

WRETHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Wretham Parish Council on Thursday, 8 September 2016 at 7.00 p.m. in Wretham Village Hall, Church Road.

**Present: Councillors Will Townsend (Chairman), Harold Smith, Sharon Ford, Jean Foster, Ann Schofield.
Julian Gibson (Clerk)**

The Chairman opened the meeting by thanking Mr Philip Foster for making and erecting a new sign at the southern end of the row of Forestry Cottages in Thetford Road (see also item 6.3)

1 Apologies for absence. None.

2 Declarations of interest. None.

3 Dispensations. None.

4 Public participation session.

4.1 Gullies outside Stonebridge Cottage. A member of the public pointed out that these gullies blocked with silt and weeds, and as a result the rain water running down the A1075 floods that part of the road, creating an aquaplaning problem, and eventually makes its way into the dwelling's front garden. The Clerk said he would report this to Norfolk County Council Highways.

4.2 Gulley on Church Road. It was reported that the cover to the gulley east of 7 Manor Cottages has broken some time ago, and now the hole was covered by weeds and so not visible. The Clerk said he had reported this before, and would do so again.

4.3 Planning issues. A member of the public voiced detailed concerns about a number of planning concerns. The Clerk was able to explain that, like it or not, Traditional Norfolk Poultry had ended up getting more or less exactly what they wanted because they managed to play the system using the Permitted Development regulations. The Watering Farm applications were passed by Breckland Council's Planning Committee (despite the strongest opposition by this and other local Parish Councils) simply because the applicant had threatened that if he could not keep the buildings he had erected without permission, he would exercise his right to put a far larger number of pigs on the land, which would make the problems on Peddars Way and other access roads far worse. So the Committee had decided that imposing a condition on the number of pigs to be on the site would be the lesser of two evils. The Clerk pointed out his concern over monitoring compliance with this condition. The actual planning permission notice is still to be issued.

The member of the public then moved on to the situation at Stonebridge Camp, complaining that development had still not really started, and that the piles of crushed concrete were an eyesore at the entrance to the village. The Clerk said that there were two applications awaiting decision which sought to vary the plans, the second of which was the subject of item 8.2. The earlier application (3OB/2016/0007/OB) has been submitted because under planning regulations, a developer is entitled to expect to be able to make a profit, and in this the applicant's agent sought to argue that the changes in the economic situation justified lessening or removal of the planning obligations in the Section 106 agreement. District Councillor Phil Cowen has said that the District Surveyor would be looking at the figures and that if he agreed, then the requests would have to be accepted under the Regulations. There is, though, no proposal at present to change the £80,000 (index-linked) contribution to extend the Village Hall.

The possible development of land to the south of Hockham Road (reference no. LP[112]001 in the Breckland Local Plan Emerging Site Options was mentioned. The Clerk confirmed that at the initial stage Breckland was obliged to include all sites that were put forward for consideration. However, as a parish with no settlement boundary, the current proposal was that Wretham would come under Policy PD05B, under which development would only be allowed where a limited number of criteria apply. This includes a limit of 5% “increase in dwelling stock over the plan period” per hamlet, so it would seem to be very unlikely that this site would end up in the final Plan. In any event, there will be at least one further consultation process, which would allow the Council and parishioners to raise concerns.

- 4.4 **Norfolk County Council issues.** With relation to the earlier comments, Councillor Ian Monson confirmed that it was his Council’s responsibility to maintain Peddars Way to the standards of a soft road, and acknowledged that this would involve a cost every few years which the Council Tax payers would have to fund. He then spoke about the Devolution issue, saying that less than 1% of residents in Norfolk and Suffolk responded to the consultation process (implying that the vast majority were happy with the status quo), and of them only 43% were in favour. However, as this is a Government project, the councils involved would have to put forward a proposal how it would be implemented. As many businesses and politicians liked the idea, he likened it to the EU Referendum, where the establishment wanted one thing and the population the opposite. However, in this instance he said there would be no referendum, and so no opportunity to vote it down at the last minute. His Council would be voting on the proposal, probably in October. He then said that somebody in the parish had approached his fellow councillor, Terry Jermy (also Mayor of Thetford) and asked about the possibility of a roundabout at the entrance to the Larkshall site. This was news to the Council and all present. Councillor Monson confirmed that the Council had not been informed, but did not think it was likely to get anywhere.
- 4.5 **Broadband.** A parishioner said that he had spoken to BT Openreach engineers who were surveying to install a new cabinet on the A1075 verge south of the junction with Peddars Way. The Clerk said that on the BT website the “Cabinet Fibre Journey” had moved from “We are exploring solutions”, through “In scope” and “Design” to “Field survey”. It suggested that, typically, broadband would be available within the next nine months.

