

PUBLIC NOTES FOR MEETING ON 5/12/23

Item 3 – **minutes attached.**

Item 5 – **usual financial reports attached.** Since figures were prepared, the following has arrived and Clerk requesting authorisation for payment:

- £600 to Hartop Farms – Allotment rent [misc budget]

This is not included in the figures for budget etc.

Draft budget. The budget sheet shows spending to date. The draft budget is based on this with comments attached – **separate sheet.** Clerk will go through each expenditure line with brief explanation. The precept is set in January based on this, and using the most up to date figures, with options presented to Cllrs from which they choose or propose alternatives.

Item 7 – Tree Protection Order for discussion – **letter attached.**

Item 8 – Two planning applications were discussed at a Zoom Planning Meeting; Clerk responded based on those discussions. **Notes attached.**

Item 9 –

- a) Cllr Dovey requesting to be added to Comms Group
- b) Big Chat – item to look at how Council might respond to issues raised after agreeing an approach. **Response summary attached** – working document.
- c) Phone boxes – quotes: glass £301.20 (incl VAT); shelves 2*£39; paint etc £2,000
- d) The Tennis Court is in need of a replacement surface. This belongs to the PC, though maintained and run by the Sports Club. A quote of £23,470 + VAT has been received from the original suppliers. It has been suggested that we should go with this quote, as the preparation for a different type of surface would require greater expenditure. This will require a vote to suspend the relevant three quote Financial Regulation with reasons, should Council proceed along these lines. The Sports Club will make a contribution in the form of a donation to Council.
- e) A draft Member/Office protocol is presented for approval. This forms part of the paperwork suggested for the Civility and Respect Pledge, previously agreed by Council. **Attached.**
- f) White Ribbon Scheme. Cllr Carpenter has written:

I am a member of the NALC Women's Network. It is jaw dropping the number of women councillors throughout the country who are being harassed, denigrated, denied access, sexual violence against them, by male councillors and male Chairs. This experience is reinforced by such attitudes and behaviour in women's wider lives. As a result of these experiences in the Women's Network, in November 2022 NALC became a White Ribbon Accredited organisation for its commitment to ending men's violence against women in the workplace and the local community. White Ribbon is the leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against

women. The whole NALC Board have become involved as active in promoting this work, and are already creating a groundswell of activity. NALC resources and support includes which includes practical training, online events, attending the White Ribbon conference, and raising awareness within the local (parish and town) council sector. As an Accredited Organisation, NALC is delivering a 3-year work plan to change culture, systems, and our wider community to eliminate attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence against women. The core activities engage men to stop being bystanders and able to step up to call out male violence of women and girls. The Pledge or Promise is: to never excuse or ignore male violence. This action is helping to re-define what it is to be a man, free of toxic masculinity. Men become Ambassadors of White Ribbon and women become Champions - different roles for different life-experiences. [Women are attuned to what micro aggressions are and how they lead to male violence and we can support men in their learning and understanding.] 25th November UN day to eradicate violence towards girls and women and 16 days of White Ribbon activities. This year's video is Changing the Story.

White Ribbon link to website: <https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/about-us>

Item 10 – two items of correspondence relating to the Village Hard/NT Memorandum have been received and acknowledged. They were forwarded to Cllrs.

The Borough Council have forwarded information about the provision of cycle racks. **Details attached.** Council to consider what and where. Village Halls, Golf Club and NT were provided with the information, as most appropriate land ownership in their names, except for grass on Brancaster Playing Field.

Biodiversity – Council has to have agreed a basic bio-diversity policy by the end of the year, or at least to be working towards one. More detail is available online - [Complying with the biodiversity duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

NALC states: To comply with the guidance, town and parish councils could as a minimum:

- have biodiversity as an agenda item for a meeting before the end of 2023.
- note what action they are already taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree what further steps they should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Such steps may include:

- reviewing what biodiversity or nature recovery plans are already in place from other local authorities, e.g. potential for jointly-supported wildlife corridors.
- making contact with local voluntary groups working on nature conservation.
- carrying out a biodiversity audit of council landholdings and/or the whole council area, potentially involving residents in a "BioBlitz"
- gathering expert advice on possible actions in support of biodiversity, such as from [Caring for God's Acre](#) and the [Eco Church](#) initiative in respect of churchyards
- drafting an action plan that covers action that the council will take itself as well as support for the actions of other local bodies.

Worth noting – these are the only areas of BPC land:



Attached NALC model policy – yellow keep? Grey – n/a or reword? Possible addition not highlighted (for monitoring purposes).

Clerk has received correspondence ref hedgehogs – this is already included in the model policy.

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 7th November 2023 at 6.30pm

The meeting was held in Brancaster Staithe Village Hall

Present: Cllr T de Winton (Chair), Cllr B Bax, Cllr S Bocking, Cllr S Ullswater

Also in attendance: Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 15 Members of the Public

Meeting began at 6.30 pm

2023.11.07.01 - Declarations of Interest

- a) A Declaration of Interest was received from Cllr Bocking as a Common Right Holder.

2023.11.07.02 - Apologies for absence

- a) Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Borthwick, Carpenter, Dovey, Gardiner, Osborn, O'Sullivan; also from NCC Cllr Jamieson.

2023.11.07.03 - Minutes

- a) *The minutes of the meeting on 3rd October 2023 were accepted as a true record and duly signed.*

Prop: Cllr Ullswater; 2nd: Cllr Bocking; unanimous

- b) Ref the parking at Staithe Village Hall for the White Horse, it was noted this was not year-round; membership of the Barrow Common Management Committee to be discussed at Annual Meeting.

2023.11.07.04 – Public Comments 1

- a) Subjects raised were:
- Planning – 7.a.c below.
 - Noticeboards – access and rules.
 - Telephone Boxes.
 - National Trust – residents free on Chain good; meeting with BPC; lack of communication (NT website) – Clerk to write.
 - Legality of agreement with NT.

2023.11.07.05 - Reports

- a) Cllr Winton as Chair and Borough Cllr noted: his attempts to push Brancaster's position in Planning matters, adding BPC was very good at Planning; his attendance at the Centre Port (formerly Port Evo) presentation in Hunstanton – nothing new learned.
- b) As above.
- c) Report from County Councillor – none presented.
- d) Report from Clerk. Nothing raised.

2023.11.07.06 - Finance

- a) The Clerk presented the finance figures. Balances were just under £174K; he had established that the TRO payment of £10K, plus Coronation trees, could be included in CIL figures; mandate changes still proving difficult; 23/24 Local Government pay award had been agreed and £1ph rise would be implemented in

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: 5/12/2023

Dec with back pay made when calculated; invoice from BCKLWN had been received for Staithe Election costs, but not yet Brancaster – likely c.£1.5K; spending against budget all in line with expectations or lower. One additional payment requested to Amy Loose.

- b) All expenditure as listed in the pack, with the addition above, was approved for payment¹.

Prop: Cllr Bax; 2nd: Cllr Ullswater; unanimous

- c) The Clerk outlined the Borough Polling District Review, and the possibility of requesting re-Warding. Council agreed not to comment on the main proposals, or to add any comment about the Warding of the Parish.
- d) The Clerk noted the s.137 limit available for donations, and the recommended amounts in the Donations Policy. Council agreed to a donation of £2,000 to the Robert Smith Trust for insulation of properties.

