

Minutes of Brooke Annual Parish Meeting held at Brooke Methodist Church on Monday 23rd April 2018 at 7.30pm.

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Edward Jinks welcomed the Clerk and 23 members of the public to the meeting.

1. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Mr Jinks gave his report, a copy of which is attached as an addendum to these minutes. Having given his report, he invited members of the public to speak. It became clear that Mr Fuller should be given to opportunity to give his report and expand upon the information regarding new development in Brooke and how this may tie in with a new school.

2. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Mr Stone was unable to attend the meeting but had forwarded his report which is attached as an addendum to the minutes.

3. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Mr Fuller gave his report, a copy of which is attached as an addendum to the minutes.

A member of the public raised concerns about the possibility of a large development in Brooke and asked whether there was any need for such a development in order to secure a new school. She questioned whether the demographic of the village demanded such a need as many children come from out of the village to attend.

Someone questioned the amount of children that would be generated by a new development. Mr Fuller explained that as a rough guide, 100 new houses would generate 26 new children. The Council will only build new schools to accommodate 210 or 420 children.

A member of the public stated that he feels that the village needs more young people to prevent it from becoming a retirement village. Mrs Beardsell asked whether a new development would accommodate smaller 2-3 bed properties at an affordable price and whether a small scale development of smaller houses could be built. Mr Fuller explained that the entry cost to building a small development is higher which is why smaller developments tend to be of large executive type properties.

Mr Jinks explained that a public meeting is required in order to give everyone a chance to be fully appraised of any proposals being made, to which the public, developers, the County and District Councillors, school representatives and Parish Councillors will be invited. He agreed to organise a meeting within the next couple of months. The meeting will be well advertised in advance.

A member of the public asked whether the new charges imposed at waste and recycling sites has generated an increase in fly tipping. Mr Fuller confirmed that there has been a rise in fly tipping and that the Council is employing robust approach to pursue offenders.

4. BROOKE HOMEWATCH REPORT

Mrs Powell gave a very brief report on behalf of Bob Powell who was unable to attend. The Police issue a monthly crime report which shows very low levels of crime in Brooke.

5. BROOKE PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT

Mrs Cole introduced herself as the new Chair of Governors for Brooke VC Primary School. She gave a brief report, summarised as follows:

The new head teacher starts after half term. The interim head providing support at present is Stuart Odell from Trowse Primary School. The School have 10 new reception children starting in September. The Summer Spectacular will take place again on Friday 29th June.

6. MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 18TH APRIL 2016

The minutes of the last APM were circulated during the meeting, agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chairman.

7. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

8. OPEN FORUM

Mr Jinks invited members of the public to speak on issues not already covered in the meeting.

A member of the public raised concerns over the visual appearance of the meres. He considers the water quality to look poor and wondered if it needed dredging. Councillors felt that there were no specific issues with the meres at present as recent rain has increased water levels and regular working parties along with the works about to be carried out by Clinks Care Farm keep the area maintained. Councillors advised that the wooden posts between the meres are going to be replaced very soon.

A member of the public raised concerns over the regular road flooding on High Green near the new development. He understands that the road will need to be dug up to lay drains for the new development and wondered if the problems with flooding could be addressed at the same time.

He also reported that there is a hedge overhanging the highway on High Green as you exit the village towards Shotesham. The Clerk agreed to inspect the hedge and write to the owner to ask them to cut it back.

A member of the public asked how long the play park will be closed for. Mr Tobin confirmed that they are in the process of obtaining quotes to replace rotten timbers and they hope the play park will be reopened in time for the summer season.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Brooke Annual Parish Meeting 23 April 2018

Parish Council Report

Meetings during 2017/8

- 7 full Parish Council meetings
- 2 site meetings

Current PC membership:

- o Edward Jinks - chair
- o Liz Powell - vice-chair
- o Ken Warman - internal audit responsibility
- o Roma Beardsell - tree warden (and recently parish footpaths warden)
- o Dave Sanford
- o Steve Mears
- o David Harrison (village hall representative)
- o Paul Musgrave
- o Martin Tobin

Laura Reynolds stood down as the Brooke School Community governor in September - thanks to Laura for her time, energy and enthusiasm in this role, and for keeping the PC informed of school activities.

