

MEETING OF BROOKE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 23RD NOVEMBER 2015 AT BROOKE METHODIST HALL

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

In Attendance: Mrs Reynolds (School Governor), Mr Stone (County Councillor) and 3 members of the public.

1. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Mr Marris and Mr Musgrave.

2. Declaration of interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of full meeting 23rd November 2015:

The Minutes had been previously circulated to all Councillors, were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chairman accordingly.

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

Mr Harrison queried the present position regarding the overhanging hedge at No. 1 The Street by the bus stop. Mr Jinks inspected it and reported that whilst it has been cut back it really needs to be cut back further (preferably in line with the bus stop sign) to allow reasonable access to pedestrians with pushchairs or wheelchairs. Also the hedge along the footpath between Brecon Road and Kingswood Close is still very overgrown. The Clerk will report both these hedges again and copy Barry Stone in so he can take it up on the Parish Council's behalf.

5. Planning:

5.1. New and amended planning applications.

2015/1271 and 2015/1277 - Proposed bedroom annex at the rear of The Kings Head Public House. Existing listed stable block to be renovated and remain as a store to the P.H. Listed building consent.

This is an amended application and it was agreed that the amended version has not materially changed and therefore the Parish Council's previous comments should be reiterated as follows:

Councillors felt this would be over-development of the site because the proposed use of the accommodation would require car parking in its own right and the car park is already full most of time. No more land would be available for car parking in the current proposal, even though the spaces would be marked out.

While we appreciate the provision of parking for disabled visitors, these should also include the provision of toilet facilities for any disabled visitors; there is no point providing parking when, currently, there are no disabled toilet facilities.

There is no evidence of the need for more B & B provision in the village, which is considered well provided for with private B & B already.

There are concerns about disposal of surface drainage from the new buildings into the existing ditch on the rear boundary of the Public House and neighbours properties. The proposals should specify the provisions for maintaining the ditch, which are not mentioned on the plans.

There is a concern that the proposal says there are no trees to be removed but on visiting the site, this was considered not to be true. The Parish Council would like a detailed tree survey to assess the trees and the impact on the established yew trees to the rear of the next door neighbour at Number 8 Norwich Road. Councillors felt the proposed buildings would be too close to the roots of these yew trees which are not shown on the plans.

The Parish Council feels this is an inappropriate development within the curtilage of a listed building; there is the potential for noise impact on the neighbours in both adjoining dwellings (8 Norwich Road and 1 The Street) which could be significant and could be 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We feel this would be a piecemeal development as there are buildings not mentioned in the application: any proposal, if approved, should include details of the uses of all buildings on the site and any renovations or alterations proposed, all of which should be in accordance with the current listed status.

The Parish council unanimously recommend refusal for the reasons above.

6. Village sign:

The Clerk reported that the new sign has been delivered to Mrs Powell. Mr Jones has been authorised to go ahead and install it. Mrs Jones is going to remove the plants around the old sign and replant them around the new one. It was agreed that once the sign has been installed, a dedication ceremony should take place. It was agreed that Alan Sayer would be an appropriate person to ask to officially dedicate the new sign as he has lived in the village the longest. It was also agreed to ask Marjorie Sayer who was Clerk to the Parish Council for over 40 years. Mr Jinks agreed to approach Mr and Mrs Sayer.

7. School Governor report:

Mrs Reynolds gave her report, summarised as follows:

Progress with the new School is frustratingly slow; the hold-up is in the acquisition of land. Another review of potential sites is due to take place shortly, which may lead to a meeting with the PC to discuss site options. Mr Stone advised that he is aware of the situation and is doing his best to move things on.

The School has had good sporting success recently. Brooke School won in the Cluster cross country competition and 23 athletes qualified to represent the Cluster at the South Norfolk cross country completion. At that competition, 8 athletes went on to qualify to represent South Norfolk at the Norfolk School Games final at Gresham's School in Holt, which takes place on 30th November. They also helped Framingham Earl Cluster to win the Cluster competition.

The Tag Rugby team also won the cluster tournament and will represent the cluster at the South Norfolk competition. Children from the School won an EDP poetry competition and had their poems published in the newspaper.

The School recently had an open morning to encourage new children into the School next September and Mr Robinson has also been visiting local pre-schools. It is a priority to try and attract more children to the school.

8. Disabled toilets at the Scout hut:

Mr Mirfield attended the last meeting and asked the Parish Council if they would commit to running the new disabled toilet facility once it is built.

