

Draft Minutes of Brooke Annual Parish meeting held remotely by Zoom on Monday 26th April 2021 at 7.30pm.

The acting Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr David Harrison welcomed the Clerk and 6 members of the public to the meeting.

1. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

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

2. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Mr Stone had sent his apologies for absence from the meeting but had forwarded a copy of his report, which is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

3. DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Mr Fuller had sent his apologies for absence from the meeting but had forwarded a copy of his report, which the Clerk read out on his behalf and is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

4. BROOKE PLAYPARK COMMITTEE REPORT

Rebecca Hodges, Chair of Brooke Playpark Committee had sent her apologies for absence from the meeting but had forwarded a copy of her annual report, which the Clerk read out on her behalf and is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

5. BROOKE PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT

Giles Hankinson, Chair of School Governors had sent his apologies for absence from the meeting but had forwarded a copy of his annual report, which the Clerk read out on his behalf and is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

6. BROOKE HOMEWATCH REPORT

Bob Powell had sent his apologies for absence from the meeting but had forwarded his annual report, which the Clerk read out on his behalf and is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

7. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Council meeting, which took place on 13th May 2019 were circulated and accepted as a true record of the meeting. The Clerk will take a copy to the Chairman for signature accordingly. No Annual Parish Council meeting took place in 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

8. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

9. OPEN FORUM

There were no items raised for discussion in the open forum.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Brooke Parish Council Chairman's Report 2021

This has been a year like no other with the country shut down for over a year due to the Covid pandemic. The Parish Council has continued due to Jonny and Hannah hosting Zoom meetings and we thank them for this. Brooke is a much sought-after village which is why people prefer to extend, renovate and build conservatories rather than move away. The PC therefore has many planning applications that we must give comments on to the SNC who sometimes take note. The extension to Brooke House was refused partly due to our objections including the plan to remove the grass triangle and re-site the finger post.

We have put in action registration of land cared for by the PC as well as title of the squash club in Brooke Gardens.

Working parties have worked in Dovecote Close, St. Peters Play area and a great deal of work has been done on the East Mere where fallen trees have been removed and the island properly managed. We are very fortunate that Lee has been able to obtain the use of heavy equipment in order to drag 5 fallen trees from the meres, cut them up and shred the branches. Lee and his team have also tidied up the island and removed cuttings from Dovecote Close resulting in a saving of many thousands of pounds to the PC..

A tree survey has indicated some trees that need felling.

Fishing signs have been erected on the West Mere.

Once the lockdown is lifted the notice board to the memory of our late councillor Adrian Gunson will be erected.

It was decided not to pursue village map/footpaths as some footpaths are not as shown on the Ordnance Survey maps and haven't been for 40 years. If we have a map it should show where the paths now are.

Other items being pursued by the PC are :-

Flashing speed signs

Overgrowing hedges

Dog fouling

Replacement of bollards by layby

Picnic benches

A new bus stop should soon be erected at the Kirstead crossroad.

The finances are in good shape and Maurice Land has conducted the internal audit.

I would like to thank all those who helped over this difficult year, especially Jo who keeps us informed and in order.

BROOKE PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDED MARCH 2021

Prepared by Mrs Jo Andrews 31 March 2021

Balances brought forward at 01/04/2020

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Current Account | £3,162.08 | |
| Deposit Account | £14,424.72 | |
| Petty cash | £11.40 | |
| Total | £17,598.20 | £17,598.20 |

Receipts

| | | |
|----------|-------------------|-------------------|
| VAT | £832.30 | |
| Interest | £8.88 | |
| Precept | £16,663.32 | |
| CIL | £197.65 | |
| Other | £470.76 | |
| | £18,172.91 | £18,172.91 |
| | | £35,771.11 |

Payments

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| VAT | £214.53 | |
| General Admin | £8,857.28 | |
| Subscriptions | £249.69 | |
| Grants & Donations | £122.74 | |
| Play area | £840.54 | |
| Maintenance of assets | £2,500.49 | |
| Petty cash | £47.18 | |
| | £12,832.45 | £12,832.45 |
| | | £22,938.66 |

| | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------|
| Unpresented chqs from 19/20 193, 195 | £714.77 | £714.77 |
| | | £22,223.89 |

