

BRANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Clerk: Mrs M Wroth
Hall Farm
Sedgeford Road
Docking
Kings Lynn
PE31 8LJ

Email: brancaster.council@outlook.com

2nd June 2020

Decisions made by Brancaster Parish Council 01.05.20 to 31.05.20

On 18th March, a scheme of delegation was agreed by Brancaster Parish Council prior to lockdown. The following is a list of decisions made during Friday 1st May and Sunday 31st May 2020.

1. 1st May 2020 – Planning Application
19/02000/F The Smithy (revised plans submitted) – decision ‘Object’
2. 5th May 2020 – May Payments for approval
Decision – approved

Name	Business	Gross
Clerk	Salary and Expenses - May	965.72
HMRC	Tax/NI April	20.43
Brancaster Community Sports Club	Annual Insurance	232.1
Heronwood	Grass Cutting March 11 & 24	260
E-On	April Charges	202.23
Peter Bickell	Cemetery Work and strimming around parish	562
Kevin Crompton	Grass Cutting 24/3, 6/4 & 20/4	270
Westcotec	May	23.75

3. 21st May 2020 – Planning Application Decision
20/00339/F Sailcraft Sea School – decision ‘Object’
4. 22nd May 2020 – Decision on whether to hold Virtual Meetings
Decision – Split decision ‘no comment’
NB – no casting vote can be used in a split decision using delegated decisions

Michelle Wroth
Parish Clerk and RFO

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8th July 2020

Decisions made by Brancaster Parish Council 01.06.20 to 30.06.20

On 18th March, a scheme of delegation was agreed by Brancaster Parish Council prior to lockdown. The following is a list of decisions made during Monday 1st June and Tuesday 30th June 2020.

- 1st June 2020 – Planning Application
20/00665/F North House – decision ‘Object’
- 2nd June 2020 – June Payments for approval
Decision – approved

Name	Business	Gross
Clerk	Salary and Expenses – June (chq 102436 / 102437)	969.95
HMRC	Tax/NI June (chq 102438)	20.43
SLCC	Annual Membership (chq 102439)	150
Heronwood	Grass Cutting April 7th and 20 th (chq 102441)	260
E-On	May Charges (DD)	195.7
Westcotec	June (DD)	23.75
Marcus Townsend	Strim and rake 2 x footpaths March/April (chq 102434)	112.50
Peter Bickell	Work in Cemetery- May (chq 102435)	822.00

- 21st June 2020 – Final payment previous clerk
Decision - approved
- 21st June 2020 – Purchase a laptop for Clerk
Decision – Approved
- 21st June 2020 – Purchasing bulbs in the autumn for planting within the Parish
Decision – Approved

6. 29th June 2020 – Planning application
20/00824/F, 4 Manor Farm Barns – decision ‘approve’

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Parish Clerk and RFO

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16th August 2020

Decisions made by Brancaster Parish Council 01.07.20 to 31.07.20

On 18th March, a scheme of delegation was agreed by Brancaster Parish Council prior to lockdown. The following is a list of decisions made during Wednesday 1st July and 31st July 2020.

1st July 2020 – Planning Application

20/00712/F East View – decision ‘Approve’

1st July 2020 – Register Barrow Common as an ‘Asset of Community Value’

Decision – ‘Approve’

1st July 2020 – Employ a Solicitor to look further into the legal title of Barrow Common

Decision – ‘Approve’

3rd July 2020 – Adopt the following policies and procedures

- Standing orders
- Brancaster Privacy Policy
- Communications Policy
- Complaints Procedure for Council
- Email Contact Privacy Notice
- GDPR
- Privacy Policy (staff)
- Subject Access Request Form
- Co-option Policy

Decision – ‘Approve and adopt all’

7th July 2020 – June Payments for approval

Decision – approved

Name	Business	Gross
Clerk	Salary and Expenses – July	1,125.04

HMRC	Tax/NI July	20.43
Kevin Crompton	4 th and 18 th May – Grass Cutting	180.00
Heronwood	Grass Cutting May 4 th and 19 th	260.00
E-On	Monthly Charges	202.23
Westcotec	July	23.75
Bendcrete Leisure Ltd	Table Tennis Table	2,520.00

8th July 2020 – Planning Application
20/00820/F Hazel Cottage – decision ‘Approve’

8th July 2020 – Planning Application
20/00819/F Lynwood – decision ‘Object’

20th July 2020 – Agree Neighborhood Plan amendments
Decision – Approved

Michelle Wroth
Parish Clerk and RFO

BRANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL – MINUTES 4TH AUGUST 2020

Clerk: Mrs Michelle Wroth
Telephone: 07766 241127
Email: Brancaster.council@outlook.com



1. Welcome by the Chairman - The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a short update. The Parish Council have used this strange period to get up to date with all outstanding items. The 19/20 Accounts have been completed, new reporting has been implemented, digital banking is moving forward, asset register has been updated, risk register will be online shortly. All Councillors and the Clerk have worked to complete these tasks.

2. Present – Cllr Campbell, Cllr G Bocking, Cllr Cotton, Cllr Bax, Cllr Borthwick, Cllr S Bocking, Cllr Lawton, Cllr Thompson
Apologies – PC Lee Anderton, County Councillor Jamieson
Public – 19 joined the meeting via Zoom

3. To receive declaration of interests on agenda items - None

4. Confirmation of the minutes – N/A

5. Car Parking around the Parish – Cllr Bax began the discussion by saying that currently it is a difficult time for parking within the Parish and that the Parish Council are not complacent and have been looking into how this can be helped. Currently the area is over capacity with increased numbers due to furloughed workers and people choosing to holiday in the UK rather than travel abroad this year. Cllr Cotton stated that one of his neighbours had an idea that areas of the parish like roads off Mill Hill, Butchers Lane, and the road from the Jolly Sailors to the affordable houses could apply for Residential Status. This would enforce permits to be used in these areas. This however would come at an initial cost to the Parish Council to apply for this status and then residents would have to pay for parking or visitor permits to be able to park on the road outside their properties. This can only be applied for on roads which are 4.7m or less wide. For this status to be applied for residents in these areas would need to agree to this, if they were to agree then the Parish Council all agreed that they would support this and apply.

Highways will not put double yellow lines on Broad Lane until the Parish Council can find an overflow carpark. The Parish Council have found 2 suitable fields and have made offers to purchase these but have been turned down twice. The two fields are the small field opposite the AA layby in Staithe and the field West of Manor Farm. The field in Brancaster would be an ideal location for the overflow for 3 reasons.

1. Enables cars off the Mill Hill junction
2. Connects directly to the footpath to the beach so users do not have to walk on the road
3. Its north of the A149 so pedestrians do not have to cross the A149 which would be a safety issue

As these have been turned down the Parish Council have now started a Compulsory Purchase Order. Cllr Thompson has his concerns with this as the fields are set aside and will be in an agreement with DEFRA, even if the fields were to be purchased the agreement is based on the field itself so wouldn't be allowed for parking.

Providing additional parking at the Brancaster playing field had been investigated, Cllr Campbell had measured part of the field and felt that it would be able to create an additional 350 spaces. However this would mean 700 car movements on the entrance to the village hall and in turn could impact the use of the shop which in turn could see a claim of loss of income received from the shop to the Parish Council. There is also a H&S matter that how would you keep those using the playing field for its purpose safe, so additional barriers would need to be purchased and parking attendants otherwise parking could be inconsiderate. Access from the west gate is not wide enough for wheelchair users and if the visitors were to use Cross Lane then this could become congested.

Another site which potentially could be used is the Old Fort, which the Council believe is National Trust land, this land could be used by both visitors to Brancaster Staithe and Brancaster.

Cllr Bax would support the idea of providing a park and ride/shuttle service to the beach, the cars could park away from the village and then travel in. Others liked this idea however logistics for this could be difficult as a site would be needed along with transport, drivers, and insurance etc.

Cllr Cotton explained that there is an opportunity to use the field (Mull Warren) located up Mill Hill, however this would mean pedestrians would have to cross the A149.

Cllr Borthwick stated that the parking issues continue through out the parish, the White Horse has turned part of its car park into an outside bar. Meaning additional parking is now on the road outside for those that are using the venue.

6. COVID-19 Volunteers – Cllr Bax wanted to thank of the Volunteers that helped fellow Parishioners that were unable to leave their homes. Cllr Cotton agreed that the scheme did a great job. Cllr Borthwick also wished to thank those that were not part of the parish scheme but helped their neighbours throughout.

7. Reports from WNBC and NCC – No NCC update available, Cllr Lawton confirmed that Stuart Dark who was a cabinet member for emergency planning is no longer a cabinet member, no other updates at this time

8. Finance

8.1 To approve accounts for payment – All In favour and carried

Name	Business	Gross
Clerk (cheque)	August Salary and Expenses	981.95
HMRC (cheque)	Clerk Tax/NI August	20.43
Marcus Townshend (cheque)	Strim and rake off footpaths	112.50
Witley Press (cheque)	Neighbourhood Plan Leaflets and Draft Review	714.00
E-on (DD)	Streetlights	195.70
Westcotec (DD)	Street Light Maintenance – July	23.75
Open Spaces Society (cheque)	Annual Subscription	45.00
Heronwood Landscapes (cheque)	Grass Cutting – Playing fields 2 nd , 15 th and 19 th June	305.00
Kevin Crompton (cheque)	Grass Cutting 9 th and 22 nd June	180.00

8.2 Financial statement as at 13th July 2020 – All in favour and carried

8.3 Approval of the AGAR for 19/20 financial year – All in favour, 19/20 accounts approved by all and carried

9. To consider any planning matters and Borough Council decisions

Ref. No:	Address	Planning Details	Parish Councils Stance	BCKLWN
20/00952/F	Broad Lane at land adjoining Manor Farm House	Condition 2 - Variation to the house types to provide additional detailing and variation between the 2 plots. This includes - Removal of a false chimney (1 real chimney retained) per property - moving of side utility door along gable wall - Addition of porch detail to properties. - Change of window glazing bars to plot 1 to add slight variation between properties	Defer to delegated decision once details received regarding access. Cllr Campbell proposed, and Cllr Lawton seconded	
20/01039/F	Tayberry, 12 Branodunum	Detached garage/cart shed	Approved	

10. Correspondences, received after published agenda

10.1 – An email had been received around parking at the beach and that there are no signs up for social distancing etc. It was agreed that the three parties involved in this area should hold a zoom meeting and start discussion how this can be addressed. The Golf Club have cancelled all meetings currently with no consultation. The Parish Council reps for this are Cllr Campbell and Cllr Borthwick

11. Other items for discussion/next agenda

- Overgrown Hedges – Cllr Thompson will contact Highways and provide update next meeting on the maximum size that hedges should be
- Board Walk; the Parish Council has contacted National Trails regarding the safety. Next month to discuss further actions on this
- Parish Documents – discuss and plan on how/where to store the Parish Records.

12. Public Session

A member of the public had been to the Brancaster Playing field and measured to see how additional parking could be added to help ease the parking issues within Brancaster. He believes that if the existing line of the carpark were extended then an additional 66 spaces could be made. Reinforced mesh would need to be installed with a cost of approx. £2.1k however this could pay for itself within a 2-week period. 2 parking Marshals would be needed to help with parking and take payment. Additional parking at the playing field could also provide additional income for the shop and Bar 71 with additional visitors. The member of the public offered to help the Parish Council install and get this running by also providing H&S training for marshals. Cllr Bax felt that the Council should take up this offer.

A resident from London Street/Butchers Lane asked whether the Parish Council would support these roads becoming one way. The Council stated that they could ask Highways whether this was possible

One Parishioner had emailed National Trails about the Board Walk and they had responded stating that the second cut of the year should take place week commencing 10th August with the third and final cut being in the Autumn.

Several the public discussed the parking within the Parish. Points which were raised included:

- The beach carpark is too small; could this be extended to the smaller carpark which is further along the track. This would need a Section 39 agreement however would mean that those wishing to visit the beach are closer so families not having to walk from the main road.
- Visitors are attracted to Brancaster because of the beach and want to park down by it so the point above was supported.
- Seeking the field will not alleviate the problem at hightide
- Could traffic updates be provided so those visiting the area can be aware in advance of high tide/flooded road or that the carpark is full etc. Could a traffic update be broadcasted on KLFM, could a Facebook/Instagram to give updates. Cllr Bax felt that maybe a collaboration with the Golf Club and the Sailing Club could be investigated. Would it be possible to have signs which could show car parking details/high tide, like those that Wells have installed?
- Could a Seasonal Restriction Order be applied for like Holme have? They have been able to erect No Parking signs and have not had to provide an additional carpark for this to be granted.
- Suggestion given for the Parish Council to contact MP James Wilde and update him on the CPO as could be an advantage to have his support.