Prop: Cllr de Winton; 2nd: Cllr Ullswater; unanimous

2023.11.07.07 - Planning

- a) Applications were considered:

- a. 23/01761 (Proposed Glazed balustrade to flat roof area with staircase access to balcony - Saxons 22 Dale End Brancaster Staithe) – Council agreed to object on grounds of: loss of privacy; design, form and character being inappropriate; effect on the street scene.
- b. 23/01818 (Proposed two storey rear extension to dwelling house - 29 The Close Brancaster Staithe) – Council agreed to raise no objection if the built area was less than 50% of the plot – Clerk to confirm.
- c. 23/01084 (variation of conditions 2 and 12; and removal of conditions 4, 5 and 13 of planning permission 22/01638: Conversion of existing barn into residential dwelling - Barrow Hill Barn 40 Common Lane Brancaster Staithe) – Council agreed to raise no objection.
- d. 23/01792 (Extension and alterations to dwelling - 6 Old Roman Walk Brancaster) - Council agreed to raise no objection if the built area was less than 50% of the plot – Clerk to confirm.
- e. 23/01865 (Proposed covered kitchen and bar - The Ship Hotel Main Road Brancaster) Council agreed to raise no objection.
- f. 23/01662 (Proposed alterations, reconfiguration and extensions to the existing dwelling - Holly Bank The Drove Brancaster Staithe) – Council agreed to object to this based on the wording of the Neighbourhood Plan ref 2.5 storey buildings.

- b) Late arriving application was considered:

- a. 23/01611 (Variation of Conditions 1 and 3 of Planning Permission 22/01586/RM: Construction of 1 new dwelling - Land Adjoining Floyd House Marsh Side Brancaster) - Council agreed to raise no objection.

- c) No other Planning matters raised.

2023.11.07.08 - Delegated decisions etc.

- a) Two planning applications had been discussed by email, and the Clerk responded under delegated powers in line with previous Council discussions. The NCI hut was a “no objection” (23/01647), and no further comment was made on the Smithy (23/01087).

¹ See below

2023.11.07.09 - Other matters

- a) Cllr Ullswater noted that the seats around the Coronation Trees were in place; plaques were being researched. The NT did not now propose to replace the Staithe Tree. Cllrs Ullswater and Bax had also attended the Wash Barrier meeting; there were items of interest, but it seemed to be information gathering for the developers. Cllr de Winton noted the change of date for the Fire Service award evening he would be attending. Cllr Bocking raised the height of the noticeboards.

2023.11.07.10 - Correspondence and requests

- a) Clerk did not raise any correspondence not already covered.
 - a. Cllr Bax commented on the Norfolk Falls project; chair to be located at the White Horse. Clerk noted prior approval to act as a Lead Council – this had been communicated and Council now sought to recruit volunteers – publicity to be arranged.
- b) Brief discussion of Climate and Ecology Bill. Council agreed no further action. Clerk noted the Biodiversity requirements in new legislation; on agenda for December.
- c) Brief discussion of how correspondence is communicated to/within Council. Council unanimously agreed no change.
- d) Item on White Ribbon Scheme deferred at request of Cllr Carpenter who proposed it.
- e) The motion requesting discussion of the Blue Plaque Scheme was withdrawn.
- f) Council agreed that Cllr Bax should lead Community involvement in the D-Day² 80 Commemoration; a Beacon to be lit; £1,000 budget to be set aside. A local historian and the School should be approached.
- g) A 20mph extension in The Close, Staithe, was noted, with no comment proposed.
- h) Cllr de Winton noted the meeting with the National Trust and read the revised text of the proposed agreement with the Trust on management of the Staithe Village Green. The Clerk noted that the NT and he proposed that this should be a Memorandum of Understanding, for clarity. Cllr Bocking referred to a NALC document which he claimed showed this was not legal – Clerk went through. Requests were made for a better map – possible future survey, though this was official NCC one. Cllr Bax requested the public be allowed to comment; supported, so the meeting was temporarily suspended [8.12 to 8.33pm] for contributions. Council agreed to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding. Cllr Bocking requested a recorded vote – Cllrs Bax, de Winton and Ullswater in favour, Cllr Bocking against.
- i) Lengthy discussion on a quote for the phone boxes, including an explanation of the need for process before quotes sought. Deferred.

2023.11.07.11 - AOB and agenda requests

- a) Cllr Bax commented on problems with Electric Vehicle charging cables crossing pavements.
- b) Clerk requested proposed agenda items be emailed to him.

2023.11.07.12 - Public Comments 2

- c) Subjects raised were:

² Typo in agenda noted – not VE Day.

- EV cables problem.
- Phone boxes – volunteers; possible company for works
- Norfolk Falls – more details.
- Maintenance works.
- Wash Barrier and NCC consultation on land north of A149.
- Housing info – would be added to website.
- CIL uses.

2023.11.07.13 - Next meeting

a) The next meeting was confirmed as being on Tuesday 5th December 2023 at 6.30pm in Brancaster Village Hall.

Meeting ended at c.9pm

Expenditure:

Inv Date	Ref	To	For	Amount	of which VAT	budget
1/10/23	DD	ECS - oct	Computer	£38.40	£6.40	admin
4/10/23	DD	nPower - sep	Street Lights	£439.16	£20.91	utilities
23/10/23	DD	Barclaycard	various	£194.64	£22.53	admin
	DD	ECS - nov	Computer			admin
	DD	nPower - oct	Street Lights			utilities
	M-7/11	Simon Bower	Expenses	£543.54	£0.00	admin
30/9/23	M-7/11	Heronwood	Grass Cutting	£298.00	£0.00	open spaces
16/10/23	M-7/11	BCKLWN	Election-Staithe	£54.60	£9.10	admin
24/10/23	M-7/11	Marcus Townshend	Grass Cutting	£265.00	£0.00	open spaces
30/11/23	contract	Salaries incl tax/NI/pension	Salary	£1,671.76	£0.00	salaries
	late	Amy Loose	Car Park passes	£48.00	£0.00	admin
INCOME						
30/10/23		BCKLWN	CIL	£4,402.07	£0.00	reserves

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: 5/12/2023

BRANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL

SUMMARY OF BANK ACCOUNTS 2023/24

DATE: 27/11/2023

Balance Savings Account	£164,641.35
Balance Current Account	£2,339.08
<i>Incomplete Transactions</i>	<i>-£8,104.70</i>
<i>Current A/C statement balance</i>	<i>£10,443.78</i>

Actual Balance **£166,980.43**

Balance at start of year	Savings	£183,758.32
	Current	£8,324.38
	Total Barclays	<u>£192,082.70</u>

Expenditure		£65,099.76
Income	to current	£39,114.46
	to savings (interest)	£883.03
	Balance	<u>£166,980.43</u>

Outstanding invoices due to BPC £0.00

Protected - CIL	£42,730.68
Protected - other ring-fenced	£56,000.00
<i>General Funds Available including creditors</i>	<i>£68,249.75</i>
check - difference	£0.00

