

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT BEETLEY VILLAGE HALL ON  
THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 7.30 P.M.**

**Present**

Councillor J Baldwin (Chair)  
Councillor J O'Donovan  
Councillor A Leigh  
Councillor J Mayhew  
Councillor R Richmond  
Councillor M Rose  
Councillor T Turner

County Councillor M Kiddle Morris  
District Councillor R Richmond

15 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence had been received from District Councillor R Duffield.

**2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.**

Councillor Richmond declared a DPI in Agenda item 7.1.1 having submitted parcels of land into the Local Development Framework. Councillor Turner declared a DPI in Agenda item 7.1.1 being the applicant.

**3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

Councillor Rose proposed and Councillor Mayhew seconded the resolution that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2017 having been circulated be approved. All were in favour and the minutes were duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

**4. County and District Councillors Reports.**

The County Councillor reported that the budget will be ratified on 20 February. The gross budget is £1.4 billion offset by school funding, grants and business rates, and the net budget to be recovered through the Council tax is £358.8 million. It is proposed that the Council Tax will be raised by 4.8% which is made up of 3% allowed by the Government for Adult Social Care and an increase of 1.8%. The Government grant is reducing and will be zero by 2020. Norfolk has an aging population which is larger than most counties and it also has a high number of children in care which is at present just over 1000 and each child costs £50k per annum. He was asked by a member of the public why more of the reserves are not be utilised and he replied that this administration does not feel it is prudent to reduce the reserves any more. It also can not use its capital reserves for revenue expenditure.

District Councillor Richmond reported that the consultation on the budget had finished and this will be announced on 23 February. It is hoped that the Council Tax will remain low by its entrepreneurial activity and it is hoped this will increase with the income from additional properties through its Transformation Policy. The Local Plan Working Group is meeting on 3 February. There are funds in the Outdoor Sport fund and it was suggested that the nets for the MUGA be applied for as well as relining.

## **5. Matters to Report.**

### **5.1 Brown Signs for the Woad Centre.**

The County Councillor stated that Highways had a letter from the owner stating that this is open all the time. The Clerk stated that he had an e-mail from a visitor to Norfolk who stated that he had an e-mail informing him that if he wishes to visit he must arrange a time in advance. The Clerk will send this to the County Councillor.

### **5.2 Bus Services.**

Councillor Leigh reported that the new minibus service had commenced in East Bilney on 10 January. This leaves on a Tuesday at 1012 to connect with the 21 service at Beech Road and the 21 return service leaving Dereham at 1230 is met at the New Inn. This allows parishioners about two hours in Dereham It has proved very popular. The Old Beetley bus is still full on a Friday. It is possible that this minibus may be able to go to Old Beetley on a Tuesday as well and the Clerk will discuss this with Norfolk County Council. The only problem is the small step up that Norse has which is fine for children but not so good for the elderly.

### **5.3 SNAP Meeting.**

Councillor Richmond had attended the meeting on 25 January and there was concern raised about drug use in villages. The priorities set were drug use in villages, parking outside schools and Breckland drug activity with the increased amount of growing of drugs in the district such as that at Beeston. PC Amy Lucas is coordinating much of the speeding problems at Swaffham.

### **5.4 Pavilion.**

The contractor had informed the Clerk that the gutters and fascias had been repaired and the heaters installed. He is expecting a price for the floor in the coming week.

### **5.5 Defibrillator for the Parish.**

Councillor O'Donovan stated that she had been unable to obtain the cost of electricity needed to be able to discuss with the tenants of the New Inn. She stated that she felt that the best place is at the Village Hall and after asking the parishioners present they all agreed it should be at the Village Hall. The Clerk will contact the Village Hall to obtain their agreement if possible to site it at the village hall. He will also obtain costings from

Community

Heartbeat

### **5.6 Breckland Town and Parish Forum 8 December 2016.**

Councillors Leigh Richmond and Rose had attended with the Clerk. Councillor Richmond stated that at the end it was stated that the houses had not been built in Thetford as not many people wish to move there. A presentation was given on the improvements to the A47. The Leader of Breckland Council informed the meeting that Breckland now had a five year housing supply and the Local plan is on track to be completed by June 2017. The A11 Cambridge Norwich tech corridor is a key factor for growth and jobs. Breckland is supporting this with projects such as Thetford Riverside, Snetterton and Attleborough urban extension and funding for Better Broadband.