Balances at 31/03/2021

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Current Account | £1,032.84 | |
| Deposit Account | £21,176.83 | |
| Petty cash | £14.22 | |
| Total | £22,223.89 | £22,223.89 |

Parish Council reserves included in current balances

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Tree Surgery | £1,000.00 |
| Clerk's computer fund | £0.00 |
| Village furniture acquisitions | £1,000.00 |
| Meres works | £2,500.00 |
| Meres fund | £1,328.51 |
| CIL fund | £6,371.95 |
| Adrian Gunson memorial fund | £112.00 |
| Councillor training | £250.00 |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| Cost of election if required | £2,000.00 | |
| Small grants fund | £1,000.00 | |
| Total | £15,562.46 | |
| Current balances excluding reserves | | £6,661.43 |
| | | |
| Parish hall account at 01/04/2020 | £282.25 | |
| Receipts | £122.74 | |
| Payments | £402.47 | |
| Parish hall account at 31/03/2021 | £2.52 | £2.52 |

Norfolk County Council highlights for 2020/21

Norfolk Statistics

- 6,200 miles of highway, 3,000 miles of footway, 5,000 bridges and structures and 53,000 streetlights across Norfolk (40% of which are environmentally friendly LED)
- 98.0% of highway inspections completed within timescale
- 99% of dangerous highway defects dealt with within timescales set out in the Transport Asset Management Plan
- 227,000 tonnes of rubbish dealt with
- 52,000 Adult Social Care Assessments for 20,000 people
- Under 1,000 Looked After Children (LAC) (0-17yrs population)

The 2021/21 Budget

A **£439 million** net revenue budget, a **£102 million** boost for roads and infrastructure and a 3.99 per cent Council Tax rise has been agreed to support communities, the economy and the environment across the County.

Further, there will be an investment of **£45.7m** to meet cost and other pressures in services, including **£28.2m** in adult social care, **£7m** in children's services and **£10.5m** in community and environmental services.

Within the investment of **£102m** in the capital programme, taking the total infrastructure programme to **£537.66m**, these include **£11.5m** for supported housing for young adults, **£4m** for children's residential homes and investment in the Long Stratton bypass and new libraries.

Additionally there will be an investment of **£2m** to respond to flooding, including an additional **£350k** in revenue budget provision, **£235k** in highways spending to reduce road flooding risks and **£1.5m** for the creation of a new flood reserve to fund urgent works and repairs.

New service from Norfolk Libraries helped families learn from home

Families that were struggling with home learning have a new place to turn to for advice and support. Norfolk Libraries has set up a phone line which serves as a first stop for parents and carers in the county using new devices to teach their children.

The phone line aims to provide a friendly voice to families that aren't familiar with home learning technology, including those that have received a new laptop or tablet as a result of Norfolk County Council's 'Every Child Online' campaign.

Norfolk libraries has scrapped late fees for children as part of post-pandemic reading push

Norfolk County Council has agreed have agreed ambitious plans for the Norfolk Libraries and Information service to improve children and young people's reading skills which have been diminished nationally as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This includes the removal of overdue charges for everyone under the age of 16, universal membership of the county's e-library through Norfolk's schools and the introduction of a new '1000 books before school' reading challenge.

Norfolk participating in new contact tracing scheme

Norfolk County Council is to oversee all Covid contact tracing in the county, building on the county's successful work to identify close contacts of those who have tested positive for the virus.

The "Local-0" scheme will see cases passed without delay to local tracers at the same time as an individual who tested positive for coronavirus is invited to complete the online contact information. The current approach passes cases from the national NHS Test & Trace taskforce onto local tracers only after the national team has been unable to make contact over a period of 24 hours.

In the seven days between 9th and 16th January there were 4,029 confirmed cases, but between 7th and 13th March this had reduced to 351, which is below the UK average.

Every Child Online campaign launched

A new campaign which aims to ensure every school age child has a digital device and internet connection to learn remotely at home was launched.

