

BRETtenham AND KILVERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING held at the KILVERSTONE CHURCH CLUB
Wednesday 26 November 2014 at 1930

1. **Attendance** Apologies had been received from Councillors Connolly, Ellen Jolly (Breckland District Council (BDC) and Bob King, Chairman Croxton PC;

The following were present:
Councillors Poulter, Engwell, Holmes-Smith, Herries, Brown and Wright.

The following were in attendance:
Mrs Carole Herries, Internal Auditor; and Samantha Gay, Knettishall Heath Ranger, Suffolk Wildlife Trust

2. **Any Declared Matters of Urgent Business** There were none

3. **Any Declarations of Interest** The Chairman declared an interest in Item 15 and Councillor Wright in Item 8.

4. **Minutes of Meeting on 17 Sep 14** These had been circulated previously and were agreed and duly signed by the Chairman.

5. **Matters Arising**

- a. **Traffic Survey C147** The NCC Highways Engineer for our area has confirmed he has added the Rushford issue to our provisional list of traffic management schemes awaiting funding. He is hopeful the HGV issue at Rushford will be included as part of the 2016/17 Traffic Management Programme, but this will of course be subject to future budget settlements that have not yet been determined.

A brief timeline for the proposed scheme:

Winter/Spring 2015 - Review requests for schemes, prioritise requests and agree which schemes will be put forward for inclusion in the 2016/17 Traffic Management Programme.

Spring 2015 – Prepare design briefs for potential schemes and Gateway Meetings are held with the Programme Management Team and Design Team to discuss each individual design brief.

Autumn 2015 – Members Programme is published which includes all Structural Maintenance and Traffic Management Schemes to be completed in 2016/17.

Spring 2016 – Designers are allocated individual schemes for investigation/consultation/legal orders

Winter 2016/Spring 2017 - Successful schemes are implemented.

It was noted there was fresh damage to the bridge over the Little Ouse River and so the Chairman agreed to go back to him to try arrange the long awaited meeting between our NCC and SCC Councillors and appropriate Highways' Staffs to discuss the problems associated with C147 (road through Rushford)

- b. **Employment of a Clerk** A suitable clerk has been identified and interviewed for the position by a panel comprising the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Internal Auditor. The Chairman sought PC agreement to offering her the position, possibly from 1 Jan 15, on a part time basis of 4 hours per week averaged over the year. This was agreed.

6. **Financial Report** The Vice Chairman updated the PC on its financial position on 26 Nov 14:

Treasurer's Account

Balance CF at 17 Oct 14 (Statement No: 47):	£6766.68
Payments In: 13 Nov 14: VAT Reimbursement	<u>£196.12</u>
	£6962.80

Payments Out:

Cheque No: 000089. Mow&Grow, POS Grass	£59.00
Cheque No: 000090. Postprint, JNP Mtg	£33.60
Cheque No: 000091. A3 Pads, JNP Mtg	£100.00
Cheque No: 000092. Mow&Grow, POS Grass	<u>£59.00</u>
	£251.60

Balance at 26 Nov 14	<u>£6711.20</u>
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Business Instant Access Account

Balance at 9 Oct 14* (Statement No: 18):	£21,541.35
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Balance All Accounts at 26 Nov 14*:	£28,252.55
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* Excludes interest from 10 Oct 14

7. **Joint Neighbourhood Plan** The Chairman reported intended questionnaire had been delayed by BDC's intention to develop a new Local Plan to replace the present Core Strategy and Development Control Policies. Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation runs from 17 Nov until 9 Jan 15 and can be viewed at: http://consult.breckland.gov.uk/portal/planningpolicy/local_plan/local_plan

The Joint Neighbourhood Plan will need to dovetail with the Local Plan and so need to be developed in parallel.

