

Minutes of the Beeston with Bittering Annual Parish Meeting, 22nd May 2023 at 6.30pm

Present: Toni Townshend, Chairman
Jim Pitt
Natalie Arnold
Peter Cook
Natalie Gould, Clerk

Also present: Mark Kiddle-Morris, Breckland DC and NCC and five members of the public.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The previous minutes were approved and agreed as accurate. Cllr Pitt proposed this and Cllr Townshend seconded.

3. Chairmans report

The Parish Council had 11 meetings during the last year covering such things as planning, the Millennium Lakes, Village Green and Traffic and Parking.

The Parish Council discusses all planning applications that are within the Parish. The past year has been very quiet in this aspect, although we have received applications for: A rural workers dwelling, a refurbishment of a derelict building, a workshop, a lake, a horse menage, 3 conversions, 2 change of uses, 3 extensions and 3 discharges of conditions. We currently have 2 ongoing appeals, 2 enforcements and a replacement dwelling.

At the Millennium Lakes site, the developer has agreed to allow residents to walk the new footpath. I hope this will become a permanent decision. The Parish Councils vision is to dredge the lake and clear the overgrown hedges, shrubs and fallen trees to open it up and to install new picnic style benches for parishioners to be able to enjoy the area.

The Parish Council has agreed to get the village sign on the green refurbished.

The Parish Council continues to work on slowing traffic along Dereham Road. A speed gun group has been formed and the possibility of hiring a SAM2 sign is being discussed to help monitor the traffic. We are also hoping that Norfolk County Council will repaint the zig zag lines outside the school to help reduce parking close to the junction.

The Parish Council has agreed to purchase a recording device so that all future meetings will be recorded.

In 2022/23 the Parish Council received an income of £7600 from the precept. We have again continued to support the Playing Field Committee and Beeston and Bittering Churchyard grounds. Over the past 20 years we have saved and maintained a healthy bank balance to use on important purchases for the village.

I would like to thank: Mark Kiddle Morris, our Breckland and County Councillor, for his time and advice; all the members of the Parish Council for their hard work over the past year giving up their valuable time to attend meetings; I would also like to thank Charles for his work in the past and Jimmy for helping us whilst we found Natalie the new Clerk; a special thank you to Ashley and Sarah too, who chose not to stand for election this year and I wish them good luck in the future. Finally I wish all new parish councillors well for the future and look forward to seeing what you achieve for the parish in the future.

Toni Townshend, Chair, May 2023

4. Fuel Charity

The balance at 1 April 2022 was £ 938.80. The trustees, at their meeting in November, had agreed a distribution of £ 38 and 46 cheques were distributed. Additionally, 45 Cheques of £50 were also distributed from Norfolk County Council grant funds. Income for the year had been £3270, including the grant and the balance at 29 March 2023 was £982.84. 1 cheque remains unrepresented

5. Reports from the Parish

Beeston Playing Field

The village hall is doing well with regular bookings such as the Brownies, the Cricket Club, the Ukuleles' group and the coffee morning.

The committee hold a meeting every six weeks. The hall has had new lights fitted this year with energy saving bulbs.

There has been some damage caused in the play area, however this has been fixed by someone in the village. The new small children's picnic table is assembled and ready to go in. It was noted that the support given from the Parish Council was appreciated.

One of the smaller issues is that the litter bin often gets over full.

The village hall committee confirmed that they would prefer dogs not to be walked on the field as finding dog excrement on the field has been a problem, however there is no way to legally stop them. It may be possible to apply for a protected order to stop dogs on the field.

Cricket Club

See report attached.

It was questioned whether an after school cricket club could be achieved, however this would be difficult given members of the club have jobs.

Beeston Primary School

Please see the attached report from the Primary School on their activities through the last year.

Bittering Church

The church remains in good order, with no further deterioration of the inside wall. Members of the Churches Trust, and of the diocese visited separately, and commented favourably. Sadly no services have taken place, despite repeated requests. We are very grateful to Beeston Parish Council for their kind contribution towards churchyard maintenance. The number of grass cuttings has increased and the area is looking neat and tidy and has received favourable comments over the last year.

Beeston Church

An update on the work to the tower was provided in the report attached, along with other Church updates.

It was noted in particular that two positions will be available and will need to be filled in order for the Church to continue running. Andrew Lawrence is leaving the position of fabric officer after 12 years and Wendy Carter will be leaving her position of church warden after this year. Wendy will have completed 50 years on the church council. 3 further members of the support team have been lost in recent history as well and it has had a big impact. The

team would like to encourage some fresh help to join them, to help to keep the Church running as normal.