The toilet facilities down the beach need improving could income from the carpark be used for this.

A member of the public thanked the Parish Council for holding the virtual meetings and allowing the public to participate.

It was asked where the details are for the offer which the Parish Council submitted for Barrow Common, the Clerk confirmed that the offer letter is on the Parish website and that the delegated decisions for July will be made available in the coming days.

An update was also asked for on the Solicitors letter received from SH&DCRA, the Chair and Cllr Bax confirmed that the Parish Council had responded to the letter received stating that the solicitor needed to contact the Brancaster Commons Management Committee. Both the Solicitors letter and the Parish Council response are both on the website under News on the home page.

There is a tree which is hanging low over the footpath which leads towards the beach, Cllr Bax will contact the owner of the land which the tree is situated on and will ask for it to be cut.

13. Close at 20.50

BRANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL – MINUTES 1st SEPTEMBER 2020

Clerk: Mrs Michelle Wroth
Telephone: 07766 241127
Email: Brancaster.council@outlook.com



1. Welcome by the Chairman

2. Present: Cllr Campbell, Cllr G Bocking, Cllr Bax, Cllr Lawton, Cllr Cotton, Cllr Borthwick, Cllr Thompson, Cllr S Bocking, County Cllr Jamieson

Apologies: James Wild MP

Public: 26 joined the meeting via Zoom

3. To receive declaration of interests on agenda items - NONE

4. Confirmation of the minutes from General Meeting 4th August 2020, Agreed and Carried

5. Matters arising from minutes

5.1 Overgrown Hedges – Cllr Thompson advised that currently hedges cannot be cut so this will need to be monitored. Cllr Jamieson confirmed that it is not up to Highways to cut Hedges but those that own the hedge, Highways can only enforce the cutting if needed.

5.2 Board Walk – The overgrown board walk has now been cut and damaged boards have been boarded over as a temporary solution. This quick fix has caused a trip hazard as the boards are higher, so users need to be cautious. Cllr Lawton felt that the footpath from Brancaster to the Drove in Deepdale should be shut completely due to the state of them. Cllr Jamieson stated that the board walk may need to be closed in the future as currently the path in Holme/Thornham is closed and will move to Brancaster once completed. Cllr G Bocking expressed that he uses the board walk on his walk to work and felt it would be sad if it were to be closed as it could be closed for months. Cllr Jamieson asked for Cllr Lawton and Cllr G Bocking to update him on the Parish Councils preferred outcome.

5.3 Parish Documents/Archiving – Cllr Cotton had received a quote from a company in Fakenham that would scan the paperwork which needs archiving, and these can then be stored on the cloud. Its cost is £140 per 4,000 sheets. The original copies could possibly be stored in the container at Brancaster Village Hall if they are kept dry and not damp. A decision on the storage of the originals will be made later. Cllr Campbell proposed that a start is made on the archiving, Cllr Borthwick seconded decision carried. Action Cllr Cotton to organise for the first files to be taken to PaperKlip.

6. Parking on London Street – Cllr Campbell started off this agenda item by providing an update regarding the additional parking on Brancaster Playing Field. A meeting took place with Cllr Campbell and Richard Roberts, the site was assessed and there would have been the possibility to fit 350 cars on the site if parked appropriately. However, the entrance/exit to the site is narrow and would cause queuing on the A149 and would have an impact on the trade at the shop and Club 71. The overall decision was that this site would not be suitable for additional parking.

Cllr Campbell has been in discussion with Highways regarding timed/seasonal parking along London Street. The process for this is 6-9months, if the residents agree then the process should start sooner rather than later to have in place for 2021. There are costs involved in this anywhere from £4k-£8k for the TRO, residents that require on road parking would then need to purchase a parking permit.

Cllr Borthwick suggested that an advert was published in the Parish News asking residents to let the Parish Council know how they feel about pursuing the restrictions and whether anyone has other suggestions. This decision was supported by all.

In addition to this a quote has been received for 3 signs which would be placed on Mill Hill, nr Brancaster Garage and the Roman Fort. These signs would highlight parking spaces available at the Beach Carpark, high tide times and if Beach Road is flooded. The top estimate of these signs is £10k each, the cost would be covered by the parties which receive income from the Beach Carpark and in the same ratio with the Parish Councils being 20%. A meeting is taking place 9th September with all 3 parties and further updates will be provided.

7. Land west of Manor Farm Brancaster – Cllr Campbell updated all on the piece of land which would ideally be the new overflow carpark which the Parish Council need to have in place so Broad Lane can be double yellow lined. Cllr Thompson asked to see a map of the site and the proposed layout and planting strip. Cllr Campbell proposed that he would draw up the draft

planning application with plans and then bring to the Parish Council for approval before submission, Cllr Lawton seconded this proposal. Vote taken 6 in favour and 1 abstained (Cllr Borthwick)

8. Reports from WNBC and NCC

Cllr Jamieson gave an update on the outline radical traffic management which he is working on, this is concentrating on the stretch of the coast from Old Hunstanton up to and including Burnham Overy Staithe. This is a bottom up approach taking onboard the ideas of the Parishes and to be in place by summer 2021.

Cllr Jamieson stated that Norfolk has been discovered and that once the plans for the 3 signs to be erected within the Parish he would be able to part fund the 20% costs that the Parish Council would have to incur.

Cllr Lawton have a brief update on pavement parking and that this will become illegal everywhere, currently its only an offence in London. This is excellent news for the Parish after the parking issues this summer.

9. Finance

9.1 To approve accounts for payment. – All agreed and decision carried

Name	Business	Gross
Clerk (cheque)	September salary and Expenses	670.44
BHIB(cheque)	Local Council Insurance Renewal	1,067.53
Gamble Plant (Norfolk) Ltd (cheque)	Large Skip Hire	210.00
E-on (DD)	Street Lights	202.23
Westcotec (DD)	Street Light Maintenance	23.75
David Bracey (Cheque)	Annual Play Inspection	96.00
Heronwood Landscapes (Cheque)	Grass Cutting – Playing fields 16 th and 28 th July	260.00
Kevin Crompton (Cheque)	Grass Cutting – 6 th & 20 th July and 3 rd & 24 th August	360.00

9.2 Financial statement as at 10th August 2020 - All agreed and decision carried

10. To consider any planning matters and Borough Council decisions

Ref. No:	Address	Planning Details	Parish Councils Stance	BCKLWN
20/01129/F	3 Harbour View Terrace, Main Rd, Brancaster Staithe	Construction of ground floor single storey extension, installation of replacement rear and front windows and new roof glazing	Further details required will take forward as a delegated decision	
20/01194/F	Land N of Manor Farm House E of Manor Lodge And S of The Gables Broad Lane Brancaster	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 19/00538/F: The erection of two detached dwellings with associated parking and turning space with access from Broad Lane	Work already started no comments to put forward to BCKLWN	

11. Correspondences

- 11.1 – Email received from Brancaster Sports Club regarding COVID-19 expenditure – The Sports club have had outlay for Hand Sanitiser beside the play equipment, all Cllrs in favour that a sum of £300 would be given to cover these costs and be provided from the COVID-19 grant which the Parish Council received earlier in the year.
- 11.2 – Branodunum Fort – email received regarding the removal of the information signs, Clerk forward email onto the National Trust
- 11.3 – RAF Radar Station – email received regarding the doors be left open and the state of the insides of both buildings. The Barrow Common Management Committee have obtained quotes to have the doors locked on the radar station and for the windows to be fixed. The Parish Council will arrange a task force to clear the rubbish which has been left inside. Clerk to update the correspondence sender

12. Correspondences, received after published agenda

- 12.1 – Parking in Brancaster – James Wild MP had emailed the Parish Council as he had been contacted by several people in Brancaster during lockdown about the parking. James has been in contact with the local Police and will help in the future with the issue if he can.
- 12.2 – Email received regarding the Brancaster Community Assistance Facebook page. This Facebook page was created by a member of the Parish who is also a Parish Councillor. It is not run by the Parish Council and comments made are personal views not on behalf of the Parish Council. Clerk to send reply to the sender.

13. Other items for discussion/next agenda

- Parking at The Hard

14. Public Session – 20 minutes (3 minutes per member of the public)

A concern was raised by a member of the Public that the proposed 3 new signs would not be used for 6 months of the year and the implementation of the signs does not fix the problem and additional parking is needed. When contacting residents via the Parish News maybe useful to give them options to choose from rather leaving it open for all request as this would take more time to process and manage.

Parking should be looked at parish wide if restrictions were placed on certain roads this would just move the parking issue to other areas within the parish.

The idea of an advert in the Parish News is good however it would be nicer and more personal if a letter was sent to each house, the electoral roll would provide details of this however not every household will be included. Cllr Bax will draft a letter for the Parish Council to agree and then letter will be printed.

The road at the top of Choseley Road needs attention, Cllr Cotton to contact Highways and if the speed limit on this road could be reduce to 20MPH it would be more appropriate especially with the state and size of the road.

The Chair finished the meeting by thanking the Clerk for her efforts whilst being in post with this being her last meeting before she leaves 11th September.

15. Close at 20.25

Date of next meeting Tuesday 6th October 2020

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 6th October, 2020 at 6.30pm

The meeting was held using Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Cllr J Campbell (Chair), Cllr B Bax, Cllr G Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr C Cotton, Cllr R Lawton

Also in attendance: Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 25 Members of the Public

Meeting began at 6.32 pm

The Chair welcomed those present, and introduced the new Parish Clerk.

2020.10.06.01 - Declarations of Interest

- a) Cllr Cotton noted a general declaration, should it be required.

2020.10.06.02 - Apologies for absence

- a) *Apologies were accepted from Cllr Thompson¹*. NCC Cllr Jamieson had also noted his apologies.

2020.10.06.03 – Minutes

- a) Cllr Borthwick sought clarity that references to the Village Hall should state "Brancaster Village Hall". *With this amendment, the minutes of the meeting on 1st September 2020, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record²*.
- b) There were no matters raised arising from those minutes.

2020.10.06.04 - Reports

- a) Chairman's report: Cllr Campbell commented that the bulb planting was going well, with over a ton planted. The next session would be on Sat 10/10/20 at 2pm in Deepdale; volunteers were welcome. He hoped this would make a "significant impact". On car parking, progress was being made; a "useful meeting" had been held with landowners and their agent, with Cllr G Bocking and the Clerk present, and he was optimistic of some additional parking. A meeting with the National Trust was scheduled for later in the week to consider matters at the Staithe.
- b) Report from Borough Councillor: Cllr Lawton noted his attempt to contact the Fleur developer, and hoped this meeting may address his concerns. He also noted the proposed changes to national planning rules, adding that these would not override Neighbourhood Plans. Cllr Bax asked about the planning backlog, and Cllr Lawton notes that staff were still working from home, which made contact more involved.
- c) Report from County Councillor: no report

¹ An apology was subsequently received from Cllr S Bocking, who had been prevented from attending the meeting at short notice.

² To be signed later when possible

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

- d) Report from Clerk: The Clerk thanked the Chair for his welcome. He commented that he was working to catch up as quickly as possible and had spent considerable time on the audit process, a Freedom of Information request, and was beginning to get to grips with the website.

2020.10.06.05 – Finance

Cllr Campbell noted that Council now had a set of accounts, though they would likely be late getting to the External Auditor. The Internal Auditor was doing his job with a "fine toothcomb". All money was accounted for.

- a) The Clerk gave a brief description of how he had set out the accounts. He hoped this was clear, but welcomed questions, suggestions and comments, and was happy to go through the accounts with anyone on request. Regarding budget-setting for 21/22 he requested that Councillors and Groups should begin to assemble budget figures for presentation at the December meeting, with a view to setting the precept at the one in January. Current balances c.£91.3K, with £19.3 ring-fenced including £18.6K CIL. Cllr Bax asked what the £700 separate ring-fenced was – unspent COVID grant.
- b) *The expenditure listed was approved without objection³.*
- c) The Clerk outlined the issues with the audit. These related to difficulties with some physical records (lack of asset list, evidence of budget-setting process) and the order in which the process had been done, also clarity on Council as a Charity Trustee. He requested Council's permission to do a detailed "mea culpa" letter to the External Auditors, explaining the issues and asking for an extension. This would enable the 20/21 accounts to be completed with no knock-on problems. Cllr Campbell noted that the latter half of 2019 had not been conducted entirely "according to the book". *Councillors agreed without objection that the Clerk should proceed as above.*
- d) The Clerk outlined that CIL should really be spent on one-off projects, with general maintenance coming from budgeted expenditure – this would help with budgeting next year. *Council agreed that the Clerk should reallocate some listed CIL expenditure to different budgets.*
- e) *Two further items of expenditure were approved without objection⁴: £120 for repairs to Brancaster Village sign, and £335 for repairs to the Bus Shelter near the Ship public house.* Cllr Campbell noted that he hoped that Village children may design and produce tiles to decorate the latter. Cllr Lawton noted the need to check ownership of walls etc.

