

# WRETHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Ordinary Monthly Parish Meeting of Wretham Parish Council** held on Thu 9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2025 at 7:00pm in Wretham Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr Sharon Ford (SF) – Vice Chair, Cllr Jon Ford, Cllr Natalie Bissessur and Parish Clerk, Jules Challenor (JC)

1. **APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE** – Cllr Harold Smith (6-month sabbatical) and Cllr Paul Barnard.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - None
3. **DISPENSATIONS** - None
4. **MINUTES** – The minutes of the meeting held on Thu 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 24, were agreed by all and signed by the Vice-Chair. These will be available to view on the Parish Council website.
5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – Joined by Debbie Holmes from Mill Stone Green who updated the Parish Council on this site.

The open space land at Mill Stone Green, which includes the roads, have not been passed to the Crown as previously indicated. This is because the land was not disclaimed as part of Wantage Developments liquidation because it was not declared as an asset by the liquidator.

As a result the land, and roads, are effectively 'stuck' in Wantage's name. Investigations are ongoing as to what action the residents are able to take, and at what cost.

Mr Beres who was the builder on site has recently been in touch with a resident and we currently await formal indications as to what, if any assistance he can give.

However, at the current time, until the land is released from Wantage, the land cannot pass to the residents, as in order to do so certain conditions, ie planning, need to be complied with.

It is therefore likely to be a long drawn out process whilst this multifaceted matter is unpicked and dealt with.

## 6. DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

- 6.1 District Councillors Report – Cllr Phil Cowen – attached
- 6.2 County Councillors Report - Cllr Fabian Eagle - none

## 7. MATTERS ARISING

- 7.1 **COUNCILLOR VACANCY** – Natalie Bissessur (NB) co-opted onto the council. Proposed by Cllr SF and seconded by Cllr JF. Forms given to NB to sign and to be returned to the Clerk (preferably scanned).
- 7.2 **OUTSTANDING HIGHWAY MATTERS** – discuss any outstanding issues + report any new issues.

ENQ-716436-B6N9B1 Lechmere Corner Trees maintenance – Cllr PB pointed out that NCC may have incorrect location and Clerk emailed to confirm location. Clerk to monitor situation.

Also Clerk to monitor "Wretham Camp" sign - bent towards the A1075 road. Also the verges in Wretham appear to no longer be regularly maintained by Highways and regular incidents of standing water/flooding – drainage on Church Road by St Ethelbert Church – still waiting for replies.



### 7.3 ANY OTHER MATTERS

Mill Stone Green – Resident Debbie Holmes confirmed the position – see above.

### 8. CORRESPONDENCE – All correspondence regularly circulated via email to all councillors.

### 9. FINANCE

- 9.1 Monthly Financial Report - to sign payments for Dec 24 and Jan 25. All sent to Cllrs via email for consideration prior to meeting and approval. Agreed to pay Serco, sum £570.80 for grass cutting for 2024 and hire of village hall, sum £150. Clerk pay, sum £449.74 for Jan 25. Serco have quoted for next two years and have agreed to keep the price the same as current year. All agree acceptable. HMRC – VAT £382.90 applied for refund. HMRC – last couple of months PAYE/NI payments not taken out although DD in place. Clerk can confirm upon checking that payment is to be made end Jan 25.
- 9.2 Budget Precept – budget for 25/26 was sent to all councillors prior to this meeting. 2024/25 was £8,546 which equates to £51.58 Band D tax p/a. It was agreed that no changes to be made to the Precept, ie no increase for 25/26. Cllr JF enquired if there are any large expenses that we need to be developing a fund for, in say the next five years. Biggest expenditure item, Village Hall and this is all refurbished. Clerk to have a think about any projects that we may need to think about.

### 10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – new planning applications, planning decisions and correspondence, and to decide on comments to be made where necessary.

- 10.1 ENF/271/22/PAR – 4 Manor Cottages - Appeal ongoing & Breckland Council managing – Clerk to obtain update from Breckland Council.
- 10.2 3PL/2023/1107/F - Sunnys Trees Hockham Road IP24 1SD - Tourism development to include erection of 2 holiday cabins, service block, stables, manege and paddocks for equestrian use– Revised plans submitted – Decision by 28<sup>th</sup> Nov 24 – Extension until 07-02-2025

### 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 11.1 History/Memory Cafe - . Clerk to check newsletter for any dates and confirm PC are happy to support.
- 11.2 Community Action Norfolk (CAN) offering energy advice talks to community groups – Clerk emailed Newsletter editorial team. It was suggested we put a date in for January 25 and liaise with newsletter.
- 11.3 High speeds by vehicles on Croxton Road by Military Camp – no update received from NCC.
- 11.4 SNAP Meetings – new dates SNAP Meeting(s) PC Dion Philips, Beat Manager Attleborough informs meeting dates for 2025.  
Fri 10th Jan 25 at 18:30hrs to be held at Attleborough Town Hall  
**Wed 9th Apr 2025** at 18:30hrs held at LOPHAM VILLAGE HALL, Church Rd, North Lopham, Diss IP22 2LW  
Thu 10th Jul 2025 at 18:30hrs held at Harling Old School Village Hall School Lane, East Harling, Norfolk, NR16 2LU  
Fri 17th Oct 2025 at 18:30hrs held at Attleborough Town Hall
- 11.5 OCO Technology – All bulbs donated by OCO planted. Rachel Heather who now looks after the Village Hall garden area planted lots of bulbs. Also Darren Soar of Mill Stone Green planted bulbs in the Millenium Row area.
- 11.6 Defibrillator update – Clerk to investigate if new pads are needed.
- 11.7 Water Pressure – Clerk in correspondence with Anglian and Severn Trent Water as STW are filling up tanks from the camp. It is imperative that if anyone has a problem to complain to Anglian Water.

