

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD FOR BEETLEY & EAST BILNEY IN THE
VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 6th March 2025 AT 7.30 P.M.**

Present

Councillor R. Richmond (Chair)
Councillor M. MacArthur.
Councillor P. Minchin.
Councillor P. Lawton
Councillor J. Billings

County Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris
District Councillor Roger Atterwill.
4 members of the Public.

In Attendance

A .Leigh. Clerk
R. Wade RFO

1. **To Consider apologies for absence.** District Councillor Richard Duffield. The apology was accepted the proposer for the apology was Councillor Richmond the seconder was Councillor Minchin all were in agreement.
2. **To receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.** None received.
3. **To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28/11/2024.** It was proposed by Councillor MacArthur and seconded by Councillor Minchin that the minutes were true and accurate, all were in agreement.

The Chairman came out of committee and asked the representative of the Beetley and District Pre-School to address the meeting. This is item 5 on the agenda.

Claire Waring informed the meeting that the Pre-School required a larger site as the numbers of children are increasing and the actual building not only is it too small but is coming to the end of its life. To have a new building on the existing site it would need to be smaller due to new Building Regulations. They had looked at other sites but feel the land which the P.C. own would be better for them and the children. This would therefore mean the Pre-School expanding into the School playground and the School playground extending into the School playing field and the School playing field expand into the playing field which the PC owns this is near to the School car park. The School and Norfolk County Council are happy with this proposal. Therefore it would be the School which is expanding into the PC playing field and they feel it would therefore be within the Covenant. The parents of the children would only have one site to visit when dropping of their children for the school and the Pre-School. The Chairman thanked Claire and said it would be discussed under agenda item 5.

The Chairman asked Jan Philips who is the representative of the Dereham Meeting Point To address the meeting. This is item 7.7 on the agenda.

Jan Philips informed the meeting that a letter had been sent to Beetley Parish Council and other Town and Parish Councils in the Dereham area advising that the Norfolk County Council funding to the Dereham meeting point is to be withdrawn at the end of this month. Meeting Point has been in operation in some shape or other since 1986. In 2014 the funding from N.C.C. changed as people were given a personal budget from N.C.C. which did reduce the income for Meeting Point but N.C.C. did top up the shortfall of the income. Dereham Meeting Point were informed by a casual comment last November that the funding from N.C.C. will end in March 2025. A meeting was held on January 15th this year with the 2 commissioners and the secretary of George Freeman MP and the DMP trustees but there has been no dialogue since that meeting other than NCC requesting to see DMP Open books which were sent. It is hoped that Dereham Town Council and Breckland Council will be able to help with the 30K hole which has been made.

Dereham and Toftwood area make up 70 % of the members and the surroundings Parishes 30%. DMP is a lifeline to so many of the members and their families. The Chairman thanked Jan for the information and told her it would be discussed later under item 7.7.

The Chairman went back into Committee.

4. Finance.

4.1. Budgets as circulated 2025/26. It was proposed by Councillor Billings and seconded by Councillor Lawton that the budgets as circulated were in order, all were in agreement.

4.2. Balances and cheques for authorisation as circulated. February 6th 2025 payments Clerks salary £502.50 (January), R.F.O salary (January) £128.50, HMRC (January) £157.60, Angela Leigh Community Car drivers pay (January) £48.60, Wave d/d £25.73, NGF Play Ltd £82.20, Electronic Office Solutions d/d £10.00, Ady's Wood Splitting Services £170.00, EON Next d/d £18.29, Malcolm MacArthur £62.99, Unity Bank charge £6.00. March 6th 2025 payments Malcolm MacArthur £40.55, HMRC (February) £157.60, Clerks salary £502.50 (February), Clerks expenses (Yearly claim) £371.85, R.F.O. salary £128.80 (February), R.F.O. expenses (Yearly claim) £97.74, Angela Leigh Community Car drivers pay (February) £75.20, Ady's Wood Splitting Service £210.00, EON Next d/d £18.74, Unity Bank service charge £6.00, NPTS 2025-2026 Annual fee £265.65. It was proposed by Councillor Richmond and seconded by Councillor Billings that these payments were correct, all were in agreement. The payments this month will be approved online by Councillor Billings and Councillor MacArthur.

4.3. Charity Account update. There is a charge of £6 per month on the current account and it was suggested the RFO could open a savings account for the Charity. This was proposed by Councillor Richmond and seconded by Councillor Mac Arthur that this was acceptable all were in agreement charge was acceptable, all were in agreement. A cheque was signed by Councillor Richmond and Councillor MacArthur for the final transfer amount from Barclays Fuel Allotment Charity to the Beetley Charity.

