

HOLME HALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Holme Hale Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 6th March 2023 in the Tony Evans Centre, Holme Hale Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Simon Broke (Chairman)
Cllr Andy Scarlett (Vice Chair)
Cllr Wendy McNeil
Cllr Neville McBrien

District Cllr Nigel Wilkin
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Lindsay and Mr Watson, from County Broadband.

2. To receive any declarations of interest and consider any dispensations.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

Cllr McNeil proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Scarlett and unanimously agreed by Council.

4. To receive an input from a representative from County Broadband re full fibre broadband.

In the absence of the representative, there was no input. It was hoped they will be able to attend the Annual Parish Meeting in March.

5. To receive County/District Councillor reports.

D/Cllr Wilkin, with the permission of the Chairman, will contribute on the relevant items where he has an update.

6. Open Forum for Public Participation (max 15 minutes).

There were no members of the public present.

7. Planning Matters

a) To consider any new planning applications.

- 3PL/2023/0117/HOU – Hunters Lodge, Hale Road - two storey annex side extension, front bay extension and single storey side extension.

The D/Cllr informed Council that the application related to an annex for elderly relatives of the applicant and Breckland had agreed that the decision will go to the Planning Committee in the event the Planning Officer recommends refusal.

Council agreed an objection that the annex is too large for the intended purpose and it needed to be repositioned in relation to the original building so as to cause less of a visual impact to the surrounding area.

- 3PL/2023/0174/HOU – 27 St Andrews Close, single Story Side Extension.

Council had no comment in respect of this application.

b) To note any planning decisions (information only).

There were no planning decisions to note.

c) To receive an update in respect of Vattenfall and consider any action.

Cllr Scarlett updated Council about a meeting he, Cllr McNeil and representatives of Necton Parish Council had attended with members of the Breckland Planning Department to discuss the design review. He felt it had been a positive meeting. Breckland had now met twice with Vattenfall officers, the second meeting being far more productive, with Vattenfall having brought in an architect to their team to assist with action on the outcome of the design review.

There was a lack of potential to relocate the buildings on site although the visual impact would be much reduced if they could be moved. However, the rules of the DCO prevent this.

If Breckland feel the design review terms are not being met, they could refuse the application but Vattenfall are then likely to appeal to the Secretary of State.

D/Cllr Wilkin confirmed that all Vattenfall related applications must go the Planning Committee for a decision.

The consultation with local residents should commence at the end of March and Cllrs Scarlett and McNeil will be meeting with Breckland again on the 23rd March.

Cllr Scarlett concluded by saying that it would be helpful to know of all new energy structures planned for Norfolk, such as the nearby solar farm at Dunham. There are concerns that Norfolk is becoming an industrial county for energy.

Council thanked Cllrs Scarlett and McNeil for continuing to take this matter forward.

d) To receive a report regarding the meeting with Statkraft on the Necton Greener Grid Park prior to the Public Consultation scheduled in the Necton Village Hall for the 9th of March 2023.

Council noted that leaflets had been delivered to every household in the village and there was to be a public meeting at Necton on the 9th March. All Councillors will try to attend.

The proposed storage is for fly-wheel energy storage, with the infrastructure required likely to be substantial due to the weight of the equipment.

Concerns had been raised regarding the considerable noise likely to be emitted from the equipment and the risk of fire.

D/Cllr Wilkin confirmed he, and other Breckland Officers, are meeting with Statkraft on the 9th March and he will ensure these matters are raised.

e) To receive a report regarding the Breckland Local Plan Issues and the public consultation process.

D/Cllr Wilkin said there had been a delay on the local consultation but once it was open he encouraged both Council and local residents to respond as it would shape planning policy in the future.

Item 8g (To consider the National Highway improvements being made to the A47 junction at Necton) was now considered before D/Cllr left the meeting – D/Cllr Wilkin said that the junction at Necton had been a cause for concern for many years and the proposed improvements by National Highways did nothing to address the two adjacent turnings into Necton and the petrol station, where there will continue to be accidents. However, National Highways will only act if there are fatalities.

The Chairman thanked the D/Cllr for his input and D/Cllr Wilkin then left the meeting.

8. Highway Matters

a) To receive updates on highway faults previously reported and consider any further action.