SPENT AGAINST BUDGET Financial Year 01/04/23 31/03/24

AS AT 27/11/23 payments until 31/12/23
% of year 75%

Budget Area	23/24 budget	spent	income	yr balance	budget bal	note
s.137	£5,500.00	<i>£7,250.00</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£7,250.00	132%	2
Open Spaces	£6,500.00	<i>£6,464.33</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£6,464.33	99%	2
Projects	£3,500.00	<i>£0.00</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£0.00	0%	1
Utilities	£6,500.00	<i>£3,261.73</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£3,261.73	50%	1
Admin	£7,650.00	<i>£4,771.68</i>	<i>£52.04</i>	£4,719.64	62%	1
Salaries	£21,000.00	<i>£15,784.86</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£15,784.86	75%	0
Insurance	£1,600.00	<i>£1,600.00</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£1,600.00	100%	2
Repairs/Fees	£500.00	<i>£0.00</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£0.00	0%	1
Coronation	£3,000.00	<i>£2,053.46</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£2,053.46	68%	0
Allowances	£3,500.00	<i>£0.00</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£0.00	0%	1
Contingency	£2,687.50	<i>£519.68</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	£519.68	19%	1
Miscellaneous	£0.00	<i>£800.00</i>	<i>£700.00</i>	£100.00		
Total - excl VAT	<u>£61,937.50</u>	<i>£42,505.74</i>	<i>£752.04</i>	<u>£41,753.70</u>	<u>67%</u>	
		spent	income	yr balance		
<i>Refundable VAT</i>	<i>so far totals</i>	<i>£2,794.23</i>	<i>£6,651.11</i>	<i>-£3,856.88</i>		
<i>Precept</i>		<i>£0.00</i>	<i>£23,321.06</i>	<i>-£23,321.06</i>	<i>income only</i>	
<i>Reserves</i>		<i>£19,799.79</i>	<i>£9,273.28</i>	<i>£10,526.51</i>		

TOTAL SPENT £65,099.76
TOTAL INCOME £39,997.49

budgeted, car parks, VAT and reserves
all sources, incl interest to reserves

YEAR BALANCE -£25,102.27
YEAR BALANCE -£33,492.52

income less expenditure
balance excluding ring-fenced/CIL

Notes:

0 - on target - no concern

1 - under - no concern

2 - over - large items - no concern

3 - over - monitor - two year payments/refund due

4 - spent - further expenditure to come from reserves

5 - no set miscellaneous budget: used for monies going in and out and grants, or where allocation tbc

NB CIL money into reserves which is not accessible for everyday spending =

£8,390.25

BRANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE - FOR DEC PAYMENT

EXPENDITURE

Inv Date	Ref	To	For	Amount	of which VAT	budget
	DD	ECS - nov	Computer			
	DD	nPower - oct	Street Lights			
4/11/23	M-5/12	Kevin Crompton	Grass Cutting +	£425.00	£0.00	open spaces
31/10/23	M-5/12	Heronwood	Grass Cutting	£298.00	£0.00	open spaces
7/11/23	M-5/12	BCKLWN	Election-Branc	£1,071.37	£0.00	admin
29/12/23	Salaries incl t	Salary	Salary	£2,088.74	£0.00	salaries

SPENT AGAINST BUDGET Financial Year 01/04/2023 31/03/2024

AS AT 28/11/23 payments until 31/12/23
% of year 75%

Budget Area	23/24 budget	spent	income	yr balance	budget bal	note	comments	
s.137	£5,500.00	£7,250.00	£0.00	£7,250.00	132%	2	? increase to maximum legally allowed - current c£7.6K - likely +7-8%	£8,000.00
Open Spaces	£6,500.00	£6,464.33	£0.00	£6,464.33	99%	2	clearly should increase, though we have put £10K into "general beautifying"	£8,000.00
Projects	£3,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0%	1	no projects proposed, or Parish Partnership Schemes	£0.00
Utilities	£6,500.00	£3,261.73	£0.00	£3,261.73	50%	1	probably the same - electricity prices coming down - likely £2500 to come for year	£6,500.00
Admin	£7,650.00	£4,771.68	£52.04	£4,719.64	62%	1	will do a more detailed breakdown, but probably about the same (less election)	£6,500.00
Salaries	£21,000.00	£15,784.86	£0.00	£15,784.86	75%	0	will add the recent rise and a guesstimate of 7.5% for next year	£23,000.00
Insurance	£1,600.00	£1,600.00	£0.00	£1,600.00	100%	2	suspect this will rise due to court case, plus we should include BCSC insurance	£2,500.00
Repairs/Fees	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0%	1	a hangover - suggest incorporate into open spaces or contingency	£0.00
Coronation	£3,000.00	£2,053.46	£0.00	£2,053.46	68%	0	we have agreed a £1000 budget for D Day - change to "events"?	£1,000.00
Allowances	£3,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0%	1	previously agreed - needs to be 11*5%of £7518 - i.e. £4135 for current year + inc?	£4,500.00
Contingency	£2,687.50	£519.68	£0.00	£519.68	19%	1	previously set at 5% of operating budget excl s.137	£2,600.00
Miscellaneous	£0.00	£800.00	£700.00	£100.00			reminder this only a tidying up figure - moneys going in and out; not a budget	
Total - excl VAT	£61,937.50	£42,505.74	£752.04	£41,753.70	67%			£62,600.00
		spent	income	yr balance				rise 1.07%

Refundable VAT	so far totals	£2,794.23	£6,651.11	-£3,856.88		just done reclaim to end Oct - £1.8K to come in
Precept		£0.00	£23,321.06	-£23,321.06	income only	we calculate this from budget and reserve balances
Reserves		£19,799.79	£9,273.28	£10,526.51		

TOTAL SPENT	£65,099.76	budgeted, VAT and reserves	
TOTAL INCOME	£39,997.49	all sources, incl interest to reserves	car park donation tends to arrive in March
YEAR BALANCE	-£25,102.27	income less expenditure	

capital/ring-fenced:

added/amended			spending in 23/24	total end 23/24
22/23	Legal Fees	£20,000.00	£0.00	£20,000.00
22/23	CIL to end 22/23	£54,119.39	£19,778.96	£34,340.43
22/23	Play equipment	£3,000.00	£0.00	£3,000.00
23/24	Play equipment	£3,000.00	£0.00	£3,000.00
23/24	New CIL	£8,390.25	£0.00	£8,390.25
23/24	Brancaster St Play	£20,000.00	£0.00	£20,000.00
23/24	General Beautifyii	£10,000.00	£0.00	£10,000.00
	total	£118,509.64	£19,778.96	£98,730.68
	total - excluding C	£56,000.00	£0.00	£56,000.00
	CIL	£62,509.64	£19,778.96	£42,730.68

add??	Recruitment	£2,500.00
	Elections	£1,500.00
	Play equipment	£3,000.00
	others?	

