

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Fransham Parish Council held on Tuesday 24th January 2023, at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

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

County & District Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Steve Thulborn, National Highways, Head of Planning & Development
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15th November 2022.

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

4. To receive an input from a National Highways officer regarding a pedestrian crossing on the A47 and other matters relating to the A47.

Mr Steve Thulborn attended the meeting at the request of the Parish Council. He gave a brief report on the work of National Highways which included the operation, maintenance and improvements to a network of over 4,300 miles of motorways and major roads in England, known as the strategic road network. In addition, they have funding to provide environmental, social and economic benefits to the people and businesses who live and work near to the network. He also outlined a scheme to improve safety on the A47 which included reduced speed limits through Necton and between Necton and Little Fransham, vehicle activated signs for speeding drivers on the same stretch and other minor safety improvements. Construction was programmed for the 2023-24 financial year.

In respect of the request for a pedestrian crossing, the Chairman outlined the need for a crossing, setting out the difficulties pedestrians, particularly the more elderly or disabled, faced when crossing the busy A47 which impacted on their ability to use local amenities and public transport. Mr Thulborn indicated that a feasibility study will be carried out and, if feasible, a bid for funding

will be put forward to either the Safety Fund or the Community Fund. If successful, he anticipated the scheme could be delivered by 2024/25. It would be a signal-controlled crossing.

In respect of a request for consideration of a pavement from Spicer's Corner, on the northside, heading west for approx. 300mtrs, to link up a well used public footpath, Mr Thulborn agreed this could also be looked at but stressed that National Highways cannot purchase land and any path must be built to current standards. Again, a feasibility study can be carried out.

In respect of the request for accident statistics and information regarding the diversions put in place when an accident occurred, Council noted the emergency diversion routes went via Fakenham or Munford and appreciated that it was difficult to stop local routes jamming up as drivers looked for alternative, shorter routes, particularly with the wide use of sat navs.

In respect of the Streetlights, Mr Thulborn said that much of the lighting asset across the county was old and needed replacing, with over £1 billion of works required. Cllr Taylor reported that of the 44 lights on the A47, only 12 were currently working, with two columns missing entirely after being destroyed in accidents. He suggested that National Highways should prioritise the lighting around junctions and the bus stops. He also raised a point that National Highways pay a flat, unmetered charge for the electricity to power the lights and were probably paying for power to fuel many lights which were not working, could a saving be made? Mr Thulborn said that testing on the existing columns would be taking place to ensure they can be installed with the new lightweight LED units and, if that is possible, the works should be completed by Spring, this year.

In respect of the dropped manhole covers, Cllr Lake outlined the problems of the dropped manhole covers and drain covers and said how dangerous they were, particularly for motorcyclists, and they were also noisy for local residents living next to the A47. Mr Thulborn will ask for a Safety Inspectors Report to try and get a more proactive response to this issue.

Mr Thulborn encouraged Council to continue to report faults on the online reporting system.

The Chairman thanked Mr Thulborn for the positive input and Mr Thulborn then left the meeting.

5. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

A written report from the District Councillor is attached. In addition to the report, D/Cllr Kiddle-Morris reported that Council Tax for Breckland will increase by £4.95.

In respect of County matters, C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris reported that a decision regarding the devolution deal is due in December, the current intention being to proceed. The deal would generate £20M over 30 years for revenue/capital projects but would require a directly elected leader who will choose the cabinet and have control over the budget.

The Chairman asked C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris to investigate an anomaly on the signage on Love Lane; at the A47 end it shows 'not suitable for motor vehicles' and at Crown Lane it shows 'not suitable for articulated vehicles'. Residents were concerned that should an accident occur, will the insurance companies refuse to pay as it is not a public highway, despite it being a highway maintained road. C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris will investigate and report back to Council.

The Chairman thanked C&D/Cllr Kiddle-Morris and C&D/Cllr Kiddle-Morris then left the meeting.

6. Open Forum for Public Participation.

There were no members of the public present.

7. Highway Matters.

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

Council noted the following updates.

- Dropped manhole covers on A47 – reported to National Highways – see item 4 above.
- FP4 – junction with Dereham Lane – broken stile – reported to Highways who have written to the landowner.
- Street Lights – A47 – reported to National Highways – see item 4 above.
- Overgrown grass to front of bungalows on Station Road – this has been reported to Norfolk County Council who cut this grass four times a year, only one cut has taken place this year to date. Works confirmed and reported as resolved but no works carried out. C/Cllr asked to investigate on our behalf.
- Crown Lane, near to farm entrance - road surface breaking up – reported to Highways.

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

Council noted that the repair works should have been carried out in the summer and the Highways Officer is now investigating why this had not been done.

8. Planning Issues.

a) New Applications.

There were no new planning applications to consider.

b) Decisions Due.

Council noted the following applications had been approved.

- 3PL/2022/1110/F – Land off Station Road, Gt Fransham - erection of agricultural building for storage of agricultural services, machinery and storage (Retrospective) & Proposed hardstanding for cleaning and manoeuvring of agricultural vehicles .
- 3PL/2022/0833/F – Beeston & Fransham – New Farm, Fransham Road - construction of rural workers dwelling and double cart port.