### 12. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA AND DATE FOR NEXT MEETING(S)

**2025 - 13th Feb, 13th Mar tba, 10th Apr, 8th May, 12th Jun, 10th Jul, Aug tba, 11 Sep, 9th Oct, 13th Nov & Dec tba**

Chairmans initials



Wretham Parish AGM Council Meeting 9 Jan 25



### **Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- a) Cllr SF has asked, does the PC have a list of all the trees with protection orders on in the Village? Clerk to investigate.
- b) Also is there a map of the village who says who owns what, ie the fields – Clerk to investigate.
- c) Jackie Preston, Clerk to Stow Bedon & Breckles Parish Council - Clerk to investigate sharing agreement etc Battery needs to be recharged and this is currently with Cllr PB.

### **District Councillors' report January 2025**

A Happy New Year to you all from us both, hopefully January finds everyone much rejuvenated after the festive holiday season.

At Breckland's cabinet on the 6<sup>th</sup> January there was one substantive item on the agenda, namely the presentation of the Draft Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy for the coming years and in particular the year 2025-2026. In addition, the leader of the council updated members on the current state of the Government's Devolution White Paper and the potential for Local Government Reorganisation, much of which has been trailed in the press over the past months.

The potential for Devolution is real and it is our understanding, although the County has had no dialogue with any of the Districts in Norfolk, that the leader of Norfolk County Council intends to seek a postponement of the county elections in May and is likely to propose this week that Norfolk County would seek to become a single Unitary authority taking on board all of the functions of the seven district and borough councils within the county, the net result being the dissolution of the seven at some time before or at the next district council election cycle in 2027.

Government has indicated that if the counties wish to seek a devolution deal that government will only discuss the opportunity with the County concerned; the effect being that the districts that provide the local knowledge and widespread service provision at the local level are excluded from any discussion to shape and guide a restructured local government model. This is regrettable and a position that the District Councils Network and Breckland Council deplores.

At a local level, the draft budget for the coming year proposed at cabinet is balanced for the next two years despite the challenging arena in which it is presented. This includes:

- A lack of clarity regarding the national funding environment
- A business rate reset,
- The fair funding review,
- Significant funding cuts,
- Demographic changes
- Reduced income
- Demand pressures in services such as
  - temporary accommodation
  - revenues and benefits
  - waste services

This means that not only will Breckland maintain all of its core services but also provides discretionary services across the district to support the vulnerable, meet our temporary housing obligations and provide grants and

the like to community groups, residents and businesses.

However, in order to maintain all of the above the draft budget does recommend an increase in the Breckland Band D Council Tax of £4.95 per annum that would see the Breckland portion of the Band D Council Tax increase from £113.58 to £118.53 per year equivalent to £2.28 per week. Of all the homes in the Breckland area, 75% are in Bands A-C and 53% are in Bands A and B and therefore the majority of homes in Breckland will pay less than £2.03 per week towards the cost of the services that Breckland provides across its 500 square miles of Norfolk. The proposed draft budget is out for consultation until 23<sup>rd</sup> January and will be debated at Council in February. Other matters of interest to our villages and towns will be

1. the proposed changes to the planning system that are proposed by government. In brief the new and amended national Planning Policy Framework found here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-2>

advises that Government has Reinstated compulsory housing targets, reversing previous policies that allowed for flexibility. This change aims to ensure local authorities meet specific housing needs. The target for Breckland has increased from **625 to 903** houses to be delivered per year.

*The current local plan seeks to deliver 612 houses per year and the current review document is based on 661 houses per year. On average over the last 11 years Breckland has delivered 631 homes per year.*

**5 Year housing land supply:**

As of the 12th December 2024 Breckland Council no longer has a 5 year housing land supply and as such the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the tilted balance, applies.

And

2. The proposed boundary commission review for Breckland that will see changes made to the ward boundaries as a result of population changes in certain wards in the district.

The LGBCE are now consulting on the draft recommendations for a 12-week period, from 3 December 2024 to 24 February 2025.

The council's working group will be considering the latest proposals in due course and a response to the LGBCE. There is also an opportunity for you – as residents of the district to have a say. The LGBCE is keen to hear whether you agree with their recommendations, and if you don't please consider submitting alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

More information about the review is at <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/breckland>

Councillors Sarah Suggitt and Philip Cowen  
January 2025

Chairmans initials \_\_\_\_\_

Wretham Parish AGM Council Meeting 9 Jan 25