

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the
MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
held at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 7th October, 2020
(via Zoom)**

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087 Those Councillors Present by Logging In Were:

Mrs. J. Borgnis (Chairman), Mr. M. Phillips, Miss A. Ferris, Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. P. Grainger, Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. J. Labouchere and Mr. C. Smith

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk) and Mr. C. Hill (Elmham News)

Apologies for absence: Mr. M. Rayner and Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor)

088 To Receive Declarations of Interest:

The Chairman reminded the meeting that, should the occasion arise, interests should be declared by Councillors as soon as this was realised, and the interest should be minuted.

089 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 9th September, 2020:

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. Agreed by all. (Proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Fitzalan Howard)

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

090 Land Management Matters (item 071)

- (a) Village Green The parishioner who had raised the matter of the tree bordering Cedar Close and the green had obtained two quotations for the work required - £780 (£650 plus £130 VAT) and £700 (no VAT). It was decided to proceed with the former. Proposed by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Fitzalan Howard. All in favour. Mr. Grainger said that some concerned parents had reported that senior teenagers had been misusing the slide by rocking it. Mr. Phillips will arrange for Norfolk Frames and Games to inspect it. They will also check the big swing. It was mentioned that there has been a reduced amount of litter. The Chairman is to establish the type of replacement tree to be obtained. Mr. Labouchere mentioned that the PCC is holding a carol singing event around the church tree on Sunday, 13th December at 4.00 p.m. Members would be welcome to participate in this event.
- (b) Cathedral Ruins Hardy Landscape are due to cut the slopes with their remote controlled mower within the next few weeks.
- (c) Cathedral Meadows Nothing to report

- (d) Broom Green Nothing to report
- (e) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) Two fence posts require angle irons and these will be fitted shortly.
- (f) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters
Letters from the Railway Company confirming the proposal for the revised right of way whilst the work to the bridge is being carried out are awaited. The Chairman is to chase.
- (g) Prince William Wood Nothing to report
- (h) Other matters
Thanks were expressed to Mr. Labouchere for all his efforts in providing and installing the signage for the Jimmy Brown Memorial Garden.
- 091 Allotments (item 072)** The collection of rents is almost complete; there are two people still to pay. The annual rent per plot is to increase from £10 to £15 next year. Three plots have been let since the last meeting.
- 092 Street Lights (item 073)**
Nothing to report
- 093 Highway Matters (item 074)**
Mr. Grainger said that he had reported the flooding issue in Eastgate Street and the collapsed sign to Highways who have acknowledged. They estimate action within six weeks. The Clerk will speak to Linda McDermott, the County Programme Engineer, to establish the position regarding the three Parish Partnership applications which have been agreed. A letter has been received concerning parking of vehicles at the east end of Eastgate Street on a corner. It was felt that the parking is dangerous. However, it is a matter that should be tackled by the police who, unlike the Parish Council, have the appropriate powers to deal with it.
- 094 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 075)**
A senior football club is in the process of being formed by Chris Reeve. Mr. Smith has spoken to him and a fee of £20 per match is a possibility. They would wish to pay by weekly standing order. The sink heater in the kitchen, which is currently turned off, needs attention. Mr. Smith will arrange for it to be looked at. There are QR code signs in the pavilion. A Risk Assessment is to be done and an updated cleaning regime will be introduced. The new bench seat has not yet been received and the Clerk will chase. With regard to the proposed Christmas tree, Mr. Saunders is not in a position to provide one this year but will be asked to recommend an alternative supplier. It was felt that a permanent tree may be desirable.
- 095 New bin for the skate ramp area (item 076)**
Mr. Phillips has the bin and the intention is for it to be installed within the next week. A new concrete pad will be needed.
- 096 Youth Club facilities (item 077)**
Mr. Fitzalan Howard has made contact with Steve James of Breckland Council and is shortly to attend a meeting with officers. A skate park project has been commenced at Watton.

097 Eastgate Centre

The Centre is to open on 8th October for the Girl Guides. It has been intensely cleaned and QR code cards have been put in place. The Girl Guides have carried out a Risk Assessment and will be using the premises once a week. No other groups will be utilising the facilities at this stage.

098 Duties of members (item 078)

The following individual duties were agreed by all:-

- a) Cathedral Ruins – Mrs. Keeble
- b) Cathedral Meadows – Mr. Fitzalan Howard and Mrs. Keeble
- c) Highways – Mr. Grainger (Mr. Labouchere to assist when possible)

099 Brookside Development update (item 079)

The S106 agreement is almost ready for signing. It has been decided that the bridge is to be transferred initially to the Parish Council.

100 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

a) Resolved to approve the following Accounts for payment:-

12/9/20	E-on (street lights – August)	£202.14
7/10/20	Mandrake U.K. (monthly payroll – August)	£24.00
7/10/20	K. Webb (Clerk’s pay for September)	£805.92
7/10/20	HMRC (tax on Clerk’s pay)	£112.00
7/10/20	HMRC (National Insurance on Clerk’s pay)	£44.92
7/10/20	Ben Darby (adjustments to kissing gates)	£385.00
7/10/20	J. Borgnis (monthly Zoom meeting)	£14.39
7/10/20	J. Labouchere (equipment & exps re Memorial Garden sign)	£97.00
7/10/20	Glasdon (open top metal litter bin)	£301.72
7/10/20	Biffa (trade waste service from 25/8/20 to 23/10/20)	£72.00
7/10/20	Mole Country Store (rock salt de-icer large bag)	£49.90
7/10/20	E-on (Pavilion from 19/6/20 to 18/9/20)	£266.64
7/10/20	J. Duffield (work in Cathedral Ruins)	£347.50
7/10/20	Mandrake U.K. (monthly payroll – September)	£24.00
7/10/20	CGM (grounds maintenance)	£781.12
7/10/20	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning – 6 hours)	£52.32