### **5.7 Beetley Pre-School.**

The Clerk had had a conversation with the Pre-School about the possibility of utilising a section of the parish land that is part of the school playing field. The Clerk informed the Pre-School that this had been raised in April 2015 and no objection in principle had been raised but that the Parish Council would need full details of the proposals. Nothing further had been received.

### **5.8 Internal Auditors Course.**

The Clerk reported that he had attended an Internal Auditors Course. The new Audit arrangements come into force from 1 April 2018 and at that point if a Parish Council has

income and payments below £25000 there will be no External Audit unless a parishioner makes an objection to the accounts. Therefore there is more reliance on the Internal Auditor and the internal controls of the Parish Council. One control is the recommendation that a Councillor is appointed to monitor/check the accounts. This must not be a signatory nor a relation of the Clerk. Councillor Rose felt therefore that she qualified and provided there is no financial risk to her she would be willing to take this on. The Clerk replied that there is no risk involved.

#### **5.9 Extract in the Link-Up.**

Councillor Richmond wondered if the extract should go into the Link-up as there had been favourable comments following the insertion in the Dereham and Fakenham Times. Councillor Leigh felt that it is not necessary as this does not go to all households and stated that another Parish Council places a note in the Upper Wensum Diary to state that “ a full set of draft unapproved minutes are published on the website within one month of each meeting. She felt that “or by contacting the Clerk” should be added. It was agreed for the Clerk to contact the editor of the Link-up and have this inserted monthly and then monitor the response.

#### **5.10 Broadband.**

The Clerk had been notified by Norfolk County Council that a new communications cabinet is to be installed in East Bilney at the rear of the verge outside The Garage Bungalow and Hillside Fakenham Road. This should be installed and implemented within the next 12 months.

#### **5.11 Norfolk Vanguard Offshore Wind Farm.**

Following the drop-in sessions that had been held a revised Ecological Survey Area had been designated which does not include Beetley. A further drop in session will be held in Dereham.

### **6. Highways and Transport.**

#### **6.1 Report on Highways Matters.**

The Clerk had applied for a new bus shelter under the Local Highway Improvement scheme but no decision is likely until April. The Clerk had requested a date for the installation of the trod in East Bilney as Norfolk County Council had now had the payments since April 2016. The Clerk had requested a litter pick along the B1146 and the manager from Serco had contacted him to state that it would be done in the New Year but there are more Health and Safety restraints now for operatives to operate either on the highway or on the verge but he will do his best. The litter pick was being done today and a very good job had been done. The Clerk had thanked Breckland and requested that the thanks be passed onto Serco. A complaint had been received regarding Church Lane and the Clerk had replied to the resident stating that it is an unclassified road and is therefore of low priority and that it is the landowner's responsibility to clear up after hedge cutting. The Clerk had reported the matter to Norfolk County Council.

#### **6.2 New problems.**

There were no new problems reported.

#### **6.3 Footpaths.**

The Highways Engineer had been contacted following a complaint of cyclists on FP4 in East Bilney as the kissing gates installed had been removed. The Highways Engineer had replied that he is contacting the Countryside Access Officer to see what options are available.

#### **6.4 20m.p.h. Speed Limit at Elmham Road/ Fakenham Road Crossroads.**

The County Councillor is still pursuing this.

## 7. Planning.

### 7.1 Applications.

#### 7.1.1 3PL/2016/1554/O-Land Adjacent to 78 Fakenham Road-residential development of 8 houses.

The applicant was asked why an area had been left at the rear of the properties and not used the whole plot. He replied that it was in case the properties wished to have a larger garden. He was also asked by a member of the public why he had kept the access and he was informed that it was for access whilst the development was taking place so that there was no congestion on the road.

Councillors Richmond and Turner withdrew from the meeting.  
The meeting was adjourned.

