

Brisley Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Brisley Parish Council held at 7.00pm on WEDNESDAY 6TH MAY 2020.

Under the Coronavirus Act, the Secretary of State has published meetings regulations which remove the requirement to hold annual meetings and allow virtual meetings up to 7 May 2021. These are contained in The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. Accordingly, this meeting was held virtually via Zoom, an online meeting platform.

Present:
Cllr Henry Collinge (Chair)
Cllr Tony Irons (Vice- Chair)
Cllr Brigid Fairman
Cllr Richard Savory
Cllr Peter Dennis
Cllr Bobby Green

C/Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)
There were no members of the public present

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were received from Cllr Nicola Curl and D/Cllr Gordon Bambridge.

2. To receive declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4th March 2020 and 1st April 2020.

Cllr Dennis proposed that both sets of minutes be accepted as a true record of the meetings, this was seconded by Cllr Irons and agreed by Council. The Chairman will sign both copies in due course.

4. To approve an Addendum to Standing Orders relating to the Covid-19 situation.

Cllr Collinge proposed approval of the Addendum to Standing Orders which set out how meetings will run and other related matters during the Covid-19 situation. This was seconded by Cllr Dennis and agreed by Council.

5. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

Reports were received from both the District and County Councillors and are attached to the minutes. In addition, C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris reported that the recycling plants at Dereham and Hempton will be re-opening on Monday 11th May. He also reported that repairs to potholes and resurfacing works are continuing.

6. To receive a Clerk's report on the progress of items from previous meetings and any items progressed under delegation of authority.

Council received an update on items from previous meetings and decisions taken whilst authority delegated to Clerk during Covid 19 Emergency (in consultation with Council members) as follows:

- 2.04.2020 – Council approved a 50% reduction, to £25, in respect of 2020 allotment rent for a new tenant, due to the poor condition of site. Unfortunately, despite starting work and then alternative options being offered to them, the tenants decided not to continue. No refund of rent was made.
- 2.04.2020 – Covid 19 - Council approved the use of Townlands funds in cases where any vulnerable person cannot repay shopping bills etc, however, it is expected that any funds paid out would be refunded in due course.
- 3.04.2020 – Council approved the advertisement of 2 x ¼ allotment plots at £20 per annum. There had been no takers for these smaller plots.
- 20.04.2020 – Planning Application 3PL/2020/0301/HOU - Rear extension to bungalow at Highfields, School Road – Council had no comments in respect of this application.
- 22.04.2020 – Council approved a payment of up to £400 for skip hire to take away all the tree guards removed from the amenity area. However, the Skip Company has advised that the actual cost is £492, this relates to the haulage £168 and the first 2 tons = £324. Confirmation of weight may increase, although this is unlikely given the content. Council will need to approve this additional cost.
- 24.04.2020 - Rural Payments Agency – Higher Tier Stewardship Application – Council approved the application for submission of the application to the Rural Payments Agency in respect of Brisley Green. Although the application had to be submitted by 1st May 2020, consultation will be ongoing with all stakeholders, including the grazing rights holders, prior to any agreement being finalised later in the year.
- 24.04.2020 – Council agreed a payment of up to £30 for feed for priority species (HLS reserve fund).
- 24.04.2020 – Council had previously approved the spray treatment of the ragwort on the amenity field, of up to £500. The actual cost of the treatment amounted to £610.00 (excl VAT) and Council will need to approve this additional cost.

In respect of the higher than approved payments for skip hire and ragwort treatment, Cllr Collinge proposed approval of the increased costs as set out above. This was seconded by Cllr Green and agreed by Council.

7. Open Forum: a 15-minute opportunity to hear from members of the public.

There were no members of the public present.

8. Planning – applications received since the publication of the agenda.

There were no applications to consider.

9. To receive reports on the regular checks and to consider any items raised in those reports.

The following written report was received:

- North Green (Cllr Bobby Green) - All is fine on the north green, nothing to report.
- South Green (Cllr Nicola Curl) - The South Green has no issues currently except thistles are beginning to appear. Please can the grazing programme be discussed with the GRH to ensure that the thistles are "eaten off" or topped at the appropriate time.
- Footpaths & Stiles (Cllr Brigid Fairman) - The footpath off Woods Lane continues to cause problems, otherwise all looking good.

The trees that were blocking the bridleway to Back Lane, Stanfield, have not been cleared but Cllr Fairman has chipped away at them and now a horse, dog or human can easily step over or get round them.

- Churchyard (Cllr Tony Irons) - In good state. Recently mown.
- Play Area (Cllr Tony Irons) - Closed with suitable notices.
- Patch Corner (Cllr Peter Dennis) - Nothing to report.
- Allotments (Cllr Peter Dennis) - The new fence is in place. There is a bit of a rodent problem developing which we might have to deal with.
- Amenity Area (Cllr Peter Dennis) - The tree guards are all off and in the skip. A massive thank you to Richard for seeing to that.