Maurice Land carried out the PC audit again in 2017 - he was satisfied with the figures and that all proper accounting practices had been followed.

The formal audit was carried out by Mazars, who were happy that we have complied with all regulations.

Matter arising from the last APM - None

Planning

Planning applications

- 39 in 2017/18 compared with
 - o 28 in 2016/7
 - o 16 in 2015/6
 - o 25 in 2014/5
 - o 19 in 2013/14

- of the 39 in 2017/18 we recommended 8 for refusal but only one was refused by SNC
 - Fox Lodge Mill Lane (twice) - over-development of plot
 - 18 High Green
 - 9 Burgess Way (large garden shed)
 - High Green Farm (twice) - (over-development, outside village development boundary) **SNC refused**
 - 15 The Street (too close to boundary)
 - BT exchange, Norwich Rd - mobile phone mast
 - we want a better mobile signal for all users in Brooke but were unhappy with a mast in a residential area and only serving two networks
 - the application was approved despite us requesting a technical meeting to discuss alternatives

Review of Greater Norwich Local Plan

Current Local Plan (up to 2026) provides for up to 20 new dwellings in Brooke

- 12 on Norwich Rd (8 market, 4 affordable) - completed
- 13 at High Green Farm (9 market, 4 affordable) development has started (2 additional houses proposed to replace existing houses)

New Local Plan will cover period to 2036

- Identified requirement - 7,200 more houses in S Norfolk/Norwich/Broadland
- We have responded to SNC on the broad principles and strategies
- We have not commented on the possible Site Allocations as more proposals may be made
- SNC propose to publish draft new Local Plan this summer, including preferred options for Site Allocations, which we will comment on then

Brooke School

- John Fuller has suggested that we may wish to consider a significant number of new houses in the new Local Plan to help justify a new school
- NCC had allocated funds for a new school in 2014 as the existing school was in poor condition and failed to meet current standards
- NCC has recently decided to allocate the funds elsewhere
 - it has not been possible to secure a new site in the last 3 years due to access and/or purchase price issues
 - NCC's Capital Priorities Group has decided that Brooke school is no longer a high priority partly due to falling pupil numbers
- We have received outline proposals for new housing development outside the current village development boundary, with the promise that land would be provided for a new school
 - this raises important questions for the future of Brooke, so we are proposing to have a village meeting to gauge public opinion on the principle of allowing a significant expansion of the village

- In the immediate future it is good to know that the new head teacher (Alex Griffiths) is due to start on 1 June
- Sadly the Pre-school closed last summer, with no immediate prospects for it to re-open

Public facilities

Meres area - maintenance

Wooden posts adjoining the highway - the Men's Shed group has agreed to replace these, with materials supplied by the PC.

We are still proposing to refurbish the two finger post signs at the Meres - we want the metal posts to be shot-blasted and it has taken time to find suitable experts and get quotes.

The low water level in the east Mere caused concern last summer/autumn, but thankfully the levels have recovered naturally.

Brooke village sign area

Refurbishment of the seats, bins and footpath are being carried out by Clinks Care farm (our grass cutting contractors).

