

## FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Fransham Parish Council held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 at 7.00pm, in the Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr Russell James (Chair)  
Cllr Richard Watts (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Gerry Taylor  
Cllr Emma Spratt  
Cllr James Sheringham  
Cllr Brian Drewitt  
Cllr Andrew Lake

District & County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris  
Three members of the public  
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, there were no apologies for absence.

### **2. To co-opt a new member onto the Council.**

Cllr Drewitt proposed that Mr Andrew Lake be co-opted onto the Council as a new member, this was seconded by Cllr Sheringham and agreed by Council. Cllr Lake was welcomed back to the Council and took his place at the table, he then duly signed his declaration of office form.

### **3. To receive any declarations of interest.**

There were none received.

### **4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019.**

Cllr Watts proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Taylor and agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

### **5. To receive County/District Councillor reports.**

C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris gave an update on county matters and this report is attached to the minutes.

He also updated on District matters and informed Council that Breckland had now adopted the Local Plan, albeit it will go immediately to a full review. However, there is now a five-year land supply, at least until October 2021.

In respect of Vattenfall, more queries were raised for County, District and Necton Parish Councils. A date for the decision is yet to be announced.

In respect of a Neighbourhood Plan, he advised against unless the Parish Council were wanting large growth areas, as a plan does not always give protection against development and is both costly and time consuming to produce.

In respect of Operation London Bridge, he was not aware of any plans by District but will notify the Clerk once these are available.

## **6. Open Forum for Public Participation.**

The following issues were raised by members of the public:

- Will the Council be taking any action in respect of the heavy use of Station Road by HGV vehicles – the Chairman informed the member of the public that this will be discussed later in the agenda.
- Will the Council support moves by Breckland to reduce carbon emissions etc in respect of the climate emergency adopted in September 2019 – the Chairman advised that they will wait to be informed by the D/Cllr and then consider the issue.
- A query was raised re public participation as set out in Standing Orders and the Chairman clarified the point in that any input outside of the Open Forum item was at the discretion of the Chairman.
- A resident queried whether they should approach a local dog walker who was leaving their dog mess and was advised that perhaps a word from a ‘friendly neighbour’ might be a good first line of action.
- The S bend road sign has still not been repaired and has fallen over the 30mph sign – C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris will chase this up on behalf of the Council
- Along Station Road, the S bend road is constantly flooding, water is running down Glebe Close but because the drain at the bottom is blocked, it continues down to the sewage plant where it then runs back onto the road. The water on the road is dangerous if it is icy. The verge where the trod is situated is being worn away by cars pulling in to allow HGVs to pass, the soakaways are full and soil is being pushed into the ditches. All paths and driveways are being damaged by HGVs and causing potholes and tracks across the verges – C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris will investigate these issues and take them forward.
- Litter picks revealed that someone was discarding a certain type of drinks bottle on a regular basis – Council confirmed that this issue may have been addressed but is to be monitored.
- The fingerpost sign on the Church footpath has broken – this will be reported to Highways who will replace.

## **7. To receive a report in respect of the Proposed Vattenfall Boreas & Vanguard Offshore Wind Farms.**

C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris had updated this matter at item 5.

Cllr Drewitt queried whether the issue raised by Mr Freeman, MP, of an offshore ring-main would still be going ahead, post election. The C/Cllr confirmed that on-shore works for the current projects already with the inspector are too far advanced to be changed. The Chairman stated that limiting on-shore works for future projects is being worked on by local MP, George Freeman, and can be left there.

## **8. Highway Matters.**

### **a) To receive updates in respect of issues previously reported.**

Council noted the following updates:

- The S bend sign on Station Road – reported to NCC – see item 5 above.

- Pot Holes, Station Road, near to Ash House – reported to NCC but not yet repaired.
- Station Road/Drive junction – overhanging tree – reported to NCC and being investigated but a reminder will be sent.
- Damaged Street Light (near bus shelter) – reported to Highways England but a repair will take 3-4 months due to a backlog of work.

**b) To receive an update and consider any further action required re the trod.**

Council noted that resurfacing and widening work to the trod is likely to take place when the weather improves.

**c) To receive an update re the modification request in respect of Footpath 6.**

Cllr Sheringham reported that footpath 6 was not suitable as a bridleway as much of it was too wet and this would be to the detriment of walkers. Council agreed not to go ahead with the application.

**d) To consider any action regarding the substantial HGV use of Station Road.**

Council noted the problems with verge damage, roadside degradation, muddy roads, speeding etc being caused by the HGVs on Station Road and requested assistance from C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris in respect of this issue.

The C/Cllr advised there were three possible options, namely:

- To designate an alternative HGV route but this was unlikely to be possible, however, he will check previous planning applications to see if a designated route was made as a condition of permissions granted re the HGV depot at Great Dunham.
- To erect a 'unsuitable for HGVs' sign – this, however, is not enforceable and is unlikely to deter the local drivers who know the route. It may stop anyone using the route as advised by their satnav.
- To request a weight restriction – this is only applicable to routes where there is a weak structure, i.e a weak bridge and this is not applicable to Station Road.

The C/Cllr will be meeting with the owner of the HGV depot in the near future and will raise these issues with him, although Council need to be aware that some of the damage is also being caused by agricultural vehicles who are permitted to use the road. Council were also advised that the highway does extend beyond the road each side and vehicles are permitted to use the verges for passing, if necessary. The C/Cllr will investigate the possibility of a 'unsuitable for HGVs' sign which may stop some of the vehicles.

Council noted that this is a problem in many areas and it will be challenging to resolve, however, all options must be explored.