The spraying is completed and hopefully there will be a good control of the ragwort.

We need to do mowing/brushcutting in various areas between the trees to take out brambles that are starting to take hold. I think we can address the issue without too much cost.

- Harpers Green (Cllr Peter Dennis) - There are now ten cattle (youngstock) grazing the green and there doesn't appear to be any problems.

In addition, Cllr Dennis reported that there had been a theft of some items from the Stay and Play Group. However, it had been ascertained that the previous holder had taken them, despite having given up any claim to them some time ago. It was agreed not to take any further action.

At this point in the meeting, C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris left. The Chairman thanked him for attending the meeting.

Cllr Green reported that he had removed the rotten bench from Patch Corner and any moles in the churchyard will be dealt with.

The footpath leading from Woods Lane across a field continues to be an issue, the field has recently been reseeded and it does not appear that any attempt to restore the footpath has been made. It was agreed to contact the tenant and request that the path be weed-sprayed.

Cllr Dennis confirmed that the correct number of livestock were now grazing at Harpers Green.

The culvert at Harpers Green has been repaired, thanks to a local resident, and the culvert at Brisley Green has also been replaced, thanks to Cllr Savory and a local landowner.

A letter of thanks will be sent to the local resident who was responsible for the removal of many of the tree guards at the amenity area, work which the Council were most grateful for.

10. Finance & Governance Matters

- a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2020 and 2021.**

Council noted both financial reports.

- b) To receive the internal auditors report and consider any recommendations.**

Council noted that the internal auditor had confirmed that all was in order and Cllr Collinge proposed approval of the report, this was seconded by Cllr Fairman and agreed by Council.

c) To approve the annual governance statement in the 2019-20 Annual Return.

Cllr Dennis proposed approval of the annual governance statement for 2019-20, this was seconded by Cllr Irons and agreed by Council. The Chairman will sign the document in due course.

d) To approve the Accounting Statements in the 2019-20 Annual Return.

Cllr Irons proposed approval of the 2019-20 Accounting Statements, this was seconded by Cllr Green and agreed by Council. The Chairman will sign the document in due course.

e) To consider approval of membership of Zoom at a maximum monthly cost of £11.99.

Council agreed that the Zoom platform was the most suitable for council meetings and Cllr Collinge proposed approval of membership at a monthly cost of £11.99, although it was hoped this will be shared with five other parishes. This was seconded by Cllr Irons and agreed by Council.

f) To approve the application for a Clerk's Training Bursary (£30.00).

Cllr Dennis proposed approval of the application for the Bursary, this was seconded by Cllr Fairman and agreed by Council. The Chairman will sign the application in due course.

g) To approve the following payments.

The Clerk confirmed that, in respect of the insurance renewal, a review had been carried out to confirm that the cover remained appropriate and adequate and no amendments were necessary.

Cllr Fairman proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Savory and agreed by Council.

• Clerk (May Salary & Expenses & April arrears)	£372.78
(includes previously approved incremental pay increase)	
• Grass Contractor	£400.00
• Grass Contractor/Ragwort Spraying	£840.00
• Internal Auditor	£13.00
• SLCC – Training Course	£36.00
• Norfolk PTS – Subscription	£115.00 (paid on 9.4.2020)
• Insurance Renewal	£344.28
• Environment Agency	£41.79
• Skip Hire	£492.00
• NCC (Amenity Rent)	£750.00 (paid on 9.4.2020)

h) To receive any new items for the next agenda.

Cllr Savory requested that 'a long-term plan for the Jubilee Wood' be added to the next agenda.

11. To confirm the next virtual meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 3rd June 2020 at 7.00pm.

Council noted the date of the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.33pm.

Signed:

Date:

County Councillor for Necton and Launditch – May 2020

Response to Coronavirus: Throughout the crisis the County Council has been working closely and effectively with District, Borough and the City Council, the NHS, Police and other public sector partners. Examples of the ways that the Council has supported people during the pandemic are:

- Procuring PPE to supply all the Council's frontline staff and care homes.
- Identifying and visiting the most vulnerable children and adults.
- Supporting schools that have remained open for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.
- Supporting the implementation of the new free school meals scheme.
- Setting up accommodation to enable the NHS to discharge patients safely.
- Offering digital support from libraries, museums and the adult learning service to support home schooling and enable people to stay safe.
- Creating a skills bank so staff can be redeployed to assist with the distribution of food and PPE.

Looking to the future the Council is working with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and all partners to devise the best strategy to recover from the economic shock brought about by the crisis.

The Council has been allocated an additional £43.6m government funding so far but has predicted a £19m shortfall in this year's budget due to lost savings, additional costs and loss of income.