2020.10.06.06 – Planning

- a) There was a long and involved discussion on Planning Application 20/01191 (variation of condition 2 on previous application at Mayflower, Butchers Lane, Brancaster). This included the Chair allowing public comments. Issues raised related to: possible future changes, and associated rumours (any move to residential would require further permissions); current materials (cladding and "eyesore") and their accordance with original plans; noise from air-pumps and effects of trees on light; height of the building etc. Given the free-form nature of this, the Clerk inquired how he was to frame a response, including whether

³ See list at end of these minutes

⁴ Added to agenda after preparation of the detailed accounts

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

Councillors might agree to use comments from the public. *It was agreed to complete the process by email.*

- b) Council had been asked to respond to the Borough regarding a proposal formally to name the Lane leading to Brancaster Hall as "Hall Lane". *Council agreed (5 for, 1 abst) to this suggestion.*
- c) A late application had come in after the agenda. 20/01496 (extension, boat shed etc., Old Mill House, Brancaster). *It was again agreed to leave to email exchanges.* Cllr Bax made a plea that residents should be honest in their applications when proposing extensions that may become annexes – it would not necessarily mean Council would object, and would save a lot of discussion and rumour.

2020.10.06.07 - Delegated decisions etc.

- a) Council had made decisions during the COVID lockdown and beyond using Delegated Decisions, all of which had been publicly available throughout. These were noted, and the Clerk requested formal approval to include them as Council minutes.
- b) *Council adopted these notes as formal Council minutes.*
- c) *Council publicly confirmed the delegated decision to appoint the Clerk, and to allow him to act as a full signatory for the purposes of online banking.*

2020.10.06.08 - Other matters

- a) No reports from Council groups. Cllr Bax thanked the volunteers who had helped at Barrow Common, and there was an extensive discussion of Common rights etc. including transfers of those rights. Clerk noted his desire over time to produce definitive statements of the position which could be adopted to avoid loss of "institutional memory".
- b) Parking had been covered previously, but there would need to be a further meeting once an offer had been received.
- c) A Freedom of information request had been received on 8th September. The Clerk and Chair had prepared separate responses based on documentary evidence available and knowledge of events. The Clerk had then collated these to form a formal response, which had been sent and received. He hopes to meet the correspondent toward the end of October to address their concerns, and hopefully prevent further issues.
- d) Clerk noted the Parish Partnership scheme and suggested a formal request should be prepared to be passed at the December meeting, given the short deadline thereafter. Cllr Cotton confirmed he had much of this in hand including having met the County Officer concerned. Chevrons and speed roundels were possible in addition to the proposed gates.
- e) *Council agreed that a BPC facebook page should be set up.* This should provide information, but not be a discussion area. Posts should come from Council via the Clerk, not be initiated by the public. There should be a direct route to make all comments to Council via email. Cllr Bax stated that she would dissolve the Community Assistance page once the Council page was up and running.

2020.10.06.09 – Correspondence

- a) The Chair noted that a letter had been received regarding parking, which had been forwarded to the Golf Club which was dealing with the complaints. Given

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

the nature of the letter, it had originally been planned to discuss this later (item 13.c). A request for a parking permit was included which Councillors rejected as the correspondent did not live in the Parish – Clerk to write. Clerk also to write to the Golf Club requesting consideration of possible disabled parking spaces.

2020.10.06.10 – A.O.B. and Agenda requests

- a) Cllr Lawton inquired about progress on the archiving etc. of historical records. Cllr Cotton confirmed that this was ongoing. The question of long-term sifting and storage was raised, and it was mooted that a group should set up to deal with this – the Clerk asked to be involved in that, and noted that much of this would be published on the website. Cllr Lawton also asked about speeding; could the Police be invited to come with a speed gun – Clerk to write. Cllr Bax referred to a cardboard cut-out of a policeman; Cllr Lawton urged caution, as with mock speed cameras. Volunteers for a speed watch could be sought for a speed watch campaign on facebook. Cllr Borthwick raised problems with hedges – Clerk referred to NCC not being very good at dealing with this; Clerk to deal with County Cllr and Highways Engineer. Cllr G Bocking to forward a similar email – could be included in ranger request. Cllr Cotton suggested inclusion in Parish magazine.

2020.10.06.13 – Public Questions

- Edward Gould noted that a Councillor was required to be a Trustee on the Robert Smith charity. He requested no changes to Neighbourhood Plan information on the website.
- Val Carpenter had documentation relating to Barrow Common. Clerk to connect her with Michael Bucher for disposal.
- Amy Loose asked about the mail merge dealing with parking – this to be dealt with out of the meeting.
- Stephen Harvey referred to the need for restrictions rather than additional space at the Staithe. Chair echoed this, including issues on the water, and Village Green rules, including charges. He was happy to talk to anyone on this. The question of yellow lines was raised, and it was noted that they would not be installed until alternative parking was provided.
- Clerk requested that the public let him know in advance if they wished to speak to help with running the questions. Chair requested help with bulb-planting.

2020.10.06.14 – Next meeting

- a) *This was confirmed as being by Zoom on Tuesday 3rd November at 6.30pm*

2020.10.06.15 – Private Session

- a) *Council agreed to go into private session to discuss details of the Clerk's conditions etc. [Public "left" at c. 8.30pm.]*
- b) *This item had been dealt with previously*
- c) *It was agreed that the Clerk should be paid on point 30 of the National Scales, with LGPS pension. Contract to be based on this and dealt with by Chair and Clerk.*

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

EXPENDITURE AGREED:

Date	To	For	Gross	VAT	budget
1/10/20	Westcotec	Street Lights	£23.75	£3.96	UTILITIES
6/10/20	Marcus Townshend - 3 inv	Groundworks	£617.50	£0.00	MISC
6/10/20	Heronwood	Grass Cutting	£260.00	£0.00	MISC
6/10/20	Peter Bickell	Cemetery	£130.00	£0.00	MISC
6/10/20	Simon Bower - interim	Salary	£500.00	£0.00	SALARIES
11/10/20	Eon - approx	Street Lights	£202.23	£9.63	UTILITIES

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 3rd November at 6.30pm

The meeting was held using Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Cllr J Campbell (Chair), Cllr B Bax, Cllr S Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr J Thompson

Also in attendance: Cllr A Jamieson (NCC), Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 15 Members of the Public, at various times

Meeting began at 6.32 pm

2020.11.03.01 - Declarations of Interest

- a) One cheque (Item 5b) was payable to Cllr S Bocking – this was raised.

2020.11.03.02 - Apologies for absence

- a) There were apologies from Cllrs G Bocking and Cotton

2020.11.03.03 – Minutes

- a) *The minutes of the meeting on 6th October, 2020 having been previously circulated were accepted as a true record¹.* [Prop: Cllr Lawton; 2nd: Cllr Bax; 1 abst.]
- b) There were no matters raised arising from the above minutes.

2020.11.03.04 – Reports

Not taken in this order:

- a) As Chair, Cllr Campbell noted that he hoped the parking survey would be published next week; consideration needed to be given as to how best to reach second-home owners. A second meeting had taken place with the National Trust to look at the car parking issue – they had wanted to discuss other matters, but had agreed to the idea of removing vehicles. He expressed concerns about compliance with the port marine safety code and the fact that the Fairways committee had not met this year.
- b) For the Borough, Cllr Lawton stated he was awaiting a formal announcement of the appointment of a cabinet member for COVID matters.
- c) For the County, Cllr Jamieson noted that his role on Finance was helping him address issues. He had had comments about the multiplicity of roadworks, including three by Anglian Water, and, having raised this (“exchanged words”) with relevant officers stated this should not happen again. On COVID, he too was aware that Cllr Stuart Dark may resume his role; the current COVID rate in the area was 88/100,000 with 20 currently in the QE Hospital. For the future he referred to work on the Coastal Path.
- d) The Clerk reported that: a new CIL payment of £6.5K should soon be received. He had had contact from the Crab Hut proprietor who confirmed that payment was being made. He had been requested by the FoI correspondent to note that

¹ To be signed when practicable.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: 1/12/20

the proposed meeting had not yet happened, meaning that he regarded it as "not yet satisfactorily closed"². The facebook page was now up and running. The Police had replied that they would do a speed-check, probably after half-term. A deposit under s.38³ had been made by Lugden Hill Farms.

Cllr Bax noted that there were now the minimum number of volunteers for the speedwatch to be viable, probably after lockdown. She had emailed the lead volunteers who had dealt with support during the previous lockdown, to prepare for any need, though she anticipated this would be much less.

2020.11.03.05 - Finance

- a) The Clerk presented the financial report, and the figures for spending against budgets. Current balances were c.£88.4 of which c.£50.9 was not ringfenced. He noted that the Salaries budget would be exceeded, and that the subs budget already had – this should probably be subsumed into admin in future.
- b) *Council agreed, without objection, all expenditure listed, with a revised amount due to Cllr S Bocking also being accepted⁴.* [Cllr Campbell asked that the Clerk confirm that CIL receipts reflected what was actually happening, and noted that he had asked the Borough Leader to consider helping with some portion of Borough CIL receipts, which had not been rejected.]
- c) The Clerk updated Councillors on the audit process for 2019/20. Paperwork was ready to be sent once the forms had been (re-)approved, including an explanation of the issues, and how these would be addressed.
 - i. The public and Councillor packs had included the Internal Auditor's report, which was deemed formally received⁵. [Cllr Campbell noted his thanks to Christopher Jones for his work.]
 - ii. *Council considered the Governance Statements on the AGAR (Audit) form, and agreed that "no" should be answered to Boxes 1, 5, 6 and 7.* [Cllr Bax noted that controls were not in place during difficult times, but that Council committed to dealing with the issue raised; Clerk noted he would be adding this to his final documentation.]
 - iii. *Council agreed the figures presented, with the Asset figure remaining the same as in the previous year, pending a full review of the Asset List.* [The Asset list was explained and discussed.]
- d) The Clerk noted that Councillors had received earlier that day the Draft Financial Regulations, and these should be considered tabled for consideration at the next meeting.
- e) The Clerk noted that there would be a brief informal session for Councillors to look at the budget-setting process at the end of the meeting.

2020.11.03.06 – Planning

Cllr Campbell asked if there were any public comments on planning matters – there were none.

- a) *Planning Application 20/01575 (Bungalow extension – 4 Boughey Close, Brancaster) was accepted without objection.*

² Meeting is due on 6/11/20

³ This allows landowners to register land as being exempt from future rights of way claims.

⁴ Figures at end of minutes, including revised amount.

⁵ The text of this report is appended to these minutes.

- b) There was a brief discussion of previous applications, which did not include any changes.

2020.11.03.07 - Delegated decisions etc.

- a) No such decisions were reported.

2020.11.03.08 - Other matters

- a) No Group reports were made, though Cllr Bax repeated her thanks to those who had helped with planting the bulbs.
- b) It was noted that local stores were ready to help if needed during lockdown. The Clerk was asked to investigate further grants.

2020.11.03.09 - Correspondence and requests

- a) No correspondence not already reported had been received.

2020.11.03.10 - AOB and agenda requests

- a) Cllr Borthwick referred to the hedge situation. Clerk brought up an email suggesting County could meet to look at the problems, and Cllr Borthwick asked to be included in those discussions.
- b) There were no other matter or agenda requests raised.

