

Rocklands Parish Council (RPC)
Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held in Rocklands Village Hall
7.00pm on Monday 10 April 2017

Present: David Howie Chair
 Shirley Colenutt
 Cath Jones
 Nickie Southgate
 Ian Scholes
 David Witt
 David Roberts

 Kim Austin Clerk
 Cliff Jordan County Councillor

Also present: 21 members of the public

The meeting started at 7.00pm

The Chair Cllr. David Howie welcomed everybody to the Annual Parish Meeting.

1. To consider accepting apologies for absence

RESOLVED to accept apologies from District Cllr. Bill Smith who had other commitments.

2. To approve the minutes of the last parish meeting (Annual Assembly) on Monday 11 April 2016

RESOLVED to approve the minutes that had been circulated prior to the meeting, as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair, Cllr. David Howie.

3. To discuss any matters arising from the minutes, not on the agenda

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. To hear the Chairman's report

The chair Cllr. David Howie delivered his report. David said:

I am aware I have said this in previous years, but again we have had a **good year**. We have had some problems along the way but all have been dealt with. We have managed within our funding, despite my efforts to spend money. The Parish Precept has remained at the same reasonable level, however this may need to rise in the future.

Again, our main issues have been with **planning applications**. Through the emerging Breckland Local Plan we have been able to confirm our status as a Rural Settlement and the Rocklands boundary has been ratified. All good news.

We always try to reflect the views of the majority of the parishioners in Rocklands but this is far from easy. At Parish Council meetings, I have tried to make sure everyone has their say and intend for this to continue.

We have opposed planning applications in Chapel Street and Mill Lane and these have been refused by Breckland Planning. Applications in Mill Lane and The Street are subject to appeal.

Our **Neighbourhood Plan** is up and running, it is taking time to formulate, but we are hopeful that a draft plan will be in place this summer. This will about the same time the Breckland Local Plan will be completed.

Signed

Date

I was asked if an application could be made to Anglian Water to have mains sewerage connected to the properties in the Rockland St Peter area under their **First Time Sewerage scheme**. After consultation with residents I made the application and things have moved much faster than expected. This very day an Infrastructure Planner will visit the area and we will await the outcome.

The **Playing Field Committee** is making an application to extend the pavilion and enlarge the parking area which they hope will alleviate problems. A committee has been formed to oversee the work.

The new **LED Street Lights** are in place and working well. So far, no problems have been experienced and we expect to save money.

The **Community Shop/Post Office** continues to flourish but I am aware they need more customers and volunteers.

The **Village Hall** is still well supported and is about to undergo a spring clean.

Our little gem of a **School** is full, with a new Headteacher in place and continues to maintain its high standards. I am in contact with the governors to see what help, if any, the Parish Council can provide in the future.

The **White Hart Public House** is under new management and reopened with an open evening on 1st April. The new owners are local and from within the parish which is great. They will require a great deal of support, but I am hopeful they will get this.

Neighbourhood Watch is now up and running well with good co-operation from the police. We are lucky to have four great co-ordinators. Crime is low in this location but we must not be complacent as seen by the recent theft of a large quantity of oil from a property in The Street. More residents continue to join. It is free to join but donations would be welcome to cover costs.

We have been involved in **Safer Neighbourhood and Action Plan (SNAP)** meetings, I have found them very interesting and worthwhile. At these meetings we have been able to ask for the police to prioritise certain actions in our parish. At present the priority is speeding on the Attleborough Road. We have had no **flooding** in the parish as far as I am aware but Highways have been called to keep gullies and pipes clear.

During the recent high winds damage was caused to power cables resulting in loss of power to parts of the parish. The response by UK Power was excellent and they have been thanked.

You may have noticed the **bus shelter** has been removed. It needed major repair work and the cost to do this was considered too high and as we have no bus service it was decided to remove it. Work has also been undertaken around the **pond** in The Street to clear dead trees and cut back overgrown bushes. Work is also required at Chapel Green where a large tree came down in the recent high winds. This work is paid for from Parish funds. I intend to try to maintain and improve the parish when funds are available.

