

**Minutes of a meeting of Carbrooke Parish Council  
held in the Community Hub, Buckingham Close on 13 February 2024 at 7pm.**

**Councillors present:**

N Defew (Chair), K Jones, D Page, S Willmott.

**In attendance:-**

N Hartley (Parish Clerk), Cllr P Bate (Breckland Council), P Arrowsmith (Community Hub). One member of the public.

**Public Participation**

A member of the public objected to the Planning Application at North Farm. She noted the flood risk on the access road, and questioned who would be responsible for the roadway. She noted that the land is within 20 metres of a watercourse, though the application does not acknowledge this. She said the application states the site to be flat, but the applicant's own topography report shows the site is not flat. She was concerned by the potential for flooding and stated that this risk breached the flood risk policy. She noted that drainage was a significant issue and pointed out the current problems with drainage. Re the access route, she noted the application states there is no significant traffic, but she pointed to the significant amount of traffic at school drop off and pick up.

The meeting went into session.

**1 Co option of K Jones**

It was **RESOLVED** to coopt Kevin Jones onto the Council. He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Baker, Borrett and Leport for personal reasons, from Cllrs Humphreys and Yerby, who were unwell, and from Cllrs H Crane (Breckland Council) and C Bowes (Norfolk County Council).

**3 Declaration of Interest**

Cllr Defew declared an interest in the grant application from the Millennium Green, as he is Treasurer to the group.

Cllr Willmott declared an interest in item 42 (Ditch Clearance) as any clearance of the ditch in front of his property would relieve him of the responsibility as a landowner to clear the ditches under what are known as Riparian Rights.

#### **4 Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2024.

#### **5 Matters Arising**

The Clerk noted that the Council's insurance claim to replace the defibrillator at the Aerolite has been settled. The Council will purchase and install a replacement.

#### **6 Reports from Breckland Councillors**

Cllrs Bate's report is attached to the minutes.

#### **7 Planning**

##### **7.1 Application considered:**

Land at North Farm, Broadmoor Road 3PL/2024/0046/O  
Construction of two detached self-build dwellings & garages

It was **RESOLVED** to object to the application on the basis of the flood risk, the existing drainage problems and the potential problems of increased traffic.

##### **7.2 Breckland Council decisions:**

Bennett Homes, ex RAF Officers Mess Site (Heritage Park) 3PL/2023/0408/VAR  
Variation of condition 2 on PP 3PL/2019/0487/VAR – vary dwelling types on Plots 41 & 42, additional variation of red line boundary of site in same region Approved

#### **8 Finance**

##### **8.1 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following payments in accordance with the Budget:-**

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £768.96

HMRC, clerk's PAYE, £192

Community Action Norfolk, annual subscription, £50

N Hartley, reimbursement for cutting key for Hub, £3.85

Norfolk Association of Local Councils, three month membership, £43.60

Spire Solicitors, final disbursements re transfer of Community Hub, £7.20

8.2 To note the following payments received:

Unity Trust Bank, interest paid, £608.73  
Scottish Widows, interest paid, £623.13  
Barclays Bank, interest paid, £70.23

8.3 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following payment from the Commuted Sum:-

Top Garden Services, grass cutting at Blenheim Grange (April-October 2023), £4,636.80

8.4 The meeting received a report of Actual to Budgeted expenditure, a copy of which is attached to the minutes.

## **9 Appointment of Internal Auditor**

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint SCS Accounting as the Council's Internal Auditor.

## **10 Review of Internal Control Policy**

The Council reviewed its Internal Control policy. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated policy.

## **11 Review of Risk Management Policy**

The Council reviewed its Risk Management policy. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated policy.

## **12 Review of the Council's Standing Orders**

The Council reviewed its Standing Orders. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

## **13 Review of the Council's Financial Regulations**

The Council reviewed its Financial Regulations. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

## **14 Review of Data Protection Policy**

The Council considered a revised Data Protection policy. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised policy.

## **15 Review of Information Security Breach Procedure**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt an Information Security Breach Procedure.

**16 Review of the Council's Privacy Notice**

The Council reviewed its Privacy Notice. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt an amended Privacy Notice.

**17 Review of the Information Audit**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Information Audit.

**18 Review of the Council's Disciplinary and Grievance Policy**

The Council reviewed its Disciplinary and Grievance policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**19 Review of the Council's Anti Bullying & Harassment Policy**

The Council reviewed its Anti Bullying & Harassment policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**20 Review of the Council's Complaints Procedure**

The Council reviewed its Complaints Procedure. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**21 Review of the Council's Openness and Transparency Policy**

The Council reviewed its Openness and Transparency policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**22 Review of the Council's Equality Policy**

The Council reviewed its Equality Policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**23 Review of the Council's Health and Safety Policy**

The Council reviewed its Health and Safety policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**24 Review of the Council's Training and Development Policy**

The Council reviewed its Training and Development policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**25 Review of the Council's Tree Management Policy**

The Council reviewed its Tree Management policy. It was **RESOLVED** that no amendments were necessary.