Our ref: 2/TPO/00680
Please ask for:
Direct dial: 01553 616234
E-mail: borough.planning@west-norfolk.gov.uk

The Clerk
Brancaster Parish Council

Geoff Hall
Executive Director

29 November 2023

Stuart Ashworth
Assistant Director Environment and Planning

IMPORTANT - THIS COMMUNICATION MAY AFFECT YOUR PROPERTY

Dear Sir/Madam

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012
The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Tree Preservation Order Tree
Preservation Order: 2/TPO/00680 - 29 November 2023**

Land Adjoining Floyd House Marsh Side Brancaster Norfolk

Please find enclosed a copy of the above Tree Preservation Order which has been served upon:

Atelier Associates
Mr Stephen Sharp
Barn B, Home Farm
Common Road
Snettisham
Kings Lynn
PE31 7PD

The Council have made the Order because:

Planning application 23/01611/F has been received for a Variation of Conditions 1 and 3 of Planning Permission 22/01586/RM.

The proposed dwelling is larger than the extant approved under 22/01586/RM, and 21/01813/O, and will require the removal of existing mature trees. The trees that are threatened by this proposal are an attractive mature landscape feature. They contribute positively to the amenity of the area in which they stand and from where they may be seen, and they are an important element of the character and appearance of this part of Brancaster.

If you would like to make any objection or other comments, please make sure that we receive them in writing **by the close of business on 27 December 2023**. Your comments must comply with Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 2012, a copy of which is attached. Please send your comments to:-

King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 1EX
Tel: (01553) 616200

Chief Executive – **Lorraine Gore**

Arboricultural Officer
The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
King's Court
Chapel Street
King's Lynn PE30 1EX

All valid objections or representations will be carefully considered before a decision on whether to confirm the Order is made. If a valid objection is received, then the decision on whether to confirm the Order will be made by the Council's Planning Committee. If you wish to object or make representations about the making of the Tree Preservation Order (in accordance with Regulation 4) you will have the opportunity to address the Council's Planning Committee.

The Council will write to you again to notify you when a decision has been made (if no objections are received) or when the Planning Committee will meet if objections are received.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Hall', written over a horizontal line.

Geoff Hall
Executive Director
Environment and Planning

Enc

REGULATION 5 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
(TREES) REGULATIONS 2012

Objections and representations

4(1) Subject to paragraph (2), objections and representations -

(a) shall be made in writing and -

(i) delivered to the Authority not later than the date specified by them under Regulation 3(2)(c); or

(ii) sent to the Authority in a properly addressed and pre-paid letter posted at such time that, in the ordinary course of post, it would be delivered to them not later than that date;

(b) shall specify the particular trees, groups of trees or woodlands (as the case may be) in respect of which the objections or representations are made; and

(c) in the case of an objection, shall state the reasons for the objection.

4(2) The Authority may treat as duly made objections and representations which do not comply with the requirements of paragraph (1) if, in the particular case, they are satisfied that compliance with those requirements could not reasonably have been expected.

Notes of a virtual meeting of Councillors to consider Planning Matters.

The meeting was held on 21/11/2023, using Zoom.

As this was not a formal meeting, decisions could not be made – it was merely to advise the Clerk on responses when not able to be determined in Full Council.

Present: Cllrs B Bax, C Borthwick, T de Winton, W Gardiner, S Osborn, S Ullswater Clerk (taking notes) and no Members of the Public

In the absence of a vote, Cllr de Winton led the discussions. There were no apologies for absence.

Two applications were discussed:

- 23/01976 (Proposed single storey extension and installation of PV solar panels to existing Garage roof. Tangle Pickers, Main Road, Brancaster Staithe)
- 23/01972 (Extension & alterations to dwelling, The Nook, 6 Common Lane, Brancaster Staithe)

Discussion on the latter took more time, involving the number of bedrooms, but, in both cases, Cllrs did not raise objections.

After this the Clerk went through the process for using the measuring tool on the Planning Portal, and covered material considerations and the Neighbourhood and Local Plans¹.

¹ It was noted that a document is available on the PC website, summarising all this information.

This document collates the responses to the Public Questionnaire and the Big Chat and provides the Council's current response and plans.

Section 1: The Parish Council's response to the feedback

Section 2: An overview of the questionnaire feedback

Section 3: Notes from the Big Chat.

Section 1:

This section will share and respond to the public and parish's feedback. Firstly, by giving a general overview of the responses and the Council's reply / actions, and also then responding to individual comments where not covered by the general response.

If you completed the questionnaire / attended the Big Chat and feel your points have not been represented or have been missed, please do let us know what it is you have said that has not been included, and we can add it in (email:) Please be assured, it will **not** have been intentional, there has just been a lot of data to go through.

The responses have been broadly divided into 9 areas. Some may sit across more than one area so a judgement call has been made where to put them, but will still have been considered with reference to the full impact and context. The 9 areas are:

- **Roads, Road Safety, Travel & Parking**
- **Environment & Management of Outdoor Spaces**
- **Village Maintenance & Upkeep**
- **Local Facilities & Amenities | Activities, Things to do,**
- **Housing (Planning & Affordability)**
- **Support for Residents**
- **Community / Identity**
- **Parish Council Feedback**
- **Other**

1) Roads, Road Safety, Travel & Parking	
Parish and Community response overview: Parking post-COVID has not been so problematic, The Parish Council has contributed £10k towards the formal consultation about current proposals which has been held up due to BC staff shortages. BPC to chivvy BC.	
Parish Council general response:	
Traffic management and parking	
Road surface repairs surface	
Speeding	

Cycle paths	
New proposals aimed at controlling visitors are in force year round, detrimental to locals and out of season visitors	
Query over price of Brancaster car park – where does the money go?	
Evening Public Transport	
Pedestrian zone on main road between ship & village green to link up the village safely	
Parking / permanent car park for Brancaster	
Traffic / main road safety	
Beach passes restored for people who live here	
There needs to be better ongoing information relating to tides - including electronic signals (as in Hunstanton and Wells) - very simply saying Road Closed or Don't Queue - to be sorted between BPC, Borough Council and Coastwatch.	
Parking post-COVID has not been so problematic	

2) Environment & Management of Outdoor Spaces	
Parish and Community response overview:	
Parish Council general response:	
National Trust	
Giving away the village green	
Dogs on beach (kids get hurt and poo)	
Loss of permissive footpaths on field edges	
Access / boat parking	

Environmental damage	
Water cleanliness	
Over regulation of traditional activities	
Large power boats and ribs taking over the harbour / dangerous boats on water	
The environment – cleaner & safer	
Standing up to the National Trust	
Defending Village green and open spaces	
Size limit on power boats	
Retaining beauty and tranquillity AND preserving access for everyone – difficult balance	
Access to harbour remains	
Concern over the Harbour chain	

3) <u>Village Maintenance & Upkeep</u>	
Parish and Community response: overview:	
Parish Council general response:	
Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:	Specific Council response:
More street lights	
Repairs to coast path needed / board walk	
Terrible state of toilets at the beach car park	
More poo bins (notably on broad lane by Dormy house and the village green)	
Bins by Brancaster toilets	
Getting work done in the parish (grass cutting, hedge cutting, maintenance / road repairs)	
Improve appearance of green and public spaces (like the daffodils) `	
Board walk	
Rubbish collection on beach	

4) Local Facilities & Amenities | Activities, Things to do,

Parish and Community response: overview:

Facilities and activities for children and young people are very needed. We need to remember that our Parish is classed as a deprived area with many families in social housing and the cost of youth facilities could be a prohibitive factor to exclude children.

