

MEETING OF BROOKE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2016 AT BROOKE METHODIST HALL

Present: Mr Jinks (Chairman), Mrs Powell (Vice-Chair), Mr Musgrave, Mr Harrison, Mr Warman, Mrs Beardsell, Mr Mears, Mr Sanford and Mrs Andrews (Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Mr Marris.

2. Declaration of interest:

Mr Warman declared an interest in item 9.2 on the Agenda.

3. Minutes of full meeting 23rd November 2015:

The Minutes had been previously circulated to all Councillors. Mr Jinks pointed out that under item 8 on the minutes – Disabled toilets at the Scout hut, it should have read that the Village Hall Committee are the Custodian Trustees of the land and not the owners. Mr Jinks amended the minutes, they were then agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chairman accordingly.

4. Matters arising from full meeting 23rd November 2015:

Mr Harrison asked about the current position regarding the overhanging hedge between 1 and 3 The Street by the bus stop and the hedge along the footpath between Brecon Road and Kingswood Close. The Clerk advised that she had referred these to Barry Stone, County Councillor but that he had recently referred them back advising that this and any future Highways matters should be reported to Bob Edwards, Highways Engineer. The Clerk has done so and awaits a response

Mr Jinks advised that the 30MPH sign to the East of the village by Old Hall Gardens has been knocked over. The Clerk will report it to Bob Edwards.

5. Planning:

5.1 New and amended planning applications.

There were no new or amended applications to consider.

5.2 White Lion PH gazebo.

Mr Mears reported that the gazebo has now been taken down.

6. Asset of Community Value nomination for The Kings Head PH:

The Clerk has received an email from Emma Eltringham, Community Capacity Builder at South Norfolk District Council advising that they had received a nomination from Norwich and Norfolk CAMRA to award the Kings Head PH 'Community Value' status. The Parish Council are being consulted and invited to comment. It was agreed that to receive the status would give the Kings Head some protection and as such the nomination should be supported. The Clerk will respond accordingly.

7. Village Sign:

The old village sign has been removed and is currently being stored with Steve Jones pending a decision as to what to do with it. The new sign has been erected. The plants surrounding the old sign were not salvageable and it was agreed that new plants are needed. Mrs Beardsell suggested contacting Homestead Nurseries and asking if they would be interested in providing and maintaining suitable plants, ideally for free or in exchange for a small plaque advertising their business. Mr Mears will ask Jane to speak to them on the Parish Council's behalf. If they do not wish to provide the plants for free, she will get a quote. It was agreed that a dedication ceremony will take place, probably on 16th April 2016 at 10.00am, to which Margery and Alan Sayer, Jane Mears and Reuben Lane will be invited. Mrs Powell will put a notice in the Parish Magazine.

8. School Governor Report:

Mrs Reynolds was unable to attend.

9. Public Spaces:

9.1 Milestones

The Clerk added the area around both village milestones to the grass cutting schedule when putting it out to tender. This should ensure that the milestones are visible and therefore less likely to be struck.

9.2 Grass Cutting tender

The Clerk has sent out the grass cutting schedule to MW Services, CGM, Clinks Care Farm and Saffron inviting them to submit quotes for the new growing season, requesting that tenders should be received by the Clerk no later than February 14th. The Chairman stated that the tenders should all be opened at the same time and it was therefore agreed that a special meeting would be held on 15th February at 7.30pm. The Clerk will book the hall. If Saffron provides a quote, Mr Warman will declare an interest.

Mr Harrison advised that the dog waste bin at the east end of the Mere is broken and that it needs to be replaced with a bigger bin. The Clerk will look into whether larger capacity bins are available. Mr Harrison proposed that the Clerk goes ahead with purchasing a replacement and having Steve Jones install it. Mrs Powell seconded the proposal with all present in favour. The Clerk will therefore go ahead with the replacement.

Mr Sanford raised concerns regarding a very deep drainage ditch which runs along the north side of the new housing development on Norwich Road. He feels it to be dangerous as if a person were to fall in, they would not be able to get out again as it is so deep and steep sided. Mrs Beardsell pointed out that it is protected by a fence on the side of the new houses and has a hedge planted on the other side. Also it is on private land and therefore no members of the public should be there anyway. Mr Jinks suggested that the Clerk should contact the developers and ask what their future plan is for the ditch. Who is it owned by and therefore who will be ultimately responsible for it and for its maintenance? Mr Jinks also raised concerns regarding the state of the verges at the front of the new houses which are currently just earth, is there any plan to grass them over? The Clerk will contact the developers accordingly.