2020.11.03.11 - Public Questions

Caroline Harper asked about access in the Cemetery – this is the responsibility of the PCC not the PC; PC work had been done as a courtesy, after which it would be handed back. Julian Walton referred in detail to his long correspondence with the Chair on conflicts of interest, SHADCRA and a solicitors' letter. Cllr Campbell noted that the PC regarded the claim as without merit, and referred to the Clerk. The Clerk noted that there was no issue with people serving on two bodies, as long as they acted in the interests of the body they were on at the time of their contributions. Dealing with pecuniary interests, these related to personal ones, rather than those relating to a group of which they may be a member where personal income was not derived. The Clerk and Council had no role in declarations or registering of interests – the Clerk may advise, but it is clear that this advice cannot be enforced; these are matters for the Monitoring Officer, not Council. Further comments back and forth concluded with the Clerk noting that if the Monitoring Officer says there is nothing to deal with, that is effectively "the end of it". Both Cllrs Bax and Campbell noted that this these rules result in a frustrating situation. [Cllr Borthwick had received a call during this exchange from Cllr S Bocking. He had been unable to be heard due to technical difficulties, but – she reported – he was prepared to meet Mr Walton in person to discuss this further.] Cllr Bocking was then able to make himself heard, and stated this was in his view a "witch hunt". The discussion became more heated and was finally concluded by the intervention of the Clerk and Chair.

2020.11.03.12 – Meeting dates

- a) The next meeting was confirmed as December 1st at 6.30pm, using Zoom.
- b) Meetings for the remainder of the Council were confirmed as: 12/1/21⁶; 2/2/21; 2/3/21; 6/4/21 & 4/5/21⁷.

⁶ Note a week later than usual

⁷ AGM unless there are any changes in legislation due to COVID

The meeting concluded at 7.38pm, after which the Clerk had a brief session with Councillors to look at budget-setting. No decisions were made.

Internal Auditor's Report

I am required to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in controls, identified by me during the internal audit, in those cases where I have answered 'No' to the internal control objective being achieved. I give below the required statements referring to the letters on the list.

B. In respect of payments being supported by invoices my answer is 'No'. Of the 21 payments sampled invoices for 3 payments with a total value of £2295 were not supported by invoices. However, all of these payments were authorised by the council. The implication is that the council could in theory be paying for goods/services which have not been received. In the case of the 3 missing invoices it is clear to me that the council has received the goods/services involved and payments were correctly made. It seems that the missing invoices arise because of misfiling/mislaying and the difficulties arising because of the change in clerk and other circumstances which I understand have been explained to you by the current clerk. The council has assured me that action is being taken to obtain copies of the 3 missing invoices and in future all invoices will be carefully retained on file. For all the other parts of Question B my answer is 'Yes'.

C. The council did not assess the significant risks of achieving its objectives etc. during the year ended 31 March 2020. This could have led to financial difficulties, fraud or error which could have led to the council losing money. In my opinion nothing has been so lost. The council had already set itself an adequate system for assessing risk but in that year had simply not performed it. The council has assured me that the risk assessment will be performed annually.

D. No budget was prepared for the year ended 31 March 2020 ergo progress was not monitored. The implication is that there was a risk that the council could have set the precept incorrectly and in extreme circumstances run out of resources. In the particular circumstances I do not think these were likely to have occurred. The council has assured me that a budget will be set annually in future and progress against budget will be regularly monitored. For the other part of Question D my answer is 'Yes'.

There is no failure in this respect but I must explain that on Question F no petty cash exists. The procedure is that small items of expenditure are disbursed from the clerk's personal funds and reimbursed monthly through expenses claims with supporting vouchers, and such expenses claims are approved by the council before payment. I have ticked 'Not covered' because coverage is not required.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:1/12/20

EXPENDITURE APPROVED:

Date	Ref	To	For	Amount	incl VAT	budget
1/11/20	DD	Westcotec	Street Lights	£23.75	£3.96	UTILITIES
3/11/20	102469	Paper-Klip	Documents	£175.01	£29.17	ADMIN
3/11/20	102470	Chris Cotton	Expenses +	£119.40	£15.40	RES - CIL
3/11/20	102471	Stephen Bocking	Expenses	£32.70	£0.00	RES - CIL
3/11/20	102472	Heronwood	Grass cutting	£260.00	£0.00	OPEN SPACES
3/11/20	102473-4	Salaries incl tax/NI	Salary	£1,287.46	£0.00	SALARIES
3/11/20	102475	David Barden	Delivery	£30.00	£0.00	MISC
14/11/20	DD	Eon - approx	Street Lights	£202.23	£9.63	UTILITIES

There had been a £20 cash receipt relating to an overpaid account – RES-CIL budget.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:1/12/20

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday, 1st December at 6.30pm

The meeting was held using Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Cllr J Campbell (Chair), Cllr B Bax, Cllr G Bocking, Cllr S Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr C Cotton, Cllr J Thompson

Also in attendance: Cllr A Jamieson (NCC), Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 16 Members of the Public

Meeting began at 6.30 pm

2020.12.01.01 - Declarations of Interest

- a) Cllr Borthwick declared in interest in Planning item 6b, Cllr S Bocking on Planning item 6c and item 8c. Cllr Cotton declared a general interest on anything "contentious", should it be required as the agenda progressed.

2020.12.01.02 - Apologies for absence

- a) There were apologies received from Cllr Lawton.

2020.12.01.03 – Minutes

- a) *The minutes of the meeting on 3rd November, 2020, having been previously circulated were accepted as a true record without objection.*
- b) Arising from those minutes the Clerk noted that he had received an interim response from the External Auditor – a full response could not be given until the end of the Electors' rights period (18th December). Cllr Bax noted that the meeting was being recorded. Cllr Borthwick asked whether the Clerk had received emails about hedges – he had not – she would re-send.

2020.12.01.04 Reports

- a) Chairman's report. Cllr Campbell noted that it had been a busy month, with meetings with the National Trust, relating to car-parking, though nothing was "settled". There would be another bulb-planting session on Sunday – thanks to Cllr Cotton for rotovating the edge of the Playing Field. The Traffic Survey was now being delivered, and was available on the website; this information would be forwarded to Cllr Jamieson once collated.
- b) Report from Borough Councillor. Cllr Lawton was absent as above.
- c) Report from County Councillor. Cllr Jamieson noted that he had a good meeting of the Norfolk Coastal Partnership Forum; he would be feeding comments about the AONB and "reducing the effects of the motor car" to County Cllrs. The latest NCC info about COVID had been forwarded to Clerks, and if anyone felt there were individuals "falling through the cracks" to let him know. Stage 4 of the Coastal Path had been launched, and Section 3 was with an Inspector. He had spoken to Historic England and the Borough Council about listing of sites on Barrow Common. He remarked on the partial lifting of COVID restrictions over Christmas, and reminded the over-50s that free flu vaccinations were available. Cllr Bax added that the "really great group" of Village volunteers could assist if requested.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

- d) Report from Clerk. The Clerk noted that the facebook page was now fully up and running, and a lot of information was also on the website – he welcomed feedback.

2020.12.01.05 - Finance

- a) The Clerk presented the financial figures. General funds available £42.9K. The salaries and subs budgets had been exceeded as previously noted.
- b) Expenditure items (listed in document pack) were summarised, invoices having been sent to the Finance Group. A grant to Brancaster Sports Club had already been paid so was removed. Two late invoices were added for consideration - £179 for the printing etc. of the survey, and £68.40 for the rotovator hire. Cllr Bax commented that Council should not deal with late invoices as a matter of course; Clerk “absolutely agreed” adding that this was to avoid a lengthy wait until mid-January for payment, especially given current banking issues. Council agreed all expenditure by consensus¹.
- c) The Clerk referred to items in the draft Financial Regulations relating to quotation levels and his delegated spending limit as being items for specific consideration². Cllr Thompson proposed (seconded by Cllr Bax) that Standing Orders should be amended to take out the current Financial Regulations contained there. The adoption of the draft Financial Regulations was agreed unanimously, with relevant changes to be made to Standing Orders.
- d) The Clerk began to present a draft budget for comments from Cllrs. He referred to moving the Churchyards budget into Section 137 as this should properly be donations. Cllr Campbell supported this noting that in the past an agreement to improve the cemetery had been made, but there was now a large amount going to the two churches which Council should not be paying directly. Cllr Thompson intervened saying “we need to establish the headings”, that there had not been a Churchyard budget, and there should be VAT included somewhere; it was “all over the ruddy place” “worse than the old budgeting system” “chaotic” and “it’s pathetic”. Cllr Campbell stated that VAT should not be included as it belonged in cash flow, not a budget. Cllr Bax commented that she felt it to be very clear. Cllr Campbell wished to close the discussion, but the Clerk asked to be allow to go through what he had wanted to say before the interventions. He started to do so, showing how the figures were derived from what he had inherited, noting that he was more than happy to move things around which was the point of this exercise. There were again interventions from Cllr Thompson asking why there was a Section 137 budget heading (the Clerk observed it was a legal requirement), and questions about salaries (Clerk noting that there was difference between contractors and employees). Cllr Campbell noted that the document stated it was a working draft, which had been presented early to allow for discussion. Cllr Bax suggested a meeting of the Finance Group with the Clerk, which was agreed – Clerk to arrange. Cllr Campbell noted banking problems, and Cllr Thompson suggested changing banks. There was further discussion on this, possibly to be referred to a future agenda.

¹ Listed at end of minutes.

² These limits being the levels before VAT.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

2020.12.02.06 – Planning

- a) Members of the Public were invited to comment on planning applications. (20/01695) Felicity Pugh commented on inconvenience, the size of the plot, loss of sunshine, trees and traffic issues. Susie Ullswater noted a smaller development had previously been refused and the access to the A149 being dangerous. Edward Gould added environmental and biodiversity concerns.
- b) PA 20/01695 – 4 dwellings, garden of Marsh House, Cross Lane, Brancaster. There was extensive discussion of this (including reference to the safety of the access on to the A149, and possible widening). Council agreed to object on the grounds of: loss of biodiversity; road safety concerns arising from increased traffic along narrow roads and dangerous junctions; conflicts with the Neighbourhood Plan (parking places etc.); difficulties for utility vehicles etc.; inappropriate density. A request to be made to Cllr Lawton to call this in.
- c) PA 20/01672 – demolition to 8 new dwellings, Cherry Trees, Town Lane, Brancaster Staithe. There was an extensive discussion of this, including reference to the NPPF and “major developments”. Council agreed to object to this application on grounds of: access issues (space for cars, utility vehicles etc.); inappropriate density (“suburbia”); massive overdevelopment; garden size; all this in the AONB and with conflicts with the Neighbourhood Plan. A request to be made to Cllr Lawton to call this in. There ensued a discussion on the possibility of requirements for properties to be occupied.
- d) There was one late application: 20/01726 – boatshed to the Smithy, Main Rd, Brancaster Staithe. Council agreed to make no objection to this application.
- e) Cllr Campbell explained that an informal meeting had been held to look in detail at six sites for potential car parking³; these had been presented by a local landowner in response to previous enquiries. Two had been removed from consideration due to either being out of the Parish, or with insurmountable access problems. A third was on the wrong side of the A149, and too far away. This left the site [1] which had originally been proposed by Councillors (East of Home Piece) which the landowner had ruled out, one to the East of Mill Rd [2], and one at the South of Cherry Field [4]. There was an opportunity for comment by the public at his point. There was extensive discussion, with Cllr Thompson being keen that other options, including option 1 should be pursued. The majority were against this in case it made future negotiations problematical. The Clerk suggested he write to the landowner to establish the costs of rental or purchase of sites 2 & 4, while asking once more about site 1. This was agreed by consensus.
- f) There were no other planning matters reported.

2020.12.01.07 – Delegated decisions etc.

- a) There were no delegated decisions this month.

2020.12.01.08 - Other matters

- a) Cllr Bax requested volunteers for bulb-planting. Cllr G Bocking asked that the Clerk chase up a date for delivery of the Christmas Tree; he wished to purchase more light bulbs, which the Clerk authorised under his delegated spending - it was agreed that in relation to the installation “Gary is in charge”.

³ These had been included in the public pack – references are to that map.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

- b) The Clerk presented a draft policy on public questions at meetings, which had been circulated. Council agreed by consensus to adopt this draft as a formal Policy. Cllr Cotton noted that another complaint against another Cllr had been “thrown out”.
- c) It was explained that North Norfolk District Council and others were seeking a change in primary legislation to ensure that a loophole in the treatment of second home/holiday lets was closed – this to prevent owners avoiding full Council Tax. It was agreed by six votes for, with one abstention, that the Clerk should write to James Wilde MP supporting these efforts.
- d) Cllr Campbell explained that the Parish Partnership scheme might part-fund access improvement to any car parks. The Clerk brought discussion back to the bid proposal for gateways as Village entrances. It was agreed unanimously to submit a bid for Village Gateways costing c.£12,700 to the Parish Partnership Scheme.
- e) Cllr Campbell outlined possible reasons for registering the Playing Field as a Village Green. This included protection against future development, and the preservation of open space as pressure on existing space was added to by new housing. Anthony Law supported this from the Sports Club perspective. Cllr Thompson suggested there may be risks, and wished for more information, and even legal advice. Cllr Cotton referred to protection for future generations, and felt this would be increased. Cllr Thompson asked about the gifting of the green – this was by public subscription. Cllr Borthwick proposed moving to a vote, seconded by Cllr Cotton. Cllr Thompson once more referred to taking legal advice, proposing this formally. Clerk noted he would as a matter of course do so, as this was an unfamiliar process, with which Cllr Thompson was happy, as long as this advice was satisfactory. Cllr Borthwick’s proposal to begin registering the Playing Field as a Village Green was accepted with no objections. Cllr Thompson and the Chair then had a heated exchange in which Cllr Thompson asserted that the Chair was acting illegally, by stating that it would be “passed anyway”. Cllr Bax supported the Chair, and asserted (correctly) that no such statement had been made.

