

Rocklands Parish Council (RPC)
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
7.00pm on Monday 9 January 2023

Present:	David Howie	Chair
	Richard Harrison	Vice Chair
	Amanda-Jayne Buckland	
	Tim Ford	
	Bryan Swaddling	
	Anne Jones	
	Kim Austin	Clerk
	Sarah Suggitt	Breckland District Councillor

Also present: 22 members of the public were also present.
The meeting opened at 19:02

Cllr. Howie opened the meeting by sending condolences to the family of Ann Burroughs who had passed away at the weekend. John Brown added that Ann would be sorely missed in the village and our thoughts were with her husband Stephen. Stephen had been a Parish Councillor in the 80s and 90s. Cllr. Howie had been given a bound Parish Council minutes ledger dating back to 13 February 1935. Very interesting reading. This ledger will eventually be stored at the Council archive in Norwich. Cllr. Howie announced that Paula Bidmead had resigned from the Parish Council. She was thanked for her time on the council.

1. To consider accepting apologies for absence

Apology was received from Cllr. Ed Connolly who was attending another Parish Council meeting. Apology was accepted.

2. To record declarations of interest from members in any items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To approve the minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting on Monday 7 November 2022

The minutes had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. All councillors approved the minutes. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair, Cllr. David Howie.

4. To discuss any matters arising from the minutes (7 November 2022) not on the agenda.

There were no matters arising.

5. To adjourn the meeting for public participation

The meeting was adjourned at 19:10.

As the members of the public present were interested in discussing application 3PL/2022/1300/F Southgate/Poultry Houses, Item 9.3.3 was brought forward.

Cllr. Howie asked for a show of hands. Nobody present was in support of the application. Those present all raised their hands to OBJECT to this application. It was noted that the application had been 'strategically' submitted again, just before Christmas. The first application in December 2021 was strongly objected to and eventually withdrawn by the applicant. This latest application is the applicant making the most of its 'free go' after withdrawing. The difference between this application and the previous application was discussed and it was agreed that there were NO significant differences, certainly none that addressed any of the multitude of issues that had been raised at the previous attempt. The Parish Council had asked the case officer, Gemma Manthorpe to help by summarising the differences but she had not done so. She had confirmed though that: Deadline for comments is 31 January 2022. NCC Highways, are objecting on the same grounds as they previously did and recommending refusal on this basis. The NCC Lead Flood Authority has not commented or objected yet

Signed

Date

but this doesn't mean this project is acceptable. The applicant has failed to submit documents/reports/information they have been asked for. The application will go before the Breckland Planning Committee and just to note, if refused the applicant could appeal. Breckland Planning cannot throw out applications at the submission stage. Local Parish Councils affected by this application are working together on their responses. Rocklands Parish Council is in touch with Cllr. Ed Connolly who will object and George Freeman MP will object as he did last time. It must be noted that everybody that objected before must repost their objections by the deadline as this is a new application.

The owner of Swangey Lakes was concerned for his business and potential contamination of his spring fed lakes. Locate somewhere else nearer to the A11 and not in a location not suitable for HGVs and an area of natural beauty. An articulated lorry had recently knocked down the wall at Swangey Ford. Intensive farming procedures will never be acceptable. The chicken sheds would be seen from miles away.

All Parish Councillors objected to this application. Rocklands Parish Council objected strongly last time and will do so again. The PC were thanked from the floor for their continued support in objecting.

The meeting re-opened at 19:50.

6. To update on First Time Sewerage (RH)

Cllr. Harrison circulated his report prior to the meeting. The project continues and, as I write, **The Street is now fully clear of roadworks**, the boring machine works there have completed, and the very long length of pipe connecting the existing sewer with the beginning of Chapel Street has been installed. Unfortunately, closure of The Street extended up to 23 December, and caused significant inconvenience to residents. However, given the ground conditions that were found, adverse weather conditions, incorrect facilities drawings provided by third parties, and the fact that a number of re-designs were necessary as a result, this protracted delay was largely unavoidable.