8. **Planning** The Chairman reported that there was only one planning item:
- a. **3PL/2014//0589/F** (Construct solar farm and associated works - resubmission) was considered at the last meeting and the following was submitted: the Council has no comment to make on the application. This application was referred to the Planning Committee on 24 Nov 14 but deferred to a later date.
9. **2015 Budget** The Chairman presented the draft budget for FY 15/16 and, for the expenditure, outlined the draw down in reserves, not only to pay for the Alms Houses

and Riverside Path as budgeted, but also to fund some of the increase in running costs. These increased running costs are those associated with the clerk and election funding¹:

The employment of a clerk is on the basis of part time working of 4 hours per week averaged over the year. This salary has to be on a PAYE basis. At present the PC does not have a pension scheme but may have to provide access to one in due course. Once the clerk has been appointed there may be other one off costs and NI contributions. For the purpose of putting the budget together a salary of £9 per hour is intended.

In terms of income, the Chairman highlighted the need to increase the precept and recommended the PC sets a precept of £4,500, £900 more than last year to start increasing the PC income to cater for the new clerk. Indeed, it was pointed out that the present precept had been unchanged since the PC inception in 2003 but at that level of £3,600 it was insufficient to employ a clerk costing upwards of £2,250 pa. Increasing the precept to £4,500 increases the precept for Band D from £17.35 to £21.45, an increase of £3.90 or 22% (percentage influenced downwards by a slightly increased tax base). A copy of the agreed budget is attached to these minutes.

10. **2015 Precept** Councillor Holmes-Smith proposed and Councillor Engwell seconded a motion to agree the FY 15/16 budget and set a precept of £4,500 and this was carried unanimously.

Resolved: To set the precept for FY 2015/16 at £4,500

11. **Knettishall Heath Update** The Chairman introduced Samantha Gay, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Knettishall Heath Ranger. She then thanked the PC for their support for the project at Knettishall Heath, both for the public consultation of installation of cattle grids, and the more recent proposed deforestation.

The Public Inquiry that took place on Wednesday 12 Nov regarding the installation of cattle grids. Speakers were heard both for and against the project:

FOR: County Council Representatives – Claire Starling, Suffolk Wildlife Trust Representatives – Nigel Farthing and Steve Aylward

AGAINST: There were 2 objectors

The enquiry lasted 2 ½ hours followed by a site visit to Knettishall Heath to observe the exact locations of the proposed cattle grids. It is anticipated the Inspector will submit a report to the Secretary of State for Transport who will make a decision in the New Year.

She then gave an update on other aspects of the heathland restoration project at Knettishall Heath. All felling licenses have been approved following the public consultation and contractors have started work on the woodland and heathland management outlined in the project. Areas of woodland management include glade creation. Areas of immature woodland that have been selected for heathland and wood pasture reversion in the project will create the main links between habitats, and work

¹ In Sep 12, there was a change in practice such that PCs met the costs of their elections. The cost of the PC election is on an equitable basis where the elections are held on the same day as District Council Elections. There may be instances where the cost of the elections will be shared by more than one election. The elections in May 2015 the cost will be shared over three elections, UK Parliamentary, District and Parish (where all are contested). Uncontested Elections will be charged at a flat rate of £75 to cover administration costs. This is in addition to, and does not replace, recharges to Parish Councils where a by-election falls outside of the 4 yearly District and Parish Elections. The PC has the schedule of estimated costs for running an election, (based on calculations for the 2011 District and Parish Elections), based on 2012 precept and tax base levels.

has started on these this month. Suffolk Wildlife Trust is selling a lot of the commercially usable wood to the contractors, with the remainder of the wood in these areas is being chipped and left at the roadside for public use as a gesture of goodwill. The creation of a new trail for public use and for dogs to roam off the lead all year round is now nearing completion. The route marked on the map on the consultation document is now fully open and fenced either side. It is due to be way-marked before the Spring.