2020.12.01.09 - Correspondence and requests

- a) There was no correspondence to report that had not already been forwarded to Cllrs.
- b) It was agreed to support the 20mph limit being extended further into The Close, Brancaster.
- c) It was noted that there were now sufficient volunteers to set up a Speedwatch group. Council agreed that the Clerk should arrange for a Speedwatch group to be set up, with future administration to be done by the Group itself.

2020.12.01.10 – AOB and agenda requests

- a) There were no further comments made by Cllrs.
- b) A request to have parking on future agendas was made.

2020.12.01.11 - Public Questions

- a) Edward Gould requested that the website reference requesting comments on the Neighbourhood Plan be removed – Clerk to action.
Caroline Harper asked whether the possible change of status of the Playing Field would affect parking – the Chair assured her it would not.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

Cllr Borthwick asked if information about help from NCC could be publicised on notice boards for those not online – Clerk and Cllr Cotton to action.

2020.12.01.12 - Next meeting

- a) The next meeting was confirmed as 6.30pm on Tuesday, 12th January 2021, to be held using Zoom.

EXPENDITURE AGREED

Date	To	For	Amount	of which VAT	budget
1/12/20	Salaries incl tax/NI	Salary	£1,067.10	£0.00	PERSONNEL
1/12/20	Westcotec	Street Lights	£23.75	£3.96	UTILITIES
1/12/20	Heronwood - tbc	Grass Cutting	£260.00	£0.00	OPEN SPACES
1/12/20	Witley Press	Printing	£179.00	£0.00	RESERVES
1/12/20	Chris Cotton - expenses	Rotovator	£68.40	£11.40	OPEN SPACES
14/12/20	Eon - approx	Street Lights	£202.23	£9.63	UTILITIES

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 12th January, 2021 at 6.30pm

The meeting was held using Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Cllr J Campbell (Chair), Cllr B Bax, Cllr G Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr C Cotton, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr J Thompson

Also in attendance: Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 30 Members of the Public (at various times)

Meeting began at 6.30 pm – The Chair requested that all present should remain muted unless contributing, and there were brief technical discussions as to how this could be done. He also noted the meeting was being recorded.

2021.01.12.01 - Declarations of Interest

- a) No declarations of interest were made.

2021.01.12.02 - Apologies for absence

- a) Cllr S Bocking had sent apologies for absence¹.

2021.01.12.03 – Minutes

- a) *The minutes of the meeting on 1st December, 2020, having been previously circulated were approved without amendment².*
- b) The Clerk noted that the advice he was asked to seek re Playing Field (registration as Village Green) and potential car parks (purchase of) had been difficult to get. NALC's lawyers had declared a conflict of interest – he was pursuing alternative avenues.

2021.01.12.04 - Reports

- a) The Chair reported that there had been much discussion of the work at Dormy triangle, with which he would deal later.
- b) For BCKLWN, Cllr Lawton noted that he had been passing information to the Clerk which had been disseminated to Cllrs and the Public. As many Borough staff had been re-deployed for lockdown-related work, there were some delays on day-to-day business.
- c) No report from NCC Cllr Jamieson.
- d) The Clerk noted that the FoI request received last year had been answered, and receipt acknowledged; further questions had been raised. The audit³ period ended on 18th December, after which Council was expecting the formal external report; this had been delayed due to questions on car park monies from SHADCRA. He had been contacted regarding a shared equity house becoming available in the Parish – further details would be posted, but those present were asked to alert interested individuals.

¹ As had NCC Cllr Jamieson, which the Clerk recalled later.

² To be signed when possible.

³ Electors' Rights

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

2021.01.12.05 - Finance

- a) The Clerk presented the financial report. This showed bank balances of c.£84K. He noted that, since these were made public, he had finally managed to access a bank statement – this showed that due to additional income the figures were actually around £8K more than this; Cllrs had had revised figures, and the Public were advised they could ask for a copy. The salaries and subs budgets were overspent, as previously noted.
- b) *All expenditure items (listed in document pack) were approved by consensus as listed⁴.*
- c) Clerk went through the draft budget figures which had been presented last month and available publicly; a Finance Group meeting had taken place and made some modifications. He had made one change removing an item entered twice. *The budget figures were agreed without objection⁵.*
- d) Clerk showed the precept figure required to meet the budget agreed. There was a discussion of the level involving (variously) the need to meet the budget, building up reserves and a desire not to increase too much. A proposal was made to set the precept at £22K (Cllr Lawton, seconded Cllr Bax). An amendment to £25K was proposed (Cllr Thompson, seconded Cllr Campbell); this was defeated 2-5. *The precept was agreed for 2021/22 as £22K (unanimous).*

2021.01.12.06 – Planning

- a) Public comments were allowed before each planning item in turn:
- b) PA 20/01496 (revisions, Old Mill House, Brancaster) – *It was agreed by consensus that the Clerk should write thanking for moves made to meet previous comments, but asking for cladding to be removed, or at least defined.*
- c) PA 20/02028 (extension and store, 15 Branodunum, Brancaster) – *It was agreed by consensus to raise no objection to this, but to request that the public footpath should be kept open throughout any works.*
[Cllr Bax noted that Members of the Public should be encouraged to add comments to the BCKLWN Planning portal]
- d) PA 20/02029 (extension, window and roof replacements, solar panels and heat pump, Old School House, Burnham Deepdale) – *It was agreed by consensus to object to this application on the basis of the design of the windows and the lack of the parking spaces required under the Neighbourhood Plan revisions.*

2021.01.12.07 - Delegated decisions etc.

- a) Clerk noted that there had been three delegated decisions referring to Planning Applications: PA 20/01823 (The Hide, Broad Lane, Brancaster) – no objection; PA 20/01695 (Marsh House, Cross Lane Brancaster) – sustain objection despite amendments; PA 20/01890 (North House, The Drove, Brancaster Staithe) – support if painting more sensitive.

2021.01.12.08 - Other matters

- a) Cllr Campbell noted the Finance Group had met, as above.
- b) Cllr Campbell noted that a letter had been received from the landowner relating to the possible car park(s). A response had been drawn up, agreed by Councillors and sent.

⁴ See detailed summary at end of these minutes.

⁵ See figures at end of these minutes.

Signed:

(Chair)

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- c) The Clerk noted that there had been 121 email and 45 hard-copy response to the Parking Survey. These would not be easy to collate, but best kept within Council to avoid GDPR issues; offers of help were made.
- d) Cllr Borthwick went through the arrangements she had discussed with the Clerk for car parking permits. Forms (newly designed) would be available online, and should be sent with SAE to the Clerk. She would check that they were permanent residents and issue the passes. Clerk added that he felt the process should be restricted to a specific period (February). Cllr Bax added that paper copies should be available elsewhere; Cllr Borthwick would be delivering to some retail outlets.
- e) *It was agreed to minute Council's agreement that the membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme for the Clerk's pension should be from his appointment (14/9/20). (Prop - Cllr Campbell; 2nd - Cllr Lawton; unanimous)*
- f) Lockdown requirements. Cllr Bax noted sessions were available for volunteers (9th and 24th Feb). It was noted that Titchwell reserve car park had been closed – as this was opposite to what the Clerk had been told he was asked to write. The question of visits from out of area and second home-owners was raised; Police were investigating. Cllr Campbell noted that this was not a matter for the PC given its potentially divisive nature.

2021.01.12.09 - Correspondence and requests

- a) Clerk reported no relevant correspondence which had not already been sent to Cllrs.

2021.01.12.10 – A.O.B & Agenda requests

- a) Cllr Lawton referred to Freebridge housing at Brentwood in Brancaster Staithe which he continued to chase up. There were contributions from several present relating to the possible development of 28 houses, difficulties of access unless using the Village Hall drive (which would not be agreed), written assurances of alternative housing and a previous visit to a PC meeting by a representative. Those with concerns were urged to contact Cllr Lawton as Borough Cllr. Cllr Campbell asked Edward Gould to update those present on the Neighbourhood Plan review process. A clarification note from the Inspector required responses to various questions, which had been given. This was followed by a fact-check report to ensure all details were correct – Cllrs had been asked to respond and two had done so; those comments were noted. Edward would reply to the Borough. There had been reassurance that neither the Borough or the Inspector felt there was a need for a further referendum, and the timescale was likely to be around five weeks from the final documentation to the Plan being “made”. Cllr Campbell stated he wished to thank both Edward and Christopher Pratt for their efforts.

Correspondence had been received about Mayflower Lodge. There was concern about the design which had been approved on Appeal – Clerk to write to Borough raising concerns.

2021.01.12.11 – Public Questions

- a) There was a very long and involved discussion, contributed to by several Members of the Public and Councillors, on recent work at the Dormy Triangle. Concerns, and anger, were expressed over the potential effect of the works on drainage, tidal flooding (including of adjacent properties), and the Coastal Path,

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plus a lack of notice to Common Rights holders, SSSI status⁶ and other issues. Both the Clerk and Victoria Egan (National Trust) would address these issues through channels. The question of the ownership of the land was also discussed, and the possibility of the PC taking this on. Cllr Bax stressed the importance of notice of works on Commons being given in advance.

Verily Borthwick asked for clarification on the situation regarding donations to the Church, including for graveyards – Clerk noted these were the responsibility of the Church, and that, following a discussion with Revd Hines it had been agreed that donation requests should be from both Churches at the same time. There was no intent to de-fund, but to ensure fair shares; the Mill Hill cemetery was a separate project.

Cllr G Bocking thanked people who had helped with working parties in the graveyards.

Cllr Bax reminded those applying for grants of the need to submit accounts.

2021.01.12.12 - Next meeting

- a) *It was confirmed that the next meeting would be on Tuesday, 2nd February 2021, at 6.30pm, held using Zoom.*

The meeting ended at 8.25pm

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

EXPENDITURE

Date	To	For	Amount	of which VAT	budget
1/1/21	Westcotec	Street Lights	£23.75	£3.96	utilities
12/1/21	Kevin Crompton	Grass Cutting	£540.00	£0.00	open spaces
12/1/21	Gary Bocking - expenses	Tree Lights	£99.99	£0.00	utilities
12/1/21	Heronwood	Grass Cutting	£85.00	£0.00	open spaces
12/1/21	Salaries incl tax/NI	Salary	£1,067.10	£0.00	salaries
12/1/21	Alltoment Rent	Allotments	£960.00	£0.00	misc
12/1/21	Eon	Street Lights	£202.23	£9.63	utilities

INCOME

Allotment rent	£480.00	£0.00	misc
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⁶ This later confirmed not to be the case.

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2021-22 BUDGET AGREED 12/1/21**EXPENDITURE**

	20/21	21/22	notes
s.137 (donations)	£0.00	£1,932.16	5% of operating budget
Open Spaces	£13,210.00	£10,029.75	
Churchyards	£2,900.00	£0.00	
Utilities	£3,210.00	£3,512.72	
Admin	£4,541.80	£4,335.00	
Salaries	£11,041.00	£17,698.28	
Insurance	£1,500.00	£1,067.53	
Repairs/Fees	£900.00	£1,000.00	
Subs	£235.00	£0.00	
Legal	£0.00	£1,000.00	
Contingency		£1,932.16	5% of operating budget
Miscellaneous	£0.00	£0.00	
Operating budget	£37,537.80	£38,643.28	total excl 137/contingency
Total - excl VAT	<u>£37,537.80</u>	<u>£42,507.61</u>	incl 137/contingency

Ring fenced funds	new 21/22
Parish Partnership - gates	£6,350.00

Total new ring-fenced	£6,350.00	
Total - operations + r/f	<u>£48,857.61</u>	total funds required

INCOME

Income - car park donation	£27,639.00	£27,500.00	estimate
Income - CTSG		£60.00	last year for this
total expected non-precept income		<u>£27,560.00</u>	

Amount required to cover	<u>£21,297.61</u>	i.e. budget less other income
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Precept	£20,000.00	<u>£22,000.00</u>	agreed 12/1/21
Tax base	738.80	751.60	
Band D	£27.07	<u>£29.27</u>	rise Band D property 8.13% c. 4p per week
Total Band D	£1,837.20	tbc	i.e. including Police/NCC/BC etc

Notes:

s.137 legal limit is £8.32 per elector (20/21) - 810 electors = £6,739.20
 misc budget for revenue neutral items - i.e. which come in and go out

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(Chair)

Date:

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 2nd February, 2021 at 6.30pm

The meeting was held using Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Cllr J Campbell (Chair), Cllr B Bax, Cllr S Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr C Cotton, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr J Thompson

Also in attendance: Cllr A Jamieson (NCC), Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 25 Members of the Public

Meeting began at 6.30 pm

2021.02.02.01 - Declarations of Interest

- a) There was a declaration of interest from Cllr Thompson on item 6c¹.

