

## **Minutes of a meeting of Carbrooke Parish Council held in Carbrooke Village Hall on 8 April 2025**

**Councillors present:** N Defew (Chair), K Jones, W Leport, D Page, L Poole, G Redfern.

**In attendance:-** Cllr H Crane (Breckland Council) N Hartley (Parish Clerk), P Arrowsmith (Community Hub). Two members of the public.

### **Public Participation**

A member of the public drew the Council's attention to a 'lost' road between Griston and Carbrooke. The road was closed around the time of the Second World War when the airfield was built. The member of the public asked if the road could be reopened.

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Borrett, Cllr P Bate (Breckland Council) and Cllr C Bowes (Norfolk County Council).

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **3 Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2025. The Chair signed the minutes.

### **4 Matters Arising**

None.

### **5 Report from Breckland and County Councillors**

Reports were delivered at the Annual Parish Meeting.

### **6 Finance**

6.1 The following payments were approved in accordance with the budget:-

N Hartley, clerk's salary, £796.48

HMRC, clerk's Paye & Hub manager's Paye (April), £440

SCS Accounting, payroll services, £18

Norfolk Parish Training & Support, subscription, £530

P Arrowsmith, reimbursement of cost of litter picking hoops, £89.70

Spartek, installation of heating controls at the Hub, £1,035  
Breckland Council, bin emptying at Blenheim Grange, £587.46

6.2 The following payments were made from the Commuted Sum

J Steward Clearances, clearance of flytips from Parish Council land, £180  
Top Garden Services, tree works at Blenheim Grange, £4,800

6.3 The Council noted the following payment received:-

Carbrooke Parish Council (Hub account), payment for manager's Paye (April), £240.80

## **7 Annual Asset Report**

The Council received the annual Asset report. There were no recommended works.

## **8 Parish Partnership Scheme bid for a sign at the Community Hub**

Norfolk County Council had accepted the Council's Parish Partnership Scheme bid for the installation of a warning children playing sign outside the Hub, as recommended in the play safety report. The cost to the Parish Council will be £325. It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the scheme.

## **9 Installation of Village Gateways under the Parish Partnership Scheme**

The Council discussed the proposed locations of five village gateways under the 2024/25 Parish Partnership Scheme. Cllr Poole noted that Norfolk County Council had advised the costs had increased to almost £20,000. The Council had paid – and was expecting to pay - £5,000, this being half of the original estimated cost. Cllr Poole will discuss with Norfolk County Council and report to the next meeting.

## **10 Dog and litter bins at Blenheim Grange**

The cost of emptying the bins is increasing. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the increase.

## **11 Litter bin at Anson Way**

In view of the amount of litter that builds up in the woods, it was proposed to install a litter bin. It was **RESOLVED** to install a bin in this location.

## **12 Hub Manager's report**

A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

## **13 Hub's Finance report**

A copy of the report is attached to the minutes.

## **14 Storage container for the Community Hub**

It was agreed to return to this at the May meeting, as the Council was still waiting for more costings regarding the groundworks. The Hub Manager was asked to provide more details of what is in the containers.

## **15 Lighting on the power substation footpath**

The Council further considered lighting in this area and will contact Arqiva. The Council will also seek guidance from the Police as to the installation of a light.

## **16 Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Poole said that it will be necessary to establish a small group of volunteers to take forward a Neighbourhood Plan. The Council is waiting to hear more information about grants. Cllr Poole will speak to a consultant and report to the next meeting.

## **17 Village Hall Boundary**

Cllr Page noted that over time the slope on the edge of the Village Hall boundary has been trodden onto the path by as much as 24 inches in some places. It was agreed that the Community Payback Team will carry out the work to push back the earth and the Council will plant daffodils which may help to prevent further soil erosion. It was **RESOLVED** to spend up to £200 on bulbs for this area.

## **18 Representatives' reports**

Cllr Redfern reported that at the Community Hub all is going well. The committee works harmoniously and enthusiastically. They continue to put on functions which generally are well supported. There are several groups and organisations which operate regularly and successfully on the premises, from "Warm Baby" to "Dance Classes." Recently an orchard has been established (mainly thanks to Helen Crane) and is being nurtured by committee members. The building is always neat and tidy and a pleasure to visit. They could do with extra storage space but this is being dealt with by the Parish Council. So overall a good report and a team well led by Pam Arrowsmith.

## **19 Items for inclusion on the next agenda**

Parish Partnership Scheme update re the speed gates.