A resident who was speaking on behalf of several residents addressed the meeting as follows:-

#### In General

We object most strongly to the planning application for the following reasons

- It is inappropriate for the location and changes the nature of this attractive part of our rural village.
- It is an intrusion into the general rural setting to the detriment of the character and visual amenities of the area.
- With a frontage of some 200 metres this can't possibly be described as infill development.

#### In terms of the Settlement Boundary

The location is outside of the current settlement boundary as adopted in the Local Development Framework, which remains logical and in line with the criteria of PD05A and therefore should be maintained.

- The final conclusions of the recent Local Plan consultation are yet to be determined but the preferred option was not to change the current boundary.
- Also the current land bank for the area appears to be sufficient as acknowledged from a report to the Planning Committee on 12/12/16 .
- Therefore this development is not currently needed particularly given the general lack and capacity of services in the area.
- PD05A para 28.11 also states that the maximum number of units should be five for this type of development and not eight as in the application which is even acknowledged by the applicant.
- you should therefore judge this application on the basis that it is currently outside the settlement boundary

#### In terms of Loss of amenity

- The development does not protect the amenity of the area and would likely lead to nuisance and disturbance to the neighbouring properties due to the noise and increase in traffic and would therefore likely result in an unacceptable loss of amenity to the occupants of nearby properties.
- Our own visual amenity which we have enjoyed for some 33 years since moving here is at risk, potentially losing the site of a large section of a very pleasant hedgerow and tree view from our bungalow and to be potentially overlooked by a two storey building.

#### In terms of Access

- Access onto the Fakenham Road from this location is very difficult and hazardous for those trying to exit and also particularly dangerous for users on the B1146 confronting vehicles coming out onto the road.
- Although in theory within a 30mph limit in excess of 25% of vehicles break this limit with speeds often in excess of 50mph being recorded by Norfolk Constabulary.

- The Fakenham Road is a busy narrow single lane road being one of the main routes into Dereham from Fakenham and other villages from the north of the site.
- Some 200 plus vehicles per hour use the road during daylight hours, including buses and HGVs, meaning that at any given time a vehicle is likely to be passing when another vehicle is exiting.
- Seven new access points for eight properties is totally inappropriate coming out onto a very busy and fast traffic flow.

In addition the visual splay required to meet the guidelines of clear view in each direction from a point 2.4 metres back from the carriageway would totally destroy the current nature of the hedgerows and trees, and be even more damaging if NCC requirements of a 2 metre wide path along the whole frontage.

#### In terms of Services

- There are limited services in the area
- The farm shop mentioned by the applicant closed some two years ago, the school population is growing consistently and nearing capacity and the limited bus service is constantly under threat of reduction due to financial cuts and lack of demand. Also the doctor/GP surgeries in neighbouring villages are oversubscribed.
- The economic and employment benefits claimed are unsubstantiated and may well be outweighed by the additional costs and loss of amenity.

#### In terms of the Environmental/Ecological survey

- The land has always been designated for agricultural use whether that be for crops or grazing and in more recent years remained fallow which has meant growth in the grass, trees and hedgerows which has encouraged a variety of birds and other wildlife to populate and abound in the area.
- The Ecological survey also highlights the potential importance of the hedgerow and that any increase in access above one could have a major and detrimental impact to it and the birds and wildlife and general biodiversity.
- There is also concern about additional run off water from the site .The Fakenham Road currently suffers from high levels of flowing water in heavy rain and the consequent risk of overwhelming the current inadequate drainage system and risk of flooding to near properties.

#### In terms of Traffic increase

- The increase in properties would lead to a considerable increase in traffic movements, not just from the potential 32 car parking spaces requested but also daily postal deliveries, weekly refuse collections and potentially frequent deliveries of Internet purchase deliveries by delivery vans, as well as other unknown, unquantified visitors.
- This would lead to further safety issues with access onto the Fakenham Road.

#### In Conclusion

- For the reasons above we believe and request that this application be refused and that the settlement boundary remains in place to stop any future applications by withdrawing your request when the Local Plan goes out for further consultation.
- We are also aware that there are a considerable number of near neighbours who also object to any development of this location and that the Parish Council should act to support the residents.