10. Finance:

10.1 Clerk's financial statement

The Clerk's financial statement had been previously circulated and accepted by all present.

10.2 Cheques to be authorised

The following cheques were authorised for payment and signed accordingly.

£10.00	Brooke Methodist Church	Hall hire
£405.00	Steve Jones	removal of old and installation of new village sign

The invoiced amount for removal of old and installation of new village sign was higher than the estimated amount of £300. This was because the old sign proved more difficult to remove than expected and a generator had to be hired in order to break up the old concrete. Mrs Powell proposed that invoiced amount should be paid, Mr Harrison seconded the proposal with all present in favour.

10.3 2016 Precept

The Clerk had circulated precept calculations prior to the meeting. Mr Harrison advised that although the Village Hall Committee had not requested a grant for the last couple of years, they had some large expenditure coming up and are likely to need to make a request in the new financial year. The kitchen needs replacing, the hall needs redecorating, new curtains and flooring. Mr Jinks suggested therefore that allowance should be made in anticipation of a request in this financial year (2015/16) and also for the next financial year (2016/17).

The tax base (number of households) is 520. It was agreed that the figure against a Band D property should be kept the same as last year at £20.11. Mr Warman proposed therefore that a Precept request figure of £10457.00 should be made, which when added to the top up grant from South Norfolk Council of £464.00 would give a total £10921.00. Mr Mears seconded the proposal and all present were in favour. The Clerk filled out the Precept request form which was witnessed by all present and countersigned by the Chairman

11. Parish Council Administration

11.1 Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

A sub-committee comprising the Clerk, Mr Jinks and Mrs Powell met and completed the updating of the Standing orders. Mr Jinks had circulated a copy of the updated version to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Mr Sanford proposed the updated version is formally adopted. Mr Marris seconded the proposal with all present in favour. The new version was therefore adopted. The sub-committee will meet again to review the Financial Regulations and report back at the next meeting.

11.2 Parish Land Registration

The Clerk sent the forms to Land Registry to register the amenity area at Brecon Road. The Clerk will check whether the land at the Village Hall has been registered.

11.3 Transparency code

The Clerk reported that in order to comply with the new Government Transparency Code, all Parish Councils with an income/expenditure of under £25,000 have to now make certain information and documentation available on a public forum, ie: a village or Parish Council website. The cost of compliance (the cost of setting up and running a website) is reclaimable. The Clerk has made enquiries with NALC and has been given the details of Steve Jackman who has set up websites for other Parish Councils. Having contacted him, the Clerk advised that he will come out and set up a website for £80.00 which will include him being available on the end of the phone after the initial set up to advise as needed. There will be no ongoing cost to running the website itself, only the Clerk's additional time in doing so. Mr Mears stressed the importance of the website being 'read only' to protect against the information published being tampered with. Mr Jinks suggested that once set up, a notice should go in the Parish magazine with a link to the website. Mr Meres proposed that the Clerk accepts Mr Jackman's quote of £80.00 and goes ahead with the set up. Mr Harrison seconded the proposal with all present in favour. The Clerk will go ahead accordingly and also find out about reclaiming the cost.

12. Parish Footpaths and Highway Matters:

There were no further footpath or highways matters not already covered previously. It was agreed that in future, this agenda item can be dealt with under 'public spaces'.

13. County Councillors report:

Barry Stone had emailed his report which was forwarded to and read by all Councillors.

14. Correspondence:

The NALC had written to advise that following the abolishment of the Audit Commission under the last Government, they successfully persuaded the Government to allow them to procure authority audit services, simplifying arrangements and reducing the burden on Parish Councils. The Parish Council does not need to do anything unless it wishes to opt out and set up their own independent audit panel and procure relevant services. It was agreed not to opt out.

The Clerk had emailed details of new Councillor training. Mr Marris would like to attend and will advise the Clerk of which date would be most convenient. It was agreed that the Parish Council would meet the cost of this.

15. Items for Agenda next meeting 7th March 2016:

Village maps
Parish Council website
Land registration
Dedication ceremony
Grass cutting

Following the sad passing of Jean Dye who was the Methodist Hall bookings secretary, there had been a mix up with the hall booking for this meeting. The hall is now booked every Monday evening by a dance class. This meeting was held in the Church room. The Clerk will look into possible alternative venues and check whether there would be any objection to using the Church room in future if necessary.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.40pm.