

Pre-Meeting Business: None

Public Participation: None

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

held in the Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 1st May, 2024

.....

001 Those Councillors Present Were:

Mrs. J. Borgnis (Chairman) – resigned from the Parish Council at the end of the meeting, Mr. P. Grainger (elected Chairman at the start of the meeting), Mr. M. Phillips (Vice Chairman), Miss A. Ferris, Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. B. Gee, Mr. J. Labouchere, Mr. N. Markwell, Mr. M. Rayner and Mr. C. Smith.

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk) and Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor).

Mrs. Borgnis stated that she would be resigning from the Parish Council at this meeting. Mr. Labouchere thanked her for her invaluable work on behalf of the parish and residents over a considerable number of years. This view was warmly supported by all members.

002 Election of Chairman

One nomination as follows:

Mr. P. Grainger (nominated by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Gee). All in favour.

003 Election of Vice Chairman

One nomination as follows:

Mr. M. Phillips (nominated by Mr. Labouchere and seconded by Mr. Markwell). All in favour.

004 Apologies for absence:

Mrs. A. Keeble and Mr. B. Borrett (County and District Councillor)

005 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.

006 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd April, 2024:

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

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

007 Land Management Matters (item 335)

(a) Village Green The debris left from the cutting of the trees has been cleared by Mr. Gee and the cutting of the grass has been done. The new table tennis table is due to be delivered on 13th May. The Chairman has been able to reinstate the status of the cycle path with the County Council so that it again is regarded as an active, ongoing request.

(b) Cathedral Ruins Mr. Duffield is currently out of action and his duties are being carried out by his wife. He advises, however, that if he continues to fill the potholes in the church car park, the level will rise much more than it already has. A suggested plan on how best to proceed has been drawn up with an estimated cost of work to be done in the region of £2K. Mrs. Borgnis is to circulate a picture of the area and members agreed to inspect with a view to discussing the matter further at the next meeting.

(c) Cathedral Meadows The replacement sign has been installed.

(d) Broom Green Nothing to report.

(e) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) Nothing to report.

(f) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters Nothing to report.

(g) Prince William Wood Nothing to report.

(h) Church Meadow Nothing to report.

008 Allotments (item 336)

All allotments are now let.

009 Street Lights (item 337)

There remain concerns regarding the costs charged by the suppliers of the electricity. The Clerk will continue to pursue this matter.

010 Highway Matters (item 338)

The Community Speedwatch coordinator has asked for some signs to be erected at the end of the village, under the North Elmham sign. This request is to be forwarded to the Police Co-ordinator in Dereham. The drain in Eastgate Street near to the Dairy corner is blocked again.

011 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 339)

Mr. Smith reported that the fire certificate has been renewed. The standard of grass cutting seems to have improved.

012 Eastgate Centre (item 340)

Nothing to report.

013 Brookside Development update (item 341)

Nothing to report.

014 Risk Management – considerations and updates (item 342)

Nothing to report.

015 Overview of Parish Council financial situation (item 343)

The resignation of Mrs. Borgnis means that the number of authorised signatories has been reduced. It was agreed by all to add two members to the existing mandates– Mr. Rayner and Miss Ferris – for both Barclays Bank and Cambridge Building Society.

016 Defibrillators (item 344)

Mrs. Borgnis is to continue to check both defibrillators with Miss Ferris having volunteered to take over this role in due course.

017 Call for Sites update – Breckland Council (item 345)

Another meeting is to be held at Breckland Council on 14th May.

018 Archive Group records (item 346)

Mr. Smith said that a quotation of £3,075 (£4,058 for fire resistant material) had been received. The price for units (two double sized wardrobes with cupboards on top) was £5,233 (£6,055 fire resistant). Mr. Smith is to circulate this information to all members. He will also make enquiries regarding second hand storage.

019 North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) Group (item 349)

Nothing to report.

020 S106 monies (£15.1K) received from Breckland Council (item 350)

A quotation of £6,060 + VAT has been received in respect of the strip of matting around the children's equipment in the play area. The grass is to be cut very low before installation and Mr. Phillips will check with both NGF Play and Nurture to ensure the suitability of the intended action. It was proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Rayner to proceed, subject to receiving the confirmation as mentioned above. All members in favour except Mr. Labouchere who abstained.

021 Reorganisation of the Parish Charities (item 352)

It will be necessary for Mrs. Borgnis to be replaced as a Trustee of various charities.

022 Maintenance of Churchyards (item 353)

A further e-mail had been received from North Elmham PCC requesting that consideration be given by the members of the Parish Council to a request to provide further financial assistance. There was no general desire to reopen the debate on this matter. Mr. Labouchere is to speak to Nurture to establish whether they would be willing to provide a quotation for cutting the grass in the churchyards. The Clerk will provide contact details.