Norfolk County Council has been working with Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF) on the campaign backed by the EDP newspaper to make sure no child is left behind in their learning because of digital disadvantage.

The county council has already co-ordinated the sourcing, prioritisation, and distribution of over 5,000 laptops and tablets, either directly to youngsters or to their schools.

Major highway improvement schemes started in 2021

A multi-million pound programme of road maintenance continued into 2021 with major schemes getting underway in Great Yarmouth, Downham Market and Stalham.

The improvements have been made possible thanks to the £22m highway funding for Norfolk that the Department for Transport announced in May 2020, to fund schemes in the 2020-21 financial year.

Norfolk received more than any other local authority in the East of England for maintenance and repairs to the county's roads, bridges, pavements and cycle paths.

At £1.2m the mechanical and electrical upgrades for the 90-year-old Haven Bridge in Great Yarmouth is the largest scheme to be funded as part of the £22m programme. Some upgrade works were completed in the autumn, but other work, which will resolve many of the issues caused by the lifting bridge's ageing equipment, started in February and is expected to take 13 weeks to complete. The £22m funding award is in addition to Norfolk County Council's existing highways capital maintenance budget of £38.6m for the year 2020-2021.

Surge of Beryl Bike rides in 2020 as Norwich pedals to greener future

With over 11,000 riders, close to 70,000 trips and 266,303 kilometres ridden on Beryl Bikes this year, Norwich can boast to being a greener place for residents and visitors throughout 2020.

Beryl, the local bikeshare provider, has played a large role in the area's transport habits last year, helping NHS and key workers take essential trips during the first national lockdown, easing pressure on public transport and providing the wider public with an affordable and convenient way to get from A to B. The 68,900 trips taken by Beryl Bike are equivalent to 43.92 tonnes of CO2 saved.

Also in 2020, in partnership with Norfolk County Council, Beryl became the world's first provider of a city-wide multimodal smart fleet including pedal bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters. This choice of vehicles provided residents of Norwich with a chance to take a variety of journeys in a safe, sustainable and convenient way.

Norfolk hits top spot for second year running in road and transport survey

For the second year running Norfolk has come first among its peers in a national highways and transport survey.

Over the summer 3,300 people in Norfolk were asked for their views on topics such as road safety, highway maintenance, congestion and public transport as part of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey 2020.

The results are ranked against other participating councils from across the country to give a nationwide picture of how Norfolk is performing.

Out of the 29 county councils and larger unitary authorities in the peer group, Norfolk secured the top spot for overall satisfaction and saw the highest above average scores in both satisfaction with 'traffic levels and congestion' and 'condition of highways'.

Norfolk Flooding Alliance created

In response to winter flooding seen across the County, the Norfolk Flooding Alliance has been created. Led by Lord Dannatt and including bodies such as District Councils, Anglian Water, the Environmental Agency, internal drainage boards, along with Norfolk County Council, the challenges posed across the County can be addressed and tackled.

Housing boost for people with disabilities

One hundred and eighty-one supported housing units are set to be developed in Norfolk, to help people with disabilities live more independent lives.

The County Council will seek to invest £9m-£18m of capital to develop supported, adapted and specialist housing over the next 10 years, to improve people's lives, reduce hospital admissions and reduce care costs by £1.9m per year.

Grant scheme launched to provide free expert advice and cash to help businesses 'Go Digital'

A new grant scheme launched last December will enabled micro, small and medium-sized businesses to make better use of digital technology through funding and one to one support.

Go Digital was launched by Norfolk County Council to help businesses based in the county identify digital opportunities. It will provide expert one-to-one consultancy and the ability to apply for grants of up to £500.

Digital opportunities included how to sell products and services online, reach new customers using social media, build customer databases, develop new or existing websites and attract

new visitors, or how to work out the best homeworking options for teams.

More vulnerable children in Norfolk supported to remain with their families

A £12-£15 million five-year programme to transform support for children and young people enabled more youngsters to remain with their families.