Work has started on the underground pumping station at the North end of Chapel Street, and trenching work has commenced in the road in the Chapel Street/Bell Road area.

At the same time, much of the boring work along Attleborough Road has been completed and the open trench along Attleborough Road is now being cut, which will allow access to the sewer pipe below - so that the lateral connections to individual properties can be formed later on.

St. Peter's Lane. Due to Anglian Water working on the new sewer, road diversions meant the lane was being used as a rat run and had been considerably churned up. Hopefully this area will fall within the reinstatement process. It was noted that Anglian Water had been using this road themselves.

7. To receive village reports

7.1 Village Shop and Post Office

The shop was pleased to win two runners-up awards from Plunketts towards the end of 2022, in the volunteer section, against tough opposition from all community projects including shops, pubs, recreation facilities etc. Shop representatives attended ceremonies in East Anglia and St Martins-in-the-Fields in London to collect the awards.....many thanks to our wonderful team of managers and the volunteers who support them each week, as they are what makes the shop a success. Visitors to the shop are full of its praises....in fact a couple who came in last week as they were thinking of moving to the area and had come up from Suffolk just for a general 'reccy', told me that visiting our shop had made their minds up for them and they were going to look in earnest at properties in the village, they were so impressed !

We are well supported by villagers and people from the surrounding villages too. The PO was very busy before Christmas so the managers were occupied behind the PO for a large proportion of their days. Unfortunately, with covid still around as well as other infections like 'flu and the nasty cough/cold that is hitting so many of us, the number of volunteers available to do shifts is dwindling and we have many empty shifts to fill quite often. We are very lucky to have a small nucleus of wonderful people who drop everything in their lives to come in at short notice and fill shifts but it's not really sustainable in the long term. A leaflet drop in the village and the surrounding area raised the profile of the shop and brought in some new customers, but not really any extra volunteers so we are trying to think of new ways to attract

Signed

Date

more! We have an incentive scheme of 10% off shopping done whilst on shift which is one new idea, any others are welcome !

We have purchased a new EPOS system that should be more suitable for our purpose and easier to keep the stock updated on and the managers, Lottie in particular who has lots of EPOS experience, is working to get it up and running very soon. I am told it is easy to operate so maybe we won't have too many issues changing over!

The unit controlling the new big chiller failed during the hot weather last summer so has now been replaced under warranty with a more powerful version so hopefully there won't be as many emergencies with the fridge temperatures rising too high and all chilled produce having to be moved into different chillers at various times when the weather improves !

Like all retail, we have been hit hard with rising wholesale prices and have had to raise our shelf prices accordingly but we remain committed to the community aspect of the shop and will never take advantage of our customers so all increases have been kept as low as possible. The café remains very popular and trade has increased in snacks with all the workmen currently in the village! Footfall did fall when the road was closed from the B1077 and Magpie Lane had to be negotiated to access the shop but hopefully we didn't actually lose any customers permanently because of the inconvenience.

Thanks to all who support the shop in any way - we look forward to seeing lots of our members at the Annual members' Meeting in February- look out for exact date soon! Remember open membership shares in the shop can still be bought at £10 so newcomers to the village can still have a say and be part owners of the business. Please ask Cath Jones for a form if you are interested!

Finally, a heartfelt thanks to RPC and all others who make our village a lovely place to live by volunteering in so many different ways...it's what make Rocklands special !

7.2 Village Hall (Sarah Good)

The Village Hall Committee would welcome new Committee members, especially a Treasurer, and we continue to advertise this in The Rocklander. The hall is well used with regular hirers and the odd private booking. We are hoping soon to have external CCTV cameras installed. Cllrs. Tim Ford and Richard Harrison are progressing and will be at the Hall tomorrow. We are also looking into having Broadband installed. Our next committee meeting should be in early February. Dave Jones reported that the Village Hall has had new stage lighting installed. The rest of the tube lighting (now becoming obsolete) is to be replaced by more modern LED versions later this month.