I thank Cliff Jordan our County Councillor and Bill Smith our District Councillor for their advice and help and for attending our Parish Council meetings. How Cliff can find the time to do this, I do not know. This is much appreciated.

I also want to thank Nicola Southgate my Vice Chairman. She is always there to give help and advice and support me when required. Nicola does great work specifically on the planning applications. And last, but not least, I thank Kim Austin our Clerk. Again, she is always there to give me help and advice. Without her, my job would be so much harder. Thank you.

There was a round of applause for David.

5. To receive reports by County & District Councillors

5.1 District Councillor's Report 2017 (Cllr. William Smith) had been circulated before the meeting and was read by Cllr. David Howie.

Signed

Date

Breckland Council's vision is to make Breckland 'a place where people and business can thrive'. This is underpinned by four priorities, outlined in the Corporate Plan:

- Supporting Breckland to develop and thrive
- Providing the right services at the right time and in the right way
- Developing the local economy to be vibrant with continued growth
- Enabling stronger, more independent communities

Examples of how a number of projects have contributed to the priorities/vision are below:

Providing the right services at the right time and in the right way

Website Review

Website has been relaunched and new design and format is accessible on a tablet or phone, as well as a pc or laptop. It offers ability to report issues via a form, make payments online, and submit applications eg. for licences - making key council functions available 24/7.

One number for Breckland

New single phone number for the council has been adopted, with touchtone options for callers to select the department they need. Call waiting times are down and most people can be helped by the first person they speak to.

Garden Waste collection service

The council launched the new option to pay online in April 2016. This has had a good take up. We can now accept payment via credit card, as well as debit card. Online forms and renewal letters have been reviewed to improve customer experience. Around 21k subscribers are now signed up to the Garden Waste service.

Creating 'one stop shops'

We have been developing opportunities to co-locate public sector organisations to deliver a 'one stop shop' for customers and ensuring value for money is achieved for residents and the wider public purse.

This has included the Department of Work and Pensions, based in Dereham, co-locating in Elizabeth House with shared reception. We have also worked with partners to establish an Early Help Hub in Thetford, providing early interventions to ensure a better quality of service for children and families. Partners include Children's Services, Norfolk Constabulary and Flagship Housing. Work has commenced on a second Hub which will be located in Dereham.

ARP Enforcement Agency

Since July 2015, the ARP Enforcement Agency has collected over £1.1m of council tax arrears. This has reduced the need to use private bailiffs, costs for which were previously passed on to debtors. Enforcement Agency has been now expanded to include South Norfolk District Council (a non-ARP member).

Digital Passport

A Digital Passport training programme has been developed and launched to ensure the council's staff are able to deliver services in a modern, digital way.

Enabling stronger, more independent communities

Our Day Out Programme

We created this programme, which is aimed at supporting people with early to mid-stage dementia and their carers. It offers opportunities to engage in arts and cultural activities in a safe and understanding environment. As a result of the success of the programme and the feedback received,

Signed

Date

Creative Arts East (our partner, now delivering the programme) has secured around £230k national funding to continue initiative for a further three years.

Breckland Fit Families

Facilitating healthy behaviour change in Reception-aged children and their families in areas of Breckland identified as having high levels of children at risk of developing weight-related conditions in later life. The UEA undertook an evaluation of the project and found significant positive impact on health behaviours of both children and parents.

Reducing Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Reducing Crime and ASB is about helping communities to feel safe in the district. The Breckland Operational Partnership Team (BOPT) has been successful in reducing anti-social behaviour year on year, resulting in reported instances reducing by over a half since 2010.

Increase in Leisure Participation

Overall participation in activities at leisure centres is up by around 6% compared to last year. Dereham Leisure Centre will shortly celebrate its 10 year anniversary. Parkwood Leisure provides sport centres on our behalf in Dereham, Thetford, Attleborough and Swaffham. We have been in discussions with the independent sports centre in Watton about available support.