National statistics reveal the number of children looked after by Norfolk County Council's Children's Social Care was lower, per 10,000 children than that of England (64 vs 67).

Norfolk Library Service awarding funding to help with Census

Norfolk Library Service has been awarded £53k to deliver support for people in Norfolk needing to access the first ever online Census, amounting to one of the largest single contracts from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Children in care gets below the 1000 barrier

The current numbers of children in care are down to 994, this is from a high of 1200 just over 12 months ago.

This has been achieved by working better and closer with families, to keep children in their family unit and is part of our transformation programme. This is a far better outcome for the children and with Average costs for a child in care at £50,000/annum savings are made. The full savings (200 x 50) haven't been fully realised because the unit costs of our children remaining are on the higher side but this does indicate the impact children in care have on the budget.

We have also increased our in house fostering meaning we use less agency places where again significant savings are with the difference being around £1000/month.

First look at new Norwich recycling centre as it takes shape

Construction of one of two new recycling centres for the Greater Norwich area is well underway as pictures taken in early March show.

A 300 tonne crane is currently on site at the new £2.75m Norwich North recycling centre as sections of what will be a 500,000 litre tank, an integral part of the comprehensive water management system on site, are manoeuvred into place. This tank is the largest of its kind at any of Norfolk's recycling centres and will ensure any surface water runoff stays within the site.

Work on the major project started late last year, and includes a new access road to the recycling centre, which is located on land off the A140/A1270 junction near the airport.

District Councillor report

The mark of a Council is not what it does when times are good and the sun is shining. The mark of a Council is how it responds to unexpected events and how it steps up when the chips are down.

When Covid arrived in in March 2020 the District Council were best prepared, to provide the help and support tens of thousands of residents and businesses desperately needed.

Over £80m has been expended locally in the last 12 months on help to the most vulnerable with hardship and isolation payments, council tax support and other help for the homeless and destitute together with targeted grants to businesses to protect livelihoods and save jobs.

And that's in addition to the national Government's furlough schemes, business rate rebates and increases in Universal Credit.

It isn't just the work South Norfolk has done with central Government that's made a difference. Our Help Hub staff have extended working hours and operated 7 days a week working with local community groups and Parish Councils to ensure every fridge has been filled whilst we have collected every bin. Tens of thousands of residents who would not normally reach out to their Council have been helped in one way or another.

We were delighted to recognise the tireless work of volunteers who helped with food shopping, prescription collection and vaccination centre work. In particular Robin Stamp was singled out for a Covid Hero award for his work coordinating activity in Brooke.

Turning to the economy, over £1m per week has been channelled to businesses in direct grants during lockdown to help them survive until they can start fully trading again in the spring. This money has been a lifeline for employers including shops, pubs and other businesses who have been forced to close. I am proud of a dedicated staff that dropped everything to distribute funds quickly and without delay with the fastest and most generous schemes in Norfolk.

Whilst our leisure centres have been closed a quarter of our staff have been redeployed to coordinate vaccination, street marshalling and test

&trace. In addition, 25 staff also volunteered to work on our Hospital wards and supporting the NHS in other ways when the pressure was greatest.

You may not have seen any of this work as you and family members have been forced to stay at home. But be assured that your Council staff have never worked as hard or as flexibly to keep essential services going in the most difficult of circumstances to keep you safe and secure and nurture an economy that can bounce back when lockdown is over.

Some of our greatest challenges are ahead but be assured that everyone associated with Our Council will keep our promise to create better lives and a stronger economy to benefit every resident and business in our district. And, in connection with that, I attach a summary report detailing in numbers the practical support to residents, business and communities in the last 12 months.

John

Councillor John Fuller OBE
Leader of South Norfolk District Council. Member for Brooke Ward

Brooke Park Committee Update Report

April 2021

1. Changes to committee

A number of changes were made to the Committee after Samantha Patel resigned as Chair in August 2020. Samantha did a fantastic job leading the committee. At the same time, Erin Patel also resigned and most recently, Gary Tahmasbi has moved out of the village and stepped down – thanks to Erin and Gary too for their hard work.