BT phone boxes

- Both phone boxes have been de-commissioned
- we have engaged successfully with BT over the last few months to stop them being removed
- we have formally applied to BT for both phone boxes to be adopted by the PC, subject to the financial implications being clarified

Graveyard extension

- There is concern that the existing churchyard will run out of space for new burials in the next 5-10 years
- We have approached the adjoining landowner who is unwilling to sell land for expansion
- It is not considered acceptable to acquire land elsewhere, so the PCC is considering ways to intensify the use of the existing graveyard

Brooke King's Head

- In December the pub faced closure due to the end of the lease in January and a proposed auction sale in February
- it is registered as an Asset of Community Value, so the sale must be delayed if there is interest from a community interest group
- the PC submitted a non-binding expression of interest in January, which puts a moratorium on the sale for 6 months
- I understand the the current tenants have agreed terms to buy the freehold, which they hope will complete at the end of the 6 months period

Brooke village hall

- In addition to the grant to the village hall committee, we have made the following additional grants:
 - £500 towards the cost of providing a defibrillator at the village hall
 - £50 towards the setting up of the Brooke community cafe

Bus stops

Following a local request we have asked NCC to consider introducing a new bus stop in the vicinity of the Bungay Rd/Littlebeck Lane junction

Finances

2017/8 (copies of the accounts are on your seats)

Balances

- Start of year £14,826
- End of year £13,959
- End of year (excluding reserves) £29

The precept was £10,712 (including £255 Government grant)

The main items of expenditure were the village hall grant, the Clerk's pay and grants to the PCC

The reserves of £13,930 comprise:

- short term known commitments of £3,780
- longer term reserves of £10,150

2018/9

- We have maintained the same level of precept for the last six years
- cost increases and reduced government subsidy have forced us to increase the precept this year
- the agreed PC budget of £11,535 will be funded by :

- PC precept £11,398
- reduced Government grant of £137
- Council Tax bill for a Band D property is £21.59 (8.4% higher than last year)

Thanks

- Liz Powell for her role as vice-chairman
- Ken Warman for his role as internal auditor
- Roma Beardsell for her role as tree warden
- All other members of PC
- John Fuller (SNC)
- Barry Stone (NCC)
- Roy Ford - water bailiff
- Maurice Land - external auditor
- Jo Andrews for her diligence in carrying out the role of Parish Clerk

Barry Stone - County Councillor for the Loddon Division

Annual Parish Round-Up – April 2018

Key Issues

Broadband – our Better Broadband for Norfolk programme has already transformed broadband speeds for many people in the county, including in some of our most rural areas. We're on course to increase superfast broadband access in Norfolk to 95 per cent by March 2020 but we need to do more to reach the final five per cent. So we're looking to invest an additional £13m into the programme to extend superfast broadband coverage and get us much closer to our goal of eliminating broadband inequality in the county.



Mobile coverage – our new Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee is leaving no stone unturned in the drive to improve the county's mobile coverage (with a target of 98%) – working with the big four mobile providers and identifying opportunities to work together to improve the quality and reach of mobile data and voice coverage in Norfolk. In February we kicked off a campaign to improve coverage, with our survey van scouring the county to identify areas of greatest need. We are also using our county council-owned buildings to help overcome 'not spots', by putting masts on top of them to improve phone signals.

A47 – we continue to actively work with the A47 Alliance, bringing together key stakeholders from Lowestoft to Peterborough to lobby for improvements to this important trunk road. Throughout 2017 we worked with Highways England (HE) to develop proposals for sections of dualling and junction improvements to deliver the already funded projects (over £300m) as soon as possible. In Norfolk, this has seen the preferred scheme solutions announced by HE for dual carriageways between Easton and North Tuddenham, and from Blofield to Burlingham. It has also resulted in proposed junction improvement details being published for the A47/A11 Thickthorn junction, as well as the Vauxhall junction in Great Yarmouth. The County Council is currently delivering improvements to the rail station junction in Great Yarmouth, using funding provided by HE, which has also confirmed its commitment to complete the construction of all these projects between 2020 and 2023.

We are also actively engaging – with the A47 Alliance – in securing the next round of funding for further trunk road improvements due to be delivered between 2020 and 2025. Our two priorities in Norfolk remain unchanged: to see dualling of the Acle Straight and the Tilney to East Winch sections. This all builds towards the ultimate aim of seeing the A47 being a dual carriageway from Great Yarmouth through to Peterborough and the A1.