2021.02.02.02 - Apologies for absence

- a) Apologies were received from Cllr Gary Bocking (illness)².

2021.02.02.03 – Minutes

- a) The minutes of the meeting on January 12th 2021, having been previously been circulated, were accepted as a true record³.

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

- b) The Clerk noted that correspondents submitting Freedom of Information requests were not happy with his responses – this was, he felt, not his problem. There may be a need for consideration of a process to end such repetitive requests.

2021.02.02.04 - Reports

- a) Chairman's report: Cllr Campbell referred to continuing conversations on possible car parks. He had made a drawing of needs at Mill Rd, for c.45 cars – this would likely be expensive due to access; he awaited a response.
- b) Report from Borough Councillor: Cllr Lawton noted that he was sending a lot of information to the Clerk which was being passed on.
- c) Report from County Councillor: Cllr Jamieson noted that COVID rates were coming down, care homes should have been fully vaccinated, and over 65s should be soon – a vaccination centre would be opening soon in Hunstanton. On flooding problems, there was discussion of Anglian Water's aging infrastructure (pumping stations etc.), and problems with sewage across the whole area, which they seemed to be attempting to resolve. There was a meeting coming up, chaired by Lord Dannatt, dealing with the responsible organisations. The Clerk to draft a letter to Anglian Water making these points and others, and forwarding via Cllr Jamieson.

2021.02.02.05 - Finance

- a) The Clerk noted receipt of £37,557 from RWNGC for the car park. As he had now got full access to online banking, he had transferred money between current and savings accounts and would do so in future to keep a maximum in interest

¹ This was made later in the meeting, due to technical issues, but prior to the item.

² Cllr Bax had previously noted that she would have to leave after 30 mins or so.

³ To be signed when possible

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(Chair)

Date:

bearing savings account. Salaries and subs budgets continued to be overspent as previously noted. Cllr Borthwick asked about the allotment payments; Clerk noted these were now up to date, but would write with confirmation.

- b) Clerk noted that his expenses included working from home payments, telephone, Zoom etc. Payments had been viewed and approved by the Finance Group. All expenditure items were approved as listed⁴.

Prop: Cllr Campbell; no objections

- c) Council agreed payment of £30 to the Parish News for printing, this to come from the admin budget.

Prop: Cllr Borthwick; 2nd: Cllr Cotton; unanimous

2021.02.02.06 – Planning

- a) Public contributions were made throughout this item, and there was, on each item, much discussion. Reference was also made back to the flooding issues above – including: Victoria Egan noting that there had been a National Trust [NT] site visit to Dormy Triangle (no real impact from recent works); further specific problems from the public (blocked pipes, sewage overflows etc.); Cllr Cotton reporting that he would meet Anglian Water on a possible visit and Cllr Thompson noting that works on drainage should be addressed from outflow upwards. NT would be writing to Anglian Water, again with reference to Cllr Jamieson. Cllr Lawton said he would be writing to Stuart Ashworth about a moratorium on planning approvals while this issue was sorted out. The Clerk asked for any other specific issues to be sent to him to assist with his letter.
- b) **PA 20/02105** – works, two-storey extension, stairwell – Mill House Cottage, Mill Rd, Brancaster. Brief mention of car parking. Council had no objection to this application, if parking was adequately provided for.
- c) **PA 21/00019** – single-storey extension, the Old Stores, Main Rd, Brancaster. Council had no objection to this application.
- d) **PA 21/00070** – demolish and replace garage, the Old Stores, Main Rd, Brancaster. Council had no objection to this application.
- e) **PA 20/02132** – change of use (agricultural to commercial), land east of 1 Saxon Field, Brancaster. There was a very lengthy and inconclusive discussion on this item, with contributions from the architect. Support was given to the possibility of encouraging employment in the area, but it was felt that the plans were insufficiently clear (access, car-parking, effect on residential area, retail possibilities, storage, WCs, boats etc.) to form an opinion. Cllr Lawton note that he would be calling this into the Borough Planning Committee. It was agreed that further particulars should be sought, and a Delegated Decision made if necessary.
- f) Edward Gould described the position on the Neighbourhood Plan and that the Inspector had not allowed Policy 11 (relating to windfall development), though he felt this would have little effect overall. Council formally agreed to the submission of the documents to the Borough as its official Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Prop: Cllr Campbell; 2nd: Cllr Cotton; unanimous

Clerk asked Edward to provide him with the documents/text for the website.

⁴ See below.

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- g) Late application: **PA 20/01695** – Marsh House, Cross Lane, Brancaster. Mention was made of change to the plans, previously rejected. The exact location of the “pill box” was raised, and the effects on wildlife (esp. owls). *This to be referred to a Delegated Decision.*

2021.02.02.07 - Delegated decisions etc.

- a) No such decisions to report.

2021.02.02.08 - Other matters

- a) There were no reports from Council groups
- b) Cllr Campbell noted that he had corresponded further with the landowner on the potential car park on Mill Road. A response was awaited. The Clerk noted that he had now collated the information from the emailed car parking surveys, which showed mixed messages. He would move on to those sent by post asap. Final results to be shared with Cllr Jamieson.
- c) The Clerk noted the probability of elections occurring in May, and the wish to encourage people to apply for the two vacant seats on BPC. These elections, at the moment, were still however not certain; there was also pressure on the Government to extend the period during which Council meetings could be held using Zoom. Comments on this to the Clerk would be welcome.
- d) Cllr G Bocking had asked about provisions for Christmas 2021 – Clerk asked for any thoughts to be sent to him. Cllr Cotton noted that he had had contact with a resident and suggested they might look at costs and ideas. Clerk also raised the idea of some form of celebration, maybe allied with the fete (“Brancaster Day”), to mark the end of lockdown.
- e) There was discussion of the possibility of claiming ownership of Dormy Triangle, and that there may be a claim by a resident. *It was unanimously agreed to begin the process of registering CL162 to Council, subject to the Clerk contacting the resident to ascertain his position.*
- f) Clerk noted the Dark Skies Festival, and the local relevance to Barrow Common. It was clear there was already a connection. Clerk to write to Barrow Common committee and clarify the position.

2021.02.02.09 - Correspondence and requests

- a) Clerk requested that Councillors consider what level of communication they want – most was already sent by email, and much of the remainder was mainly administrative. Cllr Campbell raised concerns which arose from the NT about dog waste collections by the Borough. Clerk to work with Cllrs Jamieson & Lawton to help with this. This led to a wider discussion on location of bins – residents asked to suggest possible sites. Cllr Borthwick requested an increase in dog bin emptying when lockdown ended. Clerk noted two continuing Freedom of Information dialogues; it takes considerable time, and hence has a cost. Clerk to take advice from NALC.

2021.02.02.10 - AOB and agenda requests

- a) Clerk noted that the Car park forms were now out, and a large number had already arrived for delivery to Cllr Borthwick. He suggested a date for training of 16th or 23rd of March, maybe late afternoon/early evening to be confirmed outside of meeting. Cllr Borthwick, supported by others, raised the issue of the Fort hedge near Branodunum needing “drastic treatment”– NT will look at once more.

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2021.02.02.11 - Public Questions

- a) Caroline Symington asked about supporting the campaign to raise money for computers for local school children. There was discussion about possible routes, and legal strictures for the PC. Cllr Jamieson noted that NCC may have more. This was launched by Val Carpenter who spoke next on the issues involved, and the progress of the campaign - £800 in under 24 hrs. There were various suggestions and offers of help. Verily Borthwick requested more dog bins, including using spare(s); notify Clerk of possible locations. Amy Loose asked what might happen with parking following lockdown given the timescale of any likely car parks – on this, Cllr Campbell noted that this was appreciated and something would be done; Cllr Jamieson added that NCC were looking at actions to put in place. Money was being put into a study of transport overall. She also asked what was happening with comments on the development in Butcher's Lane – Clerk had written to head of Planning at the Borough who was supportive but had no power to do more; a second letter had been sent to James Wild MP to forward to the Planning Inspectorate.

2021.02.02.12 - Next meeting

- a) The next meeting was confirmed as 6.30pm, Tuesday 2nd March, to be held using Zoom.

Meeting ended at 8.47pm

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

<u>Date</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>of which VAT</u>	<u>budget</u>
1/2/21	Westcotec	Street Lights	£23.75	£3.96	utilities
2/2/21	Simon Bower	Exp (Sep -Jan)	£247.89	£21.30	admin
2/2/21	Salaries incl tax/NI	Salary	£1,067.10	£0.00	salaries
2/2/21	Parish News	Printing	£30.00	£0.00	admin
12/2/21	Eon - approx	Street Lights	£202.23	£9.63	utilities
INCOME					
	Car Park donation		£37,557.00	£0.00	reserves

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 6.30pm

The meeting was held using Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Cllr J Campbell (Chair), Cllr B Bax, Cllr G Bocking, Cllr S Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr C Cotton, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr J Thompson

Also in attendance: Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 42 Members of the Public

Meeting began at 7.03pm, and the Chair welcomed those present, in particular the representatives of Freebridge Housing.

2021.03.02.01 - Declarations of Interest

a) There were declarations made as follows:

- Cllr Cotton – item 5a/c, 8c
- Cllr Borthwick – item 5d
- Cllr Campbell – item 5e
- Cllr Lawton – item 6b
- Cllr S Bocking – items 5a/c, 8C

2021.03.02.02 - Apologies for absence

a) There were no absences to apologise for.

2021.03.02.03 – Minutes

- a) Paul Newbold and Sophie Bates of Freebridge Housing were invited to speak relating to possible development of their site at Brentwood, Brancaster Staithe. Paul noted the pressure on housing nationally as well as locally, and the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. He stressed the importance of a well thought out scheme, with feedback built in, which was well-designed and gave added value. It should contain mixed housing for local people not the second home market. Sophie added that shared ownership and affordability for locals and youngsters were important considerations; there was no current plan – this was an initial conversation. Responding to questions it was confirmed that: there would be consultation (with an event) over the coming months; local was wider than just the Village; there would be Section 106 agreements to ensure the “cascade” prioritisation of locals, including those who wished to return. Other comments stressed the importance of car parking according to Neighbourhood Plan policies, the drive to the Village Hall not being available for access, affordability for local workers, the need for infrastructure to be able to cope, environmental concerns, floodlighting, strict controls to prevent properties moving to the second home market, commitments not being adhered to relating to previous tenants (information and right to return). Cllr Borthwick made specific mention of a previous commitment that the whole development would be exclusively for Freebridge tenants. There was an extensive series of comments from one resident on personal concerns referring to previous exchanges with Freebridge.

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Paul concluded, noting that there were ways to ensure many of these things, and that it was important to get a balance.

- b) The minutes of the meeting on 2nd March, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record¹.

Prop: Cllr Cotton; 2nd: Cllr Lawton; unanimous

- c) Arising from those minutes, Cllr Thompson raised the continuing problem with flooding at Dormy Triangle. There was mention of ongoing discussions with Anglian Water & County, sewage overflows elsewhere, informal attempts to deal with the problem, what the underlying issues and possible solutions were etc. Cllr Thompson expressed his concern that more should be being done, and his desire to join in any meetings with the relevant bodies to help sort the problem.

2021.03.02.04 - Reports

- a) Chairman's report - none
- b) Report from Borough Councillor: Cllr Lawton expressed his pleasure that the numbers of COVID infections locally were falling rapidly, and that the Police were enforcing the lockdown to greater effect.
- c) Report from County Councillor - none
- d) Report from Clerk: it was reported that the National Trust had appointed a Harbour Master, and that they had cut the hedge at the Branodunum fort as requested. He noted he had seen several incidents of Police stopping visitors in Hunstanton.