**26 Report from the Committee Investigating Hub Funds**

The Committee had carried out a further investigation and submitted a report to the Council. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the report, a copy of which is held on file with the two statements provided.

**27 Resignation of Hub Treasurer**

It was noted that Martin Keats had stepped down as Hub Treasurer. The Committee is seeking a replacement.

**28 Report of the Hub's Internal Control Officer**

The Council's Internal Control Officer had carried out a report, a copy of which is held on file and a copy attached to the minutes.

**29 Cash Handling Policy**

The Council considered a revised Cash Handling policy for the Hub. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised policy.

**30 Hub Internal Control Policy**

The Council reviewed its Internal Control policy for the Hub. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated policy.

**31 Amendments to Hub Terms of Reference**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the revised Terms of Reference document.

**32 Hub Manager/Caretaker's Report**

A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

**33 Purchase of Hub Laptops**

It was agreed that the Committee can consider the purchase of laptops for the Hub Manager/Caretaker and the Hub Treasurer.

**34 Release of Hub Funds**

It was **RESOLVED** to release the next tranche of funds in the sum of £4,532.25 and to amend the process so that the Committee can ask the Council to consider the release of funds on a monthly basis.

**35 Hub Manager/Caretaker Vacancy Advertisement**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the proposed wording for the advertisement of the vacancy and to proceed with advertising the post, applications to be received by 1 March.

**36 Path at Power Substation**

This was carried forward to the March meeting in the absence of one of the quotes.

**37 Grant Application Millennium Green**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £1,000 toward the cost of felling trees identified in a safety survey.

**38 Grant Application Village Hall**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve a grant of £1,000 to replace furniture in the bar area.

**39 Dereham Cancer Care**

The Council considered a request for a donation to Dereham Cancer Care. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would like more information on what support the group provides to residents in the Carbrooke/Watton area.

**40 Plough Roof**

This was carried forward to a future meeting.

**41 Investment of part of the Commuted Sum**

It was agreed to consider this at the March meeting when more councillors will be present.

**42 Ditch Clearance**

Following the January meeting the Clerk sought guidance from Norfolk Parish Training & Support (NPTS), and the Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC).

The Clerk's guidance, based on the below, was that the Parish Council was that the Council should exhaust all possible avenues before embarking on any ditch clearance on land that is not within its ownership. None of the land in question is owned by the Parish Council.

The advice from NALC was verbal and was as follows:-

1. Norfolk County Council is the statutory authority with responsibility for sorting out flooding issues. A Parish Council is not responsible for sorting out flooding issues, though NALC agree with NPTS that the Public Health Act 1936, as below, can be applied in ditch clearance.
2. A Parish Council should not be dealing with an issue which is the statutory duty of another authority.
3. Has there been an independent assessment of what would happen if the ditches were cleared in the identified.
4. If the Parish Council were to clear the ditches in one area of the parish, what action will it take if landowners in a different area of the parish ask the Council to clear their ditches.
5. Would clearing one ditch/relieving the pressure in one area, lead to problems elsewhere ?
6. How many properties in Carbrooke are affected by flooding ?
7. If the Council were to clear the ditches, it would need to ascertain the Riparian Rights of all those properties involved. (This can be ascertained through Anglian Water and/or Norfolk County Council, the Internal Drainage Board). Norfolk County Council has updated its Riparian Rights booklet, but not released it as yet.

The guidance from NPTS and their legal consultant, Roger Taylor of Wellers Hedley (the current editor of Local Council Administration) was that the Council could use Section 260 of the Public Health Act 1936 in respect of ditch clearance. This can be by carrying out the work or contributing toward the cost of such works. The Council needs to consider whether any expenditure on ditch clearance represents good value for money and if the Council could justify such expenditure to the parish at large.

The Clerk noted that any decision is for the Parish Council to make. As above, the Clerk noted that the Council should exhaust all other avenues before it considers the

expenditure of £4,500 on clearing ditches, with no independent assessment of what effect clearing those ditches will have and whether it will resolve the immediate problem.

The Council had asked Norfolk County Council to look at the culvert by Meadow Lane with a view to installing a wider pipe. They have said the pipe does not need to be widened.

Norfolk County Council is the statutory authority responsible for flooding.