(Expenditure approved by all members)

b) Schedule of Income:

28/8/20	HSBC (coif inc div)	£27.76
28/8/20	HSBC (coif inc div)	£44.90
1/9/20	North Elmham Bowls Club (annual rent)	£75.00
11/9/20	North Elmham Tennis Club	£75.00
7/9/20	Bank Interest (from 8/6/20 to 6/9/20)	£4.34
30/9/20	Breckland Council (Precept – second half year)	£19,144.00

Balances (as at 18/9/20):- Current a/c - £81,804.89, Business Premium a/c £31,986.23

Following the submission of AGAR (the Annual Governance and Accountability Return) for the year ended 31st March, 2020, the External Auditor focussed on comments made by the Internal Auditor regarding the procedures to be followed in respect of financial controls in the Risk Management policy. It is important that these are reviewed in accordance with laid-down timescales and duly evidenced by way of the minutes of a Parish Council meeting. The External Auditors have helpfully clarified matters by providing the following guidance:-

Here is a breakdown of what your exempt for matter “Section 1, Assertion 5 has been incorrectly completed, in light of the internal auditor’s assessment of significant weaknesses in the authority’s approach to risk management.”, means.

Assertion 5 indicates that the smaller authority as a whole must maintain an overview of the arrangements on an annual basis. Thus, it is the full authority review of risk management arrangements that we need to see evidence of, rather than evidence of individual risk assessments in place.

Please can I refer you to the wording of assertion 5 in the Practitioners’ Guide:

“Assertion 5: Risk Management

We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

In order to warrant a positive response to this assertion, the authority needs to have the following arrangements in place:

1.31 identifying and assessing risks, The authority needs to identify, assess and record risks associated with actions and decisions it has taken or considered taking during the year that could have financial or reputational consequences.

1.32 Addressing risks. Having identified, assessed and recorded the risks, the authority needs to address them by ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate and manage risk. This might include the introduction of internal controls and/or appropriate use of insurance cover.

1.33 Supporting information on risk management can be found in Section 5.”

If risk management arrangements have been delegated to a committee, the minutes of that committee would be a standing item on each full authority meeting agenda, i.e. the members have regular visibility of the risk management process via these minutes. The annual discussion of the answers to the assertions in the Annual Governance Statement should include the latest summary of the risk management arrangements as an agenda paper to support the response. If this evidence is provided, we would accept a ‘Yes’ response, even if there hasn’t been a separate minuted review of risk management, since it can be argued that the annual review of the risk management arrangements took place during the discussions of the assertion responses (rather like the Assertion 2 annual internal control review, which can also be evidenced in that way.)

The exempt for matter raised for your parish has no financial implications and does not affect your ability to certify exemption in future years. We have to notify SAAA of all exempt for matters that we raise and they may sometimes pass this on to your local council. For future audits the following exempt for matter raised will be carefully monitored to ensure it has been fulfilled.

The members fully appreciate the importance of maintaining robust and proactive procedures in respect of all areas of risk management. Therefore, to reinforce this policy, all members agreed that the topic of “Risk Management” should be a standing item on the agenda of all future Parish Council meetings. Any matters requiring attention will be promptly dealt with, as has been the case in the past, and duly minuted.

101 Virtual meetings with Housing Associations (item 081)

Unfortunately, Broadland Housing had been unable to produce a presentation at the virtual meeting due to apparent unforeseen technical difficulties which meant that no information was forthcoming. A written presentation was subsequently received. Saffron Housing attended the meeting and answered questions. It was agreed that the Chairman would request a similar written presentation from them to enable a full assessment to be made.

102 Response to the consultation on the Government’s planning white paper

Thanks were expressed by all to Mr. Rayner for his extensive work on this document. It is to be finalised with some small adjustments and then forwarded to the Clerk who will submit before the closing date of 29th October.

103 New parking area in Eastgate Street

The work on this project has been completed in accordance with the agreed specifications. In the absence of any comments to the contrary, it would appear that the local residents are content with the final outcome. It has been mentioned that a van has been taking up a lot of space. The owner had originally been given permission to use the Eastgate Centre car park whilst the work was being carried out.

104 Request from the Flourish Federation for new school governors (North Elmham and Stibbard)

The Federation is seeking three new non-staff governors. Unfortunately, no members felt able to commit to these positions. The Clerk will advise the Vice Chair of Governors accordingly.

105 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

a) Applications

- i) Dr. Baker and Ornelas Almaraz – proposed single storey side extension – Ragnells, 4 Elm Close (3PL/2020/1094/HOU) – no objection

b) Determinations

- i) Icon Architectural - new parking bay with highway cross-over – 1 Pump Street (3PL/2020/1094/HOU) - approved
- ii) Mr. Barry Johnson – retention of existing caravan for carer – Spong Hill Caravan 1, Dereham Road (3PL/2020/0875/F) – approved
- iii) Cliff/Anne-Marie – single storey dry store extension – The Railway Arms, 40 Station Road (3PL/2020/0678/F) – approved
- iv) Garrod Development Ltd – amended design for dwelling at Plot 3 – land rear of 36 Station Road (4 Beatie Gardens) – 3PL/2020/0820/F – approved.

106 Correspondence

- a) Notification from Norfolk County Council of closure of Eastgate Street from 26th to 30th October, 2020 because of new electrical connection works.
- b) Report from Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor) as follows:-

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.

107 Agenda items for next meeting:

- a) Budget for the year 2021/2022
- b) Parish Partnership applications

108 Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 4th November 2020 at 7.30 p.m. (Zoom)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.

Chairman

Date

