

WRETHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Wretham Parish Council on Thursday, 15 June 2017 at 7.00 p.m. in Wretham Village Hall, Church Road.

Present: Councillors: Harold Smith (Chairman), Sharon Ford, Ann Schofield, William Townsend.
Clerk: Julian Gibson

1 **Apologies for absence.** It was **resolved** to accept the reason for absence offered by Councillor Foster.

2 **Declarations of interest.** None.

3 **Dispensations.** None.

4 **Public participation session.**

4.1 County Councillor Fabian Eagle introduced himself to the Council and parishioners. He said that his Council was allocating each Councillor with an annual budget of £6,000 to be spent on small highway works in their division. Precise details of how this will work are still to come forward. He also pointed out that the Council Tax raised by NCC only covers 25% of its budget, the balance coming from Central Government and other earnings, before excusing himself to go to another Council's meeting.

4.2 **Stonebridge Camp.** The Clerk gave a summary of the history of the planning applications relating to the site, and then what had happened at the Breckland Planning Committee meeting on Monday 12 June. He explained that, since the plans which had been circulated to Members with the Agenda a week earlier, two further revisions of the plan had been called for by Capita, the planning officers for Breckland Council. The last of these was emailed to the Clerk at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, 8 June with a note saying that Capita would be recommending that the Committee 'that it be approved subject to receiving no adverse comments/objections from the Parish Council on the amended scheme'. The Clerk has forcibly pointed out that it was illegal to call a Council meeting without giving three clear days notice, and so impossible for the Council to make a decision before the Committee Meeting at 9.30 the following Monday, but said that he was as certain as it was possible to be that the Council would still object strongly, as none of the issues they had raised with the earlier versions had been addressed. District Councillor Phil Cowen also advised Capita to pull the item from the Committee agenda. Nevertheless, they still put it forward, recommending approval.

At the Committee Meeting, which was attended by Councillor Cowen, the Clerk, and Mr Les Berés, the applicant, the Capita officer presented the application, and included in his introduction a plan which he said was that approved in 2008. The Clerk recognised this as an early version to which the Council had voiced many objections. Subsequently he was able to confirm that the one approved was a later version with which the Council has been broadly happy. He then found that when an application was made in 2011 to extend the time limit on the original permission, the earlier plan had been attached in error. The application was not intended to serve as a way of changing the plans, the applicant did not believe that was the case, and the Council had not objected to the extension of the time limit. However it now appeared that because Capita had not spotted that the incorrect plan was included, Breckland had now given permission to that earlier version. The Clerk is trying to get this error corrected.

After the Officer's presentation Councillor Cowen was invited to comment. When he said that the Parish Council had not been consulted on the version of the plans the Committee was being asked to approve the Breckland legal adviser spoke to the Committee Chairman, who immediately interrupted Councillor Cowen, and proposed that the Committee agree to defer the matter. Councillor Cowen is now voicing strong concerns about the way Capita had been trying to railroad this matter through without proper consultation.

The Clerk then detailed a number of the amendments being proposed in this application, including parking spaces replacing front gardens in the first eight dwellings on entry to the site, only half the access road being adopted, the rest being a private road, reduction in the overall number of parking spaces provided, reduction in the Public Open Space, a 1.5m brick wall along the A1075 side either side of the entrance, an electricity sub-station immediately inside the entrance, etc. The Chairman invited Mr Berés to speak. He explained why a number of the changes in this current application had been included; saying that some involved no financial gain. Members of the public raised many concerns about the urbanisation of the site, with the elimination of front gardens and so much parking immediately off the access road, the prominent location of the sub-station, and the walls which would make it look like an enclosed development rather than an open rural one. There were also strong concerns about the inadequacy of the provision of parking spaces, with the inevitable result that vehicles would be parked on the access road and the reduced central open space. A suggestion that there should be posts round the Open Space to keep vehicles off was made, which Mr Berés agreed with. Mr Berés was then questioned forcibly about his intention to finish development of the site. He said that his finance company was concerned about the time it was taking, and admitted that, regretfully, he might have to sell the site on, which would mean that it would take even longer to be completed. Generally, this was regretted, and there were complaints about the state of the site, with its 'slag heaps' and nothing but the wire fence surrounding it. Mr Berés confirmed that it had been his intention to remove the wire fence surrounding the outer perimeter and replace it with a 2m fence with planting inside.

- 5 **Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 13 April 2017 were **confirmed** and **signed**.
- 6 **Matters arising.** [6.2 Minutes of 9 February 2017] **SAM2.** When trying to move the replacement device to the post from which the original one was stolen, the Clerk found that in the process of removing it the thieves had bent the mounting bracket on the post. The Clerk contacted Westcotec and obtained a replacement
- 7 **Correspondence.** The following correspondence was **received**:
 - 7.1 War Memorials Trust: *Bulletin* - May 2017.
 - 7.2 *Clerks & Councils Direct* - May 2017.
 - 7.3 Norfolk Constabulary: *Thetford & Attleborough Newsletter* - April 2017.
 - 7.4 HM Revenue & Customs: *BACS Remittance advice* - VAT repayment.
 - 7.5 Came & Company: *Email confirming renewal of insurance policy.*
 - 7.6 Aviva: *Your Parish Council Policy.*
 - 7.7 The Pensions Regulator: *Automatic enrolment duties: Acknowledgement of declaration of compliance.*
 - 7.8 Mr Michael Corrie, Internal Auditor: *Letter of thanks.*
 - 7.9 Norfolk County Council: *Better Broadband for Norfolk Information Sheet 26* - 26 May 2017.
 - 7.10 Seafarers UK: *Please fly the Red Ensign for Merchant Navy Day.*
 - 7.11 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Community Account statement* - 29 April - 31 May 2017.