7.3 Little Rocky's Parent and Toddler Group (Sharon Brown).

Toddler Group finished early before Christmas due to illness. A New Year party was held instead. The winter market held, in collaboration with St. Peters was a success. The group will be celebrating Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day.

7.4 Rocklands Primary School (Dave Jones)

Mrs Dekker, head teacher reported that the school remains both full and happy.

7.5 Rocklands Youth Club (Dave Jones)

Youth Club has been running since 2005 and has reached a point where its future is very uncertain unless more help is forthcoming. Fortunately, there has been a positive response to an appeal in December. A special meeting of new volunteers will be held on Friday. Hopefully the Club can reopen on a new, stronger footing on Friday 20 January.

7.6 Rocklands Playing Fields (Sarah Good)

The Clerk read out the report received from Sarah Good. We continue to advertise for a volunteer committee Secretary. Our AGM will be on Thursday 2 March. Although we have access to WiFi at the pavilion, this is quite expensive so we are looking into installing Broadband. Planning to replace the old floodlights and will be applying for a grant to cover, at least part of the cost. We have new blinds installed in the clubhouse. The running costs of the Playing Field are high and with little income, any donations and additional funding is really important. We welcome new ideas for fundraising.

Cllr. Amanda Buckland is also on the Playing Fields committee.

Signed

Date

7.7 Rockland St. Peter Church (John Brown)

Seems a long time ago now but the Santa's Tour held on 16 December 2022, with help of donations from Youth Club and Richard Baker raises £400 for Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund. Also collecting at the shop. Joint services between the churches to be held 3 times a year on the 5th Sunday of the month. Next one is 30 April. Café Church style with craft activities, to involve toddler group, and food. To be advertised in the Rocklander. Cllr. Howie looking for the NALC Survey of Churches to be completed.

7.8 Rockland All Saints' Church (Cath Jones)

The Clerk delivered Cath Jones report. Christmas events at All Saints were well attended. The Advent Lunch, a joint venture between both parish churches in Rocklands, had less diners than in previous years but was a joyous and festive occasion and enjoyed by all who came to eat a hot three course meal. It is always a struggle to find enough helpers to replace those who have sadly passed away or become too unwell or frail to do what they used to do, but even with a skeleton staff, we managed to do all the preparation, cooking, serving, washing up and cleaning the hall afterwards and a good time was had by all! Thanks to the Youth Club who agreed to cancel their Friday meeting so we could set up and lay the tables in advance the evening before - otherwise we would never have coped! Some of us even managed to see the end of the England match on TV after, boring as it was!!

The Christingle service at the beginning of December was attended by over 90 people, aged from a few months to 90+ and was, as always, a magic occasion as the children made their christingles in the old schoolroom in the churchyard and lit them from the Paschal candle as it grew dark as they sang 'Away in a Manger'. We were pleased to welcome the Rocklands School choir who sang two songs for us beautifully - thanks to Mr Aitken for giving up his precious Sunday to accompany them!

On Christmas Eve we had the traditional candlelit Midnight Mass (at a more sociable hour of 10pm to allow the priest to get to Gt Ellingham church to perform another service there at 11.30!) The church was completely full and it was another very special occasion for those who came.

We are still waiting for the Diocese to finally decide the fate of the Shellrock Benefice (a group of five churches in Rocklands, Gt and Lt Ellingham and Shropham) which has been sharing one priest who is on 25% stipend and officially, working hours, since January 2022. The plan is to amalgamate us with Hingham and district with one hopefully full-time priest who will serve about 12 churches over a wide area. The post is currently about to be advertised and we hope a suitable candidate will apply and be appointed as soon as possible. We look forward to welcoming the new incumbent, who will need as much support as they can get with that workload. The grass in the churchyard continues to grow apace and we are still working on getting it to require as little maintenance as possible as again manpower is in very short supply! We are grateful to RPC for the small annual grant to help with costs....every little helps!!

We wish all Rocklanders a healthy, peaceful and happy 2023.

