

NARBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held Monday, 4th December 2023 at 7.45pm in the Church Room,
All Saints Church, Main Road**

Present:	Chairman	Cllr D Williams
	Vice Chairman	Cllr H Pipe
	Councillors	Cllr P Bailey
		Cllr S Davey
		Cllr P Wilkinson (also District Councillor)
	County Councillor	Cllr W Nunn
	Parish Clerk	Mrs S Porter
	Member(s) of Public	0

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest (under the Breckland Code of Conduct) and requests for dispensation

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, declared a Pecuniary Interest in Item 5.5, Council Expenses, and Item 5.6, Payment of Bills, as this related to a direct financial imbursement to him.

Cllr Wilkinson declared a Personal Interest in Item 9.1, Planning Applications, as he was the Vice Chairman of the Breckland Council Planning Committee.

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, and Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe, had a standing dispensation for the duration of their term of office until May 2027 in regards to the Community Centre, as they were the Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Community Centre Management Committee.

3. Approval of the minutes of the Council meeting

Proposed – Cllr Wilkinson

Seconded – Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe

That the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday, 6th November 2023 (items 1-12 [11/2023]) are approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

All in favour

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, duly signed and dated the minutes of the meeting.

PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, adjourned the meeting at 7.31pm.

County Cllr

County Cllr Nunn reported the following:

County Deal

The Cabinet would be considering the County Deal at its meeting on Monday, 4th December 2023 commencing at 10.00am. A County Deal devolution agreement with the Government would include a £20m per year investment fund, worth £600m over 30 years, and base this funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities. The Deal would also enable the public to directly elect a Council Leader which at present was currently done in-house.

Budget

Norfolk County Council's annual budget was around £1.6 billion and covered services such as children's services, adult social services, community and environment services and general finance.

Chairman Signed Dated

The funding for special education needs and adult social care was continuing to be insufficient and depleting year on year. Norfolk County Council was currently in debt by around £1bn through loans, mortgages, leases and other project financing and was almost at its authorised debt limit.

Gritting Fleet

Twenty seven new gritters had joined the current fleet. Norfolk's fleet of fifty eight winter vehicles treated 2,200 miles of roads, at a cost of £3.2m each year, with the average cost of each full gritting run being around £49,000.

Bus Services

£49.55m of funding from the Department for Transport had been received to improve bus services across the county, which had already seen huge improvements to services, with 18% more users recorded pre-covid levels.

Cllr Wilkinson enquired whether a redundant bus stop on Main Road could be reinstated, although it was noted that the Parish Council had attempted this previously with it being refused by Highways.

Cllr Nunn requested that the site location be sent to him in order that he could investigate the feasibility of having it reinstated. Cllr Wilkinson would send a map to the Clerk in order that this could then be forwarded for consideration.

Drop Kerb

The drop kerb in Westfields, financed by Cllr Nunn's Annual Local Member Fund, would be installed by Christmas 2023.

District Cllr Peter Wilkinson

District Cllr Wilkinson reported the following:

Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP)

Breckland District Council was again delivering the SWEP provision this year where officers monitored conditions and temperatures for periods of zero degree temperatures. When this happened, those sleeping rough could be given accommodation for up to two weeks which then allowed providers to give support and access to housing solutions for those in need. If members of public felt that a homeless person was suffering in extreme weather conditions, it should be reported to Breckland District Council.

Public Participation

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, resumed the meeting at 7.40pm.

4. Chairman's Announcements on current Council business

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, reported that West Acre Parish Council would be holding a meeting in the Spring of 2024 regarding the West Acre Estate's Rewilding Project.

This was noted.

5. Finance report

5.1. Financial report

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliation, period ending November 2023, current bank account statements and finance summary with the agenda. The bank balances were as follows:

November 2023

Bank Reconciliation	Community Account	Business Account
Bank Statement Start Balances	<u>2,000.72</u>	<u>30,516.31</u>
Total Opening Bank Balances		<u>32,517.03</u>
Unpresented Payments B/F	-	-
Unpresented Receipts B/F	-	-
Opening Balances	<u>2,000.72</u>	<u>30,516.31</u>
Total Opening Balances		<u>32,517.03</u>
Receipts	-	-
Payments	- 1,582.00	-
Bank Statement Close Balances	<u>418.72</u>	<u>30,516.31</u>
Total Closing Bank Balances		<u>30,935.03</u>
Unpresented Payments	-	-
Unpresented Receipts	-	-
Closing Balances	<u>418.72</u>	<u>30,516.31</u>
Total Closing Balances		<u>30,935.03</u>
Earmarked Funds		
Operating Costs (6 Months)		10,000.00
Election		1,425.00
Asset Renewals		730.11
Tree Works (Year 2)		500.00
New Cemetery (Year 2)		1,000.00
S106		2,375.00
S137 Grants & Donations		60.00
Street Lights Conversion		-
Total Earmarked Reserves		<u>16,090.11</u>