- 7.12 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Active Saver Account statement - 29 April - 31 May 2017.*
- 7.13 Norfolk County Council: *Recycling Credit advice £138.81.*
- 7.14 United Kingdom Debt Management Office: *Loan Payment due 14 June 2017.*
- 7.15 Norfolk County Council: *Local priorities top of the agenda for small highway schemes.*

8 Planning.

- 8.1 **3PL/2017/0638/HOU: Peddars, Keepers Corner, Wretham.** Application for Extensions and alterations. It was **resolved** that the Council objected on the grounds that the proposal was completely out of character with the existing and neighbouring dwellings.
- 8.2 **3PL/2016/0939/VAR: Stonebridge Camp, Thetford Road, Stonebridge.** Revised plans for application previous considered by this Council on 8 September 2016 for Development of Stonebridge Camp inc. erection of 27 dwellings (revised scheme). **To note** that the Clerk had responded objecting on the same grounds as before under his delegated power. However, as further revised version of the plan had come in since that response was sent, the Council looked again at the proposals. Mr Berés had said that some of the amendments had been made on the suggestion of Capita planning officers. It was **resolved** that, although the Council was happy with the Revision E plan drawn by Chaplin Farrant Limited to which Breckland originally gave permission, it still had numerous objections to the latest proposals represented by Revision G plans drawn by Coda Studios, on grounds including parking, reduction of public space and play area, and urbanisation of the development.

9 **Pension Automatic Enrolment.** It was **noted** that the Clerk has now been able to complete and submit the required Declaration of Compliance and that the Pensions Regulator has acknowledged receipt.

10 **Annual Parish Meeting.** The contents of the draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 11 May 2017, to be confirmed and signed at the next Parish Meeting were **agreed**. The one matter arising concerned the state of Stonebridge Camp which had been discussed at length already at this meeting. The Clerk did also suggest that District Councillor Phil Cowen consider including the Camp in the Breckland Council report on Unsightly Sites, but this request was made too late for inclusion.

11 **Peddars Way between Illington Road and the old railway bridge supports in Stonebridge.** A member of the public had approached the Clerk and asked whether the Council could ask NCC Highways to ban motor vehicles from this section of Peddars Way (except for access). The Chairman invited her to speak and she expressed concerns about safety as it is used at speed by a large number of off-road vehicles, causing considerable risk of horse riders and pedestrians. The Clerk said that this had been requested several years ago, and that NCC had refused as the track is actually a public highway. The Council **agreed** to try asking again, and instructed the Clerk to make a formal request.

12 **Transparency Fund.** The Council **approved** an application prepared by the Clerk for a grant of £961.23 to cover the cost of the Council complying with the Transparency Code in 2017/18.

13 Finance.

- 13.1 **Clerk's salary.** It was **resolved** that cheques numbered 100666 & 100667 totalling £889.77 (salary for 1 April 2017 to 30 June 2017: £776.82; Mileage Allowance Payment for 30 January 2017 - 21 May 2017: £92.95; Telephone Allowance Payment for 2016-2017: £20.00) to the Clerk and HM Revenue & Customs be signed. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 112(2)*)



- 13.2 **Clerk's reimbursement.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100668 for £73.15 (Postage & telephones: £3.62; Stationery: £0.99; Audit/Election costs: £50.00; Shared cost of new voice recorder: £8.78; VAT: £9.76) to the Clerk be signed, as reimbursement for items paid on behalf of the Council for 30 January 2016 to 6 June 2017. (*Local Government Act 1972 s.111*)
- 13.3 **Subscriptions.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100669 for £37.75 to the Society of Local Council Clerks be signed, being this parish's share of the Clerk's Annual Subscription. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 143*)
- 13.4 **Other.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100670 for £60.00 (£50.00 + £10.00 VAT) to Westcotec Limited be signed, in settlement of their invoice no. 7625 for a replacement bracket for the SAM2 device. (*Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.72*)
- 13.5 **Telephones.** It was **noted** that on 6 June 2017 BT collected £49.08 (£40.90 + £8.18 VAT) from the Council's account by direct debit in settlement of their bill reference M015 83, for provision of broadband services. (*Local Government Act 1972 s.111*)
- 13.6 **Monthly Financial Report.** The report for the month ending 31 May 2017 was **received**.
- 14 **Matters for consideration at next meeting.** Damage to the Trod.
- 15 **Next meeting.** The next meeting will be on **Thursday, 13 July 2017, at 7.00 p.m.** in **Wretham Village Hall.**

Confirmed:



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Harold Smith (Chairman)

13 July 2017

Future Meeting dates:

Thursday, 13 July 2017	Thursday, 12 October 2017	Thursday, 11 January 2018
Thursday, 10 August 2017	Thursday, 9 November 2017	Thursday, 8 February 2018
Thursday, 14 September 2017	Thursday, 7 December 2017	Thursday, 8 March 2018