023 Sennowe Park Rave (item 354)

It is understood that this event, lasting some three days, resulted in a considerable number of complaints last year. Developments will continue to be monitored. It is scheduled to take place on 16th, 17th and 18th of August.

024 Report from District and/or County Councillors (item 288)

Please find below my annual report for my year as member for Upper Wensum Ward, and some thoughts for the future.

Please feel free to share this with all your parish councillors and with any others to whom it may be useful, parts or all of it may be shared in parish newsletters or websites at the discretion of your parish council.

For those with more than one parish council please ensure all councils receive a copy.

It is copied below in full, but I have also attached a pdf copy of the report and the Breckland achievements notes separately.

Best regards,
Gordon Bambridge
Breckland District Council

ANNUAL REPORT OF GORDON BAMBRIDGE - BRECKLAND COUNCILLOR UPPER WENSUM WARD.

Year 2023/24

Report for villages of

[#Bawdeswell](#) [#Billingford](#) [#Bintree](#) [#Brisley](#) [#Bylaugh](#) [#Elmham](#) [#Elsing](#) [#Foxley](#) [#Gateley](#) [#Guist](#)
[#Hockering](#) [#Lyng](#) [#Sparham](#) [#Tuddenham](#) [#Twyford](#)

This year has been for me personally a year of change and for Breckland Council a year when many achievements have been made and new goals set. To Breckland first.

The council has made real progress on over 50 areas where promises were made and kept from our manifesto at the last election. I have attached as a separate document the list for you to consider, but they fall into the four main areas where we promised to work for the whole community. Some of these may apply to all of you, and some to only some of you but I am proud that during my time in Breckland we have always achieved movement for the community as a whole

The four areas are

Breckland 2035

Which is the overarching name for getting a carbon neutral council by 2035, and by and large not by buying credits. So from community and individual composting, to planting thousands of trees, to car charging points, to supporting businesses, to litter pick and enforcement to keep our community clean - we have made a start on achieving this goal

Thriving Places

Is our target for ensuring established and new businesses can thrive and that our communities can grow in all ways and be more pleasant places for us all to live in. In doing this we have managed to lever in much additional funding across the district despite this being 'hard times' all around, Some of these you may have seen announced in the media, some still to be announced. Breckland has always been a council that is not too proud to seek outside funding and partnerships to ensure we provide the best for our communities, whilst at the same time keeping the district council tax the lowest.

Inspiring Communities

From individual grants to families in hard times, to housing advice and supporting abused people. To promoting mental wellbeing with over 300 mental health champions trained in the district. The Food Bus, and the community supermarket, to helping 3000 residents with housing advice. Working with young people and the police, with dog wardens and local charities Breckland are fulfilling their commitments

Working Smarter

We have performance indicators and are continually holding ourselves to these, debated in most council meetings - which you can watch, all key meetings are online live or recordings. We seek to work transparently, and if you have a case going with the council you will be increasingly able to follow progress online. Already we are offering advice on many matters online with AI and by telephone 24/7 using electronic systems whilst maintaining the office hours human contacts. Gaining many national awards for the council over the last year building on the time we spent during the pandemic modernising the building and workplace Breckland is now number one on preferred places to work.

The complete list is attached as a pdf file

To me as a councillor.

I have represented around half of the ward now for 21 years, and the other half for around 13 years since the last reorganisation of council ward boundaries, and as I have shared with some of you that is all happening again this year for the next election in 2027.

Since May 2023 I am no longer a cabinet member at Breckland but as your representative I do still attend most council meetings and actively represent every resident of Upper Wensum within the district council system. I am also in regular contact with our MP George Freeman, where necessary also contacting government departments directly, and with the County Council supporting Bill Borrett who doubles as a district and county councillor. However on matters concerning the ward I also lobby directly as is deemed necessary.

Many councillors also represent the district in other areas (it's called an outside body) For my part I represent Breckland on the Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board. This obviously impacts on our ward, but also many other wards across Northern Breckland so it involves working with them also to a certain extent. Because I have held this position for over 20 years I have progressed up and sit on other organisations and attend meetings on drainage management in Westminster and across the region dealing with both government and shadow ministers and with such as the EA from time to time. These additional positions for the council are entirely unpaid, and do of course take up time, but I find that apart from expanding my horizons it does enhance my ability to better represent you to Breckland and beyond. This could be seen for example when Storm Babet caused flooding in Breckland last October, I was able to extend the reach of our influence supporting both individuals and communities.

In a normal time Planning matters take up much of a councillors time, Breckland is the planning authority for the area, but lately Nutrient Neutrality has slowed down all housing related applications, this has tended to make more work for me rather than less. Whatever your view on this may be, the fact of an organisation like Natural England bringing in regulations like this without attention to mitigation I find appalling. We do now seem to be edging towards some sort of solution. On planning matters I generally take my lead from the parish but always also have to hear all sides of every situation so will speak to applicants and developers alike

On a similar subject, most councils, indeed whole communities are against unchecked development. However the district has targets for housing to meet. On this matter I tend to stand with the individual parish council, which leaves me sometimes a bit schizophrenic, some want a little growth, others a bit more, others perhaps substantially more growth. And all of this is predicated on the size of the community and the facilities within. I believe within this ward we do have some very mature and tolerant opinions on the matters of growth.