5 **Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 14 July 2016 were **confirmed** and **signed**.

6 **Matters arising.**

- 6.1 [4.4] **Eastmere Barn** (formerly part of Manor Farm). A Breckland Planning Enforcement Officer has visited the site and spoken to the occupants, and says that as they are undertaking the conversion of the barn themselves he does not consider that the temporary residential use of the caravan to be a breach of planning control. The Clerk asked for clarification of the difference between this situation and that at Grove Nurseries, and received a rather detailed and convoluted explanation.
- 6.2 [10] **Breckland Local Plan.** The Clerk attended the Breckland Local Plan Working Group meeting, at which it was confirmed that, as Wretham does not have a Settlement Boundary, it should not have been included in the list of parishes where retention or otherwise of Settlement Boundaries was to be discussed.
- 6.3 [12] **“Forestry Cottages” name signs.** As instructed, the Clerk has obtained the sign agreed by the Council, which he will install it at the Hilda Raker Close end of the row of cottages. As this and the one made by Mr Foster are both replacing worn out signs

which have been there since 2002, there appears to be no need to obtain further consent from Norfolk County Council.

- 6.4 [6.2] **Robert Vincent Beaupre Memorial Seat.** Councillor Foster reported the fixings the Clerk had identified would not work on the bench. However, she said her husband thought that he would be able to devise a way to chain it down. The Chairman said that this really must be done, as the Council does not want to find that the seat has vanished.

7 **Correspondence.** The following correspondence was **received**:

- 7.1 Norfolk County Council: *Remittance advice* - Recycling credits.
7.2 Came & Company: *Change of Trading Style*.
7.3 Historic England: *Wretham War Memorial, Church Lane* - Invitation to comment.
7.4 Silson Communications: *BWSC East Anglia Limited - Snetterton renewable Energy Plant*.
7.5 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Community Account Statement* - 1-29 July 2016.
7.6 Barclays Bank Plc: *Your Active Saver Account Statement* - 1-29 July 2016.
7.7 Norfolk County Council: *Wretham – Highway and community Ranger Visit* - w/c 12 September.
7.8 Campaign to Protect Rural England: *Countryside Voice* - Summer 2016.
7.9 Campaign to Protect Rural England: *Fieldwork* - Summer 2016.
7.10 Norfolk Constabulary - Attleborough Safer Neighbourhood Team: *Minutes of the Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP) Meeting* - 31 May 2016.
7.11 Norfolk Constabulary - Attleborough Safer Neighbourhood Team: *Agenda for the Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP) Meeting* - 7 September 2016.

8 **Planning.**

- 8.1 **3PL/2016/0639/F: Grove Farm Nurseries, Thetford Road, Wretham.** Application to Retain temporary mobile home for security & during building works. Planning Permission dated 15 July 2016 (to expire 28 July 2019) was **received**.
- 8.2 **3PL/2016/0939/VAR: Stonebridge Camp, Thetford Road, Stonebridge.** Application for Development of Stonebridge Camp inc. erection of 27 dwellings (revised scheme). It was **resolved** that the Council objected on the grounds that the proposed changes would make a pleasant country development into a town-like estate. Specifically there were objections about the reduction in parking spaces, turning front gardens into car parks, changes to the access road, loss of footways and footpaths, loss of public open space, drainage issues, loss of the pagoda and equipped play area. It was also agreed the Breckland Councillor Phil Cowen be asked to try to get the application called in for consideration by Breckland's Planning Committee.
- 8.3 **3PL/2015/1446/LB: Dog and Partridge Public House, Watton Road.** Listed building consent to Create disabled access to the dining room. Notice that the Planning Inspector will again try to carry out a site visit on Tuesday 30 August was **received**. The Clerk was able to add that the Planning Inspector has dismissed the Appeal against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for listed building consent. The Inspector agreed with that of the Breckland Council Historic Buildings Consultant, who said that the required access of 775mm could be achieved by removal of the door and frame to the existing access, with possibly only minimal removal of the fabric of the chimney breast. This would reduce loss of a heritage asset. Presumably Breckland Council would now make a decision to refuse the application.