2021.03.02.05 - Finance

- a) The Clerk presented the financial report and budget monitoring figures – these would be close to the year-end totals. Current balance c.£122K, of which c.£78K unrestricted. Salaries and Subs budgets overspent as previously noted. Likely underspend c.£22 excluding restricted funds.
- b) Clerk noted that there were two salary payments, one each for February & March; pension payments were also being made back to September – these were to ensure all payments were reported in the correct financial year. The bill for the audit was larger due to £710 additional accounting by Littlejohn's following the challenge made by SHADCRA. All expenditure approved by consensus².
- c) Cllr Bax made a statement as a member of the Finance Group. She referred to the extra £710 spending on the audit relating to the Beach Car Park, due to the challenge by the secretary on behalf of SHADCRA. She stated the need for £10,000 to be ring-fenced for legal action to clarify this, following the letter recently received from Rod Cooke. This money was public money and needed to defend income to Council challenged by Mr Cooke, claiming to act for SHADCRA though not living in the Village. She wished to point out to the public that if this income were lost it would require a "huge" increase in the precept affecting everyone. She invited comments to be made to SHADCRA. Cllr Campbell noted that this was in response to the External Auditor's request. There was an intervention from Cllr S Bocking regarding interests of other Cllrs. He also noted that he was seeking a round table discussion of the issues, and was not seeking all the money. An exchange took place between Cllrs which Cllr Campbell

¹ To be signed when practical

² Listed below.

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Date:

stopped once he clarified with Cllr S Bocking that he was not speaking as a Cllr, but as a "parishioner".

It was agreed to engage a solicitor to pursue this.

Prop: Cllr Campbell; 2nd: Cllr Lawton; 5-0 (3 abst.)

A further intervention from Cllr S Bocking was made referring to what he felt was a technical pecuniary interest of all Cllrs in the precept. Again, Cllr Campbell closed this.

2021.03.02.06 – Planning

- a) There were no public comments on planning.
- b) It was agreed to raise no objection to PA 21/00224 (dormer windows and roof remodelling, Woodthorpe Villa, Main Rd, Brancaster Staithe).
7-0 (1 abst.)
- c) It was agreed unanimously to raise no objection to PA 21/00089 (pergola, Blake House, Main Rd, Brancaster Staithe)
- d) There was a lengthier discussion of the next application, involving a contribution from the owner. It was agreed to raise no objection to PA 21/00214 (extension, September House, Main Rd, Brancaster Staithe).
Prop: Cllr Lawton; 2nd: Cllr Cotton; 6-1 (1 abst.)
- e) An extended discussion took place on the next application. It was agreed to object to PA 20/00308 (extensions to annexe, 4 Harbour View Terrace, Brancaster Staithe) on grounds of parking.
Prop: Cllr Thompson; 2nd: Cllr Cotton; 5-0 (3 abst.)
- f) Edward Gould noted that the Review came into force on 22nd February. All documents available on the Borough website. Cllr Campbell thanked Edward. Cllr Cotton proposed that Edward Gould and Christopher Pratt be given £500 and £250 respectively in recognition of their work, and in lieu of expenses. It was agreed unanimously to refer this to the Finance Group for consideration.

2021.03.02.07 - Delegated decisions etc.

These (all planning recommendations) were listed in the pack, except for 20/02057 (Pavilion West of Rectory) – object.

- 20/01692 – Marsh Close – no objection
- 20/00155 – St Mary's House, London St – no objection
- 20/02132 – land East of Saxon Field – object
- 20/01955 – Sailcraft - object

2021.03.02.08 - Other matters

- a) No reports from Council Groups. Cllr Lawton noted that there appeared to be gates being installed on Broad Lane, without any planning permission being sought, and wished people to be aware of this.
- b) Cllr Campbell noted that he been in further communication over car parks with the landowner. He had also been looking at the returns from the parking survey, which were varied and interesting. He proposed to publish these results in the Parish Newsletter, and pass to Cllr Jamieson.
- c) This was jumped and discussed later.
- d) Clerk reported that a registration on Common CL162 ("Dormy Triangle") was pending (since 2015) by a resident. It was agreed to allow this registration to continue without further intervention from Council.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

2021.03.02.09 - Correspondence and requests

- a) Clerk reported that he had had received another FoI request, and had been sent a lot of information from SHADCRA secretary Rod Cooke. Cllr Lawton referred to a letter from July 2019 – Clerk to investigate further.
- b) This item had been taken out of order, under 6f above.
- c) An email had been received from the National Trust [NT] regarding the re-surfacing of the Hard in Brancaster Staithe. Victoria Egan clarified: this is not covered under the Brancaster Commons Committee; other groups generously donate towards such repairs, and the remaining cost is split between the NT and BPC. This email was a “heads-up”, and the exact cost would be clearer later.

At this point Council returned to item 8c: The NT had submitted proposals to revise the constitutions of the Brancaster Commons Committee [BCC] and the Fairways Committee. Cllr Campbell gave a lengthy introduction referring to his feeling that the BCC was a “packed” committee, and expressing his views on Common Rights, general rights to roam (including future ones relating to the Coastal Path). He referred to the need for PCs to represent the “silent majority” against a small number of “vociferous activists”. He proposed a 2-2 balance, as opposed to the 5-1, between Common Rights Holders and the PC. Cllr S Bocking referred to the representation arising from the (then) claim of BPC to own the Common. There was then an exchange between the two over the capacity in which Cllr S Bocking was speaking, and the option of applying for a dispensation. The subject strayed, and Cllr Bax requested that the issue of the “packed” committee be addressed. Cllr Cotton requested a separate meeting on the issue. Victoria Egan wished to introduce some context - BCC is a local management committee, with the Fairways Committee under that; the proposal was to look at amendments required to bring things up to date. She felt that the representation was a separate issue, which would require “lots more conversations”, and a vote on that could have management implications. The Clerk noted that he had kept quiet on the questions of conflicts, which were a matter the consciences of individual Cllrs. He was concerned that a vote over numbers could have the effect of disbanding the committee, which was not on the agenda, and suggested that a meeting with NT and BPC, but with Cllrs representing Council, might be the way to go ahead, and welcoming views from the public officially through him (40+ being present at this point). He noted his frustration with the subject. A view was expressed that NCC would take over should the Committee fall, which Victoria said was not the case. SHADCRA were also involved and were being consulted separately. She requested that the wording amendments could be passed, and then BCC could discuss these matters to enable moving forward with managing the Common. Cllr Campbell again stated his lack of interest in being involved in a 5-1 Committee, and commented on the lack of action by it. Michael Bucher noted that the BCC was not new, and there was a delicate balance (a “fudge that’s worked”). An exchange over how things were working took place between these last two, including rights generally. Victoria confirmed that the Committee may not have met, but work continued in the background. Cllr Lawton asked who the PC representative was, and Cllr Cotton confirmed that he was. The issue of the succession to BCC was again raised, with Victoria

Signed:

(Chair)

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stating this was referred to in the current constitution (with Cllr Thompson disagreeing) but that the NT has owner would need to clarify the exact implications. Cllr Cotton read from the document³. Victoria noted that the claims referred to were unclear. Cllr Campbell suggested moving this to a meeting of BPC and NT; Cllr Cotton noted he had already proposed this. Cllr Lawton seconded. Cllr Bax stressed that all Cllrs should be acting as Cllrs. With further interventions, it was agreed that such a meeting should take place between BPC and NT.

2021.03.02.10 - AOB and agenda requests

- a) Cllr Lawton asked about the suggestion to store the BPC documents in Hunstanton, and the need for a Parish Office. The Clerk noted this was his suggestion as a temporary measure so he could access and sift them. Cllr Lawton suggested the records had been used by SHADCRA. Cllr Cotton explained that he had been asked to take on the paperwork, and these were being scanned. He referred to an email directly asking him if he had passed this on, which he categorically denied. Clerk noted that the Clerk should be in control of the records. He was concerned that there was a misconception that all records were public, given the constraints of GDPR etc., and that, if he had access to the records, he might be able to answer some of the questions which were repeatedly being asked. Cllr S Bocking also confirmed that he had not given access to the records to SHADCRA - the Clerk noted that he would like to know who it was. Cllr Campbell suggested the need for a short-term solution – this to be deferred to next agenda. Cllr Bax suggested a future development might be obliged to provide such a facility.
- Cllr Lawton noted a suggestion to have a car parking booking system might be adopted. Cllr Campbell noted that BPC did not own it. There were further comments about marking of spaces and ownership.

- b) There were no agenda requests from Councillors.

2021.03.02.11 - Public Questions

- a) Verily Borthwick requested the Hard not be surfaced too well. She also wanted to know what the constitution of the Fairways said regarding moorings – Victoria Egan offered to advise out of the meeting. Kirsty Allen said she was keen to know more about Common rights, grazing, the National Trust etc.; would the public be invited to any meeting? – if such a meeting were a formal Council Meeting there would be public access. Victoria Egan offered to speak to this from a NT perspective at a meeting. The Clerk suggested that this might be appropriate in a Parish Meeting. As this was relevant, he proposed bringing item 12b forward. It was agreed without objection that the Annual Parish Meeting should be a minimal event before the Annual Parish Council Meeting on May 5th, with a further Parish Meeting to be arranged with contributions from Village groups when circumstances allowed.

2021.03.02 - Next meeting

- a) The next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 6th April at 6.30pm using Zoom.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm

³ See exact wording at the bottom of these minutes.

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Wording of BCC Constitution (Dec 2000) referred to above:

"Should the above Constitution be made void by future legislation or withdrawal of either the National Trust, Brancaster Parish Council or Common Rightholders Association support, then all management of the commons would revert to the terms and conditions pertaining prior to the signing of the above Constitution.

Namely:-

i) The claim of Brancaster Parish Council and the Common Rightholders to manage the area from the Staithe Way westward to the eastern bank of the fresh water marshes, including the Golf Links.

ii) The remaining area of CL65, 124, 161 and 162 to be managed by the National Trust and the Common Rightholders."

EXPENDITURE APPROVED

Date	To	For	Amount	of which VAT	budget
1/3/21	Westcotec	Street Lights	£23.75	£3.96	utilities
2/3/21	Salaries (2/21), pension (9/20-2/21)	Salary	£2,977.73	£0.00	salaries
2/3/21	PKF Littlejohn	Audit	£1,212.00	£202.00	admin
2/3/21	Edward Gould	Expenses	£174.00	£29.00	reserves
12/3/21	Eon - approx	Street Lights	£202.23	£9.63	utilities
30/3/21	Salaries- incl pension, tax, NI (3/21)	Salary	£1,403.77	£0.00	salaries

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(Chair)

Date:

Brancaster Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 6th April, 2021 at 6.30pm

The meeting was held using Zoom teleconferencing

Present: Cllr J Campbell (Chair), Cllr B Bax (p/t), Cllr G Bocking, Cllr S Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr C Cotton, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr J Thompson

Also in attendance: Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately 35 Members of the Public

Meeting began at 6.32pm

2021.04.06.01 - Declarations of Interest

- a) There were no declarations of interest made.

2021.04.06.02 - Apologies for absence

- a) Cllr Bax apologised for being unable to stay for the entire meeting.

2021.04.06.03 – Minutes

- a) The minutes of the meeting on 2nd March 2021, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record.
- b) Cllr Lawton mentioned the storage of records, which had been raised last month – Clerk confirmed he had now spoken to his predecessor who had the records and would be arranging collection and storage when practical. Cllr Borthwick requested that two dog bin collections per week be arranged.

2021.04.06.04 - Reports

- a) Cllr Campbell, as Chairman, noted the successful training session attended by all Councillors. Cllr Thompson asked about the Beach Car Park – referred to later discussion – and Dormy Triangle and flooding issues. He requested this be pursued – Cllr Bax referred to her attendance at a recent meeting. Enquiries to be made.
- b) Cllr Lawton, for BCKLWN, had no comments to add.
- c) No report from County Councillor.
- d) The Clerk noted he had received figures for the cost of the resurfacing of the Hard in Brancaster Staithe. This would be a maximum of £2,300, and he requested indications of how Cllrs might vote at the next meeting, to allow him to indicate this to the National Trust. There was support in principle, with Cllr Campbell asking that full figures of all contributions be requested. He then referred to letters received and made a statement dealing with some of the issues raised¹.