Housing and Homelessness

At least 100 affordable homes are in the pipeline resulting from direct investment from the Council. The Council is continuing work with Registered Providers to attract further funding into the district.

Unightly Sites

We've launched a new initiative to tackle unsightly and derelict buildings. Neglected sites can be a blight on communities and attract anti-social behaviour. Our councillors will be working with residents to draw up a list of sites suffering from serious long-term neglect, are unsafe, or in disrepair. Where necessary, we'll seek to use our legislative powers to require landowners to take action and help improve the appearance of the sites.

Supporting Breckland to develop and thrive, and Developing the local economy to be vibrant with continued growth

Commercial Property

Breckland Council continues to set the lowest district council tax in the country. This is achievable in part thanks to our successful commercial investment strategy. Our commercial properties are 99% let and these investments bring in around £2.4m per year, around the same amount as is raised through council tax. Our commercial income helps us to keep the financial burden off residents and businesses.

Local Plan

Breckland Council's Local Plan sets out our vision for how the district is expected to grow over the coming 20 years. We have further refined the plans following meetings with parish councils and feedback from residents. The plan is due to be discussed by councillors again over the spring (likely May) and will then be made available for residents to view. Following this, it will be submitted to a Government Planning Inspector for scrutiny. If approved, we will adopt the Local Plan and use it to inform planning decisions in the district to ensure development and growth supports a vibrant economy that provides homes and jobs for local people.

Thetford Riverside

Signed

Date

The Breckland Bridge partnership - involving Breckland Council and The Land Group - completed the Thetford Riverside development on time and within budget. It is a major regeneration site which will drive growth in the town and district. The Council invested £8m in the development of the site which includes five food and retail units, 62 hotel bedrooms, 3 cinema screens and at least 75 new jobs. The hotel and cinema have already opened and welcomed thousands of visitors. The first restaurant will open soon. Significant interest in remaining units, with announcements expected in due course.

Mileham housing

The Breckland Bridge partnership has built 11 new homes in Mileham, near Dereham. The project is the first time for considerable years that the council has been involved in house building on its land - utilising the previously underused asset. This project includes some 'affordable housing' and will help to meet local housing demand.

Cambridge Norwich Technology Corridor

Alongside partners from Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, we have been working to establish a Cambridge Norwich Technology Corridor. Capitalising on the existing reputation of Cambridge as a centre for innovation and technology, Norwich's reputation for research, the dualled A11, and improving infrastructure, we're working with our partners to create opportunities for businesses to set up within the corridor, which will bring more and higher paying jobs to our area, as well as new homes.

Thetford Enterprise Park (TEP)

The Council is working with partners to progress delivery of the Thetford Enterprise Park. A successful £1.8m funding bid to the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) will help pay for a roundabout to provide access to the TEP. This will unlock the site and bring new jobs to the district.

Snetterton Heath Employment Site

New Anglia LEP has approved funding to support a project to upgrade the electricity supply to Snetterton Heath employment sites. With private and public sector investment, this will enable the expansion of industrial activity and attract new business and new jobs to the sites.

Upgrading the A47

We've been working with our partners to lobby for improvements to be made to the A47. Highways England has announced its proposed options for six planned A47 improvement schemes which form the Road Investment Strategy, including dualling between North Tuddenham and Easton.

Market Towns Initiative

We are considering how we can best support our market towns to enable them to flourish and develop. We previously allocated around £25k to help deliver town council-led ideas to encourage visitors and new businesses to the towns. Our Leader has also been meeting with the town councils and we will continue to work with local government partners on initiatives which will support the towns and surrounding areas.

Signed

Date

A Year of Achievement – 2016/17

The last year has been a year of achievement for Norfolk County Council.