Other parishioners raised concerns and stated that the Parish Council had been elected to do what is right for residents and should therefore object to the application and not request that the settlement boundary be changed. A parishioner stated that they lived on Fakenham Road and had no objection to the application and thought it was a natural infill. A parishioner requested a Traffic Management Survey to ascertain the exact speed of traffic at this point as vehicles at this point speed into and out of the village and often overtake as they are leaving the village going north at this point. Another parishioner thought that the whole plot should be used and that there

should not be so many entrances, had concerns about the removal of the hedge and speeding traffic and the effect on the value of their house.

The meeting was reconvened.

Councillor Mayhew stated that he was in two minds about this application as the Parish Council had agreed for development on this site. However it is still outside the settlement boundary until this is amended in the Local Plan. He felt that the whole plot should be used with the dwellings further back on the plot and not all along the front. He did not feel that the design was suitable for this site and felt that two entrances would be adequate for the 8 dwellings so that the development is similar to that to the south. He did not see the necessity for a 2 metre wide footway as requested by Highways as there is no footway along the eastern side of Fakenham Road and the removal of the hedge would be detrimental to the area.

The Clerk stated that a revised PD05A policy is to go to the Local Plan Working Group the next day which recognises that if an individual site lends itself to a higher number on the plot then this will be considered.

Councillor O'Donovan stated that she lived on Fakenham Road and had no problem with development on this site and agreed with concerns about speeding traffic but felt that more vehicles accessing Fakenham Road would slow traffic.

Councillor Leigh proposed and Councillor Rose seconded the resolution that the Parish Council object to the application as it is outside the settlement boundary. The design is not acceptable with all the entrances but in principle is still in favour of development on this land, and that it does not agree with the Highways assessment for a footway at this point as it would mean the removal of the hedge. All were in favour.

Councillors Richmond and Turner rejoined the meeting.

## **7.2 Decisions.**

The following decisions were noted.

<b>7.2.1 3PL/2016/1402/O-Ferndale House the Drift East Bilney-erection of dwelling and garage.</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Refusal.</b>
<b>7.2.2 3PL/2016/1484/HOU-Hillside Fakenham Road East Bilney-Oak Framed Garage</b>	<b>N/O</b>	<b>Permission.</b>
<b>7.2.3 3PL/2016/1430/F-Garden plot Adjacent Highfield Farm Church Road East Bilney-dwelling and garage.</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Withdrawn.</b>

## **7.3 Enforcement.**

### **7.3.1 Complaint to Breckland Council regarding a possible breach of planning.**

Nothing further had been heard from Breckland Council and the Clerk will contact it again.

## **7.4 Meeting with Breckland Council regarding the Local Plan.**

The Chairman and the Clerk had had a meeting with the Planning Policy Team to discuss the settlement boundary alterations and sites submitted in the Local Plan. The Chairman stated that again it was requested that the settlement boundary be amended on Fakenham Road and Elmham Road. The Clerk informed the Officers that the site on the corner of Fakenham Road and Gressenhall Road is in Gressenhall and as such the Parish Council had not commented. The Chairman felt it had been a worthwhile meeting.

## **7.5 Flooding in East Bilney.**

At the meeting in January concern had been raised by residents that a ditch had been filled

in, a pond dug but there is still flooding and it appears to be getting worse. The Clerk had contacted the Environment Agency who had been very helpful but it is not their responsibility. The Clerk had therefore contact Breckland Council but had not had a reply.

## **8. Beetley River Meadows.**

### **8.1 Report.**

There had been a reported case of distemper from a dog that was walked on the Meadows. This had happened a few weeks ago and the dog had to be put to sleep. Distemper is an airborne disease as confirmed by the Chairman after consulting her vet. Councillor Mayhew stated that there was minimal risk to others so it was agreed to do nothing at this time. Moles had been active again and the mole catcher had been contacted and he will be on site the following week.

The grass cutting contractor had confirmed that the price would increase by 2% which is in line with their quotation of 2016.

The Chairman was asked if she had agreed with Norse that in return for allowing the use of Beetley River Meadows for a mower demonstration it had agreed to cut the visibility splays for the duck race for free. The Chairman replied that she had not had time to contact Norse yet but would do so. Councillor Mayhew stated that prior to cutting commencing the branches need cutting off. The Clerk apologised as he had forgotten to contact the contractor.