2021.04.06.05 - Finance

- a) Cllr Bax noted that the Finance Group were considering new maintenance contracts to ensure all was “tickety-boo”. They had seen the bank statements, as recommended in training, and had reviewed the Pension Policy (item 5e). She noted that no expenditure had been incurred on any legal advice, as there had been issues finding representation.

¹ See below.

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- b) The Clerk presented the financial and budget monitoring figures, which were in the public pack. The balance of £112,791.64 was likely to be the year-end figure; with c.£69K not ring-fenced. Salary and admin budgets were slightly overspent due to large items within the month.
- c) Expenditure items as listed in document pack were approved².
Prop: Cllr Campbell; 2nd: Cllr Cotton; unanimous
- d) It was agreed to take up membership of Norfolk Parish Training and Support at a cost of £220pa.
Prop: Cllr Bax; 2nd: Cllr Cotton; unanimous
- e) The draft Pensions Policy was approved.
Prop: Cllr Cotton; 2nd: Cllr S Bocking; unanimous

2021.04.06.06 – Planning

- a) Comments from the public on planning matters were requested prior to each item.
- b) PA 21/00465 – balcony and access, Thainstone House, 15 Anchorage View, Brancaster: Council agreed to object to this application due the plans changing fundamentally what was agreed to be a well-designed estate; loss of privacy and concerns over loss of light were raised, as was a covenant requiring permission for extensions.
- c) PA 21/00590 – side and rear extension, Crosstrees, 3 South Corner, Brancaster: Council agreed to raise no objection to this application, while expressing concerns over the cladding, with a preference to be kept as they are.
- d) The Clerk noted that James Wild, MP, had forwarded a response from the Planning Inspectorate to Council's concerns over a recent appeal. This was included in the pack³.
 Cllr Cotton suggested Cllrs might print planning items off due to repeated difficulty accessing them live in meetings. Cllr Thompson noted the difficulty of reading some plans, and requested that a request be made for conventional orientation.

2021.04.06.07 - Delegated decisions etc.

- a) There were no delegated decision to report.

2021.04.06.08 - Other matters

- a) There were no further reports from Council Groups. Cllr Thomson raised the signage at the Village shop – Clerk to write to Village Hall.
- b) Cllr Campbell noted that he had received a reply from the agent of the landowner of the proposed car park sites. An offer was likely by the end of the week. There were several comments from Cllrs about the proposals, but these were all dependent on the nature of the offer.
- c) A meeting had been held with the National Trust, to look at their proposed changes to the constitutions of the Commons and Fairways committees. There was still disagreement over the representation of groups on those committees. In order to move forward, this was separated off.
 - a. The changes in the text of the constitutions proposed by the National Trust were agreed.

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

² Figures listed below.

³ Copied below.

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Date:

- d) The Clerk noted that he was working on an action list for Council projects. Cllr Thompson noted that such a list had been prepared some time back – Clerk to investigate. Some items were discussed (phone boxes – painting arranged – trees – meeting NCC targets etc.). Further ideas to be forwarded to Clerk.
- e) The current Council Groups needed consideration prior to agreeing membership next month. Suggestions to be sent to Clerk.
- f) Brancaster Day.
 - a. It was agreed by consensus to allow the use of the Field for Brancaster Day for 2021 and 2022.
 - b. The possibility of Brancaster Day being taken under the aegis of Council was discussed along with insurance provision. An informal meeting was taking place soon with the Village Hall – the possibilities of using their insurance, which Council paid for, to be raised with them.
- g) It was agreed to place a dog bin on Gypsy Lane.
- h) The Clerk outlined the position regarding virtual meetings from 7/5/21. It was agreed that he should produce formal wording approving delegation of all legally allowed decisions to him, with meetings held by Zoom in an advisory capacity. This to be submitted formally at the next meeting.

2021.04.06.09 - Correspondence and requests

- a) Cllr Borthwick made a statement: she noted she did not hold Common Rights on the Marsh Common, and was not a member of, or involved in the management of, SHADCRA. Further she was not a member of the Golf Club or BSSC. She noted a Common Right attached to her house, which she “regularly” declared. The Clerk added that he understood the reason for this statement was reference in several of the letters above to Cllr Borthwick by name and implication.
- b) A request had been made for signs to be placed by a local company – this applied to Highways land so Council moved on.

2021.04.06.10 - AOB and agenda requests

- a) Cllr Cotton criticised the letters above which had been received, as being so similar as to imply they were not written in isolation. He had declared his interest in SHADCRA, and only commented on points of fact. He referred to SHADCRA’s possession of many files of correspondence from BPC and other organisations. He objected to allegations that he, and Cllr S Bocking, had passed information. If anyone could provide evidence of this, which he denied, “prove it, or shut up”. He stated that, to his knowledge, no legal action has been, or is going to be, taken by SHADCRA against BPC over car park money. Regarding the archives, he referred to an agreement to scan and safely store the documents. He denied that he had given these documents to Mr Cooke; he asked that the person who did so admitted it. Cllr Campbell added that he was aware of the person who scanned the archives, these were minutes and were publicly available in any case and hence not relevant. Cllr Cotton concluded that, if anyone had questions, they should simply ask him. Cllr Lawton added that he scanned all the minutes, and had provided these to several people, not including Mr Cooke. Cllr Campbell drew the discussion to a close, with Cllr S Bocking declaring “I didn’t do it”. Cllr Cotton noted that there was a request to put picket fencing on the Playing Field. Anthony Law noted that there were several points which could be addressed at the meeting the Clerk would be arranging shortly with the Brancaster Sport Club.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

Cllr Borthwick noted the delay in getting out Car Park passes, due to a "huge demand" and the need to check many of them. Last year's passes were still valid, as usual, until the warden was told all new ones had been issued.

Cllr Thompson asked if there were documents in files relating to subject matter rather than simply referring to minutes. Cllr Cotton noted such documents did exist. Cllr Lawton noted the wish for minutes to be on the website. The Clerk noted this was what he would be doing, when he had access to the files, and time. There was further discussion.

b) There were no future agenda requests from Councillors.

2021.04.06.11 - Public Questions

a) There were no formal questions.

2021.04.06.12 - Next meeting

a) *The next meeting was confirmed as being on Tuesday 4th May immediately following an abbreviated Annual Parish Meeting, as previously announced.*

The meeting was formally closed at 8.12 though there were continued comments over this.

Clerk's Statement – item 4d

More than a dozen letters were addressed to me dealing with issues arising at the last meeting, relating to SHADCRA. I have forwarded them to Cllrs, and I assume that they may wish to comment later. Many points were made, but as they were addressed to me by name, and no general wish was expressed for them to be made available to Cllrs, I will reply personally:

There was discontent about public money being spent to defend a legal case. First, the additional sum spent on the audit was a matter over which Council has no choice. The Elector's rights notice specifically states: "Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections."

Second, a legal challenge has been made to Council, and it has agreed to set aside a sum to defend this case, if required. Given the sums received from the car park income - £37K+ last year - it is important that such a sum is available. Should the case not be dealt with adequately, that income could be lost, and the precept would indeed rise. Defending such income is actually in the public interest, not the reverse, as was implied. Again, claims made that "over £10,000" had been set aside are not true.

I would note that a letter was received from SHADCRA's solicitor in June last year. A reply was sent on 12th June (despite allegations to the contrary) which stated: "Brancaster Commons Committee was setup specifically for matters of this type. We fail to understand why your client has not gone through the correct process for this matter". No reply, or acknowledgment of that has been received from the solicitor.

Regarding potential conflicts of interest, Council has no power to address these – they are a matter for the individual councillors themselves, the monitoring officer or the public at elections. I would note that the registers of interests forms are available publicly, and to say "this has come to light" is simply not correct. The Councillors concerned had declared their interests at meetings, and have not voted. This is proper. It is again, perfectly proper that members of one organisation can sit on another, with two provisos: they must be transparent about such memberships, and they must act in the interests of the body, or those they represent, when they are considering conflicted matters.

Further, even if those individuals mentioned had not been Cllrs, the case would still need to be answered, so the suggestion that Council as a body is somehow responsible for the situation, or "partisan" is absurd.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

A number of suggestions were made, as to the Chair, Vice Chair and "secretary" taking action, or the election procedure being re-addressed, and issues which should be being addressed by Council instead (most of which were not PC responsibilities). Such actions are not possible.

Reference was made to the Parish records. These are in the possession of a previous clerk, with whom I have now spoken, and arrangements will be made for them to be transferred to me directly. No Cllr is in "sole possession" of these records, though some have been so temporarily while being copied, as agreed.

This is a personal statement, so I will conclude with an expression of concern at the amount of time this matter is taking, from both "sides", a view which I have stated privately to Cllrs. I have previously expressed my desire to find an amicable solution, but this was taken out of my hands when the auditor was approached. Positions become entrenched under such circumstances, which benefits no-one.

Expenditure – item 5c

Date	Ref	To	For	Amount	of which VAT	budget
1/4/21	DD	Westcotec	Street Lights	£23.75	£3.96	Utilities
6/4/21	<u>Meeting</u>	Shaw's	Stationery	£135.00	£22.50	Admin
6/4/21	<u>Meeting</u>	NALC	Sub	£234.37	£0.00	Admin
6/4/21	<u>Meeting</u>	Berry Bros/Rudd	Neigh Plan	£289.40	£0.00	Reserves
6/4/21	<u>Meeting</u>	NCC	Par Part	£6,303.61	£0.00	Reserves
6/4/21	<u>Meeting</u>	Open Spaces	Membership	£45.00	£0.00	Admin
12/4/21	DD	Eon - approx	Street Lights	£202.23	£9.63	Utilities
30/4/21	<u>Contract</u>	Salaries	Salary	£1,943.28	£0.00	Salaries

Items underlined paid by online banking, with indications of how payments had been approved.

Planning Inspectorate response – Item 6d

Dear Mr Wild

Thank you for your e-mail of 11th February 2021, on behalf of a Parish Council in your constituency. This has been passed to me as part of the Customer Team at the Planning Inspectorate for reply.

I understand that the Parish Council are concerned there is a lack of opportunity for them and local Councils to feedback on the work of the Planning Inspectorate. The published feedback and complaints procedure for the Planning Inspectorate may be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate/about/complaints-procedure>

Turning to your e-mail, a local Council can provide feedback on appeals decisions or other issues of concern, both prior and post the commencement of projects, by following the published complaints procedure. We do make efforts to ensure everyone who takes part in the appeal system is satisfied with the service they receive from us and we will investigate any concerns. That said, the appeals decision letter constitutes a legal document and accordingly, whilst we may comment in general terms, it is not possible for us to reopen matters that the Inspector was appointed to determine or otherwise add to the decision letter.

Complaints from the public and local planning authorities are reviewed by the Customer Team at the Planning Inspectorate. Following our investigations any upheld complaints, which identify areas where our service has not met the standards we set ourselves, are brought to the attention of the Inspectors and their professional managers or the appeal

Signed:

(Chair)

Date:

casework team and their managers. We also look to see if lessons can be learned from the mistake, such as whether our procedures can be improved upon.

It is the case that planning legislation requires that decisions are made in accordance with local planning policies unless, as stated in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, "material considerations indicate otherwise". Inspectors are appointed by the Secretary of State to make their own, independent decisions on development proposals. Decisions by Inspectors (or decisions based on the recommendations of Inspectors) are final unless successfully challenged in the High Court on a point of law. Only the Courts can legally review decisions or recommendations by Inspectors and identify an error in law.

Inevitably, some appeal decisions made by Inspectors may not align with the views of local planning authorities and local people, however, an Inspector will consider both the positive and negative aspects before balancing the evidence in coming to a decision to allow or dismiss an appeal. When a local planning decision is overruled at appeal stage, this does not mean that submitted evidence has been ignored or misinterpreted. Instead, the Inspector will have used their judgement to give different weight to the issues raised, taking account of the relevant policy considerations and the particular circumstances of the case, with the weight of planning argument being the determining factor.

With regard to the issue of precedent, previous decisions are material considerations which may be put before a Council, when considering planning permission. However, a previous decision is not a directive but rather relates to a specific appeal decision and its particular circumstances. If a party submits a scheme it is for the Council to consider each application on its own circumstances and planning merits. There will be the opportunity for local people and other interested parties to put views and concerns forward relating to a new planning application and for the Council's planning officers to review them in light of local planning policies. The Council is entitled to reach its own conclusions, in accordance with the current development plan and other relevant guidance, taking into account prevailing local conditions and characteristics.

I hope this response has been useful in providing clarification for your constituents.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: