

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Fransham Parish Council held on Tuesday 21st November 2023, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Richard Watts (Chair)
Cllr Russell James (Vice Chair)
Cllr James Sheringham
Cllr Andrew Lake
Cllr Emma Spratt
Cllr Katharine Robinson
Cllr Gerry Taylor

Two members of the public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from County & District Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19th September 2023.

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

4. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

Written reports had been received in respect of both County and District matters. There was nothing specific to Fransham and no matters were highlighted.

5. Open Forum for Public Participation.

A member of the public raised the problem of fly tipping taking place in Fransham and the surrounding areas. The Chairman thanked them for reporting it to Breckland, which was the correct course of action.

A member of the public raised a recent planning application which had been refused but was going to appeal and was concerned that it had been treated differently from other applications by both the Parish Council and Breckland.

The Chairman assured the member that each case is considered on its own merits and an impartial response is agreed by the whole Council; responses are not the views of any individual councillor. All responses must be within a set of guidelines.

Council did agree to contact Breckland on behalf of the member of the public regarding a related query.

6. Highway Matters.

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

Council noted the following updates:

- Four dropped manhole covers on A47 – reported to National Highways again.
- Misleading signage on Love Lane – C/Cllr to investigate and this will now be chased up.
- A47 Streetlight – fitted incorrectly or insecure – reported to National Highways.
- New Gate on Footpath 6 (Station Road) – to ensure permission has been obtained from Norfolk County Council.
- Dirty Pavements on A47 – reported to National Highways.
- Hedge at Bus Stop – referred to National Highways.
- Stile on FP4 – broken step will be reported to Highways.
- Bradenham Lane – a report of flooding had been received but no issues were located upon inspection. However, this will be monitored.

b) To receive an update regarding repair works to the trod.

Council noted that a purchase order has been submitted to the contractors and a start date for the works is awaited.

Council gave consideration to the installation of a solid fence on the fence side to protect the trod from invasive brambles but agreed Highways would not allow it on grounds of reduced visibility.

c) To receive an update on requests to National Highways for a pedestrian crossing and an extension of the pavement from Spicer's Corner.

Council noted that no update had been received and a reminder has been recently submitted. Council will consider contacting the local MP to help chase this up if no response is received by the January meeting.

d) To consider an application to the Parish Partnership Scheme.

There were no suggestions and an application will not be submitted this year. The scheme will open again in 2024.

e) To consider quotes to clean the Bus Shelters.

Council considered two quotes and Cllr James proposed that the quote from Contractor 1 be accepted, at a cost of £150 for the initial clean, followed by four cleans per year at a cost of £100 per clean for both shelters. This was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council.

f) To consider the installation of a litter bin in the A47 layby and fly-tipping signs.

Council agreed to contact Breckland to confirm that an additional bin can be added to the collection schedule. Once this has been confirmed then the purchase of a bin will be considered.

Cllr Sheringham proposed that two fly-tipping signs be purchased at a cost of £41.50 each for two of the laybys on the A47, this was seconded by Cllr Watts and unanimously agreed by Council. The signs can be funded from the Highways Reserve.

7. Planning Issues.

a) New Applications.

- 3PL/2023/1007/VAR – 2 Wood Farm Cottages, Goggles Lane - variation of Conditions 5, 7, 8 and 9 on 3PL/2021/0457/F - conditions that were pre-commencement/occupation that were not discharged – no issues were raised by Council and a ‘no comment’ response will be submitted.

b) Decisions Due.

Council noted the following application had been approved:

- 3PL/2023/0634/VAR - Development Site 590516 312080, Crown Lane - variation of Conditions 2, 3, 4 & 5 on 3PL/2021/0055/D.

No decision has been made on the following applications:

- 3PL/2022/0957/F – land at Grovewood House, Station Road - conversion of existing barn to holiday let - Amendment: Red line amended to incorporate new access point.
- 3PL/2023/0727/F – Canary & Linnet, Main Road - proposed change of use and conversion from a public house (Sui Generis) to a self-contained residential dwelling (C3).
- 3PL/2023/0819/F – Home Farm, Beeston Road – change of use of farm buildings to storage use (Use Class B8)

The following application has been confirmed as no prior approval being required:

- 3DM/2023/0003/DEM – Top Farm, Main Road - application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Demolition of 4no. buildings (Ref: Buildings 1, 14, 15 and 16) The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B.