The committee members are currently: Chair- Rebecca Hodges, Vice Chair – Clare Angell, Secretary - Jo Angell, Treasurer – Donna Wilgress and member – Louise Long.

2. The park

The park remains a popular and busy park since it opened on 5 July 2020. We are pleased that we continue to provide hand sanitiser at the entrance (something which not many local parks do) and people are very good at respecting our Covid guidelines.

3. Finance

The existing balance is just over £2,600.

We have just renewed the annual public liability insurance policy with BHIB. Our ongoing costs at this moment are ongoing maintenance of the park.

4. Charity Commission filing

As our income for April 2019 to 2020 was over £25,000 (due to the funding we received) we were required to file a report and audited accounts with the Charity Commission. These documents were submitted a few weeks ago.

5. Next steps

We would like to continue to fundraise for a few small pieces of equipment in the park (where we have some small spaces), some netting at one end to ensure that footballs cannot be kicked over into the playpark and we would like to consider some seated areas outside of the park for older children to socialise/sit. We will speak to the Village Hall Committee about the possibility of this.

Brooke Primary School report

As we start to come out of Lockdown 3 we are delighted to have started returning to some sort of normality. It has been lovely seeing the children return to school and we hope that the school routines bring some feeling of security and stability for everyone. The schools focus is very much one of ensuring the children feel safe and secure and also happy and well. We are actively preparing for life beyond June 21st, when we hope to be coming out of all restrictions. This of course, will be subject to government guidance.

Since the announcement of the first lockdown on March 23rd 2020, the children, parents, carers, and staff have all shown immense resilience, togetherness, love and kindness. Values, which by no coincidence, are at the very heart of everything we do at Brooke Primary School. Reflecting on peoples actions over the last year, it is incredibly humbling to have witnessed such amazing generosity of spirit during a time which brought so much fear and uncertainty for all. On behalf of the Governing Board, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved with the school, and also to the wider village community for your care, compassion and understanding.

The school continues to go from strength to strength. In September, we expect to be at or very near capacity, with 140+ children on the school roll. To put this in context, three years ago, the school roll was 93. This growth is an outstanding achievement and a reflection of both the great work carried out by the Head Teacher, Mr Griffiths and his team, as well as the vision and values provided by the school.'

Giles Hankinson
Chair of Governors

HOMEWATCH REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2021

Letting me know when a crime has been committed is helpful when it would be useful for me to alert other householders to the possibility of a crime against their property or person. You should always telephone the Police using 999 if a crime is in progress. In all other cases, 101 is the number to ring.

The most recent advice we have had is about cold callers.

Norfolk Trading Standards are warning residents about recorded message telephone cold calls and online adverts on social media sites claiming to be offering 'Government backed vouchers' and servicing for your solar panels. These are scams.

Theft Of Snowdrops/Bluebells

Whilst many Snowdrops are now coming to an end of their season, Bluebells are starting to appear across the county. We have already seen the first report of Bluebells being stolen and this is currently being investigated. Again, if you see anyone collecting wild bulbs please make sure this is reported to police. Bluebells are a protected plant under the Wildlife and Countryside Act making it an offence to even pick them. All native wild plants are protected from being uprooted as well.

Police are aware of concerns and rumours circulating on social media about dogs being stolen or men in a van, including a van allegedly marked with the RSPC logo, acting suspiciously around people out walking with their dogs. Please know there haven't been any crimes recorded this week that relate to dog thefts nor have we received any reports of dogs being stolen from a property or while out walking with their owners over the last week. Please make sure your animals are microchipped.

As usual, it is important to remember that 101 is the number for all non-urgent calls to the Police and 999 is only for emergencies or if a crime is in progress at the time of the call.

For advice on home security speak to our Crime Prevention Officer on 101 and asking for a domestic security survey which is free of charge.

The Crime Stoppers number is 0800555111. This is the number to ring if you want to give information about a crime which has been committed but you are unable or unwilling to ring the Police.

Don't forget, keep safe and obey the Covid Rules as we inch out of lockdown.

Bob Powell
Local Co-ordinator for Homewatch