While a great number of changes have taken place, the culture of the council has been driven in a much more responsive, flexible direction. While there is much still to do, our reputation has improved significantly. We have received recognition as a listening council, a caring council, a courageous council and one that is looking forward to a more positive future.

We have not ducked the extremely difficult decisions that have been needed, including in Children's Services, where we are determined to deliver that step-change needed to bring about

All achievements over the last year must be seen against a backdrop of ever-shrinking budgets and growing demand for a number of our services.

At a service level, achievements have been seen across our service areas.

Children's Services

More children than ever are being educated in good or outstanding schools - big improvements in Norfolk schools were highlighted in the Ofsted Annual Report in December 2016, with Norfolk the fifth most improved county nationally for the proportion of pupils at good or outstanding secondary schools over the past four years, and the 18th most improved for primary schools. Norfolk is also one of the most improved in the region for children at the end of the early years' stage achieving a 'good level of development'. And Norfolk's colleges and sixth form colleges are all rated 'good' by Ofsted.

Norfolk moves into top-half of the GCSE league table - Provisional GCSE results for 2016 have put Norfolk above the national average for the first time in a decade. The government has introduced a new method for measuring performance, called Progress 8, which ranks schools according to the progress made by students during their time in secondary education. Under this system, Norfolk had a score of 0.02, compared with a national average of -0.03, where the higher the number, the greater the progress.

A unique partnership - Norfolk County Council and children's charity, Barnardo's, are developing an imaginative new approach to working together to better support children and their families. The new service, which we anticipate having in place by summer 2017, will focus on edge of care provision; supporting more children to remain at home with their families (where it is safe to do so), as opposed to coming into the care system.

Children's University - raising children's aspirations by supporting them to carry on learning outside the normal school day and encourage a passion for learning is what our Children's University is all about. Norfolk Children's University is run by Educator Solutions - a traded Norfolk County Council service - and is working with over 12,000 children in Norfolk. In February 2017, another 80 five- to 12-year-olds graduated from the university, marking the completion of more than 30 hours each of extra learning outside school.

Getting more of Norfolk's young people into top universities - the Norfolk Higher Education Scheme has gone from strength to strength this year. It was founded to link up sixth forms and colleges in Norfolk to share opportunities for university applicants - such as mock interviews, workshops, outside speakers and university visits. All 33 schools and colleges in the county have signed up to the scheme, which is run by a partnership of Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Education Leaders. Its pilot year, which was open only to applicants to the 'most-competitive' and 'high-demand' universities, saw 350 students sign up. This year, having opened up to all Norfolk students applying to any university, 1,220 have already registered. In summer 2016, 48 Norfolk state school students were offered places at Oxford or Cambridge University. Increasing numbers of care leavers are moving into higher education; over 50 of our care leavers (11%) are doing university courses, compared to a national average of 6%.

Transforming school buildings - we're also supporting children's learning by investing in school buildings. In February 2017, for example, we completed £1.99m of improvements to Southtown Primary School. This two-phase project, designed and managed by NPS, has transformed the school into a modern all-through primary for four- to 11-year-olds - which is better for their learning - and increased the number of places from 180 to 210. This is part of our £144m programme of improvements.

NEET and unknowns - Norfolk has done exceptionally well in the first year of a new

Signed

Date

Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group on the 'Healthy Homes Assistance' project, set up at the end of 2016. The project is helping facilitate early hospital discharge, reduce admissions and / or readmissions and provide preventative measures to reduce risks around the home. A study of one of the cases already completed by the project where falls prevention works were carried out at a cost of £465, has identified potential savings to the NHS of £12,000.

Giving a warm welcome to Syrian refugee families - Norfolk has a long tradition of extending the hand of friendship to those in need and this has held true in this case of welcoming Syrian refugees to the county. At the beginning of February, the first five Syrian families arrived in Norwich to begin their new life in Norfolk. In preparation, extensive work was done with district councils, health authorities, schools and voluntary groups to get everything in place to welcome the families, all of whom have young children. We were also inundated with offers of help and support from Norfolk residents and local faith and voluntary groups.