**e) To consider supporting a proposed parish Speedwatch Team.**

Cllr Drewitt volunteered to take this issue forward as it may help address the speeding issues on Station Road but it would need the support of the Parish Council. Cllr Taylor proposed that Council support a scheme, if Cllr Drewitt is able to rally enough volunteers, this was seconded by Cllr Watts and agreed by Council.

**f) To consider any new highway issues.**

There were no new issues raised.

## **9. Planning Issues.**

### **a) New Applications:**

There were no new applications to consider.

### **b) Decisions Due:**

There were no decisions to note.

### **c) To receive an update regarding producing a Neighbourhood Plan.**

Cllr Watts reported that a Neighbourhood Plan may not be suitable for Fransham as it is a long process involving a lot of work, local referendums etc and is perhaps suited more for larger villages. However, he circulated a local plan for the information of councillors and suggested they look at it together with information available on the gov.uk website and make a decision as to the way forward at the March meeting. Council agreed this course of action and it was noted that the Local Plan may now give Fransham better protection against unsuitable developments.

## **10. To receive an update on the Bus Shelter Project.**

Council were advised that the westbound bus shelter had been destroyed in an accident just prior to Christmas and an insurance claim was ongoing to replace the shelter. Unfortunately, once again Highways permission re the works is awaited, together with the closure of the original project. Council agreed to contact the local MP to try to take this matter forward.

## **11. To receive an update regarding the grass cutting contract for 2020 onwards.**

Council noted the new contractor was engaged and a consent form to cut and maintain the highway verge was to be completed and returned to Highways re the trod cut.

## **12. To receive a report from the village hall committee regarding repairs.**

Cllr Spratt reported that fund raising was ongoing with the fish and chip night raising over £300 and £200 being received from Waitrose. The damp in the building needs addressing as soon as possible.

## **13. To receive a Crime & Policing report.**

The Chairman reported that no crimes had been reported in the previous two months although there had been an instance of drink/drug driving on the A47 with the offender doing speeds of over 100mph.

At this point in the meeting, the C/Cllr left the meeting and the Chairman thanked him for his input.

## **14. Finance & Governance Matters.**

### **a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.**

Council noted the report.

**b) To receive a report regarding public sector website accessibility and to consider options as to the way forward.**

Cllr Watts proposed that the council engage the services of a Norfolk Parish Training & Support Associate to assist in building a new website, with the costs being budgeted and spread over the two financial years 2019/20 and 2020/21. This was seconded by Cllr Spratt and agreed by Council. Once built, ongoing costs will be minimal, and the Clerk will be able to update the new site.

**c) To receive a report regarding Operation London Bridge – a Local Plan.**

Council agreed to take no action until notified by the D/Cllr of any Breckland plans.

**d) To review the following policy documents.**

Council agreed some minor amendments in respect of the risk factor under the Staff heading (Risk Assessment & Management Policy and the cost of replacing the Village Sign (Asset Register). Cllr Watts then proposed adoption of the updated documents, this was seconded by Cllr Taylor and agreed by Council.

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Risk Assessment & Management Policy
- Asset Register
- Information & Data Protection Policy

**e) To consider approval of the following payments:**

Cllr Taylor proposed approval of the following payment, this was seconded by Cllr Watts and agreed by Council.

- Clerk Salary & Allowance – Dec/Jan £210.26

**15. Correspondence for circulation.**

Council noted the following correspondence and no actions were required.

- Breckland – Adoption of Local Plan
- Notice of intention not to dedicate PROW – Dunham Lodge.

**16. To note the meeting dates for 2020**

The Chairman reported that he would be unable to attend on the 19<sup>th</sup> May and Council agreed to change the date to the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The other dates were noted.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May (following the Annual Parish Meeting commencing at 6.30pm)

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November

**17. To receive any new items for the next meeting.**

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

**18. To confirm the date of the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council which will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in the Village Hall.**

Council noted the date of the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.26pm.

Signed:

Date:

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## County Councillors Report – January 2020

The consultation by the Boundary Commission (BC) on the review of voting Divisions in Norfolk was suspended during the election and is now set to close on the 11th February. The purpose of the review is to ensure that each Norfolk County Councillor represents a roughly equal number of voters. The BC have determined that the number of Councillors elected to NCC should remain at the current number of 84, and that each Division should be represented by a single Councillor. It now remains for the BC to divide up Norfolk in to 84 Divisions of, as nearly as possible, an equal number of voters and they would like to know which communities feel tied together and would like to be represented by the same Councillor. Details can be found on the BC website. A further consultation on the BC's draft recommendations will take place from the 5th May to 13th June. Their final recommendations will be published on the 30th September.

The Councils budget will be set at the meeting of the Council on the 17th February. The government has agreed a one off grant towards adult and children's social care and the proposal is to increase Council Tax (2% increase in the Adult Social Care precept and 1.99% increase in the general rate), this is insufficient to cover the inflationary and demand cost increases projected in 20/21 and certainly not enough to reverse any of the reductions in service applied in previous years. We are still waiting for government to make a firm decision on business rate retention as a funding stream for local government and to implement the Fairer Funding formula which would see rural counties such as Norfolk receive a larger slice of national funding. The central government budget that could address these issues has been delayed from February until March and is therefore beyond the date which NCC must set its budget.

NCC Local Transport Plan 2020-2036. The last Transport Plan was agreed in 2011, Since then there have been many changes to the way and how much they travel, shopping on the internet, local transport schemes, car sharing etc have all changed the way and why we travel. NCC want to know the priorities that the public place on transport; what is required and how it will be used up to 2036. Responses can be made on the NCC website until 28th February.

Norfolk Rail Prospectus 2020. NCC wants the views of the public as to what is required of the rail network and what benefit are expected from an improved rail network. We will use a consultation which runs until the 28th February to gather views that will provide evidence for an updated Rail Prospectus which will be used to influence the delivery plans of the rail industry.