Reconciliation Community Account	
Bank Statement 01.11.2023	<u>2,000.72</u>
Receipts	-
Payments Cleared	- 1,582.00
Bank Statement 30.11.2023	<u>418.72</u>
Unpresented Payments	-
Unpresented Receipts	-
Closing Balance	<u>418.72</u>

Reconciliation Business Account	
Bank Statement 01.11.2023	<u>30,516.31</u>
Receipts	-
Payments Cleared	-
Bank Statement 30.11.2023	<u>30,516.31</u>
Unpresented Payments	-
Unpresented Receipts	-
Closing Balance	<u>30,516.31</u>
Total Closing Balances	<u>30,935.03</u>

General Reserves
 General Reserves
 Specific Reserves
 General Reserves
 General Reserves
 Specific Reserves
 Specific Reserves

Total Closing Balances	<u>30,935.03</u>		
Total Earmarked Reserves	<u>16,090.11</u>	Remaining Available Precept	<u>14,844.92</u>

Chairman Signed Dated

5.2. Section 137 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972

5.2.1. MAGPAS Air Ambulance (deferred from last meeting)

The Clerk reported that she had written to MAGPAS Air Ambulance to establish how many residents in the village the charity had helped during the past twelve months but no response had been received.

Councillors agreed that as no response had been received, no further consideration could be given to their request for financial support as it was not a local charity.

5.3. War Memorial Rededication Service

The Clerk reported that at the Full Council meeting in July 2023, Councillors had agreed a cost of £50.00 for light refreshments for a War Memorial Rededication Service. Councillors agreed that the maximum event net cost, which included the Community Centre hiring fees, should be £100.00.

It was noted that the Chairman, Cllr Williams, and Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe, had a dispensation (granted September 2023) to speak on matters relating to the Community Centre to enable them to participate in discussions appertaining to the Community Centre and further vote if the transaction of business would be impeded by the number of persons present.

Proposed – Cllr Wilkinson

Seconded – Cllr Bailey

That a rededication service for the War Memorial is held by the RAF and hosted by the Parish Council in the Community Centre at a maximum net cost of £100.00.

For – 3

Against – 0

Abstentions – 2 (Declared Interests)

5.4. Defibrillator pads

The Clerk reported that new defibrillator pads had been purchased as an emergency expenditure under the Clerk's delegated powers from Intermedical (UK) Ltd at a total cost of £204.00 + £40.80 VAT (total £244.80) due to the current ones expiring 31st October 2023. The Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe, responsible for the defibrillator, would place these in the unit cabinet urgently.

Proposed – Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe

Seconded – Cllr Bailey

That the Council formally approves the purchase of new defibrillator pads from Intermedical (UK) Ltd at a total cost of £204.00 + £40.80 VAT (total £244.80).

All in favour

5.5. Weed spraying of the footpaths within the Churchyard

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, had declared a Pecuniary Interest in this item.

The Clerk advised that this item had been considered under confidentiality at the last Full Council meeting in November 2023 where it was reported of her complaints to CGM that spraying of the footpaths within the churchyards had not taken place at all in 2023. Their response had been an apology with no commitment to addressing this matter.

In light of this issue, the Chairman, Cllr Williams, had purchased commercial weed killer which could be sprayed by a certified individual with whom he was acquainted with. As the season was now wet, there would be little point in having the paths sprayed at this time and the weed killer was being stored by the said professional.

The Clerk reported that the weed killer had been purchased from Pitchcare at a total cost of £40.70 + £8.14 VAT (total £48.84).

Chairman Signed Dated

Proposed – Cllr Davey

Seconded – Cllr Wilkinson

That the Council formally approves the purchase of weed killer from Pitchcare at a total cost of £40.70 + £8.14 VAT (total £48.84) and that Cllr Williams is reimbursed.