If the Council wishes to proceed, it needs to weigh up a potential expense of £4,500 to carry out this work and to calculate this against the number of residents who would benefit from this expenditure. Those councillors who have an 'interest' in this should declare that interest at the meeting and not vote on the matter.

The Council might also wish to consider that if it wants to clear ditches (which are the responsibility of landowner, not the Parish Council) in one area of the parish, how it will deal with potential requests to clear ditches in other areas of the parish.

Cllr Page said he had met a representative of Norfolk County Council who said the County Council was not responsible for ditch clearance or for the pipes under the main road. It was **RESOLVED** to obtain a copy of this officer's report and to contact the local flood group for their guidance.

#### **43 Community Orchard Grant**

The Council had received a grant of £1,425 toward the cost of trees in the Community Orchard at Blenheim Grange. Cllr Crane will be asked for her plans re clearance of the site, planting and maintenance.

#### **44 D-day Anniversary Grants**

It was **RESOLVED** to apply for a grant for a Beacon to be installed at Blenheim Grange.

#### **45 Representatives Reports**

Cllr Page noted that the Millennium Green has been felling trees and that the noticeboard grant funded by the Parish Council has been well received.

Cllr Defew said that work on the Village Hall roof will take place in early April and will take up to a week depending on the weather. The Hall is advertising for volunteers to help in the bar.

#### **46 Items for Inclusion in the Next Agenda**



The installation of a dog bin on Broadmoor Road.

**47 Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will be in the Community Hub on March 12 at 7pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.55pm.

## **Report of Cllr Bate (Breckland Council)**

At the Council meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January the opposition asked whether the extra funding we have received from the government was too little too late. Too little in that there wasn't much of it and too late in that, financial plans have already been made. The cabinet responded that any extra money was welcome. Also, the cabinet were asked about nutrient neutrality and the hardship this was causing local builders because of its effects on house building. The cabinet and opposition agree, and work is ongoing to blunt this and to and to build the houses that are needed.

It was pointed out that some people are finding the local plan difficult to access and to understand. The cabinet said they have tried to make it accessible and will continue to work on this.

## **Report of the Hub's Internal Control Officer**

I have prepared a Hub Cashbook based on the receipts and payments on file and checked against the bank statements. The Cashbook needs some of the VAT figures to be added and for there to be separate additional columns for some items. These will be completed shortly.

I have gone through a series of questions with Pam, who has taken up the Treasurer's duties following the resignation of Martin Keats. Martin Keats had not kept an ongoing cashbook, nor are his records complete.

I have made the following observations:-

### Payments

- None of the invoices have been initialled as having been made and by who. This was an oversight by the Treasurer and henceforth has been rectified. All payments will be initialled by those making the payment.
- There is no supporting bills/evidence of expenditure for payments made to P Arrowsmith the following payment. Pam handed the supporting information to the Treasurer. It appears he has mislaid them. He has been contacted re this and no longer has any supporting information re these payments.

£391.85 (7 June)

£60.43 (20 June)

£126.85 (26 July)

£596.67 (6 December)

- Re the record of deposit monies being returned, ie for each deposit/hire fee paid there should be a corresponding record showing the return of the deposit. Pam has

explained that this is shown on the Booking Form for each hirer. A corresponding check will be added to the quarterly Internal Control checks, which checks the receipt of the payment from a hirer to the return of the deposit to the hirer.

### Stay and Play

Pam has explained how Stay and Play operates. The charge is £2 per family. Stay and Play is run weekly. A separate record is kept of the income received (mostly cash). Payments are made out of the income for refreshments (tea/coffee, biscuits). The number of attendees per week is between 5 and 15. The record of monthly income and expenditure will be held on file. A corresponding check will be added to the Council's Internal Control checks.

### Fund raising

On the paying in slips are items such as Race Night (£499.30) and Pig Race night (£705). Pam has explained that the Treasurer kept a separate record of the income received from fund raising events. The process of checking cash needs to be changed so that it is checked in accordance with the Cash Handling policy. Two members of the Committee need to check all cash received and no cash should be removed from the building.

A payment of £1,100.60 was made to Breast Cancer (7 August). There is no record of the decision to make that payment in the Hub minutes. Henceforth all such decisions will be minuted.

There is a payment into the bank on 7 August headed Cancer Coffee for £728.10. Pam has explained that the balance of £372.50 came from other fund raising events. Henceforth this needs to be made clearer in the records. On a separate, but related note, there will be significantly less fund raising by the Committee in 2024, as fund raising is to be taken over by the Friends of Carbrooke group. This group is not connected to the Parish Council and will separately hire the Hub and put on events. The Hub Committee will be fund raising via a Mystery night, Halloween and Christmas. All income taken from these events must be in accordance with the Council's procedures. A separate check will be added to the Council's Internal Control checks.

