

# **BRETtenham and KILVERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT**

**2020 – 2021**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**Introduction** The last year has been dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic and the restrictions to try and ameliorate its effects but nonetheless, the Parish Council has continued to meet regularly, albeit virtually by Zoom, scheduling meetings every month but on the understanding every other meeting is designated "Provisional" and is only taken up if there is urgent business.

The Council continues to run a deficit budget having used the allocation of Public Open Space "S106" money granted to cover the upkeep costs of the space. As this grant has now been used, the PC is conscious that it is necessary to increase its income to cover all running costs and establish a reserve for both contingencies and to be able to contribute to public facilities envisaged in Kilverstone as part of the Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE). The Council's annual accounts are attached to this report.

**Greater Thetford Partnership (GTP) Board** The PC provides 2 members of the Board which Board continues to move the programme forward to bring 5,000 new homes and supporting infrastructure to the greater Thetford area. The aim is to regenerate the whole area covered by Thetford, Croxton, Brettenham and Kilverstone and bring prosperity to the region and to make it an attractive place to live and work. The Board's terms of reference have evolved to ensure the Board is able to function and discharge its oversight duties properly. Sub phase 1A of the SUE programme to deliver 343 dwellings is under construction and 1B is about to start. This second half of the first phase is dependent upon the construction of a new sub-station to provide sufficient power for the area and this is now underway with planning consent given.

A GTP manager is in post and the PC is contributing to the cost. The manager is responsible for the Delivery Plan, as well undertaking other work on behalf of the Board, including lobbying and liaising with other partners and authorities. The Parish Council remains extremely concerned at the lack of an overall programme plan to allow the necessary oversight and coordination to deliver the aim. Further, the current 6 strategic objectives do not include the 5,000 new homes build programme or the release of Section 106 funding. Moreover, the 6 objectives are a mix of outcomes and outputs and all this should be made into an overall programme plan to deliver the outputs and realise the benefits.

Of further concern is the absence of new primary care facilities to serve the new population of some 12,000 as there are no premises or facilities planned, albeit there is a small provision of about £170k provided in the Section 106 Agreement. The Clinical Coordination Group

(CCG) is now finalising its primary care strategy and acknowledges the shortfall provision in the area and is intending to come forward with a longer term plan, probably utilising the Healthy Living Centre in Thetford in the short term. It is understood funding will be an issue. The Board has recognised the need for additional burial sites as the Thetford cemetery capacity is limited, as are the local churchyards. Two areas north of the SUE have been set aside for woodland burials but the establishment and management stills needs to be resolved.

The Board also believes the following major infrastructure projects need to be included in the programme in order for the wider economic vision to “Extend the Oxford/Cambridge corridor” into East Anglia to be realised:

- A11/A14 junction interchange
- Thetford Station upgraded
- Upgrade infrastructure at Ely Junction and Ely Capacity Enhancement Programme for which phase 2 consultation on possible planes is underway until 4 Jul 21. (<https://phase2.elyareacapacity.com/round-2-consultation-ely-south/>)
- Improve the “5-Ways” junction on the A11 at Mildenhall to reduce the great deal of congestion the present roundabout causes. It is understood this has been accepted by Highways England and included in its Road Improvements Strategy (RIS).

**Community Governance Review** In January 2017, Thetford Town Council sought to extend its parish boundary to include the new Sustainable Urban Extension area (SUE). The review, undertaken by the Community Governance Sub-Committee of Breckland District Council (BDC), concluded that the area south of the A11 and west of the A1065 in Croxton should be taken over by Thetford Town Council but there would be no change to Brettenham and Kilverstone. It is likely the changes will come into force in 2023. Both parish councils will need to consider whether some change in the areas covered by the Joint Neighbourhood plan needs to be covered.

In addition, the Boundary Commission has undertaken a review of Norfolk County Council’s divisions with the aim of equalising the number of electors (within 10%), retaining the current 50 seats. The PC objected to the initial proposal to include some rural parishes in the larger urban division areas on the grounds that mixing urban and rural requirements is not acceptable, particularly in the face of the larger number of urban voters in the proposed divisions. This has been accepted and Brettenham and Kilverstone Parish Council will remain in a rural Division but move from Guiltcross to the Brecks. This change will come into force in 2026.

**Community Safety** Crime in the Parish remains at a very low level with no reports of any serious crimes. Issues within the Parish have mainly been speeding and anti social behaviour, the latter primarily in Thetford Town Centre and the former associated with motor bike scrambling in rural areas. The Camera Safety Partnership (CSP) has been active in the Parish and in July Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies conducted a joint exercise when 64 bikers were stopped. The Parish Council intends to collate all instances of illegal bike scrambling and forward them to the police lead on illegal motorbike use. To this end Kilverstone, Euston and Shadwell estates as well as Knettishall Heath have been contacted and agreed to inform the Parish Council of any instances as they occur.

The Parish Council continues to be represented on the Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP). However during the previous year only one virtual meeting via TEAMS has taken place due to covid-19. Unlike previous meetings this was not that well attended and the

Constabulary's objective to change the format of these meetings by having an independent chair was not achieved. Current police priorities are vehicle ASB (which covers speeding and scrambling) and ASB in public places. There is no date set for the next SNAP meeting.