7.9 White Hart Public House (Dave Thomas) No report.

7.10 To update on Chapel Green Meadow (Chris Sharpe)

The Clerk read out the report received from the Chapel Green Management Committee. Over the autumn and winter months there has been little need for meetings or activities, even though a year of unprecedented heat, allowed growth of vegetation well into December.

We would like to request once again that vehicles are not driven over the green. This creates ruts, compacts the soil and damages the wildflower meadow. This is not appropriate for a village green. Permissive access routes already provide obvious surfaced access to houses.

8.0 To report on financial matters

8.1 To agree the Precept for 2023-2024

	PRECEPT	GRANT	INCREASE FROM PREV YEAR
2019/2020	6200	£6,200.00	£700.00
2020/2021	6200	£6,200.00	£0.00
2021/2022	6200	£6,200.00	£0.00
2022/2023	7200	£7,200.00	£1,000.00

The Clerk had circulated some projected figures for the coming year. Defibrillator pads/battery costs are included in the £500 allocated to miscellaneous. (Will need new pads in November 2023, and possibly a new battery this year.) Electricity costs may increase more than estimated. Breckland will pass election costs onto Parish Councils (Note: South Norfolk Council are not passing election costs onto their parishes), £1391.95 for an election and just £75 if uncontested. £75 included in budget and hopefully the parish election will be uncontested.

It was agreed that the precept should not be increased this year. It would remain at £7200. Precept Form B was signed by the chairman. The Clerk would return the completed/signed form to Breckland before the 31 January deadline.

8.2 National Salary Awards 2022-2023 - to agree Clerk's annual pay rise.

National Salary Awards have eventually been agreed and published. Pay should be backdated to April 2022. Level **SCP18** was £13.21 per hour from 1/4/2021. New hourly rate from 1/4/2022 is £14.21. **£14.21** x 5 hours per week, x 52 weeks per year, is £3694.6 / 12 months = **£307.88** per month. These figures had been circulated for checking.

Letter to Barclays needs signing to change the Standing Order to **£307.88** from February 2023 onwards. Backpay equates to £21.66 extra per month for 9 months (April 22 to Jan 23) = **£194.94**. (See cheque to be signed 100777). Clerk's annual pay rise was agreed.

8.3 Financial position

Bank account balances on Monday 9 January 2023

Barclays Community Account	£	7618.09
Barclays Saver (Reserve) Account	£	337.15
TOTAL as per bank	£	7955.24

Summary

RPC Rocklands Parish Council	£	7754.64
RNP Rocklands Neighbourhood Plan	£	200.60
TOTAL as per bank	£	7955.24

8.4 Money in since last meeting (7 November 2022)

5/12/2022	Barclays Interest on Saver Account	£	0.19
	TOTAL IN	£	0.19

8.5 Money out since last meeting (7 November 2022)

8.5.1 Standing Orders/Direct Debits

17/11/2022	NPower (was Eon) Electricity (DD)	£	50.18
1/12/2022	Clerk's wages (SO)	£	286.22
19/12/2022	NPower (was Eon) Electricity (DD)	£	16.20
3/1/2023	Clerk's wages (SO)	£	286.22
	TOTAL OUT	£	638.82

8.5.2 Cheques out (to sign)

CHQ 775	NPTS. Clerk - Prepare for elections '23 training	£	36.00
CHQ 776	K&M Lighting services - 2 months Dec 22/Jan 2023	£	30.60
CHQ 777	Clerk, Backpay - back to April 22 (9 months)	£	194.94
CHQ 778	Reimburse Cllr. Howie - Paper/Ink	£	41.12
CHQ 779	Reimburse Clerk - Postage/Heat/Ink etc. 10 months	£	51.60
	TOTAL OUT	£	354.26

Signed

Date

Finance/Clerk's Notes:

Dog Poo bins.