Police

A report was received from Paula Gilluley, our local engagement officer.

As we approach the summer months the Local Safer Neighbourhood Team will be looking to roll out engagement opportunities across the policing area. We have already been fortunate to have been invited to the Dereham Day celebrations and we welcome the opportunity to be able to get out and about in our communities. We know that with the warmer months comes the increase in opportunist crime and you can find lots of free crime prevention advice from our website at www.norfolk.police.uk which can help to prevent residents becoming victims of crime. If you have any specific concerns, please do contact the Team at SNTDereham@norfolk.police.uk. You can report crime at our website and always dial 999 in an emergency. We continue to encourage parish councils/residents to attend our SNAP meetings (times and dates sent to all parish councils in advance) to speak with their local beat managers and to raise any issues of concern.

Your local beat managers have always enjoyed a very close working relationship with the community and we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Beeston with Bittering Parish Council, local community and businesses for their continued support.

It was noted that if the parish have any events which they would like to invite the local team to, then they will endeavour to make room in their diaries.

6. County & District report

Report presented by Mark Kiddle-Morris on the county and district 2022-2023 activities – see attached.

Mark will forward on the revised bus timetable starting 3rd July to see if any changes will benefit Beeston.

It was confirmed that verges should be trimmed around now and then again in September. It was also noted that the chipping warning signs blocked the view of

7. Open forum

It was noted that 5 acres of land on Watery Lane is up for auction tomorrow. This has the potential to be affected by the mineral extraction rights of the quarry next door.

It was also stated that the road out of the village towards the church contains a makeshift passing place and we were asked if highways can be requested to make it a proper paved passing place? *This is to go on the agenda for next month.*

Meeting closed at 19.24



c/o



Brian Parke (Secretary)
21 Peakhall Road
Tittleshall
Kings Lynn
Norfolk PE32 2QE

07799761412 /01328700672

brian.parke1@btinternet.com
beestoncricketclub@gmail.com

To
Natalie (Beeston with Bittering Parish Council)

The Club are again running 2 teams in the Norfolk Cricket League again this year ,the first team in Division one west and the second team in Division four west .

We have again increased the number of playing members both from the village and surrounding area,when other clubs are struggling for people.

The club is hoping some of the younger members will do coaching courses to help us progress with the forming of junior teams, both girls and boys.

The club has arranged fund raisers during the off season to raise money for new equipment league fees etc, sponsorship has been hard to find this year due to the financial climate but we keep trying and thank the people who have supported us and due our best to support them.

Brian Parke
Secretary
Beeston Cricket Club



Beeston Primary School

Executive Headteacher: Mrs S Charman
Chapel Lane, Beeston, Norfolk, PE32 2NQ
Tel: 01328 701267
Email: office@bee.unity-ed.uk

Report for Annual Parish Meeting - 22nd May 2023

We currently have 57 children on roll from ages 4 to 11. We teach the children a broad and balanced curriculum based on themes such as 'Athens vs Sparta', 'Jurassic Hunter', 'Under the Canopy' as well as following the national curriculum for Maths and English.

We enrich our curriculum outside of the classroom through Forest Schools where children have the opportunity to explore the forest school area and learn outdoor techniques and skills such as making fishing poles, stripping bark, making fire and cooking popcorn from the kernels. They also have the chance to build dens, play in trees, explore the mud pit and learn about wildlife, including those that live in and around our pond.

Our broad curriculum is supported through trips and visits, these have included Sandringham house and gardens, Gressenhall Rural life museum and the local area of the park and members of the community coming to talk about their roles to our Stars class. We are fortunate to work closely with the community and have used the village hall for our nativity performances and harvest festival celebrations. The school has been involved in litter picking around the village and we were overwhelmed by the support of children and their families as well as receiving an email of thanks from a local resident, which was shared with the children.

Our Year 6's have the opportunity to take part in our residential trip. In 2022 it was to Norfolk Lakes at Lyng. It was a 3 day adventure including canoeing, shooting, caving, kayaking amongst other activities on offer. Our staff volunteer to attend with the children and this is always enjoyed by all. We are hopeful to use this venue again for the next academic year.

We have been focusing on developing children's experience of competitive sport and this year children have had opportunities to take part in Cross-country, speed stacking, Kwik cricket, netball, football, indoor athletics and tri-golf- more are planned for this term. These events involve schools from across West Norfolk and Norwich and we are always proud of the aptitude and resilience our children show, we are always proud of how they represent the School. We have a sports coach that not only teaches PE lessons but provides a good quality after school club on a Monday that is well attended.

