

NARBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held Monday, 4th March 2024 at 7.30pm 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	1

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

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

Cllr Wilkinson declared a Personal Interest in Item 7.1, 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 – Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe

Seconded – Cllr Wilkinson

That the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday, 5th February 2024 (items 1-12 [02/2024]) 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 7.32pm.

County Cllr

County Cllr Nunn reported that he had received approval, in principle, to help fund the bus shelter project with £2,000.00 from his Annual Member Fund. He confirmed that a further £1,000.00 might also be available if no other Parish and Town Councils requested funds from him between now and the end of the financial year.

It was agreed for the Clerk to write to Cllr Nunn and request consideration for an additional £1,000.00.

Cllr Nunn also confirmed that he had applied to the Government’s Bus Service Improvement Plan Fund for an allocation of financial support. It was unknown whether this would be successful.

He was given a vote of thanks for doing this and for his allocation of up to £3,000.00 for the proposed bus shelters replacement.

District Cllr Peter Wilkinson

District Cllr Wilkinson reported the following:

Chairman Signed Dated

Breckland District Council Budget 2024/2025

At the Breckland District Council Full Council meeting held Thursday, 22nd February 2024, Councillors approved the 2024/2025 budget which would see an increase in the annual District Council tax of £4.95 for a band D property. Around 75% of houses across the district were in bands A-C, which meant the majority of residents would be paying less than £1.94 per week for services. The budget had not made cuts to any of its core services and had set aside funding to support Breckland's most vulnerable residents. Breckland maintains its position of having the lowest rate of District Council Tax in Norfolk.

The 100 services carried out by Breckland District Council included bin collections, street cleaning, assessing planning applications, licensing and housing support.

Dog Fouling Signage

Small dog fouling signage obtained from Breckland District Council by Cllr Wilkinson would be placed in hot spots throughout the village by him in an attempt to reduce these offences.

He was given a vote of thanks for this.

Fly Tipping

Cllr Wilkinson had recently coordinated the removal of fly tipping in Swaffham Road with Serco. They had spent a great deal of time collecting the waste and had done an excellent job in clearing the rubbish.

It was agreed for the Clerk to send a letter of appreciation.

Public Participation

The member of public wished to express his huge concern of the consistent antisocial behaviour and vandalism of the two bus shelters. He confirmed that as a resident living close to one of the shelters, he continually had to put up with rowdy and intimidating youths making a great deal of noise, playing loud music, vandalising and graffitiing the shelter and damaging nearby private residential property by kicking fencing down. The member of public further noted that elderly passengers waiting for buses were having to stand outside the shelters during inclement weather because of the intimidation of certain youths sitting in them. The member of public expressed his wish for the shelters to be replaced and this was noted.

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, confirmed that the police were aware of the incidents at the bus shelters and advised that the Council would be considering the replacement of the current structures with open visual shelters in an attempt to cease the antisocial behaviour.

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, resumed the meeting at 7.55pm.

Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Williams

Seconded – Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe

To invoke Standing Order 10a (vi), in order to vary the order of business and allow Item 10, Highways & Transport Matters, to be discussed at this point of the meeting.

All in favour

4. Highways and transport matters

The Clerk reported that Norfolk County Council had received 118 bids under the Parish Partnership Scheme (PPS) and was proposing to support them all. The Cabinet meeting had been held today, although formal written approval had not yet been received.

The Clerk noted that as this item was not on the agenda, it could not be formally approved this evening, although Councillors should consider whether or not they wished to proceed with the upgrade of the existing shelters or to replace the two shelters under the PPS.

A lengthy discussion took place and Councillors felt that in light of the further recent vandalism and graffiti, adjacent residential properties having to sustain constant antisocial behaviour and transport passengers not being able to use the structures, that they should be replaced with modern visible shelters.

A show of hands for the replacement of the shelters was undertaken and the result was:

For – 4

Abstention – 1

The Clerk would add this item to the next agenda for formal approval.

The Clerk reported that Broxap had specified that the shelters would need to be placed on concrete bases and not tarmac and that she would need to seek quotations from three contractors with a street works qualification to undertake the base constructions and demolition works for this project.

Councillors agreed for the Clerk to contact Broxap, the supplier of the shelters, for their costs to construct concrete bases and supply and install the shelters.

Cllr Wilkinson reported that the timber from the current structures could be recycled and used to construct the boundary fencing for the westbound shelter. This was agreed.

The member of public left the Council Chamber at 8.17pm.

5. Chairman’s Announcements on current Council business

There was nothing to report to the meeting.