For – 4

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1 (Declared Interest)

5.6. Approval of pre-authorised payments, receipts and pending disbursements

The Clerk had circulated the payments and receipts made since the last meeting and presented the late bills to the meeting:

Date	Payee	Description	Transaction	Net £	VAT £	Gross £	Receipt £
10.11.2023	Parochial Church Council	Room Hire 06.11.2023	SO	14.00	0.00	14.00	0.00
13.11.2023	RBL Poppy Appeal	3 x Remembrance Wreaths	BACS	75.00	0.00	75.00	0.00
20.11.2023	Npower	Street Lighting Power Oct	DD	379.07	18.95	398.02	0.00
20.11.2023	Narborough Museum	Refund RBL Wreath	BACS	-25.00	0.00	-25.00	0.00
27.11.2023	Intermedical (UK) Ltd	Defibrillator Pads	BACS	14.00	2.80	16.80	0.00
To be paid	Mrs S D Porter (Royal Mail)	Return postage Defib pads	BACS	2.99	0.00	2.99	0.00
To be paid	K&M Lighting Services Ltd	Street Lighting Maint Nov	BACS	38.86	7.77	46.63	0.00
To be paid	Clerk	Clerk Expenses November	BACS	22.60	0.00	22.60	0.00
To be paid	Clerk	Salary November	BACS	788.56	0.00	788.56	0.00
To be paid	HMRC	PAYE/NI Contributions Nov	BACS	228.63	0.00	228.63	0.00
To be paid	Cllr D Williams (Pitchcare)	Weed treatment	BACS	40.70	8.14	48.84	0.00
Totals				1,579.41	37.67	1,617.08	0.00

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, had declared a Pecuniary Interest in this item.

Proposed – Cllr Davey

Seconded – Cllr Wilkinson

That the payment of bills are approved in accordance with the above schedule and the receipts are noted.

For – 4

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1 (Declared Interest)

6. Parish Partnership Scheme 2024/2025 – bids to be submitted by Friday, 8th December 2023

6.1. Quotations for the replacement of the two village bus shelters under the PPS

The Clerk reported that she had sought quotations from local builders for the entire project works. One company had not responded and the other had made suggestions about the works required, and this had been circulated prior to and with the agenda.

The net costs quoted by Broxap had been as follows:

Shelter x 2 Supply	£4,398.00
Shelter x 2 Installation (not including concrete bases)	£4,470.00
Shelter x 2 Delivery	£1,186.00
Total Project Cost (excluding demolition/removal existing shelters & concrete bases)	£10,054.00
Total project cost split 50/50 with NCC	<u>£5,027.00</u>

Further potential Income/Expenditure was as follows:

Possible County Cllr Nunn Local Member Fund	+2,000.00
Existing Shelters to be demolished and removed at cost by Council	POA
New concrete bases	POA

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the bid needed to be submitted to Norfolk County Council this week and that she would have no further time to request tenders for the work.

Chairman Signed Dated

A lengthy discussion took place and Councillors agreed to submit the above bid to Norfolk County Council for two Harrowby bus shelters, as detailed by Broxap, and if successful, the Council could then consider whether or not to proceed with the project in its current form.

Proposed – Cllr Wilkinson

Seconded – Cllr Bailey

That the Council agrees to submit a bid for the supply, delivery and installation of two Harrowby passenger shelters from Broxap at a cost of £10,054.00 + £2,010.80 VAT (total £12,064.80) (split 50/50 between the Parish Council and Norfolk County Council) for the 2024/2025 Parish Partnership Scheme and that the bid is sent to Norfolk County Council by the Clerk by 8th December 2023.

All in favour

The Clerk would prepare the application urgently and submit it to Norfolk County Council.

7. Draft Budget 2024/2025

The Clerk had circulated a copy of the draft budget with the agenda and the items were considered and adjusted accordingly. The Clerk advised that due to the high inflation rates and unpredicted financial pressures on Parish and Town Councils this past year, Councils were being encouraged to consider a precept rise up to 10%.

Councillors agreed that the 2024/2025 precept should be increased by 10% from the 2023/2024 precept.

Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Williams

Seconded – Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe

That the 2024/2025 precept is increased by 10% from the 2023/2024 budget and that the final precept is approved in January 2024.

For – 4

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1

The final draft budget and precept would be presented for formal approval at the January meeting.

8. Reports from Councillors (as listed on agenda) regarding issues and community matters (circulated with agenda if applicable)

8.1. Emergency Plan update

There was nothing to report to the meeting.

8.2. Council Facebook Page

The Clerk reported that she had emailed Ms S Greeno for the Council Facebook page password but no response had been received.

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, agreed to contact Ms Greeno at the Sports & Social Club and report back at the next meeting.

If the password could not be obtained, a new account would be set up.

9. Planning Applications and Decisions

The Chairman, Cllr Wilkinson, had declared a Personal Interest in this item.

9.1. Planning applications received from Breckland District Council

9.1.1. 3PL/2023/1086/HOU – 28 Dennys Walk – Proposed single storey side extension – Comments by 6th December 2023

No objections.