Boundary Commission Revue: The Boundary Commission have decided that they cannot finish the statutory consultations on their revue of Norfolk County Council division boundaries in time for any recommendations to be implemented prior to the May 2021 County Council elections. Therefore, the May 2021 election will be contested on the existing division boundaries.

Highways: Due to the problems of deploying maintenance personnel and adhering to the social distancing rules in the current Coronavirus pandemic only work on rectifying defects that present a danger to the public and property are being carried out. Social distancing rules mean that each member of a maintenance gang, usually 4, will have to travel in a separate vehicle. Our main subcontractor has furloughed staff and a certain proportion of our personnel are isolating themselves, this has reduced the workforce available.

Annual Report - D/Cllr Gordon Bambridge

Note:

First part details this ward only.

Second part deals with what Breckland has achieved against the plans put forward in our Manifesto.

Third part is what is our intention for the future (please note this was constructed before the Corona virus outbreak.)

1.

Personal report for the Ward

First of all thank you for re-electing me in May 2019. I made a commitment to you then that I would do all I could without fear or favour to all of the electorate within the ward. I have also tried to represent the ward as a whole within the 15 villages and into District, County and National political arena. This has been an unusual year with district elections, a new general election, European elections and the referendum, plus now the Corona Virus to contend with. The police commissioner election has been postponed.

I am pleased to have been fully involved on your behalf in the listed Breckland Achievements below. Whilst some of these may seem a long way from Upper Wensum, all those I have listed will improve our living in this ward. Many of Breckland achievements would be seen as innovative and mean that we are recognised as a leading council of our size and type.

This has been a good year overall, although I was taken ill in August, and still continue to be poorly, although I am finally well on the way to recovery. I have not been able to attend evening meetings since August, but just as this was looking possible to start again we have this lockdown, and it is likely to affect me for a few more months as I am now 'vulnerable'. I have, however with the advantage of internet, telephone and well organised meetings in Breckland been able to keep well up to date with goings on in the ward and the district. I have met many individual parish councillors, or small groups, or members of the public which has been useful. Now that most, if not all parishes are meeting virtually I am very open to join in with those meetings from now on. One of the things fallen by the wayside is my blog site, I will be refreshing this from May 2020.

I was able to see the Local Plan to its completion, and am pleased to say that it has finally, after many hold ups by PINS all of which were outside the control of the council, been Adopted in January. At the end of January I was asked to oversee Licensing, Public Protection and Environmental services, so left planning to others and am getting to grips with that, which includes the new waste contract involving three district councils and is one of the largest such deals in this area. Breckland will come on stream with this April 2021, but we are well on track to do this. Much more will be announced during the next year.

During the current situation all Breckland meetings have become virtual meetings. Many have had to be cancelled or altered as we face up to the challenges of dealing with burdens placed upon districts by the government, and the extra work involved with protecting the most vulnerable people in society. We have also managed to place around 80%, at time of writing, of the small business support grants, been able to top up the food banks and so on. The first big virtual meeting will be the JUNE planning meeting followed by Cabinet and then the July Full Council meeting. Details will be published soon.

As business must go on, and as a cabinet member I am meeting with colleagues at least three times a week on Zoom or Teams to review actions and policies. I am speaking to other members and officers regularly to continue both council and ward matters by telephone and email. I am continuing with my

work with organisations outside the council in all ways. This includes the Drainage Board, Water Resources East, the Waste Contract, and a number of NCC panels.

2.

Some of the Breckland achievements 2019/20

We are the only Local Authority in Norfolk that has an adopted Local Plan.

We have declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019 and are working to deliver an Environment and Climate Strategy in late Spring of this year.

We have invested £60k in the installation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition ANPR) technology in Breckland, to support Norfolk Constabulary detect, deter and disrupt criminal activity in the District particularly county lines.

The council has been successful in securing **£14.1 million** in Housing Infrastructure Funding which will help unlock the power issues that are inhibiting the development of the Thetford Enterprise Park and 5,000 new homes at Kings Fleet also in the Greater Thetford area.

The Council has secured **£3.5 million** in funding from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and the Norfolk Business Rates Pool to expand the current electricity supply capacity at the Snettisham Employment Area with a view to supporting substantial industrial business growth.

The Council has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Flagship Group and Norfolk County Council to work together to deliver a meaningful change for the future direction of the Abbey Estate in Thetford. It has also made commitment to an ongoing dialogue with the local community to understand what matters most to residents and other estates in the town.

The Council has restructured its existing Market Town Initiative and committed to further funding it for another three years to the sum of **£750k** over that period. It will commit to giving **£50k** per annum out of this to each of the five market towns.