Mrs Powell reported that she had asked the cleaners at the Village Hall if they would be prepared to add the toilets on to their cleaning rota for payment at the same rate, which they were. As the Village Hall Committee are the owners of the land, she then asked them if they would employ the cleaners if they were reimbursed the cost, which they were.

The Village Hall Committee would also be responsible for covering the new facility under their insurance. Mr Jinks proposed that the Village Hall Committee takes on responsibility of running the new facility but the Parish Council pays the cost net of any income. All users will pay to use it by way of a 20p coin slot. Mrs Beardsell seconded the proposal with all present in agreement. The physical collection of the 20p coins is yet to be decided but it was suggested that the cleaners could do it when they go in to clean. The Clerk will write to David Harrison in his capacity as Village Hall Committee Chairman with this proposal, copying in Harry Mirfield.

9. Public Spaces:

9.1. Litter bins

The Clerk has ordered a new bin for the Norwich Road lay-by.

9.2. Tree for Brecon Rd amenity area

Mrs Beardsell has an oak sapling which she will plant where the dead tree was removed.

9.3. St Peters play area representative

There were no volunteers to fill the vacancy left by Keith Joad. It was agreed that the position would remain unfilled.

9.4. Grass cutting

The 3 year contract will expire shortly. The Clerk will put the contract out to tender with a minor alteration to include cutting the area in front of the bench on the western side of the mere (adjacent to the White Lion pub). The Clerk will write to CGM, Saffron, the contractors who serve Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk Council and one other contractor inviting them to submit quotes.

9.5. Bus shelter cleaning

Sadly, Ted Bowgen who has been cleaning the bus shelter since his wife died has passed away. Mrs Powell offered to get the contact details of a relative so that the Parish Council can send a condolence card. It was agreed that as the shelter is seldom used, there was not a current need to employ someone else to clean it but Mr Sanford offered to include it in his litter picking route.

9.6 The meres working party on 24 October was a success. It was agreed to reimburse Mrs Powell for providing the refreshments at a cost of £10. The Clerk will pay her out of petty cash at the next meeting.

Mrs Beardsell advised that the tree wardens are no longer affiliated to South Norfolk Council.

10. Finance:

11.1 Clerk's financial statement

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

11.2 Cheques to be authorised

The following cheques were authorised for payment and signed by Mr Jinks and Mrs Warman:

£10.00	Brooke Methodist Church	Hall hire
£151.96	CGM	Grass cutting for October

11. Parish Council Administration

11.1 Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

Mr Jinks, Mrs Powell and the Clerk met and finished amending the documents as per the new model documents. A revised version will be forwarded to all Councillors for approval and adoption.

11.2 Parish Land Registration

The Clerk has resurrected the application to register the land at Brecon Road by adverse possession. Mr Warman asked whether the village hall and surrounding land has been registered; the Clerk agreed to investigate.

3. Future meeting dates

The Clerk had emailed all Councillors with suggested meeting dates. The following dates were agreed:

11th January (meeting to agree precept request)
 7th March
 18th April (APM)
 16th May (AMPC)

12. Parish Footpaths and Highway Matters:

Mr Stone introduced himself and advised that he had emailed his report which is as follows:

Devolution update – There's a lot going on with Devolution both in County and District Councils. The Chancellor has said that only those areas with a DEM [Directly Elected Mayor] would be able to surcharge business rates to pay for infrastructure as well as increase Council Tax above the present 1.9%. My view is that I don't believe that the Mayoral model would be a show stopper if only a relatively low number of responsibilities were devolved at that level, adequate scrutiny was imposed and the extra Business Rates paid directly to councils covered the cost for the infrastructure. Would it be worth having an elected mayor if we raised an additional £1bn over 20 years for infrastructure?

The alternative is a nominated Chairman, swapping Chairman between Norfolk & Suffolk which may be a fudge that will impress nobody in Government.

The saga continues!

Broadband – Access to high-speed broadband has doubled in Norfolk as first Better Broadband contract is completed ahead of schedule and under budget. Norfolk County Council's partnership with BT has given 185,885, mainly rural homes and businesses, access to fibre-enabled broadband with more than 80 per cent of households and businesses in the county now able to buy a superfast broadband service (24 Megabits per second and above), nearly double the number who could receive these speeds three years ago.