6. Finance report

6.1. Financial report

The Clerk had circulated the bank reconciliation, period ending February 2024, current bank account statements and finance summary with the agenda. The bank balances were as follows:

February 2024

Bank Reconciliation	Community Account	Business Account
Bank Statement Start Balances	<u>1,274.47</u>	<u>27,224.67</u>
Total Opening Bank Balances		<u>28,499.14</u>
Unpresented Payments B/F	-	-
Unpresented Receipts B/F	-	-
Opening Balances	<u>1,274.47</u>	<u>27,224.67</u>
Total Opening Balances		<u>28,499.14</u>
Receipts	2,000.00	-
Payments	- 1,291.94	- 2,000.00
Bank Statement Close Balances	<u>1,982.53</u>	<u>25,224.67</u>
Total Closing Bank Balances		<u>27,207.20</u>
Unpresented Payments	-	-
Unpresented Receipts	-	-
Closing Balances	<u>1,982.53</u>	<u>25,224.67</u>
Total Closing Balances		<u>27,207.20</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 01.02.2024	<u>1,274.47</u>
Receipts	2,000.00
Payments Cleared	- 1,291.94
Bank Statement 29.02.2024	<u>1,982.53</u>
Unpresented Payments	-
Unpresented Receipts	-
Closing Balance	<u>1,982.53</u>

Reconciliation Business Account	
Bank Statement 01.02.2024	<u>27,224.67</u>
Receipts	-
Payments Cleared	- 2,000.00
Bank Statement 29.02.2024	<u>25,224.67</u>
Unpresented Payments	-
Unpresented Receipts	-
Closing Balance	<u>25,224.67</u>
Total Closing Balances	<u>27,207.20</u>

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

Total Closing Balances	<u>27,207.20</u>		
Total Earmarked Reserves	<u>16,090.11</u>	Remaining Available Precept	<u>11,117.09</u>

Chairman Signed Dated

6.2. Clerk's Expenses for Printer Ink

The Clerk reported that she had not claimed any expenses for printer ink during the past year as the readyink was paid by the Clerk automatically at a cost of £9.99 per month. This expense covered the printing costs for three Councils.

Councillors agreed that providing the Clerk could evidence the costs, £40.00 would be approved per annum.

Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Williams

Seconded – Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe

That the Council approves an annual payment of £40.00 payable to the Clerk annually in March towards her expenses for the readyink purchased.

All in favour

The Clerk would arrange for this payment to be made annually in March.

6.3. Bank Signatories

Cllr Davey reported that he no longer wished to be a signatory on the bank accounts. The Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe, agreed to take over this role.

Proposed – Cllr Wilkinson

Seconded – Chairman, Cllr Williams

That Cllr Davey is removed as a bank signatory and Cllr Pipe is added.

All in favour

The Clerk would arrange for the mandates and documentation to be completed and forward these to Unity Bank.

6.4. 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 £
12.02.2024	Parochial Church Council	Room Hire 05.02.2024	SO	14.00	0.00	14.00	0.00
19.02.2024	Npower	Street Lighting Power Jan	DD	489.43	24.47	513.90	0.00
To be paid	Clerk	Clerk Expenses February	BACS	22.60	0.00	22.60	0.00
To be paid	K&M Lighting Services Ltd	Street Lighting Maint Feb	BACS	38.86	7.77	46.63	0.00
To be paid	Norfolk ALC	Biodiversity (split DW/Wat)	BACS	10.00	2.00	12.00	0.00
To be paid	Clerk	Salary February	BACS	546.05	0.00	546.05	0.00
To be paid	HMRC	PAYE/NI Contributions Feb	BACS	136.40	0.00	136.40	0.00
Totals				1,257.34	34.24	1,291.58	0.00

Proposed – Chairman, Cllr Williams

Seconded – Cllr Wilkinson

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

All in favour

6.5. Pre-approval to pay March invoices prior to next Council Meeting

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the Council was in April 2024 and invoices received in March 2024 would need to be paid in this financial year.

Chairman Signed Dated

That the Clerk circulates a list of invoices received in March 2024 to Councillors and is given delegated powers to pay them in this financial year.

All in favour

The Clerk confirmed that she would circulate a list to Councillors of all receipts and payments to be made in the last week of March 2024, in order that Councillors could approve them in principle.

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

7.1. Emergency Plan update

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, reported that he had not received any contact from the Breckland District Council Emergency Planning Officer regarding the Community Centre. He would await further instructions in the future.

7.2. Council Facebook Page

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, reported that Ms Greeno would be closing the original 'Narborough Parish Council, Norfolk' Facebook page in order that he could then set up a new page named either 'Narborough Parish Council Norfolk' or 'Narborough Norfolk Parish Council', depending on name hosting availability.

Once the page had been set up, the Clerk would add the link to the Council website.