## **20 Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be in the Village Hall at 7pm on May 13.

The meeting was closed at 7pm.

Signed ..... Chair

Date .....

## **Cllr Crane's report**

Local plan update- At cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> March it was agreed to do another 'Call for sites'. The reason is that with the new government figures of 905 houses per year compared with the previous 625 we simply do not have enough suitable land coming forward. And because of these new figures we had to pause the plan. This increase is mandatory and if we do not have in place an up to date plan and housing the government will step in and place houses where they think they should be. It is therefore really important that we engage now with Town and parish councils and residents and businesses to find where this land can be. The parish Council will get a village checklist to complete, this is so that we have up to date information about every village in Breckland. The focus will be to bring parish councils together in clusters to see where new homes can be put and where a smaller village could possibly take a few houses supported by the facilities in another village. We cannot and should not dismiss out of hand a small amount of houses in every village. The location will have to meet criteria and be deliverable.

Devolution-Cabinet agreed the consultation responses to the government regarding its plans on Devolution. We either disagreed or strongly disagreed to each question and you can find the questions and reasons why on pages 18 -20 of the cabinet report. I remain unsupportive of devolution of an area as vast and as rural as Norfolk and Suffolk. I do not believe there will be any money savings as has been shown in other areas where this simply has not worked. We are rural and although it may work in big cities such as Manchester it is not a suitable model for Norfolk and especially Breckland. Breckland has no debt and has the lowest Council tax which will be swept away when council tax is levelled with the other authorities we join. We also have vast assets again which will be amalgamated with any new authority.

Local Government Reform-Again our response along with all but one Norfolk authority has been for 3 unitary authorities for Norfolk. Breckland joining up with Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and a part of North Norfolk. We do already have shared services with all 3 of these authorities. Norwich standing alone and East and South Norfolk with the remaining part of North Norfolk another.

Car parks-We paused the car park consultation process because of devolution and what that would mean for our 5 market towns. We continue to work with Town Councils to see if there is a way of them taking on the car parks, leasing at a peppercorn rent, buying etc. The consultation process and data is not lost and will be given to whoever takes on the car parks in the future. If it is the Towns then it will save having to run the process again at expense to them.

Barnham Broom-The sale of Barnham Broom has completed. The site was bought in 2006 for 7million£ as a revenue stream and has been sold for 6.9million£. During the 19 year ownership of this site the Council invested a further 1.95million£ in the asset. The total income from the Golf club including its sale figure and rental figure was £11.68million£. This means the overall profit made by the council is 2.73million£. To be clear and although I was not a member at the time, this asset was bought because

Breckland was cash rich at the time and the then government's devolution plans were to take any money back from a council that was not using it, hence Barnham Broom was bought. I accept that this has been a hugely controversial investment but it did make a good return. In anticipation of the sale of Barnham Broom Breckland has used some of the money to purchase temporary housing accommodation. This money, because it is capital sale money cannot be used to support services. Whilst on the subject of investments Breckland Council has assets that bring more in in rent than council tax, this is the money we can use for service delivery and support for residents and businesses.

Virtual Village Hall-The leader did a virtual village hall session with the EDP, no questions known in advance. Residents sent their questions to the EDP or they asked them live whilst watching. This can be found on the Breckland YouTube channel. Much of what I have mentioned above are the questions that the public asked.

### **CLlr Bowes' report (Norfolk County Council)**

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April was the first of the additional seven hazardous waste events currently taking place. Extra funding was given for these to take place as well as the usual events in autumn. They are being held on a Friday and Saturday.

Booking is required for these events - it can be done through the Norfolk County Council website. [www.norfolk.gov.uk/hazardouswaste](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/hazardouswaste) or by telephone Monday to Friday. Libraries can also help customers make a booking.

Locally the dates are:

11th and 12th April 8am - 4 pm Dereham Recycling centre

25th and 26th April 8am - 4pm Thetford Recycling centre

### **Community Hub Report**

Bookings Payable hours and Community Hours

	April	May	June
Total Paid Hours	144 TBC	112TBC	116 TBC
Total Community Hours	30	28	20

Booked hours are increasing with a new booking for Jujitsu on a Tuesday Evening.

Heating improvements have been completed and is working very well in controlling the temperature of the building

The lighting improvements have been delayed but are due to be completed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025.

The defibrillator has been installed we are gathering information to allow it to become active.

New Storage is a priority, and I would like to ask the parish council for a storage container, we have condensed and rationalised the equipment as much as possible but still require more storage space.

Pam Arrowsmith