- 9 **War memorial.** It was **noted** that that Historic England has awarded Wretham War Memorial Grade II Listed Building Status. The Clerk said that this was part of a large project where all outdoor WWI memorials were being examined with a view to listing.
- 10 **External Audit.** The External Auditor's report for the year ended 31 March 2016 was **received**. This confirmed that nothing has come to the External Auditor's attention giving cause for concern. However, under "Other matters" the Auditor points out that one of the six identical dates required on two pages of the Annual Return had not been completed, and recommends that all dates are completed before submission of the annual return in future. Luckily they made no charge for inserting the date themselves after the Clerk suggested they might do this. The Clerk will now comply with the conclusion of audit requirements of *The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015*.
- 11 **Clerk's Annual Appraisal.** The Chairman confirmed that he had carried out an Annual Appraisal of the Clerk's performance, assessing it as being fully satisfactory. It was **agreed** to accept his recommendation that, in accordance with his contract, w.e.f. 17 July 2016 he is awarded an additional Spinal Column Point to take him to SCP 25, which increases his pay rate by 35.8p/hour or £94.51 p.a., making the total salary £3,078.24 p.a. This increase is within the planned budget. (As part of the agreed 2016-2018 National Salary Award, his annual salary w.e.f. 1 April 2017 will now be £3,107.28.)
- 12 **Finance.**
- 12.1 **Clerk's salary.** It was **resolved** that cheques numbered 100635 & 100636 totalling £810.34 (salary for 1 July 2016 to 30 September 2016: £765.49; Mileage Allowance Payment for 2 June 2016 - 31 August 2016: £44.85) to the Clerk and HM Revenue & Customs be signed. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 112(2)*)
- 12.2 **Clerk's reimbursement.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100637 for £7.75 (Postage & Telephones) to the Clerk be signed, in reimbursement for items paid on behalf of the Council for 3 June 2016 to 1 September 2016. (*Local Government Act 1972 s.111*)
- 12.3 **Telephone & internet.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100638 for £77.71 (£61.71 + £16.00 VAT) to BT be signed, in settlement of their bills reference M0010L, N002Z4, M003WM and M004&3 for internet and telephone services. The total bill amount is £109.87, but this includes a price rise (which came in before the service was connected but well after the contract was entered into) and a late payment charge (after BT had assured the Clerk that "You won't be expected to pay the bills until we get this sorted."). The Clerk has therefore deducted these. He is still waiting for the name on the account to be changed to that of the Parish Council, and for one of the two accounts that BT originally set up in error to be closed. (*Local Government Act 1972 s.111*)
- 12.4 **Section 137.** In accordance with its powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, it was **resolved** that cheque number 100639 for £75.00 to the Royal British Legion be signed as a donation, which in the opinion of the Council is in the interests of the area and its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 137*)
- 12.5 **Training.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100640 for £12.50 to Norfolk Association of Local Councils be signed, being this parish's share of the cost of the Clerk attending the Autumn Conference on 10 November 2016. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 111*)
- 12.6 **Other.** It was **resolved** that cheque number 100641 for £56.58 (£47.15 + £9.43 VAT) to Hirst Signs Limited be signed, in settlement of their invoice no. 33475 for the Forestry Cottages sign. (*Local Government Act 1972 s. 111*)

12.7 **BT Direct Debit.** The Clerk reported that despite his having requested a direct debit form twice on-line and once in an email no copy has yet arrived.

12.8 **Monthly Financial Report.** It was noted that there have been no transactions on the account since the last meeting.

13 **Matters for consideration at next meeting.** None.

14 **Next meeting.** The next meeting will be on **Thursday, 6 October 2016, at 7.00 p.m.** in **Wretham Village Hall.**

Confirmed:

W Townsend
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Will Townsend (Chairman)

6 October 2016

Future Meeting dates:

Thursday, 6 October 2016

Thursday, 12 January 2017

Thursday, 10 November 2016

Thursday, 9 February 2017

Thursday, 8 December 2016

Thursday, 9 March 2017