Chairman Signed Dated

9.1.2. 3NM/2023/0106/NMA – Land west of Chalk Lane – Amendment to pp 3PL/2021/1082/D – Porches slightly amended at eaves to comply to housing association requirements and style remains. Amended location for Electricity Box. Double brick gable verge detail omitted (Refers to All House Types) Window widths slightly reduced to work for brick setting out (Refers to House Type FF) (Non Mat Minor Amend) Information Only.

9.2. Planning decisions completed by Breckland District Council

9.2.1. 3PL/2023/0855/F – Forester Lodge, Main Road – Erection of 1 no. dwelling
Approved.

9.2.2 3NM/2023/0106/NMA – Land west of Chalk Lane – Amendment to pp 3PL/2021/1082/D - Porches slightly amended at eaves to comply to housing association requirements and style remains. Amended location for Electricity Box. Double brick gable verge detail omitted (Refers to All House Types) Window widths slightly reduced to work for brick setting out (Refers to House Type FF) (Non Mat Minor Amend)
Approved.

9.3. Late Planning applications and notices of decision

No late planning applications or notices of decision had been received from Breckland District Council.

9.4. Other planning matters / enforcements / appeals and other notifications (for information only)

There were no other planning matters to be considered at this meeting.

10. To resolve the Council’s statutory obligation to declare its first action for biodiversity by 1st January 2024 and agree policies and objectives urgently after this

The Clerk had circulated, prior to and with the agenda, the Government’s requirement for all public authorities to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity under ‘biodiversity duty’ of the Environment Act 2021.

The Clerk confirmed that the Council was required to consider how it could protect and develop sites in the parish to ensure the future survival of nature, animals, insects and plants. Councils were being encouraged to set goals and targets to ensure habitats and species were maintained, protected and in some cases, revived.

The Clerk suggested that areas, preferably Council owned, could be identified for rewilding, owl boxes and other suchlike facilities could be placed around the village to encourage wildlife (subject to approval from landowners) and support to local groups and organisations could be promoted to ensure biodiversity was on everyone’s agenda. The Clerk felt that this would run in conjunction with climate change objectives.

A discussion took place and Councillors agreed that it would be difficult for this Council to provide its own biodiversity sites, due to the limited land and assets it owned. However, farmers and other landowners could be encouraged with ideas. Councillors agreed to list potential areas in the village which would benefit from being conserved and enhanced by biodiversity.

Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Williams

Seconded – Cllr Wilkinson

That the Clerk completes the Model Biodiversity Policy and this is adopted by the Council.

All in favour

The Clerk would complete the draft Model Biodiversity Policy for circulation to the Council.
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10.1. Biodiversity Working Party

A short discussion took place and Councillors didn’t feel it would be necessary to set up a working party to deal with biodiversity and that policies and objectives should be collectively dealt with by the whole Council.

Chairman Signed Dated

11. Correspondence

11.1. For action/information

11.1.1. Norfolk D-Day 80th Anniversary beacons event

Norfolk ALC had sent information regarding the Norfolk D-Day 80th Anniversary in June 2024 enquiring that Councils give consideration to lighting a beacon to commemorate this historic event. This had been circulated by the Clerk prior to the agenda.

A short discussion took place and it was felt that the Council would not wish to utilise the ratepayers' finances on this.

11.2. Late correspondence

The Clerk reported that a letter had today been received from the CGM Group (East Anglia) Ltd to confirm that on 4th May 2023, the company had been acquired by Nurture Landscapes Limited and was now part of The Nurture Group. The business would continue to trade as the CGM Group up to 31st December 2023.

This was noted.

12. Highways and transport matters

Cllr Wilkinson reported that highways improvement works on the A47 would be continuing until the new year.

Cllr Wilkinson reported that a bollard at the junction of Main Road and Swaffham Road had recently been taken out by a tractor. Live wires had been left protruding but Highways had swiftly made these safe and tarmacked over the hole as a temporary measure.

13. Date and time of the next meeting

13.1. Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Council was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 3rd January 2024 at 7.30pm, in the Church Room, All Saints Church.

14. Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 S1)

Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Williams

Seconded – Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 Section 1, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in order to allow confidential items to be discussed.

All in favour

14.1. Clerk's National Salary Award

See confidential report.

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, closed confidentiality and resumed the meeting.

Proposed – Cllr Bailey

Seconded – Cllr Davey

That the Clerk's Spinal Column Point (SCP 20) hourly rate is increased in accordance with the current National Joint Council (NJC) Pay Scales 2023-2024, backdated to 1st April 2023.

All in favour

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.36pm.