4.4. Change of bank update. Councillors Billings, MacArthur and Richmond signed a bank mandate form to add Councillor Lawton as a signatory.

4.5. To agree the Annual fee for NPTS. It was proposed by Councillor Richmond and seconded by Councillor Lawton that the Annual fee of £265.65 is paid all were in agreement.

5. Beetley & District Pre-School new site. The Chair stated that Councillor MacArthur had circulated a Position Paper for information due to the complexity of this item and that it needs to be agreed by all Councillors that it is adopted. A discussion was held and it was agreed that the Parish Council does not have any money in the current budget to pay for any legal fees. Councillor Billings stated that there would need to be an agreement that funding would come from elsewhere. Councillor Lawton agreed with Councillor Billings. Councillor Minchin also agreed and pointed out that the longer it goes on the cost of legal fees would increase and the Councillors should be mindful of this. District Councillor Roger Atterwill agreed that the position paper should be adopted. He also suggested to progress this the Parish Council contacts a solicitor and asks for a quotation for the initial fee which could be passed onto the Pre-School for them to agree whether to pay it or not. Councillor MacArthur Proposed and Councillor Minchin seconded that the Position Paper is adopted all were in Agreement.

6. Reports from County and District Councillors. Public Participation.

6.1. To receive reports from County and District Councillors. District Councillor Roger Atterwill reported that the Devolution deal for Norfolk and Suffolk and the Local Government Review are two separate items. The County Council elections are cancelled for this year and an election for an elected Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk would be held in May 2026. Local Councils are to give their ideas to the Government by 21st March and the decision will be made by the Government by end of September. There are many idea which are at present up in the air. The Local Plan review has started again, where the target for Breckland was to build 649 houses per year it has now increased to 903. Breckland will be calling for additional sites and the Local plan should be completed by the end of this year. The Breckland Boundary review is still ongoing. The new planning system was discussed at Breckland Council and all of the Breckland Councillors agreed it was not user friendly the developers of this system are working hard to improve it. Breckland Council are working with Dereham Town Council regarding the Dereham Meeting Point lack of funding from Norfolk County Council. A meeting to discuss this will be held which will include Breckland Council, Dereham Town Council, Norfolk County Council and Dereham Meeting Point

Trustees to agree a sustainable footing agreement for future years.

County Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris informed the meeting that he had not sent a report but he will be sending one soon showing the budget information. The NCC portion of the Council tax will be an increase of 4.99%. Devolution, NCC have had several meetings concerning this and they prefer a single unity for Norfolk. The Government require a plan by the 21st March and full proposals by 26th September when it will be decided if the proposal submitted by NCC is acceptable or not. There will be a Hazardous Waste Amnesty in April and May.

6.2. Public comments. None.

7. Matters for report

7.1. Speedwatch Beetley. The Clerk had received a report from the Beetley Speedwatch Co-Ordinator stating there were no Speedwatch sessions carried out in January or February due to the weather. Hopefully they will resume in March.

7.2. Councillor induction training Councillor Lawton. Councillor Lawton was very pleased with the training he received and found it to be very useful.

7.3. Breckland Boundary review. The draft recommendations has been circulated to all Councillors and it was felt no discussion was necessary at this point in time.

7.4. Snap meeting 15/01/2025. Councillor Richmond reported that he had attended on line and it was well attended. The usual issues, anti-social behaviour in Dereham, speeding vehicles in Dereham and villages. There were more issues with speeding offences involving drugs rather than alcohol. The next meeting will be in 3 months' time.

7.5. Beetley Community Car Scheme. It was agreed not to involve Breckland Council and the Scheme will continue being funded by Beetley Parish Council and the users of the service.

7.6. New Roadside Nature reserve Rawhall Lane. The Clerk informed the meeting that a Roadside nature reserve had been identified by Norfolk County Council on Rawhall Lane. This will be maintained by Norfolk County Council and each year specialist contractors will cut the verge. This information has been placed onto Beetley Parish Council website.

7.7. To consider a donation to Dereham Meeting Point. This was discussed and it was agreed to wait until the meeting which District Councillor Atterwill had informed the meeting about had been held and then a further discussion could be held regarding a donation. All of the Councillors agreed that the Dereham Meeting Point is a valuable service for Dereham and the surrounding Villages.

7.8. East Bilney Townlands hedge cut. The Clerk reported that the Hedge has now been cut.

7.9. Roosting Hills Trout Fishery. The Clerk had received a letter asking for the usual permissions of use on Beetley common. Their letter had been circulated to all Councillors. It was Proposed by Councillor MacArthur and seconded by Councillor Minchin to grant permission all were in agreement.