There is a payment of £514 on 6 November to the Warm Baby Project and a separate payment of £500 to the school on 18 December. Pam has explained that these funds were not raised for one particular event. As above, a tighter control must be kept on fund raising activities and where the funds raised are applied. A separate section regarding this has been added to the Terms of Reference document 2024.

### Stripe

I asked if there is a record of who makes payments using Stripe. There is a record and this has been added to the file. The Stripe system is no longer being used.

## Report form Community Hub Chair /Manager Caretaker

As you are all aware Martin Keats has decided to stand down from the Treasurer position as of 15/01/24 PA thanked him for all his contributions to the Hub and wished him well on his next adventure.

PA Chair of the Hub committee and Nick the Parish Council Clerk will cover the position until another treasurer is found. After meetings with Nick we are confident that all the account details /figures are upto date this has taken a lot of time to complete.

### Bookings Payable hours and Community Hours

	Nov	Dec	Jan TBC	Feb	March
Total Paid Hours	67.00	73.25	75.5	87TBC	61.5TBC
Total Community Hours	43.50	40.75	27	33	22.75

We are in discussion with the NHS to use the building on a regular basis, it is hoped that the NHS will be using the Hub for health checks for babies and toddlers during Feb, the booking may continue throughout the year. Update to follow

Abbotts countryside have confirmed there bookings until Dec 2024

The Residence Association changed its name to Runway in 2022/2023 but has not been successful raising funds for the community or putting on any events. A meeting has taken place to reinvigorate this group and to move it forward in 2024. The group is to be renamed to "Friends of Carbrooke". They have a Chair and Treasurer and three other members willing to move this group forward to raise funds for Carbrooke and surrounding areas. The group will be hiring the Hub for their events in the future.

Fire extinguisher service and PAT testing have been completed.

### Carbrooke Parish Council Actual to Budgeted Expenditure

Category	Budgeted	Expenditure	Notes
<b>Running Costs</b>			
Insurance	1,200	754.76	
Clerk's salary, paye & expenses	11,400	10,042.13	
Payroll	100	72.00	
Office supplies	50		
Internal Audit	150	120.00	
External Audit	400	378.00	
Council training	200	751.00	
NPTS subscription	400	396.00	
Microsoft & McAfee subscriptions for council laptop	100	169.98	
Website costs (Wix)	110		
Community Action Norfolk subscription	50		
Information Commissioner fee	35	35.00	
<b>Community Hub</b>			
Caretaker		2,280.00	
Payments made before Hub bank account opened		7,586.92	
Bin lid play area/water softener		1,505.60	
Funds transferred		4,532.25	
Shelves for container and slabs		1,049.60	
<b>Blenheim Grange – open spaces</b>			
Grass cutting	Commuted Sum	579.60	

Tree survey	Commuted Sum	834.00	
Tree maintenance	Commuted Sum		
Flower bed maintenance & weed killing	Commuted Sum	1,300.00	
Clear Cabin site/signage	Commuted Sum	441.32	
<b>Blenheim Grange Play Area</b>			
Play equipment repairs	1,000	7,136.40	
Play equipment safety report	160	156.00	
Safety surfacing	2,000		
<b>Blenheim Grange Capital costs</b>			
Dog waste collection	3,000	847.58	
Remove flytips, benches, fencing, war memorials, signs, noticeboards, drop down locks	1,000	809.00	
New noticeboard	-	1,099.20	
New bin/other		2,678.26	
Veolia – incorrect payment to be adjusted		50.03	
<b>Village Hall car park</b>			
Grass cutting	450	453.60	
Plough		584.30	
<b>Capital costs</b>			
Defibrillators	250	68.34	
Phone box	100		
Street light charges Trenchard Crescent	100	75.59	

Broadmoor road bus shelter and fence repair		550.00	
SAM2	200	100.80	
Dog bin		471.74	
<b>Grants &amp; donations</b>			
Grants	8,500	3,929.00	
RBL Poppy wreaths x 3	100	100.00	
Donation to Watton Fireworks display	150		
Christmas tree and lights	400	390.00	
Elections (May 2023)	3,000		Not spent as no election was held
		£52,328.00	

The Council's Precept has been set at £50,000. Allowance has been made for income from the Community Hub.

#### Bank reconciliation as at 31 January 2024

Barclays Current Account	£23,692.27	
Barclays Deposit Account	£20,239.11	
Lloyds Blenheim Grange	£ 2,552.84	
Lloyds Hub	£ 4,919.49	
Scottish Widows	£60,782.15	
Unity Trust	£88,429.58	£200,615.44
Balance c/f	£188,851.53	
Add receipts	£ 64,091.91	
Less payments	£ 52,328.00	£200,615.44