Parish Council general response:

Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:	Specific Council response:
Village shop	
Church (needs to unite)	
Marshside bar / white horse	
Loss of local amenities	
Unspent fund (?) local school possibly closing down local school struggling to attract interest	
Surgery and local amenities can't cope with extended numbers Second homes and rental homes should contribute to the Parish through taxation - possible quadrupling/business rates.	
Keep local shop & PO / local facilities (all year round)	
No Parish Vicar	
Lack of after school care options for local schools	
Infrastructure	
Collaboration between BVH & allotment to have market stalls	
Support for local business	
White horse	
Local amenities	
More community events	
Encourage outdoor activities	
Avoiding dormant winter / out of season local events / children's and young events	
A kids' club/youth club, sports coaching, arts and crafts activities, one night a fortnight in village hall - possibility YMCA could staff it - Tuesdays best night to avoid clashes with Swallows and Amazons and tennis club.	
Children's play ground in Staithe is very needed since the fire last year.	
More volunteers needed for Parish News collation/Hot Spot lunches/Carpet Bowls/ Coffee Morning/Coastwatch. With people ageing younger people are needed to ensure these groups can continue.	

Mention was made of the sad demise of the Line Dancing group after over 20 years. Volunteering is good for us and we get as much out of it as we put in.	
Local community groups may need assistance to get information about their activities advertised more widely and consistently.	

5) <u>Housing (Planning & Affordability)</u>	
Parish and Community response overview:	
Parish Council general response:	
Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:	Specific Council response:
Over development / constant building works	
Large empty houses / holiday homes / second homes / locals pushed out	
Unaffordable housing developments / local priced out of housing / no local government support for locals' housing / encourage owner occupiers / keep families here lack of rental homes for locals	
Planning / housing planning / unsightly	
Urbanisation	
Homes for locals / Housing (1 notes middle majority missed out)	
Stricter planning	
*covenant preventing Holiday lets	
Houses built next to VH / Freebridge need to speed up the process of getting the new houses built on the former Brentwood site. Parishioners suggested they might set up a petition to get the housing built asap.	
No building work June - September	
Concern that young people have to leave the village to find somewhere to live that they can afford.	
work here. • _Smaller starter apartments are needed for single young people.	
There is enthusiasm for shared ownership.	
PC to be pro-active in advertising the qualification for social/affordable housing and other information on how housing lists work.	
Town Lane proposed developments not welcome	
Frustration at BPC planning recommendations being ignored at Borough level - Parishioners need almost as much expertise as developers. Possibility of guidance/ advice from BPC.	

6) Support For Residents

Parish and Community response overview:

Parish Council general response:

Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:

Cost of living

Limited opportunities / infrastructure for all (esp. children)

Jobs that pay enough to live here

Support those living here so they can stay here

Fair and sustainable growth that is relevant to all ages

PC to work with Saxon Shore councils on hosting Beat the Bills roadshow

Specific Council response:

7) Tourism & visitors

Parish and Community response overview:

Parish Council general response:

Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:

Volume of visitors

Lack of awareness of tides wind etc. esp. by visitors / lack of effective signage about flooding etc. | Signage around flooding to deflect folk away / visitor education | electronic signage

Managing seasonal influx

Not following signs

Selfishness of visitors

Stopping tennis week nuisance

Specific Council response:

8) Community / Identity

Parish and Community response overview:

(from the big Chat) People found it really useful to be able to work together with lots of other people from both villages working on common aims and speaking to people who they may not have met before, with

the potential of new friendships. • The age range of participants teens-9s - was particularly appreciated, as was meeting with people from different backgrounds.	
Parish Council general response:	
Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:	Specific Council response:
Lack of engagement with part-time residents	
Too few young people / children in area all year round	
Outsiders / outsiders coming and wanting change	
Too much Anger / resentment / bullying / need to pull community together / need to feel we all matter / managing divide and resentment	
change resistance	
Retaining beauty and tranquillity AND preserving access for everyone – difficult balance The balance necessary to keep Brancaster both an attractive destination for visitors and a place to live for locals	
Lack of historical understanding / too much change / things aren't staying the same	
Loss of community	
Lack of connection between local residents and second home owners	
Making sure all stakeholders are represented and their views considered	
Regenerating a sense of community / making people feel welcome / a community that recognises all origins	
Let legal team sort out the common rights issues and move on	
Too many outsiders / 'true locals first	
More full time residents	
Prevent more change	
Trying not to forget the character of the village and its history and not to bow down to people with money and influence	

9) Parish Council Feedback

Parish and Community response overview:	
Parish Council general response:	
Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:	Specific Council response:
PC out of touch – e.g. meeting only at times when retired people can attend	
Ineffective parish council	
Lack of investment in the parish	
Listen / communicate with parishoners & community communicate with all stakeholders update improve communications (website & social media	
Communicating with elderly with no tech access.	
Overall, communications need to be much better on Parish notice boards - easy to identify and attractive - with space not taken up with commercial posters	

10) <u>Other</u>	
Specific issues / comments from Parish & community:	Specific Council response:
Crazy planning - mayflower	
Corporate interference from landowners	
Therapy dogs in schools / old people's homes	

Member/Officer Protocol

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this Protocol is to guide Councillors and Officers of Council in their relations with one another. The Protocol's intention is to build and maintain good working relationships between Councillors and Officers as they work together. Employees who are required to give advice to Councillors are referred to as "Officers" throughout.

A strong, constructive, and trusting relationship between Councillors and Officers is essential to the effective and efficient working of Council.

This Protocol also seeks to reflect the principles underlying the Code of Conduct which applies to Councillors and the employment terms and conditions of Officers. The shared objective is to enhance and maintain the integrity (real and perceived) of local government.

The following extract from the Local Government Association guidance on the 2020 Model Councillor Code of Conduct states that:

“Both Councillors and Officers are servants of the public and are indispensable to one another. Together, they bring the critical skills, experience and knowledge required to manage an effective local authority.

At the heart of this relationship, is the importance of mutual respect.

Councillor/Officer relationships should be conducted in a positive and constructive way. Therefore, it is important that any dealings between Councillors and Officers should observe reasonable standards of courtesy, should show mutual appreciation of the importance of their respective roles and that neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position or seek to exert undue influence on the other party.

Councillors provide a democratic mandate to the local authority and are responsible to the electorate whom they represent. They set their local authority’s policy framework, ensure that services and policies are delivered and scrutinise local authority services.

Chairs and vice Chairs of committees have additional responsibilities. These responsibilities will result in increased expectations and relationships with Officers that are more complex. Such Councillors must still respect the impartiality of Officers and must not ask them to undertake work of a party-political nature or compromise their position with other Councillors or other Officers.

Officers provide the professional advice and managerial expertise and information needed for decision making by Councillors and to deliver the policy framework agreed by Councillors. They are responsible for implementing decisions of Councillors and the day-to-day administration of the local authority.