Acting against domestic violence - In December 2016, we reached the 500 mark for training domestic abuse 'champions' in frontline professions to help people suffering abuse. Our domestic abuse change coordinators are working across the county with people in professions who come face-to-face with the public, training them to become 'champions' so that they can look out for signs of abuse and take action to improve the safety of anyone affected. Champions are given free training to learn how to ask, respond to, and support people affected by domestic abuse, and to use their knowledge to also help their colleagues know how best to respond.

Norfolk Community Learning Services celebrates 'Good' Ofsted report in major turnaround - Education in Norfolk has received another boost with the news that Norfolk Community Learning Services (NCLS) has achieved an Ofsted inspection judgement of 'Good', providing Norfolk County Council with the security and sustainability to achieve its long term objectives for the service. This follows a previous judgement of 'Inadequate' in January 2015. At the recent inspection (April 2016), Ofsted inspectors said that "Leaders and managers have dealt quickly and very effectively with key issues identified at the previous inspection".

Inspectors were impressed by the new vision, strategic objectives and operating model for the service, formerly known as Adult Education. These

measure for local authorities, which combines numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and the number of young people whose activity is unknown. This gives a much more accurate picture of young people's circumstances. In Norfolk, we have a combined NEET and unknown percentage of 4.9%, much better than the national figure of 6.8%.

Growing our own social workers - recruiting and retaining social workers is a challenge for many councils. In Norfolk, we are doing something about it - by growing a bank of talented social workers and developing them through their entire career. In summer 2016, we launched our own social care academy which offers training and mentoring to social workers, not only new to the profession, but at all stages of their career. The academy builds on the work of the highly successful Norfolk Institute for Practice Excellence (NIPE) scheme, an innovative partnership between us and University of East Anglia, set up in recognition that the first year of a social worker's career is crucial. 110 social workers have been employed through NIPE since it was set up two years ago.

Adult's Services

In Good Company - Loneliness can cause ill health and reduce people's ability to lead fulfilling and independent lives. In November 2016 we launched our IGC campaign - working with partners, including charities and the local media - to combat loneliness and raise awareness of the wide range of support on offer in Norfolk. Since the campaign launched, we've received hundreds of pledges from individuals and organisations - all of them promising to do something, no matter how small, to help tackle loneliness in their community. Now Norfolk businesses and community organisations are being urged to apply for a new quality accreditation mark for their work to combat loneliness in the county.

Our adult social care twitter day - County Council staff and partners took to Twitter in October 2016 to raise awareness of adult social care services countywide. They tweeted experiences of their typical day, giving followers an insight into how diverse the care sector is, and also shared a wealth of information about what's available. More than 14,000 people looked at the tweets on the day and the site is now being followed by the media and social work organisations. This was our fourth successful Twitter day, following Children's Services social care, schools and roads earlier in the year.

Healthy Home Assistance - we've been working with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, East Coast Community Healthcare and NHS Great Yarmouth and

Signed

Date

were approved by Norfolk County Council's Communities Committee and implementation will be complete by September 2016.

Community and Environmental Services

Better broadband - the latest tranche of Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) will see high-speed broadband coverage reaching more than 95% of Norfolk home and businesses by spring 2020. This brings the total investment in the BBfN programme to £68m since it launched at the end of 2012. Currently, 87% of households and businesses in Norfolk can get a superfast broadband service, more than double the number four years ago (42%). We won't be satisfied until everyone in Norfolk has access, so we will continue to push for more investment and make the money we already have go as far as possible.

Integrated transport strategy – along with Suffolk County Council and the New Anglia LEP, we have commissioned Mouchel to research and produce an integrated transport strategy, covering air, road, rail, buses, sustainable transport and ports, which will be used to lever in transport investment from Government. The work was commissioned in October 2016 and is due to be published shortly.