Council noted the following updates on highway faults:

- Brown's Lane – Pothole just before York Lodge – reported to Highways and now resolved.
- Brown's Lane – roadside degradation - reported to Highways and now resolved.
- Church Lane – tree debris in ditch – reported to Highways but no action to be taken as ditch is responsibility of landowner. However, Council noted that someone has now cleared the debris out of the ditch.
- Brown's Lane – fly-tipping (asphalt) – reported to Breckland, no action taken and will be reported again.
- There are a large number of potholes in the village and they have all been marked for repair.

b) To receive an update regarding the roadside drain gratings and associated flooding issues.

Council noted that Highways have agreed to clear the gratings and then carry out a full inspection of the system. However, the initial works were marked as urgent but have not yet been completed and this will continue to be chased up.

c) To receive an update in respect of the Village Gates installation.

Council noted that Highways have not yet confirmed the date of installation and this will be chased up again.

d) To receive an update in respect of the Parish Partnership application for a SAM II Speed Sign.

Council noted that a decision regarding the application is due this week.

e) To consider the need for a Grit Bin near the bottle/paper banks.

The Chairman confirmed that there were no serviceable bins available and Council agreed not to proceed, particularly as Highways would not agree to fill any additional bins.

f) To consider a request to Highways for roadside kerbing to stop erosion near to highway signage on Cook Road.

Council agreed that, subject to a positive outcome to the parish partnership application, a request for a kerb, which could also assist with flooding, would be considered.

g) To consider the National Highway improvements being made to the A47 junction at Necton.

This matter had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

9. To consider tenders received for the grass cutting contract.

Council had received three tenders for the grass contract and appointed a contractor for a one year period at the cost of £1,766.20. Just one company had been able to supply a three year quote, due to the current financial climate, and Council agreed that the contract will go out to tender again in 2024.

10. To receive a report regarding the purchase of a village defibrillator.

Cllr McNeil reported that a decision had to be made as to which unit would be suitable and a grant of £1,000 was available. Training is available for residents. Council agreed a 50/50 donation could be offered, with the Village Hall if they were in agreement, and subject to the final cost which is likely to be approx. £1,600.

11. To receive a report regarding the Coronation on 6th May 2023.

Cllr McNeil reported that an application for a grant of £500 from Breckland had been submitted, with the support of D/Cllr Wilkin, and a decision was awaited. A Village BBQ was planned for the evening of the Coronation.

Cllr Scarlett said it was hoped the bell ringers would be trained in time for the Coronation and be able to ring the church bells on the day of the Coronation.

12. Finance and Governance

a) To receive an update regarding the annual asset inspection and consider any action.

Council noted the issues raised in the inspection and agreed the following:

- The unstable post on the dog bin at Top Cross will be reported to Breckland.
- Maintenance of the Bus Shelter on School Road will be considered at the next meeting.
- The wooden seat on the Village Green will be cleaned.
- The BT Box will be added to list as, although it is maintained by a residents group, it is the property of the Parish Council and must be included in the asset list.

b) To consider approval of a Risk Assessment & Management Policy.

The Clerk had now located a previous policy which remained current.

c) To consider any action required in respect of the two councillor vacancies.

Council were concerned that there could be up to three vacancies following the forthcoming May elections and encouraged any interested residents to put themselves forward. An article will go in the next edition of Moonraker.

d) To consider any charitable donations.

Cllr Scarlett proposed that the donations agreed in the budget be approved, with an additional donation to Age UK of £50, this was seconded by Cllr McBrien and unanimously agreed by Council. The donations are as follows:

Holme Hale Playing Field Trust	£450.00
St Andrew's Church, Holme Hale	£600.00
Swaffham & Litcham Hospice	£50.00
Norfolk Citizens Advice	£50.00
Age UK	£50.00

e) To receive a financial report (bank reconciliation and budget update) for the year ending 31st March 2023.

The financial report (attached) was noted.

f) To receive an update regarding Council banking and consider approval of online banking.

Council noted that the banking updates in respect of the new Clerk were nearing completion. Council approved the use of online banking, as set out in financial regulations.

g) To consider approval of the following payments.

Cllr McNeil proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr McBrien and unanimously agreed by Council.

- Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – Feb £238.33
- Clerk (Salary & Office Allowance) – Mar £238.53
- HMRC (Feb/Mar) £55.20
(reduced from £114.20 to take account of £59.00 credit at HMRC.)

13. To consider any reports and correspondence received.

- Consultation - A County Deal for Norfolk – Devolution – Council noted the ongoing consultation but had no comment.