The roles are very different but need to work in a complementary way.

It is important for both sides to respect these differences and ensure that they work in harmony. Getting that relationship right is an important skill. That is why the code requires Councillors to respect an Officer’s impartiality and professional expertise. In turn Officers should respect a Councillor’s democratic mandate as the people accountable to the public for the work of the local authority. It is also important for a local authority to have a Councillor-Officer protocol which sets out how this relationship works and what both Councillors and Officers can expect in terms of mutual respect and good working relationships.”

This Protocol covers:

- The respective roles and responsibilities of Councillors and the Officer;
- Relationships between Councillors and Officers;
- Where/who a Councillor or an Officer should go to if they have concerns;
- Who is responsible for making decisions.

Background

This Protocol is intended to assist Councillors and Officers, in approaching some of the sensitive circumstances which arise in a challenging working environment.

The reputation and integrity of Council is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of Councillors and the Officer working together to support each other's roles.

The aim is effective and professional working relationships characterised by mutual trust, respect and courtesy. Overly close personal familiarity between Councillors and Officers is not recommended as it has the potential to damage this relationship.

2. Roles of Councillors and Officers

The respective roles of Councillors and Officers can be summarised as follows:

- Councillors and Officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another, but their responsibilities are distinct.
- Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only for their term of office.
- Officers are responsible to Council. Their job is to give advice to Councillors and to Council, and to carry out Council's work under the direction and control of Council and relevant committees.

Councillors

Councillors have four main areas of responsibility:

- To determine Council policy and provide community leadership;
- To monitor and review Council performance in implementing policies and delivering services;
- To represent Council externally; and
- To act as advocates for their constituents.

All Councillors have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with the Officer, regardless of their status and should be treated equally. They should not involve themselves in the day to day running of Council. This is the Officer's responsibility, and the Officer will be acting on instructions from Council or its committees, within an agreed job description.

In line with Councillors' Code of Conduct, a Councillor must treat others with respect, must not bully or harass people and must not do anything which compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, Council.

Officers can expect Councillors:

- to give strategic leadership and direction and to seek to further their agreed policies and objectives with the understanding that Councillors have the right to take the final decision on issues based on advice
- to act within the policies, practices, processes and conventions established by Council

- to work constructively in partnership with Officers acknowledging their separate and distinct roles and responsibilities
- to understand and support the respective roles and responsibilities of Officers and their associated workloads, pressures and reporting lines
- to treat them fairly and with respect, dignity and courtesy
- to act with integrity, to give support and to respect appropriate confidentiality
- to recognise that Officers do not work under the instruction of individual Councillors or groups
- not to subject them to bullying, intimidation, harassment, or put them under undue pressure.
- to treat all Officers, partners (those external people with whom Council works) and members of the public equally, and not discriminate based on any protected characteristic
- not to request Officers to exercise discretion which involves acting outside Council's policies and procedures
- not to authorise, initiate, or certify any financial transactions or to enter into any contract, agreement or undertaking on behalf of Council or in their role as a Councillor without proper and lawful authority
- not to use their position or relationship with Officers to advance their personal interest or those of others or to influence decisions improperly
- to comply at all times with Councillors' Code of Conduct, the law, and such other policies, procedures, protocols and conventions agreed by Council.
- respect the impartiality of Officers and not to undermine their role in carrying out their duties
- not to ask Officers to undertake work, or act in a way, which seeks to support or benefit a particular political party or gives rise to an Officer being criticised for operating in a party-political manner
- not to ask Officers to exceed their authority where that authority is given

Chairs and vice-Chairs of Council and committees

Chairs and Vice-Chairs have additional responsibilities as delegated by Council. These responsibilities mean that they may have to have a closer working relationship with employees than other Councillors do. However, they must still respect the impartiality of Officers and must not ask them to undertake work or anything else which would prejudice their impartiality.

Officers

The primary role of Officers is to advise, inform and support all members and to implement the agreed policies of Council. They are responsible for day-to-day managerial and operational decisions within Council, including directing and overseeing the work of any more junior Officers. Councillors should avoid inappropriate involvement in such matters.

In performing their role Officers will act professionally, impartially and with neutrality. Whilst Officers will respect a Councillor's view on an issue, the Officer should not be influenced or pressured to make comments, or recommendations which are contrary to their professional judgement or views.

Officers must:

- implement decisions of Council and its committees which are lawful, which have been properly approved in accordance with the requirements of the law and are duly recorded. This includes respecting the decisions made, regardless of any different advice given to Council or whether the decision differs from the Officer's view.
- work in partnership with Councillors in an impartial and professional manner
- treat Councillors fairly and with respect, dignity and courtesy
- treat all Councillors, partners and members of the public equally, and not discriminate based on any protected characteristic.
- assist and advise all parts of Council. Officers must always act to the best of their abilities in the best interests of the authority as expressed in Council's formal decisions.
- respond to enquiries and complaints in accordance with Council's standards protocol
- be alert to issues which are, or are likely to be, contentious or politically sensitive,
- and be aware of the implications for Councillors, the media or other sections of the public.
- act with honesty, respect, dignity and courtesy at all times provide support and learning and development opportunities for Councillors to help them in performing their various roles in line with Council's training and development policy
- not seek to use their relationship with Councillors to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly
- to act within the policies, practices, processes and conventions established by Council

Officers have the right not to support Councillors in any role other than that of Councillor, and not to engage in actions incompatible with this Protocol.

In giving advice to Councillors, and in preparing and presenting reports, it is the responsibility of the Officer to express his/her own professional views and recommendations. An Officer may report the views of individual Councillors on an issue, but the recommendation should be the Officer's own. If a Councillor wishes to express a contrary view they should not pressurise the Officer to make a recommendation contrary to the Officer's professional view, nor victimise an Officer for discharging his/her responsibilities.

There are exceptional circumstances where a Councillor can fulfil the role of Officer, for example where there is a vacancy. This can only be done if Councillor is not paid for the role and should only ever be short-term while Council seeks to fill a vacancy. There will need to be a particular clear understanding of when Councillor is acting as a Councillor and when acting as the Proper Officer.

3. The Relationship: General

Councillors and Officers are indispensable to one another. However, their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are accountable to the public, whereas Officers are accountable to Council as a whole. At the heart of this Protocol is the importance of mutual respect and also of civility.

Councillor/Officer relationships are to be conducted in a positive and constructive way. Therefore, it is important that any dealings between Councillors and Officers should observe standards of courtesy and that neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position nor seek to exert undue influence on the other party.

Individual Councillors should not actively seek to undermine majority decisions of the corporate body, as this could then bring them into conflict with Officers who have been charged with promoting and implementing Council's collectively-determined course of action.

Councillors should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer, or of Officers collectively, in a manner that is incompatible with this Protocol at meetings held in public or on social media. This is a long-standing tradition in public service. An Officer has no means of responding to criticisms like this in public.