8. To receive an update in respect of the Vattenfall Community Fund, the Offshore Transmission Network and any other matters relating to the infrastructure at Necton.

There was no update available in respect of Vattenfall related matters.

9. To receive an update regarding the Village Sign and to consider any issues arising from the regular inspections of council assets.

The bench on Station Road is much improved, thanks to Cllr Taylor.

Cllr Lake confirmed he is making a metal frame to be fitted around the damaged plinth of the Village Sign. Once this has been installed, the new dedication plate will be mounted.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Lake for replacing the broken locks on the four notice boards.

10. To consider the grass cutting contract for 2024.

Council considered the quote from the current contractor but agreed that the contract should go out for tender for 2024.

11. To consider applying for a grant to replace the lost orchard trees on the Village Hall field.

Council agreed that a grant application should be submitted for the cost of trees, guards and posts to replace the lost orchard trees.

12. To consider a policy to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Fransham, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

Council noted that a draft policy will be available for consideration at the January meeting and, in the meantime, were advised to consider ways to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Fransham.

13. Finance & Governance Matters.

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To receive a report from Cllr James re the 2023 NALC Conference.

Cllr James reported that he had recently attended the Norfolk Association of Local Councils Conference, specifically to speak about the Local Council Award Scheme and this had raised the profile of both Fransham Parish Council and the Scheme itself. Two issues were raised during the conference which Council should be aware of:

- A general lack of respect, notably to clerks, was a real issue and a revised Code of Conduct, with implications for councillors, was in the pipeline.
- A change to financial regulations is expected due to an increase in fraud cases.

The Chairman thanked Cllr James for attending the conference on behalf of Council.

c) To consider the draft budget and to set the precept for the year ending 31st March 2025.

Council agreed the draft budget, with an amendment for cleaning the bus shelters, and Cllr Watts proposed that the precept remain at £5,750 for the year ending 31st March 2025, this was seconded by Cllr James and unanimously agreed by Council.

d) To consider approval of the following payments and note any receipts.

Council agreed that the payment of £75 should not be made to Breckland in respect of the May elections, as no election had been held.

Cllr Taylor proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr James and unanimously agreed by Council.

P14 Clerk Salary & All (Oct)	£131.52 (SO)
P14 HMRC – PAYE	£30.40
P17 Clerk Salary & All (Nov)	£131.52 (SO)
P17 HMRC – PAYE	£30.40
P16 Grass Cutting (2 of 2)	£875.00
P15 Cllr Lake (notice board locks)	£90.07

14. Correspondence for circulation.

Council noted the following correspondence and no action was proposed.

- Zero Hour – support for climate and ecology bill.
- Notification of publicity of the Necton neighbourhood plan under regulation 16 of the neighbourhood planning (general) regulations 2012.

15. To receive any new items for the next meeting.

Two new items were received for the next agenda:

- To consider the location of SLOWs on Fransham roads.
- To consider any maintenance for the War Memorial.

16. To confirm the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 16th January 2024 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.21pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

FINANCIAL REPORT - NOVEMBER 2023

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget 2023/24	To Date	% Spend		
PAYMENTS*				Bank Balance at 01.04.2022	8149.94
Admin	2,517	849.97	34%	Plus Receipts at 31.10.2023	6031.35
Salary	2,019	1,215.56	60%	Less Expenditure at 31.10.2023	<u>2729.52</u>
Maintenance	100	-			11451.77
Grass Cutting	2,118	1,750.00	83%	Balance at 31.10.2023	
Donations	50	-		Community Current Account	4415.56
TOTAL	6,804	3,815.53		Business Savings Account	<u>7066.61</u>
RECEIPTS			Received	11482.17	
Admin	-	-		Plus any outstanding receipts	0.00
Precept	5,750	5,750.00	100%	Less any outstanding payments	<u>30.40</u>
Bank Interest	-	27.70			11451.77
Recycling	20	31.76	159%	including:	
HMRC	-	117.40		Highway Reserves	2656.61
TOTAL	5,770	5,926.86		GENERAL RESERVE	8795.16
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-1,034.00	2,111.33			