

Brisley Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Brisley Parish Council held virtually at 7.00pm on Wednesday 7th October 2020.

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

County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from D/Cllr Gordon Bambridge.

2. To receive declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2020.

Cllr Irons proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Green and agreed by Council.

4. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

The County and District Councillors both provided written reports and these are attached. In addition, C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris updated Council in respect of the Covid outbreak in Y10 at Litcham School. Public Health England and Norfolk had evaluated the safety measures put in place and were satisfied that pupils were able to return to the school, however, it did appear that current attendance was low.

5. Open Forum: an opportunity to hear from members of the public.

There were no members of the public present.

At this point in the meeting, Cllr Irons took the Chair due to technical problems being experienced by Cllr Collinge.

6. Highways

a) To receive an update on matters reported to Norfolk and Breckland Councils.

- Woods Lane Flooding – Cllr Dennis reported that he had met with the tenant of the land and had been assured that the issue which had caused the flooding the previous winter would be resolved. Cllr Green reported that he would clear the culvert opposite, near to the Woods Lane pond.
- Speed Limit request – B1145 from Mileham direction – the C/Cllr is taking this issue forward but it remains on currently on-hold.

Cllr Irons congratulated the Highways team on their efficiency in an instance where a pothole had been reported and repaired within days.

b) To receive a report from the Public Rights of Way Warden.

The PROW Warden reported that, following the previous meeting, she had received “stand corrected” messages from Councillors Kiddle-Morris and Borrett. However, getting NCC to fulfil their statutory duties as regards maintaining public rights of way remains an issue but at least our two councillors are now aware that a legal duty exists.

The “private” notice has been removed from the footpath sign and re-attached to the fence at Harpers Green. The two cross-field paths in this vicinity have not been reinstated yet, nor the one running across the corner field at Fludge Lane.

The footbridge leading from the maize field path via a stile on to paddocks is looking unsafe and will be reported to Highways.

A letter of support had been received from a parishioner regarding the unnecessary cutting of verges. They had been very sad to see some harebells destroyed on Fludge Lane. It is apparent that highways do not have a duty to cut verges, only to keep the highway clear and in many cases a once yearly cutting schedule in the autumn would be enough to ensure the highway is kept clear, particularly on single track roads with little traffic.

7. Planning

a) Applications for consideration.

There were no new applications for consideration.

b) To note any planning decisions.

Council noted the following decisions:

- 3PL/2020/0710/F - Maltings Farm, Gateley Road - New Single Dwelling, swimming pool, Garden Studio - Change of Use 0.5 Acre Agricultural Land to Domestic Curtilage – APPROVED.
- 3PL/2020/0564/HOU – Shoemaker’s Cottage, Church Street – Conservatory extension- APPROVED.
- 3PL/2020/0859/F – Maltings Farm, Gateley Road - Conversion of agricultural building to two dwellings, change of use of agricultural land to domestic curtilage, erection of two double garages, and associated works – UNDECIDED.

At this point in the meeting, Cllr Collinge took the Chair again.

8. Open Spaces

a) To receive an update regarding the long-term plan for the Jubilee Wood.

Cllr Dennis had met with another contractor whose advice was very much the same as our advisor from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust in that the trimmings should be left to provide habitat for wildlife, rather than being chipped. A firm quotation was awaited but it was expected to be £600, with the works being carried out during the winter months. This price compared favourably with the costs previously obtained for separate contractors and a chipper. Cllr Green proposed that, once a firm quote is received, the contractor should be appointed to carry out the works at a cost of up to £600, this was seconded by Cllr Fairman and agreed by Council.

The contractor had also advised that the dead willow at Woods Lane be removed and a quote is being obtained.

At this point in the meeting, C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris left the meeting.

b) To receive an update regarding the application for a Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Grant.
There was no further update regarding the application.

c) To receive an update regarding the pond project.

Council noted that the pond near to the Bell was to be renovated this year, and permission had been obtained to remove the willow in it which was necessary as it was in the conservation area.

The invasive weed in the pond at Patch Corner had been identified as water soldier which is a native plant but can unbalance the plant community within a pond. Council agreed that, as there was no likelihood of it spreading to other ponds, this could be dealt with when the pond is next cleared of silt. The situation will continue to be monitored.

d) To consider a request from the Hope Federation of Church of England Primary Academies to use the Amenity Area for 'Forest Schools Lessons'.