A Councillor who is unhappy about the actions taken by, or conduct of, an Officer should:

- avoid personal attacks on, or abuse of, the Officer at all times
- ensure that any criticism is well founded and constructive
- ensure that any criticism is made in private
- take up the concern with the Chair

Neither should an Officer raise with a Councillor matters relating to the conduct or capability of another Councillor or Officer or to the internal management of Council in a manner that is incompatible with the objectives of this Protocol.

Potential breaches of this Protocol are considered below.

4. Expectations

All Councillors can expect:

- A commitment from Officers to Council as a whole, and not to any individual Councillor, group of Councillors or political group;
- A working partnership;
- Officers to understand and support respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- A timely response from Officers to enquiries and complaints;
- Officer's professional and impartial advice, not influenced by political views or personal preferences;
- Timely, up to date, information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities or positions that they hold;
- Officers to be aware of and sensitive to the public and political environment locally;
- Respect, courtesy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality from Officers and other Councillors;
- Training and development opportunities to help them carry out their role effectively;
- Not to have personal issues raised with them by Officers outside Council's agreed procedures;
- That Officers will not use their contact with Councillors to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly.

Officers can expect from Councillors:

- A working partnership;
- An understanding of, and support for, respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- Leadership and direction;
- Respect, courtesy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality;
- Not to be bullied or to be put under undue pressure;
- That Councillors will not use their position or relationship with Officers to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly;
- That Councillors will at all times comply with Council's adopted Code of Conduct.

5. Some general principles

Close personal relationships between Councillors and Officers can confuse their separate roles and get in the way of the proper conduct of Council business, not least by creating a perception in others that a particular Councillor or Officer is getting preferential treatment.

Special relationships with particular individuals are not recommended as it can create suspicion that an employee favours that Councillor above others.

The Proper Officer (usually called the Clerk) is the head of paid services and has a line management responsibility to all other staff. Communications should be made directly with the Proper Officer, unless it is agreed by the Proper Officer that such communications may take place directly with other Officers over a particular matter. Councillors should not give instructions directly to the Proper Officer's staff without the express approval of the Proper Officer.

Councillors' access to information and to Council documents

Councillors are free to approach Officers to provide them with such information, explanation and advice as they may reasonably need in order to assist them in discharging their role as members of Council. This can range from a request for general information about some aspect of Council's activities to a request for specific information on behalf of a constituent. Such approaches should normally be directed to the Officer.

The legal rights of Councillors to inspect Council documents are covered partly by statute and partly by the common law. The common law right of Councillors is based on the principle that any member has a *prima facie* right to inspect Council documents so far as their access to the documents is reasonably necessary to enable the member properly to perform their duties as a member of Council. This principle is commonly referred to as the "need to know" principle.

The exercise of this common law right depends therefore upon Councillor's ability to demonstrate that they have the necessary "need to know". In this respect a member has no right to "a roving commission" to go and examine documents of Council. Mere curiosity is not sufficient. The crucial question is the determination of the "need to know". This question must be determined by the Officer.

In some circumstances (e.g. a committee member wishing to inspect documents relating to the functions of that committee) a Councillor's "need to know" will normally be presumed. In other circumstances (e.g. a Councillor wishing to inspect documents which contain personal information about third parties) a Councillor will normally be expected to justify the request in specific terms. Any Council information provided to a Councillor must only be used by Councillor for the purpose for which it was provided i.e. in connection with the proper performance of Councillor's duties as a member of Council.

For completeness, Councillors do, of course, have the same right as any other member of the public to make requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Correspondence

Correspondence between an individual Councillor and an Officer should not normally be copied (by the Officer) to any other Councillor. Where exceptionally it is necessary to copy the correspondence to another Councillor, this should be made clear to the original Councillor. In other words, a system of “silent copies” should not be employed. Acknowledging that the “BCC” system of e-mailing is used, it should be made clear at the foot of any e-mails if another Councillor has received an e-mail by adding “CC Councillor X.”

Official letters or emails on behalf of Council should normally be sent out under the name of the Officer, rather than under the name of a Councillor. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for a letter or email to appear over the name of the Chair, but this should be the exception rather than the norm. Letters or emails which, for example, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of Council should never be sent out in the name of a Councillor.

Correspondence to individual Councillors from Officers should not be sent or copied to complainants or other third parties if they are marked “confidential”. In doing so, the relevant Officer should seek to make clear what is to be treated as being shared with the Councillor in confidence only and why that is so.

Press and media

Councils are accountable to their electorate. Accountability requires local understanding. This will be promoted by Council, explaining its objectives and policies to the electors and customers. Councils use publicity to keep the public informed and to encourage public participation. Council needs to tell the public about the services it provides. Good effective publicity should aim to improve public awareness of Council’s activities.

Publicity is a sensitive matter in any political environment because of the impact it can have. Expenditure on publicity can be significant. It is essential to ensure that decisions on publicity are properly made in accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity and Council’s Media Protocol. The Officer may respond to press enquiries but should confine any comments to the facts of the subject matter and the professional aspects of the function concerned. On no account must an Officer expressly or impliedly make any political opinion, comment or statement.

Any press release that may be necessary to clarify Council’s position in relation to disputes, major planning developments, court issues or individuals’ complaints should be approved by the Officer.

The Chair (or Chair of a committee) may act as spokespersons for Council in

responding to the press and media and making public statements on behalf of Council but should liaise with the Officer on all forms of contact with the press and media. Council may also appoint individual Councillors as spokespeople where there is an area of particular expertise but this should only be done with the agreement of Council.

Council must comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1986 ("the Act") regarding publicity. All media relations work will comply with the national Code of Practice for Local Government Publicity. The Code is statutory guidance and Council must have regard to it and follow its provisions when making any decision on publicity.

The LGA has produced useful guidance on the Publicity Code - <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/short-guide-publicity-during-pre-election-period>

For more detailed information and guidance regarding the role of Councillors in connection with the use of social media, reference should be made to Council's Social Media Protocol where there is one in place.

6. IF THINGS GO WRONG

Procedure for Officers:

From time to time the relationship between Councillors and the Officer (or other employees) may break down or become strained. Whilst it is always preferable to resolve matters informally, it is important that Council adopts a formal grievance protocol or procedure.

The principal Council's Monitoring Officer may be able to offer a mediation/conciliation role or it may be necessary to seek independent advice. The Chair of Council should not attempt to deal with grievances or work related performance or line management issues on their own. Council should delegate authority to a small group of Councillors to deal with all personnel matters.

The law requires all employers to have disciplinary and grievance procedures. Adopting a grievance procedure enables individual employees to raise concerns, problems or complaints about their employment in an open and fair way.

Where the matter relates to a formal written complaint alleging a breach of Councillors' Code of Conduct the matter must be referred to the principal Council's Monitoring Officer in the first instance in line with the Localism Act 2011. Council may however try to resolve any concerns raised informally before they become a formal written allegation.

Procedure for Councillors:

If a Councillor is dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of the Officer or another employee, the matter should be reported to the Chair and then raised with the Officer in the first instance. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, it may be necessary to invoke Council's disciplinary procedure.

DRAFT

**Active Travel Enhancements:
Parish and Town Council Expression of Interest Request**

As part of the West Norfolk Prosperity Funding programme the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk has prioritised investment for active travel enhancements in the local area. The term 'active travel' means travel within the local area which includes physical movement, such as walking or cycling.