Swaffham has been successful in getting through to the final stages of the Future High Street Heritage Action Zone funding process. It has submitted a final bid for **£350k** from English Heritage and is match funding £100k itself. The purpose of the bid is to make improvements to the conservation area in the market place, look at public realm with a view to utilising the market place and Buttercross as a focal point for events and activities

The Council working in partnership with North Norfolk District Council and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council has retendered its waste contract with a view to making significant savings. The contract has now been awarded and represents the largest contract of its type in the East of England (circa **£250 million** across the three councils)

We have successfully delivered three complex elections (District and Parish, European Parliamentary and UK Parliamentary). Two of which were required at short notice.

We have successfully secured government funding to establish a rough sleepers' engagement service. Our Garden Waste Service is high performing and continues to grow and bring additional income to the council.

We are making great strides in tackling environmental crime particularly fly tipping and are the best performing council in Norfolk

There has been a significant shift in customer satisfaction with our planning & building control service. Breckland lottery is going from strength to strength with more organisations and communities benefiting from the money it raises.

In response to our nationally recognised challenge around social mobility, we have funded and recruited two Skills Officers. They are effectively engaging with high schools across the district and connecting them with local businesses to provide better opportunities for young people leaving schools. We are the only council in Norfolk to take this approach.

The council has jointly funded the Tripstart programme with DWP which is providing skills around using transport for unemployed people where this is a barrier. It has enabled a number of people with significant barriers to work to move closer to the job market

Brecklands Dog warden service was awarded a Gold Stray Dog Footprint in the 2019 – the RSPCA’s Community PawPrints Awards which celebrates good practice rewarding those organisations exceeding basic and statutory service requirements with the aim of achieving higher animal welfare standards, particularly in terms of dealing stray dogs. This is the fifth year in a row that the service has achieved this level of award.

We have continued our history of supporting the armed forces through our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant. We have also committed £30,000 in funding to support celebrations for VE/VJ day and the Battle of Britain across the district.

***** figures quoted are just some of the monies levered into the district by your council**

3.

Below is a shortened version of our declared targets for 2020/2 which we established at the start of the year. With Corona Virus we recognise that some things WILL change and that some things WE WILL WANT to change and the whole forward plan is being reviewed. To be announced at our delayed AGM

We will be commissioning a partner to conduct a series of socio-economic studies across each of our five market town. The expected outputs of this exercise will be a delivery plan that will enable us to work in a more coordinated way with key delivery partners like the County Council or Health to make significant improvements to the towns while drawing down capital and revenue investment from their programmes of activities. Dereham will be piloted as the first town to go through this process. Subject to decisions made at Council we will be looking to invest £1 million from its inclusive growth reserve to look at addressing the impacts of vulnerability across the district. As this can cover a very wide area the Council has decided that a targeted approach focused on tackling county lines, safeguarding and modern slavery, reducing the impact of domestic abuse, tackling social isolation and reducing the impacts of poor mental health are its main priorities at present. We are working to deliver an Environment and Climate Strategy in this year. This will focus on what is within our gift to address; so it will look at reducing the Council's own carbon footprint and environmental impact, how we use our statutory powers and duties to influence others around this agenda, and how we engage our communities to change their behaviours. Subject to decisions made at Council we will be making further commitment to support our market towns and their rural hinterlands by allocating £50,000 per town each year for the next three years through a refocused Market Town Initiative. We will continue to ensure that Breckland growth in a sustained way by bring forwards sites like the Snetterton Employment Area, Thetford Enterprise Park, and the sustainable urban extensions at Attleborough and Thetford. We will continue to champion and unlock issues around utilities and infrastructure enabling improvements to A47 and A11 to come forward and reaping the benefits of the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor for all our communities. We will work to make sure that our Headquarters, Elizabeth House are fit for purpose and the most efficient they can be, whilst offering a modern and flexible environment for our officers and our tenants. This will be delivered through our WorkSmart 20:20 programme. We will focus on the development of new temporary accommodation provision in the district. The new unit is at the planning stage and will look to provide configurable accommodation of up to 21 rooms under the Council's control with an aim to reducing the cost to the organisation. We will continue to work with communities and key stakeholders in Attleborough, Swaffham and Thetford to explore future leisure options. In addition to this our leisure provider Parkwood will be moving back into a refurbished facility at the Nicholas Hamond Academy.

Finally I personally would like to acknowledge the work done by our NHS locally and for all the other emergency services and essential workers such as the refuse collectors, the local shops, the farmers, our transport workers and anyone else who has acted to keep the country moving. I also acknowledge the efforts put in by officers at Breckland, the one third who were transferred to Corvid 19 duties and the two thirds who kept the basic services going up to now. Of course I also

**recognise the essential work being done by Parish Councils in the ward, and those, often un-
recognised, volunteers and groups which I think have sprung up in all of our villages. Please pass
my thanks on to them.**

**Gordon Bambridge
Upper Wensum Ward**