7.3. Biodiversity matters (under the 'biodiversity duty' of the Environment Act 2021)

The Clerk had attended a Biodiversity session hosted by Norfolk ALC on Friday, 9th February 2024 and had circulated the slides and a written report with the agenda as follows:

Facts and Statistics

- *Biodiversity stands for Biological Diversity.*
- *The loss of mammals throughout the world is a bigger problem than climate emergency.*
- *41% of species have declined due to human activity.*
- *Lots of species are now extinct.*
- *The UK has 'led the world' in destroying the natural environment; centuries of farming, building and industry have made the UK one of the most nature-depleted countries in Europe.*
- *The UK is now one of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth; it ranks bottom 10% of 240 nations and territories, with just 53% of original nature left intact compared with the Index's low safe limit of 90% and the global average for all nations of 79%.*
- *Norfolk is one of the most depleted counties in the UK.*
- *Due to rising climate temperatures, hedge cutting should only take place November to February (any months outside these will risk wildlife safely).*
- *Ditches should no longer be filled in due to the serious increase of flooding (see Flood Risk Management 'Slow The Flow').*
- *The aim is to achieve a 10% gain of better biodiversity, although a goal of 20% should be considered.*

Local Authorities & Organisations

- *The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Breckland District Council and Norfolk County Council have Nature Protection and Biodiversity policies and committees.*
- *Supplementary planning guidance for Norfolk is available and should be referred to when commenting on planning applications.*
- *Statutory organisations like the Environmental Agency have seen a 50% cut over the years (staffing, equipment, etc).*

Actions for Parish/Town Councils

- Carry out an audit of the parish with photos and create a Parish Map; this will highlight the positive areas and show areas that could be improved and/or enhanced (The Parish Wildlife Map Toolkit can aid this process).
- The Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service can provide local data.
- Make a Bio Action Plan (BAP) – look up others online and work with local professionals.
- Create a Management Plan for special sites (5 year rolling plan).
- Set up a Biodiversity page on the Council website; explain what it is and add the plans and actions.
- Display signage where areas should be protected.
- Place swift bird boxes on community buildings to help attract them back into rural areas.

Help & Resources

- If Councillors cannot do the above, request residents in the village to do it, as there are likely to be people who are either passionate about this topic or an expert in this field.
- Local groups can be contacted for help.
- Put out a plea for local ecologists and tree specialists to help write plans (most villages have professionals that will want to help).
- The Norfolk Wildlife Trust can help set up a community group and provide training programmes.
- Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership.
- Natural History Museum.
- National Trust (see 2023 report: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/our-cause/nature-climate/state-of-nature-report-2023>).
- Natural England.
- BCKL&WN Biodiversity Task Group - Urban Wildlife Informal Working Group.
- See slideshow for many other helpful resources.

A short discussion took place and it was felt that there may be enthusiastic residents in the village who may wish to help.

The Clerk would prepare a post for Facebook to seek volunteers.

7.3.1. Norfolk ALC Chairman's Course

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe, had attended a free Bitesize Chairmanship Course hosted by Norfolk ALC on Wednesday, 21st February 2024. The slides had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the agenda.

The Vice Chairman, Cllr Pipe, confirmed that the course had been extremely helpful and she had learnt a great deal. She confirmed that she felt content to stand as Chairman at the Annual Meeting.

8. Planning Applications and Decisions

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

8.1. Planning applications received from Breckland District Council

No planning applications had been received from Breckland District Council.

8.2. Planning decisions completed by Breckland District Council

8.2.1. 3BT/2024/0003/BT – Land at Narborough Sewage Treatment Works, Lower Farm Road – Prior approval for Arqiva Smart Metering 1No. Omni at 13.83m mean mounted on proposed 12m streetworks pole. Proposed Arqiva Smart Metering 1No. GPS Antenna at 12.4m mean mounted on proposed streetworks pole. Proposed Arqiva Smart Metering 1No. 3G Omni Antenna at 3.8m mean mounted on proposed streetworks pole and proposed Arqiva Smart Metering Equipment enclosure to be installed on a root foundation (The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A)

Prior approval is given.

Chairman Signed Dated

8.3. Late Planning applications and notices of decision

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

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

The Chairman, Cllr Williams, reported that street naming for the new Minster Homes development on Chalk Lane was currently being considered and the Parish Council had previously been consulted on this.

It was agreed for the Clerk to contact the Breckland District Council Street Naming Officer, Ms S Davies, for an update regarding the street naming.

9. Correspondence for action/information

No correspondence for action or information had been received.

10. Late correspondence/enquiries

No late correspondence or enquiries had been received.

11. Date and time of the next meeting

11.1. Date and time of the next meeting

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

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.35pm.