Good progress on the NDR - it was a productive first year for the construction of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road which will provide Norfolk, Broadland and Norwich with high-quality infrastructure that will serve the county, its people and the economy for years to come. Work is going well, with most of the 1.5 cubic metres of bulk excavation complete, three roundabouts in use at the western end, bridge beams installed or imminent on four of the eight bridges and nearly 9km of carriageway complete to base asphalt layers. A new Tarmac plant at Postwick will this year supply nearly 150,000 tonnes of asphalt for the 20km dual carriageway. Planting of the 300,000 shrubs, trees and hedgerow plants is well under way.

Our transport infrastructure priorities

A47 - Norfolk County Council leads the A47 Alliance, bringing together key stakeholders from Lowestoft to Peterborough to lobby for improvements to this trunk road. Throughout 2016 we have been lobbying Highways England for early delivery of three sections of dualling, as well as junction improvements in Guyhirn, Thickthorn and Great Yarmouth. These schemes are programmed to begin in 2020. The Alliance Steering Group is currently gearing up to influence the trunk road

programme for the next round of improvements due to be delivered between 2020 and 2025. We have already met Highways England to lobby for our two priorities in Norfolk in this period: the dualling of the Acle Straight and Tilney to East Winch.

Towards the Norwich Western Link - now that the NDR is under construction, we have begun to consider the business case for a Norwich Western Link. This would both ease local traffic conditions and provide a strategic link to the west of the city. Initial work has focused on gathering feedback from local communities and developing a stakeholder group. We are also beginning to assess the economic viability of the project, and if the business case proves positive, we will press for funding and scheme delivery.

Long Stratton bypass - a bypass for Long Stratton would benefit residents and road users alike, and is firmly on our list of priorities. Along with improvements to the Hempnall crossroads, it's also required for the village's planned growth of 1,800 new houses and 12 hectares of employment land. We are keen to lead on the design and delivery of the bypass, and work is currently ongoing to set out how we, South Norfolk Council and the developer will collaborate to support the process of approvals, design, funding and delivery. Once the process is agreed, preparatory work will start towards the planning application – with a view to submitting it by the end of this year and delivery around 2020.

Podium position in highways and transport survey - an independent survey of Norfolk residents resulted in the County Council being ranked third out of 28 similar councils for satisfaction with highways and transport services – the third year in a row that Norfolk was in the top three. One of the biggest increases in satisfaction was for street lighting which saw us move up from 18th to 9th position in the rankings.

Emergency Services collaboration - Medical co-responding trial

Since July Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service has been participating in a national medical co-responding trial which sees our fire-fighters mobilised to suspected cardiac arrests alongside the East of England Ambulance Service. We have 10 fire stations with 99 firefighters participating in the trial, the greatest number in the region.

Signed

Date

By mobilising our firefighters with the ambulance service we are can deliver an early intervention using cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillators giving the casualty the best chance of survival.

Since July we have attended over 230 co-responding incidents and initial analysis would indicate that our crews are delivering effective CPR. The national trial concludes in February 2017.

Awards - The Library and Information Service won the national Libraries Change Lives Award for its pioneering work in partnership with Norfolk Public Health to promote healthier lifestyles. This work is being taken up as an example of good practice by libraries across the UK. Enhancing the reputation of NLIS

Customers - Each year Libraries run the Summer Reading Challenge to encourage children to continue reading during the summer holidays and to make a significant contribution to improving literacy. In Summer 2016, 14,413 children and young people took part in the challenge. 57% were girls and 43% were boys.

Libraries as cultural hubs - In 2016, the potential of libraries as cultural hubs started to be realised. A number of theatrical and music performances were held in libraries across the county. The most recent being Librarian Theatre's 'A Christmas Carol' which played to sell out audiences in three libraries before Christmas. Earlier in the Autumn 5 libraries played host to an interactive dance performance aimed at early years.

6. To receive comments from the public

There were no comments from the public.

The meeting closed at 7.12pm.

Signed

Date