The NDR – construction of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR – the A1270) made good progress over the summer of 2017, allowing the opening of the first 6 km, from the A1270 Fakenham Road to the A140 Cromer Road, to open in November, more than three

months ahead of schedule. This was followed by the next 7.75km to the A1151 Wroxham Road before Christmas. The final phase, 5.25km from the A1151 Wroxham Road to the connecting roundabout on the Postwick Hub, is on course to open to traffic on the 11th April 2018.

Norwich Western Link – we have continued to develop the initial business case appraisal for a Norwich Western Link – to join the NDR to the Norwich southern bypass. The work undertaken during 2017 (and reported to Committee in October) included modelling to provide an indicative assessment of a possible dual or single carriageway solution. This work was based on an assumed alignment (which should not be taken to be a preferred solution). The economic appraisal provided a high value for money (vfm) rating (using Department for Transport guidance). The next steps include further scheme development, technical and environmental work and consultation to be completed throughout 2018.

Long Stratton bypass – getting a bypass built around Long Stratton is one of the County Council's top infrastructure priorities for Norfolk, and something we have long been pressing for. There was good news in February, as developers submitted a planning application to South Norfolk Council which included plans for a bypass. There's a long way to go before any decisions are reached but this is an important step in the right direction, and the planning consultation is a great opportunity for people to have their say in this important matter.

Hales roundabout – in January, work started on £1.63m roundabout to replace Norfolk's most dangerous main road junction on the A146 at Hales junction, which currently has the worst accident record for a main road in Norfolk. .

And more roundabouts – we've also had £3m from the Government for a new Hempnall roundabout which at the time of publication is out for public consultation.

Market towns – our Environment, Development and Transport Committee agreed in September 2017 to carry out a series of studies looking at short-, medium- and long-term transport impacts of growth in market towns – to help us identify and plan interventions ahead of growth. The first year's studies, in Dereham, Thetford, North Walsham, Swaffham and Diss, are already under way, in close cooperation with local stakeholders, including town and district councils.

LEADER project reaches funding milestone – funding allocated to rural businesses in Norfolk and north Suffolk through the LEADER programme, an initiative managed by the county council, passed the £3m mark in December. Since Norfolk and north Suffolk's LEADER programme started, the five Local Action Groups (LAGs) have awarded millions to 69 rural projects, including:

Repton Property Developments – Norfolk is growing and we need enough houses for people to live in. Gathering information about the types of housing required will help us support economic regeneration and has the potential for us to make money from our own properties. With this in mind, we have set up our own company, Repton Property

Developments Ltd, to do this work. We're scrutinising our own property estate as, if we offer several services from fewer buildings, we can sell surplus property and reduce running costs. And having several services in one place also offers a better service to the public.

Fire and Rescue – councillors from our Communities Committee voted unanimously in January that the Fire and Rescue Service should continue to be governed by the county council. In 2016/17 (latest stats available), our Fire and Rescue Service attended 7,340 incidents and rescued over 700 people.

And finally... recycling Norfolk's disused railways

As part of our vision for a cycling and walking network for the county, a feasibility study is looking at bringing disused railways and other underused parts of the transport network back into use as cycling and walking routes which would help make the county a top walking

Annual Parish Report

South Norfolk Council – Annual Review

There are 380 Councils in England and South Norfolk Council is officially one of the highest performing. The respected Local Government Chronicle placed us in the Top Six Councils nationally at its awards ceremony. And elsewhere, we were the first public sector organisation in Norfolk to win the coveted Investors In People Platinum designation for the work we do to enable our staff to work more effectively and efficiently to serve you better.

Last year 1300 new homes were delivered in South Norfolk. That's nearly 1pc of the entire national total of new homes. There are now many more affordable homes locally than before the right to buy started and our housing team are finding two socially-rented homes for families every business day.

But new homes need to go alongside investments in the infrastructure that improves quality of life. At Wymondham a £4m investment in better leisure & fitness facilities has seen a 60% increase in the number of visitors and we now teach 2000 youngsters to swim each year.