The Clerk has ordered 2 new dog poo bins from Glasdon. £115.68 plus vat (£138.82) plus 12.50 plus vat for delivery. To be delivered to Cllr. Howie. Still need to confirm locations. And buy poles for mounting on. Will contact sponsors found by Cllr. Jones.

Training. The Clerk would be attending a course - 'Preparing for Elections 2023'.

Local Council Elections 2023. The local council elections will take place on Thursday 4 May 2023. Please note that photo IDs are needed to vote this year.

9.0 To consider planning applications

9.1 Planning outcomes since last meeting (Monday 7 November 2022)

3PL/2022/0960/F UPSTONE/ Land South of Sandy Lane NR171XG/Change of use from maintained grass field to 2no. shepherds huts to provide tourist accommodation (259)
PERMISSION

3DC/2022/0306/DOC DUNNING Agricultural Buildings, Rectory Road NR17 1XA/Discharge of Condition No 11 on 3PL/2022/0285/F PC not asked to comment. **DOC COMPLETE** (264)

9.2 Applications pending outcome

3PL/2022/0396/F WARNES. Land at Magpie Lane. Change of use from agricultural storage to dog grooming salon and erection of horse walker and manege. (Additional Information) (254)

3DC/2022/0325/DOC DEVLIN Allisons Farm 82 The Street NR17 1UX/ Discharge of Conditions 3,4,9,14 on 3PL/2021/0697/F PC not asked to comment.

9.3 New applications since last meeting (Monday 7 November 2022)

9.3.1 3PL/2022/1344/F QUINN/1 Mount Pleasant, Rocklands All Saints NR17 1XQ/Demolish existing house & outbuildings & construct replacement house with detached garage/storage & annexe (266)

Mr & Mrs Quinn had wanted to renovate but this was found to not be possible, so now would demolish and rebuild with a modern and eco-friendly approach. As much flint as possible would be re-used. The Parish Council agreed the plans were excellent. The application is supported by the neighbour. No mains sewer - would use a suitable water treatment plant instead. Previous evidence of a Saxon burial ground. Some metal detection and archaeological work proposed. All Parish Councillors agreed they had NO OBJECTION to this application, in fact were in support of the sympathetic build proposed.

9.3.2 3PL/2022/0396/F WARNES/Land At 598140 296820 Magpie Lane NR17 1UU/ Change of use from agricultural storage building to dog grooming salon. Erection of horse walker and manege. Use of existing stables for commercial use, in association with commercial use of the horse walker and manege (267)This application had previously been discussed at length. The Parish Council agreed to continue to OBJECT to this application.

9.3.3 3PL/2022/1300/F SOUTHGATE/Land to South side of Swangey Lane NR17 1XJ/ 8no. poultry houses with associated admin blocks, feed bins and ancillary development (Revised scheme) which is accompanied by an Environmental Statement and non-technical summary (268) Cllr. Suggitt read out comments she had received from Gemma Manthorpe, Case Officer.

- We have received an objection from NCC Highways who are objecting on the same grounds as they previously did and recommending refusal on this basis.
- All consultation responses will be read
- There are outstanding consultation responses from, among others, Natural England, Ecology and the Environment Agency
- This application is being assessed on merits
- **The application is going to committee**
- While parish councils have been given extensions of time and neighbour consultations will all be read it is helpful for responses to come in as early as possible and any that come in before the decision will be read, if any come in when the agenda has been published but before committee and raise new information this will be verbally reported
- All statutory consultees have been re-consulted

Signed

Date

- The LLFA have not objected nor commented, they have said that they are unable to comment but this doesn't mean the proposal is acceptable
- I will forward one of the objections regarding potential for presence of Hobby (protected bird) to ecology for comment
- I noted previous concerns over water availability to the site and will look at how this is to be provided
- If the application is refused they can appeal
- There is only one 'free go' within the fee regulations

and any new applications since the agenda was published

Breckland Call for sites. A consultation is being carried out by Breckland for areas of development and green spaces. All parishes can access their lists on Breckland 'Commonplace'. Rocklands Parish has a list of 5 suggestions. These will go through a 4-step filtering process. Breckland will look at who owns the land, how many houses are proposed for development, inside or outside settlement boundary etc. May contribute the Breckland Local Plan. Another consultation paper is out today - Issues and Options paper.