She ended with an update on the 3½ year community focused Heritage Lottery Project (HLF). The HLF project is in its final year and is due to finish in September 2015. The final year involves building on the community projects already in place, and involving more schools from Thetford. A suggestion will be made to update the PC on the outcomes of the whole project in summer 2015. Finally, an initial announcement will be made of an event to celebrate the project in 3 Aug 15 to which the PC will be invited.

The Chairman thanked Samantha for attending the meeting and giving the PC such an interesting and informative resume of progress on Knettishall Heath.

12. **Moving Thetford Forward (MTF) Update** The Chairman reported that the Board had not met since 11 Apr 14 and apart from the Riverside Walk (see Item 13 below) there was still nothing else of significance to report. However, the new Chief Executive of South Holland and Breckland District Councils met with those involved with the SUE and its development on 25 Sep at which the PC was represented by the Vice Chairman. The aim is to develop a partnership model for delivering sustainable community growth and infrastructure across the greater Thetford area; the group will meet again at a date yet to be agreed.

13. **Public Open Space – Arlington Way** The Vice Chairman reported the grass-cutting season is now over and the last bill for 2014 paid. The PC will now need to consider the contract for next year, and he proposed that 'Mow & Grow' were asked to quote for next year's contract. They were the clear winners when we got quotes for this season's contract, and have been very efficient throughout the year.

Separately, in late spring this year, before the first cut there appeared a very attractive display of wild flowers on the site. The mowing regime that we had agreed removed them, but a resident has asked if the PC would promote a 'wildflower meadow' on at least a part of the site next year. A straw-poll of residents suggest that this would be well received, and the Vice Chairman supports the proposal. He sought agreement to pursue this idea with the residents living closest to the site and, if they are content, to discuss with our contractor a suitable mowing regime. It is possible that there will be a small increase in the overall cost for the year, but this should be minimal. The Vice Chairman agreed to discuss this with 'Mow & Grow' and report back before any decision is made. This was agreed.

14. **Riverside Walk Update** The Vice Chairman reported there has been significant progress since the last meeting:

- a. Abbey Homes have agreed to allow access across their land to link with BTO Land. Metcalf, Copeman and Pettefar, Solicitors, will work with Abbey's solicitors to agree a simple licence to that effect.
- b. The bid papers are now virtually complete and the PC will need to agree the full list of contractors. The PC requires at least 3 bidders and to operate a 'sealed tender' process. The PC has the 2 contractors who submitted estimates for the original, shorter, path, and he has invited NCC Highways to put forward their

preferred contractor, as well as Thetford Town Council and the BTO. Hopefully, this will not be a long process.

- c. The PC now needs to determine the timeline for issuing the bid papers and a date for bids to be received. He recommended the bid papers should be issued by 10 Dec 14 with replies by 10 Jan 15. Regrettably, this will have delayed the start of any construction work into next year, possibly until early spring.

15. **Freedom of Information Complaint** The Vice Chairman opened the item by reminding Councillors of the complaint (Case Reference Number FS50557722) made by Mr Cruse on 14 Oct 14 to the Information Commissioner about the PC's response to his FOI request. Having consulted with the Information Commissioner's office, a further reply has been agreed by the PC and sent to Mr Cruse giving the same explanation as has been given previously, together with all of the documentary evidence that is available, 5 attachments, most of which were already in the public domain.

16. **Kilverstone Alms Houses Update** Councillor Holmes-Smith reported that following a meeting with Moya Cruz, Housing manager of CoopHomes, at Kilverstone, the PC is now in possession of some paperwork of historical events which is presently lodged in the estate office, to facilitate its examination in slow time.

He went on to report mandate forms had been completed by him and the Vice Chairman in person at then bank.

He then reported the PC had received conflicting advice from the CoopHomes regarding the insurance cover. The Chairman had been told that the present cover extended until July 15, whereas Moya Crus (by e mail) advised the PC should take out building cover as the existing CoopHomes policy did not extend to cottages they no longer had dominion over. In order to retain suitable cover, the Alms Houses are now included in the Kilverstone Estate policy until 31 Dec 14 at a cost of £69. He sought views over whether to continue with the Estate policy, for which the PC would be invoiced or to increase the PC's insurance to cover the Alms Houses for which there would need to be a valuation. It was agreed to obtain a valuation of the Alms Houses and then approach the PC insurers in parallel with those of Kilverstone Estate.

