driven by demands of government. The Council is working hard to negotiate improvements on the A47, in discussions with our MP, George Freeman, who is arranging a meeting between the Council and Highways England.
- Cllr Kiddle-Morris reported that the A47 Alliance, of which he is a member, is lobbying to get adequate improvements along the full length of the A47 from Peterborough to Great Yarmouth.

## Session closed at 8.28 pm

## Cllr Kiddle-Morris left the meeting at 8.29 pm.

## 7. Planning Matters

### 7.1 To receive results of outstanding applications (from Breckland Council)

None.

### 7.2 To receive new planning applications relevant to the village and make comment

**3PL/2017/0048/O**, Hale Road: outline for access to development of 14 units.

Cllr Hayton explained that existing drainage of this site is by open ditch, which was free flowing on the site visit on 17 February. He would recommend that the ditch remain open and not culverted to ensure effective long-term management. Cllr Woodward suggested that diversion of water into the neighbouring property's natural pond should be investigated. He also stated that flooding risk is increased by individuals not taking responsibility for the ditches that abut their boundaries, for which they are legally responsible.

Cllr Matthews summarised the Council's concerns for clarity; flood risk management, clean drains, open and not underground, redirection to neighbouring pond. Cllr Hayton noted that this land forms part of the proposed allocations to meet the village housing allocations and should this application fail, then alternative sites will need to be considered.

It was **resolved** to submit these identified concerns within the Council's consultation response.

**3PL/2017/0193/HOU**, 5 Larwood Close: extension to existing property.

No comments or concerns identified.

**3PL/2016/0983/O**, Erne Farm: new information relating to access, historic assets and ecology.

There was a consensus that the proposed numbers of 46 is excessive. Cllr Bass noted that the farmhouse appears to be in such poor repair to be unviable for retention. Cllr Matthews stated that this site would not be allowed to become a "second diner" and if development were not allowed, this would happen. Cllr Matthews clarified the Council's comments for clarity; in favour of the site development, sympathy with the heritage statement by Landpro, the numbers are excessive, road access needs more consideration. It was also noted that the Council have concerns about the ongoing financial and operational management of

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any open space, which becomes the responsibility of the Council.

It was **resolved** to submit these comments and concerns within the Council's consultation response.

**3PL/2017/0190/O**, old school site, 10 dwellings: this site currently has permission for 4 dwellings (since 2015).

Cllr Sisto stated that the village needs affordable housing and so supports this development. Cllr Wilkin considers that the design is poor and the layout and open space will become an invitation for school time car parking. Cllr Thompson agreed with the need for affordable homes but objects to the location, as this is overdevelopment of a site. Cllr Woodward expressed concern about flooding management, this site lies immediately north of the ditch which flows down through Chantry Lane.

Cllr Matthews clarified the Council's comments for clarity; overdevelopment of the site, flood risk management, form and character of the design is not in keeping with surroundings, layout is not conducive to good traffic flow.

It was **resolved** to submit these comments and concerns within the Council's consultation response.

## 7.3 To receive update on Local Plan

The LPWG meeting of the 3 Feb (reported at last month's meeting) was adjourned to complete on 21 February. Published minutes are not yet available from Breckland Council. There has been no contact from the Local Plan officers following the LPWG meeting of 3 February, when it was agreed that officers were to continue to work with this Parish Council on housing allocations for the village.

## 7.4 To receive update on St Andrew's Road proposed layout & note the order made to stop up highway

Last month's meeting noted public consultation on the Stopping up of a section of highway was in progress. Consultation is now over and the stopping up order has being made. Copies of this order are available to view in the Parish Office.

During February, a resident brought to our attention a condition discharge relating to condition 9 on the Old Garden Centre planning permission. This discharge agreed for a reduction to the entrance width and change of alignment, causing access restrictions to agricultural support vehicles. The Parish Council made representations (21 February) to Tom Donnelly, Breckland Council Planning Officer and Graham Worsfold, NCC Highways. On 01 March, Mr Worsfold contacted the Parish Council to advise that our concerns have been taken into consideration and a revision of the scheme would be made to maintain a 10-metre radius at junction. Final drawings will be provided to Council once produced.

## 8. Footpath working group

Cllr Hayton reported on the recent research day at Norfolk Records with 6 volunteers and acknowledged that the project would benefit from more professional support from Helen Chester and proposed that we commission her services for more detailed research on 3 routes. The Clerk confirmed that there is outstanding in-year budget to support this proposal. It was **resolved** to commission Ms Chester.

## 9. SAM 2 – to receive a report

The working group have identified 10 points around the village. Cllr Hayton is drawing up a site plan that will be submitted to NCC Highways for their comment and (anticipated) approval. The identified locations are:

1. St Andrews Lane, outside No 17/19 on the existing Street Light
2. Outside The Grange, St Andrews Lane (possible new post)
3. St Andrews Lane on the 30 MPH sign
4. Tuns Road, on existing Speed Sign
5. Tuns Road, signs opposite Eastgate
6. North Pickenham Road, opposite the small bridge into allotments
7. North Pickenham Road on existing 30 MPH sign
8. North Pickenham Road, outside Necton Management Offices in the grass verge
9. North pickenham Road, outside No 28/28A
10. Hale Road into the village from Home Hale, on existing speed sign

Cllr Sisto reminded Council that School Road had previously been identified. This will be added to this list.

More volunteers are sought to manage the siting and moving of the unit. It is envisaged that the unit will be in

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operation in 3 months' time.