For families of the school we provide extended hours for before school club (8am-8.35am) and after school club (3pm-4.30pm) This is a paid service and provides working families within our community support outside, as well as our children to get involved in activities including knitting, Lego, puzzles, a wide variety of board games, well being drawing and colouring, coding and using apps such as google earth to see where they live.

We have a very supportive FOBs, who proactively share ways to fundraise and raise awareness within the school and its community- the cake raffle is a favourite. They gave our children their first experience of a silent disco and have supported Macmillan coffee events and continue to support the school.



Unity Education Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee (Company No. 10591822) registered in England and Wales at Crown Road, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4AG

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Report for the Annual Parish Council Meeting 2023 – St Mary the Virgin's Church, Beeston

This time last year we were preparing for the opening of the church after 2 years of extensive repairs to the tower. As part of the Heritage funding there are now two new information boards: 'Beeston – An illustrated history exhibition' and the 'Heritage Pathway Trail'. We held the opening event even though the scaffolding remained around the tower for a further 2 months.

We are now back in business with a pattern of two services a month and the occasional Benefice service. A good number of cyclists and walkers taking part in The Norfolk Churches Cycle Ride visited in September. We held our Harvest Festival service in October with produce going to St Nicholas House and the Dereham Food Bank. It was good to be back in church for the Remembrance Service, which was well attended. Our plans for 'Carols at The Ploughshare' which had been cancelled due to Covid restrictions the year before, took place at the pub on a chilly but dry December evening. We had a range of villagers delivering poems and readings interspersed with traditional carols. Our Team Rector, Miriam Fife, has been enthusiastically engaging with local schools and Beeston Primary School held their Christingle service in the church.

On 6th October we were dismayed to discover that the lead from the south roof had been stolen despite the security cameras. We are still going through the frustrating process of acquiring a new roof; this time made of zinc. This leads me to highlight the role of the 'Fabric Officer', the person responsible for overseeing the building, liaising with the architect, applying for grants, completing forms for the Diocese, chasing reports etc. With a building of this age, there is always something to address. This role has been carried out by Andrew Lawrence who has diligently overseen major repair projects. However, Andrew will not be continuing with this role after this year. We are a small PCC and there is no one to take on the role. The implications could be far reaching as another building project may well result in the closure of the church for an indefinite period. We need a Fabric Officer! Someone who enjoys the detail of reports/funding applications etc. It is not necessary to be a church attendee. We would ask the Parish Council to make this known whenever and wherever it can.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued financial support for the grass cutting in the churchyard. It is much appreciated. We are holding our own financially and were able to pay our Parish Share which pays for the clergy in the Benefice. Thanks also to all the volunteers who contribute to the upkeep of the church.

We were all pleased to welcome Reverend Andrea Woods to the Inner Nar Benefice in March this year; a much needed support for Miriam with 17 parishes to 'look after'.

Sue Wheeler

PCC Secretary

District Councillor for Launditch Ward
Report for 2022 -2023

Below I have highlighted some of the initiatives that Breckland Council has put in place to support residents, communities and businesses throughout the district. The focus has been to support people in recovering from the continuing effects of the pandemic and the rising cost of living, exploring new ways of working and reacting positively to climate change.

We have spent some time looking at how we work as a council and how we can be more efficient in delivering the services that residents expect from their district council. Breckland has a strong and well managed commercial property portfolio which produces as much revenue (that pays for the delivery of services) as is collected from council tax. Breckland's precept is still the lowest of a district council in England. The 5 Breckland market towns and 3 local villages have a higher level of council tax.

Breckland planning policy team and members have reviewed the Local Plan (adopted 2019) as required by the National Planning Policy Framework and decided that an update is required. This work is ongoing, new consultations with residents, parish and town councils, landowners and developers will take place in the coming months. The draft Local Plan will be submitted for examination towards the end of 2025 with a view to the plan being adopted in early 2026.

To Support Breckland's Environment we have: -

- Invested £850k in LED replacement streetlights in the 5 market towns.
- Saved energy by installing new LED lighting and pool covers at our leisure centres.
- Supported more businesses by providing them with a cost-effective trade waste solution, generating income which can be ploughed back into other Council services.
- Kept our communities cleaner by taking enforcement action against 100 waste offenders for fly tipping or littering.
- Supported greener transport options by awarding a contract for the installation of EV charging points in Swaffham and Watton town centres.

- Become more sustainable, by planning a collection scheme for batteries and small electrical items.
- Reduced our output of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions by 437 Tonnes since 19/20
- Showcased how we can – with others - become NetZero by 2035, by holding an Environment Awareness Month including a NetZero Conference.