Council noted that no decisions had been made on the following applications.

- 3PL/2022/1009/F – Mill Farm, Beeston Lane - formation of new stock yard to Mill Farm, for the keeping of livestock.
- 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.

9. To receive an update in respect of the Vattenfall Community Fund and the Offshore Transmission Network.

There was nothing new to report.

10. To consider any issues arising from the regular inspections of council assets including the dedication plate on the Village Sign.

No issues had been raised from the regular inspections.

11. To consider any commemoration/celebration for the Coronation.

Council noted that £500 was available from Breckland to Village Halls for the celebration. Council members were asked to bring forward any ideas.

12. To receive an update on the Local Quality Council Award Scheme application.

Council noted that all the requirements for the Award should be in place once Council adopt the NALC documents at item 14c.

13. To note the meeting dates for 2023:

Council noted the meeting dates for 2023, as follows.

- 17th January
- 21st March
- 16th May (Annual Parish and Annual Council Meetings)
- 18th July
- 19th September
- 21st November

14. Finance & Governance Matters.

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2023.

The financial report was noted.

b) To consider the grass cutting contract for 2023 and beyond.

Council agreed that as the 2022 contractor had not carried out the works or responded to any attempts to contact him then the contract should go out to tender with the quotes available for consideration at the March meeting.

c) To review and consider approval of the following NALC model policy documents.

Cllr Taylor proposed that the following documents be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously agreed by Council.

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations

d) To consider approval of the following payments.

Cllr Lake proposed that the following payments be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Sheringham and unanimously agreed by Council.

• Clerk Salary & All (Dec)	£144.22 (SO)
• Clerk Salary & All (Jan)	£155.52
• HMRC	£0.40
• ICO (Data Protection)	£35.00 (DD)
• Website Renewal (Refund to Clerk)	£106.06

15. Correspondence for circulation.

The Chairman agreed to complete the Breckland Design Guide survey on behalf of Council.

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

A Village Facebook page will be considered at the next meeting.

17. To confirm the next meeting of Fransham Parish Council will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 21st March 2023 in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.25pm.

Signed:

Date:

District Councillors Report January 2023

Local Plan:

The “call for sites” process associated with the full review of the Local Plan finished on the 1st December. You may recall that the period was extended particularly to enable sites for gypsy and traveller accommodation to be put forward as well as further sites for housing and business use. The result of this further consultation has been published on the BDC website. The Council are not inviting comments at this time. When each site has been assessed against various criteria including deliverability there will be a period of consultation for all interested parties to comment on the sites and the results of the appraisal process.

On Monday the 9th January Cabinet discussed the “Issues and Options” consultation document with a view to releasing it for an 8 week period, commencing in February 2023, for comments to be submitted. The document outlines options for future development in Breckland including a vision of what the district will look like through the period to 2046, to specific options for housing requirements, development control policies and design standards. This is the first round in public consultation, there will be a “Preferred Options” consultation in October followed by a pre-submission consultation in 2024.

Planning Reform:

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill currently going through parliament is proposing changes to the planning system. Not least is a proposal to amend the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to give local planning authorities and neighbourhoods more freedom to control growth in their areas. The main proposal is to split the NPPF in to 2 documents; one to contain “national development management policies” which would apply to all local planning authority areas and the other to contain regulations for plan making. The government are currently consulting on the proposed changes to the NPPF until 2nd March. Details of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and the consultation on the NPPF can be found on the gov.uk website.

Nutrient Neutrality:

In March 2022 Natural England declared that 2 areas in Norfolk; the river Wensum SAC and the Broads catchment, were suffering from an input of nitrates and phosphates which is adversely affecting the biodiversity of those rivers. Consequently a moratorium was placed on passing any planning applications, mainly for increased overnight accommodation, from sites which drained into those catchments.

Mark Kiddle-Morris
Member for Launditch Ward.
15th January, 2023.

FRANSHAM PARISH COUNCIL - YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2023

FINANCIAL REPORT - JANUARY 2023

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget 2022/23	To Date	% Spend		
				Bank Balance at 01.04.2022	7,914.03
				Plus Receipts at 30.12.2022	4,709.00
				Less Expenditure at 30.12.2022	<u>3,179.96</u>
PAYMENTS*					<u>9,443.07</u>
Admin	1,243	865.20	70%		
Salary	1,441	1,225.71	85%	Balance at 30.12.2022	
Maintenance	100	-		Community Current Account	4,410.41
Grass Cutting	1,140	572.26	50%	Business Savings Account	<u>5,032.66</u>
Donations	50	387.47			9,443.07
TOTAL	3,974	3,050.64		Less any outstanding payments	<u>-</u>
					<u>9,443.07</u>
RECEIPTS			Received	including:	
Admin	-	125.00		Highway Reserves	2,656.61
Precept	4,250	4,250.00	100%	GENERAL RESERVE	6,786.46
Bank Interest	-	4.72			
Recycling	20	30.58	153%		
HMRC	-	17.60			
TOTAL	4,270	4,427.90			
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	296.00	1,377.26			

*includes payments awaiting authorisation at this meeting as listed on the agenda.