## 10. A footpath on Kett's Hill – to receive an update

CLlr Bass reported on her meeting with CLlr Wilkin. The key outcomes; a trod along the northern verge would be more in keeping with village environment and financially more achievable. The Clerk reported that a request for initial costs has been requested from NCC Highways, with a view that it may be a scheme to consider within the Parish Partnership Scheme 2018/19. It was **resolved** to wait for indicative costs before proceeding further with public consultation. It will continue to be listed on agenda. CLlr Hayton suggested that the NCC "safe walking to school" budget might be worth investigating.

## 11. Annual Parish Meeting, Thursday 27 April 2017

### 11.1 To consider an invitation to NNAB to deliver a short presentation

It was **resolved** to send this invitation.

### 11.2 To launch Community Sprits Awards

Community Spirit Awards seeks to receive nominations to recognise the great volunteer work that local residents are doing for their neighbours and the community in general. CLlr Bass is leading this initiative and we have compiled a short list of nominations to kick-start this new initiative. **Current nominations:** Bernard Bell, Phil & Maureen Kirkby, Frank Woodward, Babs Hastell, Barbara Jones. A short write up of each nominee will be published in the April Parish Link.

The intention is that it will become an annual event – with people putting forward nominations during the year. CLlr Wilkin will present the Awards on the 27 April and Town Farm Cars has offered to sponsor this year's event.

## 12. Finance

### 12.1 To agree payments of invoices received during February

The following payments were agreed. The total payment being £18,636.80.

Payee	Reason	Cheque	Value	VAT portion (to be reclaimed)
Nest Pension	February pension	dd on 22feb	24.42	
G Joyce	Feb Salary	dd on 24feb		
BT	phone for Feb	dd on 23feb	31.08	5.18
L Luff	Feb Salary	102663		
HMRC	February NI&TX	102664	278.85	
Eon	January energy	102665	332.02	55.34
TT Jones	January maintenance	102666	154.00	25.66
Westcotec (new LED)	New LED at Jubilee Way	102667	504.00	84.00
Westcotec (bus shelters)	New bus shelter westbound	102668	5,205.60	867.60
Westcotec (bus shelters)	New bus shelter eastbound	102669	10,668.00	1,778.00
G Joyce	February expenses (admin, postage, mileage)	102670	21.60	

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## **12.2 To receive current financial statement and progress against budget**

Receipts in February:

£228.00 admin fee from NRCC

£40.00 payment from Saham Toney for delegate on training

Current actual income yr. to date: £92,762.70. Actual outgoings yr. to date: £104,775.48 (includes above expenditure). A reconciled bank statement and budget check were circulated to members. There were no questions raised.

**Cllr Matthews requested a resolution** from Council to consider a suspension of Standing Order 3.v as the meeting has been in session for two hours. It was **resolved** to suspend standing order for 15 minutes to enable the conclusion of the meeting.

## **12.3 To consider the appointment of Internal Auditor for 2016/17**

For the past three years, Council commissioned an experienced Clerk from another parish, who has provided a service, complete with detailed report, which complies with requirements. To provide a comparison, a quote for services was sought from Auditing Solutions, a private accountancy firm with extensive local authority audit experience, who provides services to a number of large parishes in Norfolk. They considered that one day at £420 plus VAT would be sufficient for our requirements. Our previous Internal Auditor, Luisa Cantera provided a statement of her current fees, indicating that based upon previous knowledge of our accounts, the work will take her 6-8 hours at £17.5 per hour. She is fully insured to carry out this work and as Mattishall is a similar sized parish council to Necton and within the same local authority district, she has the advantage of local and sector knowledge. She carried out internal audit for three other parish councils last year and expects to be re-commissioned this year. It was **resolved** to commission Lusía Cantera for services relating to 2016/17.

## **12.4 To consider a request for donation to Norfolk & Norwich Association for the Blind**

It was **resolved** to provide a donation of £100 to the NNAB.

## **12.5 To consider a request from the football club for a grant for extra battery spotlights**

The Clerk advised that some supporting information is still outstanding and recommends a deferment of this to next month. This deferment was **agreed**.

## **13. To receive updates from individual Council Members (for information only)**

- Cllr Bass reported the pothole by the post box on North Pickenham Road. The Clerk confirmed that it was reported to NCC Highways that morning.
- Cllr Sisto reported that the pothole on School Road and the A47 drain cover are still outstanding.
- Cllr Woodward reported that 5 welcome packs were distributed in last month.
- Cllr Matthews reported several large potholes on the Ivy Todd road.

## **14. To receive any items for inclusion on the next agenda (for information only)**

As noted above.

## **15. To confirm date and time of the next Parish Council Meeting Monday, 03 April 2017, 7.30 pm.**

Confirmed.

## **16. To consider a resolution to exclude members of public and press under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 ahead of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

It was **resolved** to agree this resolution.

**Meeting adjourned for 5 minutes whilst waiting for members of public to exit.**

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Cllr Hayton left the room ahead of discussion of the following item.

**17. To consider a mid-term review of the street light maintenance contract.**

Street light maintenance is contracted out to TT Jones Ltd under a long-term agreement to finish on 31 May 2019. This mid-term review seeks to understand if this contract continues to provide best value for the Council, should it commission an upgrade of remaining old light stock before the end of the agreement. A confidential report was provided to members. It was noted that the potential saving would not be greater than the potential penalty of early termination of contract. It was **resolved** to wait until the end of this agreement before completing the light stock upgrade.

Meeting closed at 9.50 pm

Minutes signed by Chair (or designate) \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_