To Help Breckland Businesses Thrive we have: -

- Invested £750K into projects which support our local high streets and enable our 5 Market towns of Dereham, Swaffham, Watton, Thetford and Attleborough and their surrounding areas to thrive.
- Supported economic growth in the district by project managing and funding a new primary substation in Snetterton.
- Helped businesses bounce back from the COVID Pandemic, by allocating £4.2M of government funding.
- Supported over 45 new enterprises and created more than 65 jobs with our successful Start Up Programme
- Started to plan how we'll help people in Breckland access better homes through a new Strategic Housing Plan.
- Secured £1.6m national funding for local projects to boost local skills and training, reduce carbon emissions and support our most vulnerable residents.
- Bid for £1m in national funding to help support rural businesses and communities over the next two years. This funding will be vital in helping us provide new infrastructure and support to help grow our important rural economy.

To Assist and Inspire Residents and Local Communities we have: -

- Helped provide accommodation for our residents by investing over £4.6 million in emergency housing.
- Helped domestic abuse survivors, by supporting the Daisy Programme with £100,000 of funding over 3 years.

- Supported our local communities with the increased cost of living pressures by introducing a local food store and a mobile food bus, providing food at more affordable prices.
- Helped to support community well-being by training over 200 residents to become mental health champions.
- Helped to link residents with support groups by our new Social Prescribers, easing the pressure on the NHS.
- Put plans in place to improve our leisure provisions by increasing our level of investment.
- Helped people to stay living in their homes, avoiding admission to care homes, through a new pilot handyperson scheme.
- Made a difference to resident's lives every day by awarding over £120,000 to local community projects.
- Enabled community groups and voluntary organisations to come together and celebrate the Platinum Jubilee, by allocating over £12,000 in grants.
- Helped the district celebrate the Jubilee, by illuminating the Swaffham Ecocity turbine, making it the tallest beacon in East Anglia lit up in honour of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- Supported local students to achieve their potential by launching a £10,000 educational bursary.
- Welcomed almost 100 Ukrainians to the district, providing them with temporary homes and recruited native-speaking welfare officers to provide the best possible support to refugees.

To deliver cost effective Services to our Residents we have: -

- Made our website more user friendly and accessible for our customers, particularly for those with a disability. This puts us in the top 10 Councils for website accessibility.
- Helped our officer teams see how they can use data to improve services to residents through our 'Great to Greater' sessions.
- Enabled residents to get answers to their queries 24/7 through our new Chatbot, Bobbie. Soon, residents will also be able to get answers to queries through Amazon Alexa
- Upskilled our people, to better serve our residents, by delivering Leadership Development Programmes

- Generated rental income from commercial properties which will exceed our target this year.
- Made £344,000 in efficiencies this financial year.
- Kept residents informed by sharing a press release at least every 3 days.
- Reached out to more of our community through increasing our use of social media channels.
- Helped counter the rising cost of energy bills, by processing over £5 M in £150 Council Tax Rebate payments.
- Given residents more choice in how they pay for Council services through new on-line forms.
- In a recent survey 79% of residents said that they trust Breckland Council.

Your Councillor: -

During the past year as well as attending meetings of the full Council I have attended the Planning Committee as a member this also included a number of fact-finding site visits. Recently I was appointed to serve on the Licencing Committee.

Throughout the year I have been involved, as an Executive Support member, in the current full review of the Local Plan and the partial review requested by the examination inspector in 2019 under policy INF03.

After the resignation of the entire membership of Weasenham parish council in May 2022 I and 2 other Breckland Councillors were appointed to run the parish council. This we have done for a full year.

Mark Kiddle-Morris.
Member for Launditch Ward
May 2023.

County Councillor for Necton and Launditch

Annual Report April 2022- April 2023

Budget and Council Tax:

The Council Tax and budget for 22-23 was set at a meeting of the Council in February 2022. An increase in council tax of 1.99% in the general precept and an increase of 1% for additional adult social care. However, even before the start of the financial year in April 2022 work was begun to tackle the budget for 23-24. There was projected to be a shortfall of some £60m for the year from April 2023 which had to be addressed. A strategic review of the council, “doing things better for less”, was initiated to address the shortfall.

A balanced budget, for 23-24, was set in February which maintained all the council services at the previous level and included a net spending increase of £29.6m to meet rising costs. The government had increased the referendum limit from 2% to 3% for 23-24 so the hard decision was taken to increase the level of council tax to the maximum allowed. This will increase the County Council’s share of band D bills from £1516.95 to £1592.64.