Councillor Holmes-Smith has visited both beneficiaries at the cottages and they now understood the changes and that they had a contact number for Councillor Holmes-Smith via the estate office. He took the opportunity to advise them that he would like to inspect the properties both inside and out.

Once he has all paper work he will update the PC with a better understanding of the financial position.

The Chairman reported he had contacted the PC's solicitor and a draft resolution has been prepared to ask the Charity Commission to amend the Trust Deed in accordance with the resolution passed by the PC on 17 Sep 14. The draft resolution to seek to amend the Trust Deed was agreed by the PC.

17. **Reports by Members**

a. **Environmental and CPRE** Nothing to report.

b. **Community Safety** The next SNAP meeting is on Thursday 27 Nov 14 at 1100 at Attleborough Police Station.

There have been no reported crimes for the PC area. A new Police information system has been established called Police Connect by both Norfolk and Suffolk. The Chairman reported he has registered for this new service which will continue to be placed on the PC web site.

- c. **Rural** Nothing to report.

18. **Correspondence** The following correspondence had been received:

- a. **Norfolk County Council** The PC had been notified of the renewal of the partnership between NCC and TCs and PCs to deliver highway improvements on 50/50 basis. NCC has allocated £200k for FY 15/16.
- b. **DCLG** has published a guide for the press and public attending Local Government meetings.
- c. **NCC** has written explaining the consultation, which runs until 19 Dec 14 to identify savings of some £1m in FY 15/16. Views can be submitted at:
<http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/News/NCC159402>

19. **Date of Next Meetings:**

- a. Wednesday 17 December 2104 at 1930 in the Kilverstone Church Club
(Provisional for Urgent Matters only)
- b. Wednesday 21 January 2015 at 1930 in the Kilverstone Church Club (Full Meeting)

Minutes agreed:

A M Poulter OBE
Chairman

Date:

Attachment:

Budget for Financial Year 2015 – 2016

BRETENHAM and KILVERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL
Draft BUDGET FY 15/16 (Updated 26 Nov 14)

BF 1 April 2014	£25,558.35							
Balance 26 Nov 14	£26,746.79							
Remaining requirement 14/15	£1,000.00							
Forecast EOY FY 14/15	£25,746.79							
				Earmarked Reserves			FY 15/16	EOY
				S106 POS	Riverside Path	Alms Houses	Spend	Forecast
FY 14/15 Requirement	Revenue	Balance					Qtr1	
Revenue balance (B/F)	£25,746.79			£8,000.00	£10,000.00	£3,500.00		
Precept	£4,500.00							
Balance FY 14/15	£30,246.79	30,246.79						
Recurring								
Clerk Remuneration	£1,900.00							
Clerk expenses	£250.00							
Stationery	£800.00							
Members expenses	£250.00							
Web site maintenance	£250.00							
Insurance	£550.00							
Memberships	£250.00							
Minor repairs	£500.00							
S106 POS maintenance	£500.00							
Audit fees	£0.00							
Total recurring spend forecast	£5,250.00	£24,996.79						
One Off Revenue & Capital Costs								
Neighbourhood Plan Development	£1,000.00							
Clerk Set Up costs	£1,000.00							
Legal Fees (Alms Houses)	£1,000.00							
Alms Houses Set Up	£1,000.00							
Election Costs	£1,400.00							
Riverside walk	£10,000.00							
Total One Off Costs	£15,400.00	£9,596.79		£8,000.00	£0.00	£1,500.00		
Total EOY FY 14/15								
Draw Down on Earmarked Reserves Remaining Earmarked Reserves				£12,000.00				
		£9,500.00						
EOY cash in hand		£96.79						