The Peddars Way path north of the Blackwater Bridge over the Little Ouse River borders a large estate with a very high fence and a low level (9 inches above the ground) electric fence on the public right of way. This is a dangers to walkers, particularly children and dogs, and the PC is trying to persuade Norfolk County Council to have it removed from the public footpath.

**Riverside Path** The Parish Council continues to contribute to the maintenance of the Riverside Path that lies within Brettenham in conjunction with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), with each paying half of the contractor costs. Maintenance work comprises herbicide treatment and verge cutting during the summer growing season.

**Path Extension** The extension of the footpath at the start of Arlington Way to link with the wheelchair access entrance to the Riverside Path continues to be extremely popular and is much used by parishioners and the public at large.

**Public Open Space 1** Some parts of the knee-rail fencing surrounding the main POS have been replaced and there will now need to be an ongoing process of inspection and repair. Annual maintenance comprises monthly grass cutting from May to September with a cut of the wildflower area in September. Maintenance of the POS was being financed using funds from a Unilateral Agreement with Abbey Homes (similar to a Section 106). These funds have now been exhausted and the Council will now need to use its precept for any continuing maintenance.

**Public Open Space 2.** As agreed last year, a part of the smaller POS has now been adapted to provide an additional parking space linked to the drive of the adjacent bungalow. The adaptation, described in the 2019/20 Annual Report, was funded entirely by the residents of the bungalow and at no additional cost to the Parish. A suitable lease was agreed and the first annual payment has been received.

**Precept** The Council continues to keep its precept as low as possible but is conscious of the need to ensure its annual running costs are met by the precept and build its reserves to cover the growing community as the development of the new homes begins in the Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE). The FY 21/22 increase was 5%.

**Kilverstone Alms Houses** Following an unprecedented year, the normality of day to day oversight of the almshouses will hopefully be able to resume. The almshouses continue to provide modern housing for the two beneficiaries. Following the recent refurbishment to the 2 homes, small maintenance issues have been dealt with even in difficult situations and the PC thanks Kybird Builders for their continued support. The finances are in a reasonable state and should withstand unforeseen upkeep demands. The continued aim of the trust is to provide further alms houses. It is hoped to utilise Community Housing funding for this and the PC will explore possibilities with BDC. Further expansion of local housing will give more impetus for this with the potential to access other grants and donations. In the short term, the Council as Trustee has control of the Trust's finances but still needs to resolve the day to day running issues.

# MONEY MATTERS

## FY 2020/2021 Accounts

	£		£
Opening balance	<b>19,953.79</b>		
<b>Receipts</b>		<b>Payments</b>	
Precept	5,400.00	PC Expenses (travel)	27.00
Support Grant	-	Postage	-
VAT Refund	327.49	Subscriptions	421.44
Interest (to Mar 20)*	2.64	Insurance	554.99
BTO Refund	157.50	Grounds Maintenance	1,966.00
POS Rental	100.00	Stationery/Ink	-
Solicitor's Fees Refund	895.00	Zoom Invoices	158.29
		Clerk Pay, Expenses and Allowances	2,182.59
		Breckland Contribution	500.00
		Solicitors' Fees	1,074.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b><u>6,882.63</u></b>	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>6,884.31</b>
In Year Net Surplus	- 1.68 *		
B/F	19,953.79		
<b>Total</b>	<b><u><u>19,952.11</u></u></b>		
<b>Carried Forward</b>	<b>19,952.11</b>		
	<b><u>2020</u></b>	Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021	<b><u>2021</u></b>
			<b>£</b>
	8,375.78	<b>Bank</b>	
	11,578.01	Treasurers Account	8,371.46 *
	<b>19,953.79</b>	Business Instant Access Account	11,580.65 **
<b>Assets</b>	<b>£ 10,688.64</b>		<b>19,952.11</b>

\* as of 31.03.21

\*\* as of 09.04.21

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the PC at 31 March 2021 and reflects its receipts and payments during the year.

## Notes to the Accounts

1. **Assets** Notice boards (and with drop boxes), Village signs, bench, grit bin, office equipment for the Clerk, Riverside Path furniture and donated Public Open Space at Arlington Way - £10,688 (Based on the purchase value).
2. **Borrowings** The PC has no borrowings
3. **Earmarked Reserves** Following completion of the Riverside Walk project and legal work associated with the transfer of the Trust from CoopHomes, The PC had earmarked reserves of £15,500 for at the end of FY 20/21:
  - £8,000 for Community Facilities Development
  - £6,500 for POS Maintenance
  - £1,000 Contingency
4. **Tenancies** The PC has no tenancies
5. **Section 137 Payments** The PC made no S137 payments in FY 20/21.
6. **Agency Work** The PC undertook no agency work
7. **Contingent Liabilities** The PC's accounts for the year end 31 March 2021 do not include a provision for any such contingency.

*A contingent loss will be accrued in the financial statements where it is probable that a future event will confirm a material loss which can be estimated with reasonable accuracy at a date when the financial statements are approved.*

*Where a material contingent loss is not accrued, perhaps because it cannot be accurately estimated or because the event is not considered sufficiently certain, it is disclosed in a note to the accounts.*
8. **Advertising and Publicity** No costs were incurred for advertising and publicity during the year
9. **Trust Funds** The PC is the trustee for the Kilverstone Alms house Trust.
10. **Commitments** The PC has and maintains the Public Open Space (POS) at Arlington Way following a Unilateral Agreement (similar to a Section 106 agreement).

## PARISH CONTACT DETAILS

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