Cllr Irons reported that he and Cllr Savory had met with the representatives and it was proposed that the school children visit the amenity area regularly between the months of October and February to identify trees, plants and insects, take tree rubbings, make models and general woodcraft. They will also build a small fire but this will be carried out on Cllr Savory's land and not on the amenity area. The amenity area was particularly suitable as there was a lot of weather shelter available. Council agreed that they were happy for the area to be used by the Academy, who had their own public liability insurance in place.

e) To consider any actions arising from the Play Area Inspection Report.

Cllr Irons reported that he had inspected the items mentioned in the report and the items mentioned as "loose" have minimal movement and will be tightened in due course but there is no immediate danger from any of them. The sign for the Adult Outdoor Gym equipment has been replaced by the Clerk.

f) To receive an update regarding the Japanese Knotweed at The Hill.

Council noted that the third and final treatment was due to take place during October but agreed to keep any remaining funds in reserve in the event it is required next year.

9. To receive reports on the regular checks.

- North Green (Cllr Bobby Green) - nothing new to report.

Cllr Dennis reported that there was a hedge, running alongside a blind ditch, on the Green which had become overgrown and needed cutting back. Cllr Curl proposed a budget of £100 to carry out the works, this was seconded by Cllr Green and agreed by Council.

- South Green (Cllr Nicola Curl) - nothing to report except a golf ball found and requested that people do not hit golf balls on the Green as they are (or at least used to be) lethal if a dog chews them.
- Churchyard (Cllr Tony Irons) - some small branches were blown from the tree near the church and had been put in the hedge for the contractor to remove. There are two or three new mole hills.
- Play Area (Cllr Tony Irons) - the replacement tree is now planted thanks to Cllrs Fairman and Dennis. Cllr Dennis has also done an excellent job installing the No Dogs signs.
- Patch Corner (Cllr Peter Dennis) - an interesting retaining wall has appeared on the boundary. A tidy up of the area will be needed once the leaves are off the trees.
- Allotments (Cllr Peter Dennis) - the recent gales did a bit of damage to growing crops but nothing very serious.

- Amenity Area (Cllr Peter Dennis) – the area is looking good at the moment, fortunately the recent strong gale was blowing from the north and didn't affect the trees too badly.
- Harpers Green (Cllr Peter Dennis) – this is looking good at the moment and the recent rain has greened it up a little. Four young stock remain, which is about right for the grass available.

10. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2021.

There were no queries raised and the report was noted.

b) To note the external auditors report for the year ending 31st March 2020.

There were no issues raised by the external auditors and the report was noted.

c) To consider if any amendments are wanted to the Townlands Governing Document.

Following an offer to purchase one of the Townland sites from the tenant, the Charity Commission had been consulted to see if this was possible and had advised that legal advice would have to be obtained to amend the governing document accordingly. Council agreed that, as this would be complicated and costly, not to go ahead.

d) To consider allocation of Townlands funds.

Cllr Savory suggested providing help to any families in need of assistance funding the additional transport fees required to travel to swimming lessons. Cllr Irons will contact the School and report back to the November meeting.

e) To consider approval of the grass cutting contracts for 2021 and beyond.

The contractors had provided their quotations for 2021 and 2022 and Cllr Collinge proposed approval, this was seconded by Cllr Irons and agreed by Council.

f) To approve the following payments:

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

• Clerk (October Salary, Expenses & Arrears)	£443.17
• PFK Littlejohn (External Audit)	£240.00
• Grass Contractor (September)	£186.00
• Grass Contractor (September)	£300.00
• Xmas Trees (x 100)	£66.00
• Community Heartbeat (Annual Contract)	£151.20
• SLCC Membership (Brisley £53.10)	£140.00
• Play Area Inspection	£144.00
• Anglian Water (allotments)	£75.08 (direct debit)
• Grass Contractor (August)	£300 (paid 3.9.2020)

11. Correspondence for circulation.

- Planning White Paper Consultation – CPRE
- Breckland response to the Changes to Planning Policy Consultation.

Cllr Curl proposed that a letter be sent to the local MP and the Housing Minister objecting to the proposed changes, particularly the short time frame for consultation, the brownfield sites with permission but not being developed, the lack of local consultation for applications, and the huge increase in the number of

homes to be built in Breckland and Norfolk, supporting the views expressed by the CPRE. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Fairman and put to the vote: For – 4, against – 0, abstentions – 3, the vote was carried.

Cllr Fairman suggested that the parish council become a member of CPRE and this will be added to the next agenda for consideration. Cllr Savory suggested that the views of the village should be obtained before Council make any decisions and this will also be added to the next agenda.

12. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

The following two items will be added to the November agenda:

- To consider obtaining the views of the village in respect of changes to the planning system.
- To consider membership of the CPRE (previously known as the Campaign to Protect Rural England), the countryside charity.

13. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 4th November 2020 at 7.00pm.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the meeting closed at 8.16pm.

Signed:

Date:

WHATS GOING ON IN BRECKLAND

As your local district councillor for Breckland. This time I should have been talking about What Breckland is up to, and how it is coping with the pandemic - actually quite well really.

The council did keep working throughout the pandemic and the lockdown, it has also reverted now to bringing back some workers into the office. Social distancing is still hindering some contacts with individuals, so I commend you to use the generic departmental email addresses still, these are checked by my senior people several times each day

Council meetings have continued throughout via ZOOM or TEAMS and that the basic work of both the council and the councillors has been and is still all going on.

The £30,000,000.00 the Council has paid out in grants to all sorts of business across Breckland, This is government money which Breckland was tasked to assess and grant to recipient businesses under a specific formula

The £10,000.00 Breckland Council donated to food banks PLUS additional hardship grants to individuals. Breckland is aware that the most vulnerable in society did need special protection in this time.

The community self help groups in all the towns and many villages collecting groceries and prescriptions etc for those locked in. And of course the hundreds of those of you who picked up the phone or checked the neighbour, or even just gave a wave. This happened in your village as well as many others across the district

The fact that 99% of all bins were emptied on it's due day, and that we are the only council in the area to do that. If you had one of the 1% or less that were missed I am sorry, I did have personally, but it was picked up the next day before I reported it, the lane had been blocked.

The fact that all the homeless and rough sleepers in the district were offered accommodation under special arrangements. With money laid aside for homeless people we have now embarked on building specific homeless accommodation for 3 families and about 17 singles or couples in addition to our existing stocks.

Businesses were supported in either their closure or their remaining open. Our future really depends on local small and large business continuing and People getting back to work

Breckland responded well to not just the general problems of Covid-19, but also to the specific situation in Attleborough. Some of our officers are currently helping out in Gt Yarmouth - supporting the Norfolk community

The successful anti fly-tip and littering campaigns which has been the most successful ever in the whole area in recent times despite the lockdown.

The council has dealt with more planning applications during this period that we would have expected, and that they are all being assessed and dealt with. We are now considering the planning consultations and white paper.

The 28 positive actions Breckland are considering regarding climate change. We are extremely fortunate to live in such an area, but your council are very aware of our responsibility for it and for all of our futures.

We are getting on track with some committees having actual meetings or hybrid meetings, (some attendees there and some online) most of which are live streamed on youtube so that even more people are able to see what is being done on their behalf. The full Council, Planning, Scrutiny and Cabinet are probably of most interest and details are always on the website

If you have a problem which relates to Breckland Council I am available through the council website or directly.

GORDON BAMBRIDGE

County Councillor for Necton and Launditch Division
Report October 2020

Budget:

NCC is starting the budget setting for 2021/22 in very uncertain times for local government finance. Areas of uncertainty are; the local government funding allocations from government are unknown; the governments Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) has not yet been delivered; key reforms to government funding have been delayed (by Covid distractions) the Fair Funding Review, Business Rate Retention localisation and Adult Social Care funding. Covid pressures on NCC budget for this year amount to £75.421m against government support of £63.824m leaving an overspend this year (so far) of £11.597m. Due to the impact of Covid £17.780m of planned savings have not been realised. The Council is also working to address a forecast budget gap of £45.434m for 2021/22 prior to any Covid impacts. Many of the additional costs, lost income and undeliverable savings experienced in this financial year may have an extended impact on the 2020/21 budget. The Cabinet meeting on the 5th October will not be able fully to address the forecast budget deficit, further work will be required to identify further saving options.

Local Government:

NCC and other Norfolk local authorities have written to government to request that any Local Government Review is delayed until the effects of Covid 19 on the economy, council services and budgets are returned to the normal. LGR is an expensive and disruptive process to undertake and, although projected to save money, is best carried out when there is stability in local government.

Waste Amnesty:

A reported last month, and as a reminder, NCC are holding free hazardous waste disposal days during September and October at the recycling centres. The following are the dates and times for the nearest ones:

Dereham 2nd, 3rd, 4th October.

Hempton 9th, 10th, 11th October. Both centres are open from 9am to 4pm.

Mark Kiddle-Morris.