Improving opportunities to encourage active travel across the borough is important as it has the joint benefits of both reducing the environmental impact of travel whilst enhancing health and wellbeing. It also enables us to better enjoy our predominantly flat local environment.

To support the growth of active travel opportunities across the borough we would like all Parish and Town Council's to consider local interest and demand for cycle storage infrastructure, with possible grant awards available in 2024/25.

At this current Expression of Interest stage there is no guarantee of grant award, but your response will enable us to determine how best to distribute this funding to help improve active travel facilities across the whole borough.

Our focus of grant support is for three possible cycle products with differing levels of grant intervention rates. Please review and complete the Expression of Interest form on the next page at your next public meeting and return your completed form to westnorfolkspf@west-norfolk.gov.uk.

Please note that the grant award opportunities highlighted will be for the 2024/25 financial year and an additional brief application process will be required to secure a grant. This process will commence in February / March 2024.

Grant awards will be to purchase the indicated product only and this will then become an asset for management by the Parish / Town Council. Identification of an appropriate supplier and correct installation of the granted products to a suitable secure surface, as per the manufacturer's instructions, will be the responsibility of the grant recipient.

If your Parish or Town Council has identified an alternative cycle storage product that they would seek grant assistance for, please provide additional information in your covering email.



Expression of Interest: Active Travel Enhancements and Cycle Storage

Please complete and return the Expression of Interest table below. For each product please consider the following questions before you answer.

- Can the equipment be situated on Parish / Town Council land in an accessible location, or can you obtain permission from the landowner to install the equipment?
(E.g. NCC Highways land would require a street furniture licence [Norfolk County Council](#))
- Will the Parish / Town Council accept ongoing responsibility for the asset?
- Can the match funding (if applicable) be committed for 2024/25?
(Please note that 'in kind' match funding cannot be accepted.)

Sheffield cycle stands 100% grant award possible.

These are traditional hoop style bike stands that provide storage for multiple bikes - one on either side of each hoop. Security of bikes depends upon the correct use of privately owned bike locks. Stands must be securely fixed to a hard standing surface.

Is your Parish / Town Council interested in a 100% grant to fund the purchase of a Sheffield cycle stand?

SELECT



Secure Cycle Drums 75% grant award possible.

These are covered, lockable storage units which provide enhanced security for bicycles. Access to the unit must be managed by the asset owner. Security of bikes depends upon the correct use of privately owned bike locks. Drums must be securely fixed to a hard standing surface. The cost of these products vary by supplier and size; current estimates are that a 25% cost could equal up to £2,000.

Is your Parish / Town Council interested in a 75% grant to fund the purchase of a secure cycle drum?

SELECT

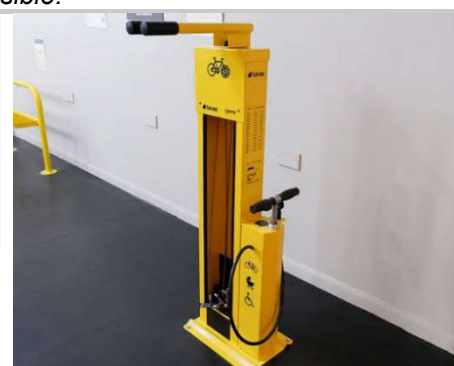


Bicycle Maintenance and Repair Stand 75% grant award possible.

This is a resource which allows community members to maintain and repair their bicycle and includes the provision of tools which are secured via a steel cable. Stands must be securely fixed to a hard standing surface. The cost of these products vary by supplier; current estimates are that a 25% cost could equal up to £500.

Is your Parish / Town Council interested in a 75% grant to fund the purchase of a bicycle maintenance and repair stand?

SELECT



Name of Parish Council:	
Date of public meeting:	

INTRODUCTION - STATUTORY DUTY

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including town and parish councils) operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Government guidance published on 17 May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, town and parish councils must:

- consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

Town and parish councils, unlike other authorities, are not obliged to publish a report on their actions, but the [Government guidance](#) requires all public authorities to complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024. They must agree their policies and objectives as soon as possible after this and must reconsider the selected actions within five years of completing their previous consideration, or more frequently if they choose.

To comply with the guidance, town and parish councils could as a minimum:

- have biodiversity as an agenda item for a meeting before the end of 2023.
- note what action they are already taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree what further steps they should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Such steps may include:

- reviewing what biodiversity or nature recovery plans are already in place from other local authorities, e.g. potential for jointly-supported wildlife corridors.
- making contact with local voluntary groups working on nature conservation.
- carrying out a biodiversity audit of council landholdings and/or the whole council area, potentially involving residents in a ["BioBlitz"](#)
- gathering expert advice on possible actions in support of biodiversity, such as from [Caring for God's Acre](#) and the [Eco Church initiative](#) in respect of churchyards
- drafting an action plan that covers action that the council will take itself as well as support for the actions of other local bodies.

Whatever action is agreed, as a minimum local councils could ensure they address biodiversity concerns when commenting on planning applications.

All these steps may inform an agreed biodiversity policy for which a model example is attached. Guidance for town and parish councils on developing a [local nature action plan](#) has been published by South Gloucestershire Council, as well as a [field guide](#) for those with little or no ecological background.

MODEL BIODIVERSITY POLICY

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, **[insert council name]** (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

DEFINITION

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area.

The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- encourage and support other organisations within the **parish / town** to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

ACTIONS

Planning applications

The Council will:

- when commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.

- support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and property management

The Council will:

- carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regard to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's [regulations for plant protection products](#).
- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- ~~consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.~~

Local community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

MONITORING

This policy was adopted on **xx** (Minute reference **yy**) and will be reviewed in two years or sooner should legislation dictate / each year at the Annual Meeting. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually, with reference to the original biodiversity audit to show progress.

DRAFT MODEL ACTION PLAN

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing	Newsletter, social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Cemetery / churchyard	Additional planting Maintain and renew bird boxes as required. Adopt a plan to support wildlife and diversity whilst maintaining the site in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance. Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.	Increased diversity of habitats and food sources Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.		
Recreation ground	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Leave some areas unmown. Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Food sources and cover Encourages insects. Sustain and enhance natural habitats.		
Common / other open spaces	Adopt a management plan. Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs. Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety. Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected e.g. peat free compost and no chemicals.	Sustain and enhance natural habitats. Protecting habitats Protecting/enhancing habitats Regular attention.		

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
The Built Landscape	Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protecting/enhancing habitats Extending habitats.	Ongoing	
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish. Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine. Create a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links Encourage local farmers to contribute. Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use. Discourage floodlighting.	Engagement/ownership of biodiversity Promote biodiversity. Promote biodiversity. Promote biodiversity. Extending habitats. Protect nocturnal animals.	Ongoing	Neighbourhood plan consultation
Support Community Projects	Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas. Work in partnership with the school to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them. Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.	Extending habitats. Promote biodiversity. Promote biodiversity.		
Monitoring	Form a group – working party status to monitor progress and ensure legal compliance. To include Cllrs and residents.	Keep process on target and regularly reviewed.		