8. Highways.

8.1. Clerk to give feedback on ongoing Highway problems. The Clerk reported that the sign to Dereham, Fakenham and East Bilney was still not repaired this was destroyed in an accident on the 2nd October 2024, County Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris would progress. The cross roads sign at High House Road/Elmham Road junction was reported on January 21st an update had been received stating it was booked in to be replaced in the coming months.

8.2. To note any new problems within the Parish. A pothole on School Road, this now has white markings around it so hopefully it will soon be repaired. A property on Fakenham Road Beetley has had a low wall installed with lights on the highway verge which is a hazard when driving past. County Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris is taking this forward with the Highways Engineer.

8.3. To receive a report from all Councillors on the footpaths. Councillor Minchin reported all his footpaths were ok so did Councillor Richmond and Councillor Billings. Councillor MacArthur informed the meeting that a very kind Parishioner had repaired a problem on footpath 8 and all the others were ok. Councillor Lawton stated all his were ok other than on CRF16 a new post needs to be erected which Councillor Mac Arthur and himself will do.

8.4. Verge cutting Beetley Parish. Councillor Mac Arthur had tried to make contact with M.P. Dennis but had been unsuccessful he will keep on trying.

9. Planning.

Applications.

9.1. PL/2024/0946/HOU Calta Church Lane Old Beetley. Enclose of existing pergola to form

secure store and covered garden seating area. **Planning approval given so no comments.**

9.2. PL/2024/1033/FMIN Land & Building West of Folly land & North of School Road Beetley.

9.2. Proposed change of use and conversion of a brick & flint agricultural building and land within curtilage of self-build 4 bedroom single storey dwelling. Councillor Billings proposed and Councillor Lawton seconded that no objection be raised all were in agreement.

9.3. PL/2025/0117/HOU 7 Ashley Road Beetley. Proposed construction of a porch on the side elevation with hip and cut in roof to extend existing garage. Councillor Richmond proposed and Councillor Billings seconded that no objection be raised all were in agreement.

9.4. PL/2025/0116/PIP Land off Elmham Road Beetley. Proposed 5 No. Residential bungalows, designed as lifetime homes, with disabled access. Councillor Minchin proposed and Councillor Lawton seconded that this application is refused due to it being outside of the settlement boundary, the Highway access is on a very busy road and at the part where it is very dangerous. The ecological survey is out of date and should be carried out again. All were in agreement.

9.5. PL/2025/0114/TRE 4 Birch Avenue Beetley. Reduce the crown of oaks T1 & T2. **For information only not for consultation.** This was not discussed.

Decisions made by Breckland Council.

9.6. PL/2024/0946/HOU Calta Church Lane Old Beetley. Enclose of existing pergola to form secure store and covered garden seating area. **Permission**

Decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate.

9.7. APP/F2605/D/24/3354248. Planning Application 3PL/2024/0711/HOU Waterside Church Road Old Beetley. This appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

9.8. App/TPO/F2605/10117 Planning Application TRE/2023/0307/TPO Waterside Church Road Old Beetley. This appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

10. Beetley River Meadows.

10.1. Monthly Play Equipment inspections. The Clerk reported that the repair to the play equipment was now complete. Councillor Billings stated there were a few minor repairs required for some of the play equipment which he would deal with. The Clerk confirmed she had requested the grass cutting contractor to spray under the nest swing to remove the moss build up. Councillor Billings passed the current inspection sheet to the Clerk for filing.

10.2. Bank erosion update. The Clerk reported that the work was complete.

10.3. Grass cutting contract. C.D. Grounds Services have taken on the contract at the same price which was agreed by the Parish Councillors last year.

11. Parish Council matters.

11.1. Inspections :- Pavilion, Defibrillator. Councillor MacArthur reported that a new water heater is being installed at present. Been in the Pavilion. The Defibrillator is in good working order and still has 4/5ths of battery life left.

11.2. Biodiversity Policy Action Plan. Aaron Brown of NWT is meeting Ady on the 14th March for a walk round Beetley Common. Any suggestions he brings forward concerning Biodiversity would be looked at and included in the Action Plan.

11.3. Beetley brick sign / outside of School Elmham Road – repair for discussion. This was discussed Councillor Richmond proposed and Councillor Minchin seconded that the quotation was accepted all were in agreement.

12. Matters for next meeting (not for discussion). None.

13. To confirm the next meeting of Beetley Parish Council will be held on Thursday 3rd April 2025 @ 7.30 p.m. at Beetley & East Bilney Village Hall High House Road Beetley.

The meeting closed at 21.42 Hours.

Signed as a true and accurate record.....

Date signed.....