

Rocklands Parish Council (RPC)  
Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held in Rocklands Village Hall  
7.00pm on Monday 11th April 2016

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: 6 members of the public

The Chair Cllr. David Howie welcomed everybody to the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.05.

**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 13th April 2015**

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 believe that the parish has had **another good year** and without too many problems. The funds have been managed well, due in no small part to our excellent clerk and we have been able to keep the **parish precept** at a reasonable level.

Our main concerns have been **planning** issues, which in part have brought people together, but have also caused rifts in the community, which is sad. When planning applications are made, we have always tried to look at them all with an open mind, and in particular to try to judge if they suitable for a small rural parish such as ours. Flooding issues are always an important consideration.

In dealing with planning we always try to reflect the views of the majority of the Parish. With the help of many parishioners, we have successfully opposed a planning application for properties to be built at the rear of **The White Hart Public House** in

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The Street, despite a recommendation by Breckland Council Planning to grant permission.

And as we continue, again I believe with the majority of the parish backing to oppose another proposed development at the rear of homes in **Chapel Street**, we can achieve a successful outcome.

We have taken an interest in **Breckland's Local Plan**, and made a contribution to it. We have now made a start on our own **Neighbourhood Plan** forming a committee and consulting with parishioners.

The **Community Shop/Post Office** continues to flourish at the centre of our Community.

The **Village Hall** seems to be well used.

The **Playing Field** has continued with its upgrading, new heater, new cricket score box and general tidying. It is intended to upgrade and extend the pavilion, as well as refurbishment and upgrade of the children's' play area. I would personally like to see more use of this excellent facility by the Parish.

**Rocklands School** continues to maintain its high standards, and is well supported.

The **White Hart Public House** however seems to be on the decline, which is a great shame. This parish needs a good vibrant public house, which I am sure the White Hart could again become. I suspect some of the problem now is as a result of bad feeling generated by the failed planning application.

The **telephone box/library** seems to be working well, but is in a dire state and must be cleaned and painted this spring. The other box will be sold and money put towards parish funds.

The Parish Council has a nice **new notice board** donated by Alan and Elaine Johnson and put up by Alan outside the Shop. I thank them for this.

The **Street Lights** as reported last year are old and often in need of repair, we must try to replace them this year before the winter with new LED lights.

**Flooding.** While we have had days of heavy rain and considerable amounts of water has run off the fields and flooded streets, to my knowledge no properties have been flooded. This I believe is due to some residents clearing ditches and pipes so water can run away, but we must not be complacent. We must in particular be aware that over development could again cause problems for the future.

At the request of parishioners **Home Watch** was introduced, the response was very good, and at first so was the co operation and communication with the police. But that has now changed. The Police apparently changed their computer systems and were unable to convey information to the Community. Home Watch was no more and was

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replaced with **Neighbourhood Watch**. We now have to register as Neighbourhood Watch, even though we were supplied with signs with Home Watch on them. This is an ongoing situation.

We welcomed **two new councillors**, David Roberts and Ian Scholes who is accomplished at dealing with our web site. The number of councillors therefore remains at seven. I believe they have both fitted in well and hope they have gained from the experience

I would again like to thank Cliff Jordon our County Councillor and Bill Smith our District Councillor for all the help and advice they have given us and for their attendances at our meetings. This is greatly appreciated.

And again a big thank you to Kim Austin our Clerk for all her help and advice. What would I do without her ?

## 5. To receive reports by County & District Councillors

### 5.1 District Councillor's Report 2016

In Bill's absence his report was presented by County Councillor Cliff Jordan.