10. To update on the Rocklands Neighbourhood Plan (RNP)
Rocklands Neighbourhood Plan. Currently on hold.

11. To update on SID (flashing speed sign) (RH)

Cllr. Harrison circulated his report prior to the meeting.

Due to the road closures for the new sewer project - affecting The Street, it's junction with the B1077, and the traffic light control on the B1077 itself - the SID has not been deployed since 4 November last year, as any data collected would be unrepresentative. Now that restrictions on The Street have been fully removed, we will shortly consider re-instating monitoring on that road.

Meanwhile, following the suggestion from Robin Apps at our last meeting, I have written to our area Highways engineer (copy our Attleborough Police Beat Manager) - with the proposal that 40 mph 'countdown' signs be considered on the approach from Great Ellingham direction. Previously, Highways have resisted moving the existing 40 mph zone sign further towards Great Ellingham.

12. To update on Highways.

Magpie Lane diversion. The road verges have been eroded. Cllr. Harrison has spoken to Matt Lines of NCC Highways and he will address the issue.

Site - corner of Mill Lane/The Street. Mud on roads. Parking on the verges. All contractors should be parking on site and should be enforced. Not wheel washing although should be.

13. To update on Flooding (RH)

Cllr. Harrison circulated his report prior to the meeting.

The large underground surface water attenuation tank has been installed on the 7-dwelling housing development on the junction of Green Lane and Mill Lane. In conversation on-site with the developer Cllr Ford was informed that this tank is impervious and will discharge water via a level sensor and pump system to the ditch network surrounding the site - from where it will discharge into the existing culvert system running down The Street. It is difficult to understand how, in periods of very heavy rain, this will provide any useful attenuation as, once the tank at discharge level and the pump is running continuously, flow into the culvert will be at a constantly (effectively unattenuated) high level.

Further, the way in which some of the site boundary fencing has been positioned so close to the edge of some of the ditches leads one to wonder how maintenance/clearance of those ditches can be effectively achieved.

It is also noted that on the most recent 'Drainage Strategy Plan', there is an 'Exceedence Flows Route' marked. It is assumed that this is the route that excess surface water will take when the on-site attenuation system is overwhelmed. This route runs down the road through the centre of the site and out of the entrance directly onto Mill Lane.

Signed

Date

It remains to be seen whether the on-site 'attenuation' system works in periods of heavy rain, or whether the culvert system down The Street is overwhelmed and flooding of Mill Lane and The Street occurs. If it does, we will consider how to further address and publicise a system that will therefore not be fit for purpose.

I have written to the Head of the Water Management team - who are also the Lead Local Flood Authority - at County Hall, with a request that we arrange a visit by Karen Paterson of the Environment Agency, and the NCC Water Management Team - to involve key stakeholders/landowners in identifying agreed surface water flooding mitigation measures.

On 22 November, I and representatives from a number of other mid-Norfolk parish councils who have significant flooding issues, met with the 'Watton & Saham Flood Action Group' at Watton Town Hall. The aim of these meetings will be to share knowledge and experiences, and lobby Government, local authorities and service providers to maintain a high level of awareness of the significant flooding problems that our communities experience.

As a result of our first meeting, agreed letters on various aspects have been sent to our local MP George Freeman (copy Lord Dannatt - Chair of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance), NCC Director of Highways, and the CEO of Anglian Water. Already, George Freeman has confirmed that he has raised our concerns with Therese Coffey (Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and with the DEFRA team - and will request a formal response to follow-up.

Further meetings are to be arranged, and local authority and agency representatives will be asked to attend as appropriate.

14. To discuss any correspondence. There was no correspondence.

15. AOB - To receive items for the next agenda.

16. Date of next Meeting - Monday 6 March 2023 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 21:42

Signed

Date