My stance on the matter is that I will always support the view of the parish, but that most communities (not all) do need a little growth, to support their shop/pub/bus/school etc.

I do believe that most larger villages should consider a neighbourhood plan.

I do believe that most communities would support an exception site which is where a small development of truly affordable dwellings are built with local support for local people in perpetuity. And I am happy to talk through these issues.

On wider matters:-

I have opposed the proposed New Town on land encompassed Billingford/Bintree/Elmham mainly in two wide ranging areas encompassed by infrastructure and environment, I noted that some 45 communities opposed this many in Breckland but also from North Norfolk and Broadland areas, and I am happy to discuss this (it was the most raised matter during the recent election)

I have supported the dualling of the A47 on the basis that it improves access will enhance all of our communities. (It does affect me personally)

I support the proposed Western Link Road on the basis that every one of the fifteen villages in the ward are adversely affected by its lack to a greater or lesser extent. The A1067 and every Southward road off it to Guist and beyond have become rat runs because it is not there. All of Northern Norfolk suffers because the Norwich Northern Bypass was not made a complete circular road around the city.

Again I am happy to discuss these matters

I am acutely aware that with fifteen villages I do miss a lot of parish meetings, I am sorry for that. In addition to your parish councils and other necessary meetings I do also need to keep up with the few Breckland meetings held in the evenings and others such as the police SNAP. Also sometimes there are two, three or even four parish meetings on the same night.

What I will say is that I am always available to meet with parish clerks, chairmen or councillors outside of the usual parish meeting. Day or evening. I will also make time to meet parishioners singly or preferably in groups. This can be in your parish or at Breckland office, or on site if appropriate.

Gordon Bambridge
01603 881364
07540 973229
gordon.bambridge@breckland.gov.uk

025 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

a)	Resolved to approve the following Accounts for payment:-	
18/4/24	Npower (street light electricity from 1/3/24 to 31/3/24)–(d/d)	£474.86
29/4/24	Biffa (wheelie bin service from 30/3/24 to 26/4/24) - (d/d)	£61.25
23/4/24	E-on Next (pavilion from 5/3/24 to 4/4/24) – (d/d)	£141.45
22/4/24	K. Webb (quarterly computer allowance) – (s/o)	£20.00
1/5/24	Mandrake (UK) Ltd – payroll services for March	£26.40
1/5/24	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning for April)	£137.28
1/5/24	J. R. Fletcher (key keeping – February and March)	£62.50
1/5/24	Anglian Water (Pavilion from 2/1/24 to 19/4/24)	£22.74

1/5/24	K. Webb (Clerk's pay for April)	£826.64
1/5/24	HMRC (Tax and N.I. on Clerk's pay)	£244.58
1/5/24	Mole Country Stores (rock salt)	£68.16
1/5/24	Environment Agency (general drainage charges)	£111.12
1/5/24	Ace Fire (annual service of fire equipment)	£79.02
1/5/24	Signs Express (replacement sign for Cathedral Meadows)	£1,190.53
1/5/24	J. Duffield (work in Cathedral Ruins)	£195.00
1/5/24	Clear Insurance (annual Parish Council insurance)	£693.04
1/5/24	HeBlad (outside table tennis table)	£3,180.00

(Expenditure approved by all members; proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Rayner)

b) Schedule of Income:-		
8/4/24	Breckland Council (Precept – six months)	£20,317.50
9/4/24	Pavilion lettings	£10.00
26/4/24	Breckland Council (Recycling)	£813.84
26/4/24	English Heritage (Management Fee- Chapel)	£5,355.00

Balances (at 29/4/24):- Current a/c - £78,175.69, Business Premium a/c - £43,321.08

026 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

a) Applications

None

b) Determinations

- i) The Planning Inspectorate, Bristol – appeal by William Seaman (Yaxham) Ltd under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission on land behind 55 Eastgate Street, North Elmham – appeal dismissed.

027 Correspondence

- 1) Clerks and Councils Direct magazine for May, 2024
- 2) Breckland Council's Corporate Plan Achievements 2023/2024
- 3) Newsletter from Dereham Debt Centre and donation request
- 4) Request from George Freeman M.P. to hold a Community Surgery (Clerk to contact to arrange)

028 Any Other Matters (for information only)

The Clerk is to report the resignation of Mrs. Borgnis to the District Council with a view to starting the process to locate a new member for the Parish Council.

029 Agenda items for next meeting:

AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

030 Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 5th June, 2024 at 7.30 p.m.

The Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on Wednesday, 22nd May, 2024 at 7.30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

Chairman

Date