**Breckland's outdoor playing spaces** could be in for a significant boost as a funding pot totalling almost £310,000 is now available to improve the provision of sports and children's play areas. Breckland Council is inviting the district's town and parish councils to submit bids for a share of the funding, so it can be used to benefit local communities. Community groups, sports clubs, charities and schools are also welcome to apply where they can evidence public access to the facilities alongside group use. The funding must be used to provide new or enhance existing free-to-access children's play areas and outdoor sports provision, such as slides and swings, multi-use games areas, sports pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pavilions and changing facilities, or parking related to the provision of these facilities. The money has been received by Breckland over the last few years from housing developers who, as part of their planning permission, are often required to make funding available to help improve local play and sports facilities. The funding pot has been available for some time and has previously been accessed by community groups, but the number of funding bids Breckland has received recently has been surpassed by the contributions from developers, leading to the pot growing in size. The funding has been ring-fenced for use in the parish or surrounding area from which the original contribution was sourced and there is funding available for areas across the district. Some of the funding has been identified as being for children's play area provision and some for outdoor sports provision, though applications may request combined funding from both pots. The application process will be managed on Breckland Council's behalf by Norfolk Community Foundation. Outline project proposals must be received from local groups by 13th May. After the initial proposals are assessed, selected applicants will be invited to submit a full application. Any funds not allocated as part of this project will remain available for future bids."

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**Council Tax - Band D 2016/17 - Norfolk Districts Comparative Figures**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>£ Weekly</b>	<b>£ Annual</b>	<b>District</b>
			<b>Change</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>
	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Breckland	69.03	7.17	0.10	4.95	73.98
Broadland	111.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	111.15
G. Yarmouth	146.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	146.48
King's Lynn	111.97	0.80	0.02	0.90	112.87
N. Norfolk	138.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	138.87
Norwich	239.34	1.95	0.09	4.67	244.01
S. Norfolk	130.68	3.31	0.08	4.32	135.00

The Breckland Council Tax for 2016/17 has increased by £4.95. While this is the largest increase of all the Norfolk Districts, it should be remembered that Breckland did not increase council tax in the previous three years i.e. 2013/14. Breckland council taxpayers still enjoy the lowest district council tax in the country.

**Chapel Street.** I have been in consultations with the officers regarding the application for 11 dwellings at Rocklands (3PL/2015/0384/F). The application is likely to be referred to the next available meeting of the Council's Planning Committee on 31st May 2016. A revised plan has been submitted recently which show some minor changes. However, it has not proved to be possible to alter the design/position of the access onto Chapel Road such that the required visibility splays can be achieved. **Please note: I am advised for this reason that the application will be recommended for refusal on highway safety grounds.**

**Regional Authority.** At the present time the Policy team are in the process of refining the contents of the plan in light of the comments received during the public consultation. A report on the consultation responses will be considered by Breckland Council's Local Plan Working Group in due course (date likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> April). I understand in terms of the Rocklands Neighbourhood Plan, I am advised that the Parish is still in the early stages of the process and is undertaking some initial evidence gathering. There may, however, be a complicating factor as a consequence of the Government's initiative to establish a Regional Authority. At this time it is believed that the new Authority will acquire responsibility for strategic housing and, by virtue of acquiring responsibility for housing, it is likely to have a major, if not overall responsibility for planning. This may have a substantial impact on the local plans that are now being developed by the Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk district councils'

Bill Smith  
District Councillor

**5.2 County Councillor's Report 2016**

Cliff Jordan's report covered the following main topics:  
Recycling centres

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Road surface dressing programme  
Devolution  
Vital services saved in budget  
Parish Partnership Scheme  
Norfolk's Young Parliament elections  
Roads, Transport & Infrastructure  
Broadband  
Children's Services  
Dementia friends/carers  
Waste  
Social Care

County Cllr. Cliff Jordan's full report can be found on the RPC website with these minutes.

Cliff Jordan  
County Councillor

Cllr. David Howie thanked Cliff Jordan for his report and for delivering Bill Smith's report in his absence. He thanked them for showing their support for and interest in the village.

**6. To receive comments from the public**

There was a short discussion on how untidy the Village was in places due to litter (bags, cans, cigarette ends etc.) This had been noticed by villagers out cycling and horse-riding. It would be interesting to compare the cost of fly tipping to the Council against the cost of extra opening hours for Recycling centres.

The meeting closed at 7.33pm.

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