The first areas set to benefit from the second BBfN contract are parts of Burgh St Peter, Barnham Broom, Barford, Bawdeswell, North Creake, Dereham, Ashwellthorpe, Bradwell, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, Shropham, Hanworth, Starston, Harleston, Hickling, Sea Palling, Thuxton, Cawston, Bradenham, Southrepps, Gunthorpe, Ridlington, East

Ruston, Weasenham St Peter, Little Fransham, Topcroft, Woodton and Wymondham.

Faster broadband services for these areas are set to become available by the end of March 2016. It should be noted that the new roadside fibre broadband cabinets serve very localised areas, usually parts of towns and villages rather than whole communities.

Winter Campaign – With the start of November comes the launch of Norfolk County Council’s annual Norfolk Winter campaign, designed to help people in the county get through the winter.

From Monday (2 November) onwards and throughout the winter, daily updates and useful advice will be shared using the #NorfolkWinter hashtag on Twitter and on the Norfolk Facebook page (www.facebook.com/norfolkcc), including the ever-popular gritting updates, informing people if the council’s fleet of gritter lorries are needed each day. The council’s 51 gritter lorries are ready to hit the road on any given day or night and Norfolk County Council’s seven salt domes are stocked with more than 17,000 tonnes of salt. This will be replenished as it is used through a long-term contract the council has with its supplier Compass Minerals.

More than 2,000 miles of Norfolk’s roads – over a third of the county’s network – are on Norfolk County Council’s regular gritting routes, including all A and B-class roads and some C-class roads (the A11, A47 and A12 are gritted by Highways England).

The gritting routes are reviewed every year and amendments made as necessary; people can check which roads are on the council’s gritting routes for the 2015/16 season by looking at the map at www.norfolk.gov.uk/gritting. On the same map people can find the locations of the more than 1,800 grit bins in the county that will be filled by the County Council and which people can use on public pavements and roads.

Finances – Norfolk County Council is to consult residents on a package of budget proposals to help save the Authority £123 million over the next three years - but which will also see all the county’s libraries and children’s centres remaining open. These savings are on top of the £245 million the council has saved over the last five years.

The council is also recommending some invest to save proposals including swipe card after-hours access to libraries and greater support for some aspects of adult social care.

Council committees have been discussing the need to re-imagine how services will look - with a worst case scenario of them having to manage with 75% of their current budget - given Government grant cuts and increasing demand for services. Following last month’s Policy and Resources Committee the range of savings for 2016/17 vary from 2% in Children’s Services to 23% in the Central Resources and Finance department.

The County Council expects to have its budget consultation up and running on its website by Friday 30 October, which will last until 14 January, although people can already make their views known by emailing haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.uk

Mrs Powell expressed frustration at the recent road signage which has appeared at the entrance to The Street which states ‘Road ahead closed’ and yet there are no road closures in Brooke. Furthermore the sign is actually in the road itself and causing an obstruction. Mr Stone advised that he does not know which road this relates to but he will take it up with Highways.

Mr Jinks advised that a 30mph repeater sign was removed following damage from The Street, near the meres. It has not yet been replaced. The Clerk will chase Highways and copy Mr Stone in.

Mr Stone advised that he is on the South Norfolk Council Planning Committee so if are any planning issues crop up, he would be happy to help.

12.1 Damaged milestone

Mr Jinks and Mr Musgrave inspected the damaged milestone to the South of the village. It was agreed that this milestone (as well as the one to the north of the village) has historical significance so should be preserved but not moved. Mr Jinks proposed that in an effort to make both milestones more visible and therefore less likely to be struck by the Council’s grass cutting flails or farm machinery, the Parish Council should add a 10 foot area around the milestones to the new grass cutting schedule. Mr Harrison seconded the proposal, 5 Councillors were in favour and 2 against. The motion therefore carried. The Clerk will add these areas to the grass cutting schedule when it goes out to tender.

12.2. Highways Rangers

Mr Stone reported that the Highways Rangers are coming to Brooke soon and invited the Parish Council to advise of any specific works needing doing. The Clerk stated that she always receives an email advising when they are coming and she submits a list of jobs. However, the jobs listed are never carried out and the emails sent by the Clerk asking

what was done at the visits and why the listed jobs were not carried out are never answered. Mr Stone advised her to copy him in to any emails sent.

13. Correspondence:

There was no correspondence to discuss.

14. Items for Agenda next meeting 11th January 2015:

Village sign
County Councillor's report
Land registration
Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
Precept
Grass cutting tender
White Lion PH - gazebo in front garden

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