A reminder; local government cash is divided between revenue (broadly what we receive in income) and capital (normally capital grants from government and money borrowed to fund capital projects). Any goods and services and routine maintenance are paid for out of revenue and new projects, major refurbishments, and new equipment are paid for out of capital.

The projected revenue spend for 23-24 is as follows:

- Adult Social Services £249.5m
- Children’s Services £232.6m
- Community and Environmental Services £177.1m
- Strategy and Transformation £12.8m
- Finance and Commercial Services £35.8m

The capital budget for 23-24 is £956.5m. The highlight schemes include the Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing and the building of new SEND schools in places nearer to where pupils live. Other projects include:

- County Farms (refurbishments and carbon reduction) £9.4m
- Technology improvement Programme £8.2m

- Scottow Enterprise Park £8.6m
- Highway Improvements £2.5m
- New Fire and Rescue Equipment £1.2m

County Deal for Norfolk:

The County Council has entered negotiations with government on a “County Deal” for Norfolk and signed an “in-principle” deal in December 2022. The deal would see a grant of £600m paid over 30 years to fund economic development, infrastructure projects and skills training. As a condition of the deal the government require a directly elected leader, in addition to the 84 elected members, to take control of the budget. The governance model proposed requires legislation and this will not be passed until late in 2023 after which the changes required to NCC’s constitution will be debated at a meeting of Council in December 2023.

Bus Service Improvements:

During 2022 the County Council negotiated with government for an allocation from the Bus Service Improvement Fund and received an allocation of £50m, one of the largest in the country. The first £10m phase of this funding was received in November 2022. Since then, NCC have worked closely with bus service operators to implement enhanced routes and services as well as reviewing infrastructure and fares to encourage passenger growth and improve bus service reliability and sustainability. The revised and improved bus timetables will come into use on the 3rd July, 2023.

Social Infrastructure Fund:

The 2022 was the third year that Social Infrastructure funding has provided capital grants to improve facilities for communities and boost the level of community services. £775,000 was awarded to communities to fund individual projects and £225,000 awarded to Norfolk Community Foundation to expand their Nourishing Norfolk food hubs across the county. Look out for this year’s funding to go live.

Major Infrastructure:

Norfolk county Council are working to deliver 2 major road improvement projects; the Long Stratton bypass on the A140 and the much discussed Norwich Western Link (NWL) which will join the A47 to the A1067 effectively

completing an outer ring road to Norwich (The greater Norwich Local Plan envisages 49,000 homes being built during the plan period to 2038). Improvements to the A47 being brought forward by National Highways should also help the economic development of Norfolk by allowing better connectivity and slightly shorter journey times for commuters. The NWL and the A47 improvements should divert traffic currently using the B1145 (through Brisley, Stanfield, Mileham, Litcham, Lexham and Rougham) to use the new improved routes to access Kings Lynn and the east Midlands.

Necton and Launditch Division:

I represent some 8,600+ electors in the Necton and Launditch division which covers approximately 80 square miles and has 22 parishes within its boundaries. 19 parishes have parish councils, there are 2 parish meetings, and one parish is administered by the district councillor. 5 parish councils meet monthly, the rest on a bi-monthly basis (except Rougham), the parish meetings are only obliged to meet once a year.

Your Councillor:

I have, in the past year, been a member of the following committees/working groups at County Hall, all meetings are held during the working day usually commencing at 10:00:

Full Council, the ultimate decision-making body for policy and governance which meets 6 times in a year (plus extra-ordinary meetings).

Scrutiny Committee, which meets every month to scrutinise internal policy and to hear “call ins” of executive decisions from members. Can call in external organisations that serve the residents of Norfolk.

Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel: chairman of this committee which scrutinises the progress of the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership in delivering the aims of the Partnership. Reports to the Scrutiny Committee.

Audit and Governance Committee; meets every 3 months or so to monitor the financial performance of the Council, now has responsibility for the members code of conduct.

People and Communities Select Committee; (until July 2022) reviews and formulates policy relating to community matters. Meets every 6 weeks.

Standards Committee as Chairman (until subsumed into the Audit and Governance Committee). Monitored the effectiveness of the Members Code of Conduct.

Adult Social Care Performance Review Panel (meetings held via Teams); monitors the progress of adult social care reforms, working towards an inspection from government.

Planning (Regulatory) Committee; substitute member (must maintain training and be available on each day a meeting is called).

Parish Councils; attended as many of the scheduled 18 meetings as possible, usually bi-monthly. These are always evening meetings as they cannot be convened before 6:00pm.

Mark Kiddle-Morris,
Member for Necton and Launditch Division,
Norfolk County Council.