### **8.2 Duck Race 7 May for Beetley Pre-School.**

The Pre-School had again requested permission for a duck race and if the Parish Council would cut the viewing areas.

It was agreed unanimously to grant permission for the race and to have the areas cleared.

### **8.3 Girl Guide Event on Beetley River Meadows.**

The Clerk had received a letter from The Girl Guides informing the Parish Council that it was to hold an event on the Meadows as it is a public area. The Clerk had replied that the area is owned by the Parish Council and is not therefore a public area in the sense that the Girl Guides thought. He had asked for more details which had been supplied and distributed to all Councillors. The Girl Guides would only be at the area for a maximum of two hours but a request had also been made to erect a toilet tent. This was discussed at length and all felt it would have been better if contact had been made with the Parish Council earlier.

Councillor Leigh proposed and Councillor Rose seconded the resolution that no objection be raised to the use of the area but that the Parish Council objects to the erection of a toilet tent. All were in favour.

## **9. Open Spaces.**

### **9.1 Report.**

The Clerk had received notification that a new Nitrate Vulnerable Zone had been designated which covers Beetley and the Parish Council owns land within the area. Councillor Richmond stated that the Parish Council needs to do nothing at this stage but to monitor the situation on its land.

## **10. Finance.**

### **10.1 Budgets.**

The budget sheets and financial information had been circulated.

Councillor Richmond proposed and Councillor Mayhew seconded the resolution that these be approved. All were in favour.

## 10.2 Balances and Cheques for Authorisation.

Councillor Rose proposed and Councillor O'Donovan seconded the resolution that the balances and cheques for authorisation be approved. All were in favour.

### Balances

#### **Bank of Ireland Treasurer's Account.**

Balance at 31 10 16	25312.55
Plus Interest-2.29	
VAT Refund-1571.13	
Wayleave-79.06	
Norfolk Community Foundation C/Car-135.20	
Beetley Village Hall-79.80	
Interest-1.94	
Litcham Parish Council-34.75	
Norfolk Community Foundation C/Car-99.58	
Transparency Code-384.78	
	<u>2388.53</u>
	27701.08
Less cheques authorised 03 11 16 -1832.98	
cheques authorised 01 12 16- 2590.34	
	<u>4423.32</u>
Balance at 31 12 16	23277.76
Less unpresented cheques authorised 06 10 16-6.00	
unpresented cheques authorised 01 12 16-229.00	
	<u>235.00</u>
Balance at 31 12 16	23042.76
Float for Community Car co-ordinator	<u>250.00</u>
Balance at 31 12 16	23292.76

Amount available for Section 137 : 1148 x £7.42 = £8518.16

Spend to Date : £25.00

Cheques for authorisation:

752	Mrs A Leigh	Community Car Dec	151.00
753	Norfolk County Council	DBS Check	25.00
754	B J Leigh	Contract Jan 501.38 less PAYE 90.40	410.98
755	HMRC	PAYE Jan	90.40
756	Mrs A Leigh	Community Car-Jan	123.50
757	Abacus Copiers	Monthly Contract	25.54
758	Information Commissioner	Data Protection	35.00
759	Julia Bloomfield	Website Maintenance	55.00

### **10.3 Change of Bank to Barclays.**

The Clerk had waited until the payment from RPA had been received and will now attempt to change the account to Barclays.

### **10.4 Donation to Norfolk Age UK.**

It was agreed unanimously not to donate.

### **10.5 Budget 2017/18.**

This was deferred until the next meeting as no accounts had been received from the Village Hall.

## **11. Correspondence received for circulation.**

The following correspondence would be circulated.

### **11.1 LCR Winter 2016.**



- 11.2 Clerks and Councils Direct January 2017.
- 11.3 Details from a meeting on Nitrate Zones.
- 11.4 Information from Breckland Council Town and Parish Forum.

**12. Matters for the Next Meeting.**

- 12.1 Clerk's Salary.
- 12.2 Councillor to Check Financial Matters.

**13. Date of the next Parish Council Meeting.**

This was confirmed as Thursday 2 March 2017 at 7.30p.m. to be held at Beetley and East Bilney Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.53 hours.