We're just about to start a similar £2m upgrade at Long Stratton on top of the completion of a new All-Weather pitch so that more and more people have the chance to lead healthier and active lifestyles.

Broadband is another key piece of infrastructure and we have signed a contract with a local provider to increase the number of fast-internet radio masts from 10 to 28. This means that by this Summer the 5000 homes that BT cannot and will not connect to fast broadband will get proper access to the digital world – Broadband is a critical utility and we will be one of the first rural districts to get 100pc fast broadband coverage to everyone.

A planning application has been submitted for the Long Stratton Bypass and homes to be built alongside. There is a lot of work to be done before it becomes a reality but the finance is in place to deliver it with Council, Government and Developer Contributions.

Together with improvements at the Hempnall Crossroads, the dangerous Hales junction and shortly after, the developer-paid George Road, Loddon roundabout, contributions to the Diss Market Triangle and a new school in Wymondham, housing development is paying the bill for improvements that improve quality of life for everyone.

It's not just about housing and infrastructure and strengthening the economy. You Council seeks to solve peoples' problems one family a time.

A good example is the way we help people stay independent in their homes for longer. This sort of work saves the NHS a fortune. In the last 3 months we have had a staff member sitting at the hospital as people are admitted to the ward. We identify the

people who will be needing a little help at home when they get better: perhaps a hand rail in the bathroom, a wheelchair ramp or even something as simple as booster-feet under a favourite chair. We do this work whilst the patient is getting better so they can get home quicker.

In just 12 weeks we helped 100 people, halved the average stay in the hospital and saved 380 bed-days and life was better for each of these people as they recovered – some of whom could have been one of your aunts, uncles or grannies.

That's just one example of our work which covers preventing homelessness, sorting our debt problems, helping youngsters find a rented home or ensuring that landlords keep their promises to tenants.

We mustn't also forget the work we do to help small businesses and this year we have been able to reduce the rates bills of the smallest firms by more than the Government expects so that, especially, rural pubs, shops & garages can remain open for longer.

Everyone knows that finances are tight in local Government so we have invested in becoming a low-cost operator. It means that our Council Tax is 20% less than inflation since 2007 yet we do more. As an example, 62% of our ten most popular transactions are now applied-for online via our website. It means that we have fewer administrators, can deal with problems faster and at times when it is convenient for our customers – even if the office is closed.

These efficiencies are important but they are not enough if we are to deliver the 86 services for residents. So that's why we are looking to more with our neighbours in Broadland Council. Both councils have similar geography, scale and outlook. We are seeing whether a single team that works for Both Council will benefit our communities on a scale residents can recognise and relate to.

Working more closely together offers both councils increased capacity and resilience, together with greater financial stability whilst taking advantage of commercial opportunities to deliver better value for our residents. Our taxpayers expect a local government that moves with the times and innovates, while retaining and attracting the most talented staff, offering them positive futures and career development opportunities.

Our joint aim is for two strong councils, working together with the ambition and resources to make our combined area one of the best places to live and work in the country.

Finally, all these things work on a district-wide basis. But we're delivering locally too. We still offer community grants and very locally have assisted projects in Brooke like the WI Community Café that combats loneliness, the Mens Shed in Poringland that does so much good work in the community. We contributed to the Brooke defibrillator and helped Bergh Apton put on the Village Play. And in Seething a contribution was made

to the new playpark.

Everything we do aims to make Better Lives and Stronger Economies for everyone whilst keeping the cost down with a dedicated team of staff members and Councillors working with the other parts of Government to improve lives one family at a time, one street at a time and one place at a time.

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Councillor John Fuller
Leader of South Norfolk District Council. Member for Brooke Ward
The Old Hall Coach House
The Street Brooke Norwich Norfolk NR15 1LB
Phone 01508 558280 John's Mobile +44 7500 662255
john@johnfuller.org.uk www.johnfuller.org.uk