



MINUTES

BRANTHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday 01 February 2023, 7.30pm held at Brantham Village Hall

A list of abbreviations used can be found at Appendix D

PRESENT: Cllrs M Bridgeman, C Couchman, E Osben, J Heywood, T Rowlinson and T Lancaster

CHAIRPERSON: Cllr McCraw

IN ATTENDANCE: S Keys (Clerk), SCC Councillor Harley and 3 members of the public

PC 03.23.01 OPENING

The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.30pm and thanked all for attending. A statement was read out by the Chair indicating that, in accordance with legislation, the public and councillors were permitted to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of the meeting. A full transcript is available from the Clerk.

The Chair reminded the public that a Council meeting is not a public meeting, it is a meeting conducted in public. Members of the public, the press, and District, Borough or County Councilors are invited to attend our meetings and contribute during the public forum. Comments from the public during the remainder of the meeting should be by invitation from the Chair only.

PC 03.23.02 APOLOGIES

The Council noted apologies from Cllr Aherne, L Cherry and P Seward.

PC 03.23.03 CODE OF CONDUCT UPDATE

- a) To review Suffolk Joint Standards Board Sub-Committee decision notice received from Babergh District Council – the Council reviewed the information received and noted the recommendations included.
- b) To consider the recommendations made by the Joint Standards Board Sub-Committee and agree next steps – the Council noted the recommendations sanctions outlined by the Sub-Committee:
 - That Councillor Aherne comply with the sanctions previously imposed by Brantham Parish Council following the Monitoring Officer’s recommendations
 - That Councillor Aherne be given a single point of contact at Brantham Parish Council for the period of one year with a review after the first six months
 - That the outcome of this decision and the sanctions imposed are published on Brantham Parish Council’s website and other local media publications

Following discussion Cllr Lancaster proposed that the sanctions recommended should be approved by the Council and that the Clerk should be the single point of contact for Cllr Aherne with a review after three months. This was seconded by Cllr Rowlinson and aif.

- c) Cllr McCraw made a statement to the Council (included as Appendix B). Cllr McCraw proposed that this statement was affirmed by the council, this was seconded by Cllr Osben and aif.
Cllrs agreed that all future correspondence from Cllr Aherne should be sent to the Clerk. Any other correspondence would not be responded to.

ACTION – The Clerk to write to Cllr Aherne informing him of these decisions.

PC 03.23.04 DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND LOCAL NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

- a) There were no local non-pecuniary interests declared for the agenda under discussion.
There were no gifts of hospitality exceeding £25 declared.



b) There were no requests for dispensations for the agenda under discussion

PC 03.23.05 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

- a) To consider and approve the minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting on 01 February 2022 – Cllr Heywood proposed that the minutes were approved by the Council, this was seconded by Cllr Couchman and aif.
 b) The Council considered the In Camera minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 01 February 2023, Cllr Bridgeman proposed that the minutes were approved by the Council, this was seconded by Cllr Heywood and aif.

PC 03.23.06 CLERK’S REPORT

a) To review actions from the previous meeting – the Clerk provided an update on the outstanding actions as detailed below:

MINUTE NO.	ACTION	ONGOING/ DISMISSED
PC 02.23.06	Test the booking system of the Lawford recycling centre Contact colleague to find out more <i>Completed. Booking system now available for residents on the border of Essex</i>	Dismissed
PC 02.23.08	Finalise the Persistent and Vexatious Correspondence/Complaints Policy and add it to the Parish Council’s website <i>Completed</i>	Dismissed
PC 02.23.08 (2)	Respond to DSmith re: dog litter on LPF <i>Completed</i>	Dismissed
PC 02.23.09	Contact residents on Kettle Way to see if they have objections to a dog litter bin next to the yellow litter bin <i>Letters sent, awaiting response</i>	Ongoing
PC 02.23.09	Draft a response to THall re: insurance when using the Lower Playing Field <i>Completed</i>	Dismissed
PC 02.23.11	Investigate costs for Commemorative coins <i>Completed. The Council reviewed the recommendation circulated by the Clerk. Following discussion Cllr Lancaster proposed that the the Clerk should be authorised to purchase 300 commemorative coins for distribution to children at Brooklands Primary School and Brooklands Young Employers, this was seconded by Cllr Bridgeman and aif. ACTION – Clerk to purchase coins</i>	Dismissed
PC 02.23.11	Contact LMadley to find out more about the Kings Coronation event <i>Completed – on agenda for discussion</i>	Dismissed

b) To receive an update from the Clerk on any other Council issues – none.

PC 03.23.07 PUBLIC SESSION

A written report had been submitted from Cllr. Harley (available as Appendix C). Cllr Harley gave a verbal update on the following issues:

- Hosts for Ukrainians needed
- New Highways contract awarded to Milestone Infrastructure from October 2023

Cllr Couchman queried what the amount is set aside for social care from the precept. Cllr Harley confirmed that the total social care budget for Suffolk is approximately £700m

A written report had been submitted from Cllr McCraw and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr McCraw provided an update on the following:



- Budget passed as expected
- Voter ID requirements for the forthcoming elections

The following questions were received from members of the public:

- What is the outcome of discussions on the installation of cycle way signage on the path between Brantham and Manningtree. Cllr Heywood confirmed that the Recreation, Footpaths and Services Sub-Committee would consider the possibility of funding this once a cost for the project is known. Cllr Harley indicated that he could fund 50% of the cost. **ACTION** – Cllr Harley to provide an approximate figure for this work, including the installation of a dropped kerb to allow cyclists to access the path from the A137

PC 03.23.08 FINANCE REPORT

- a) To note and approve the balance of accounts as at 28 February 2023 - The Clerk informed the Council that the balance of accounts would be circulated following the meeting. These were:
 - Current account: £5000.00
 - Deposit Account: £106,399.84
 - Salaries Account: £3.34
- b) The Council noted Appendix A (February 2023 Finance Report) which detailed the accounts paid since the last meeting the accounts awaiting payment and the receipts allocated. Cllr Couchman proposed that Appendix A was approved by the Council, this was seconded by Cllr Heywood and aif.

PC 03.23.08 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES

1. Finance Committee

- a) To receive a report and minutes from the recent Finance Committee meeting – Cllr Bridgeman provided an overview of the meeting. He confirmed that a bank reconciliation for January and February is currently outstanding. The Committee approved the payslips due for payment and considered proposals for signage at play areas and purchase of additional equipment for local play areas from the Recreation, Footpaths and Services Sub-Committee.
- b) To note the contributions agreed by the Finance Committee – the Committee had approved financial support for the village youth club for three months at a cost of £225.
- c) To consider/agree any other proposals presented by the Finance Committee – none.

2. Recreation, Footpaths and Services Sub-Committee

- a) To receive a report from the RFS Sub-Committee – Cllr Heywood informed the Council that following the review of the local play areas the RF&S Sub-Committee had received three quotes from play equipment providers. So far the quote received from Kompan was the preferred option. A request for support for funding had been submitted to the Finance Committee who had agreed that funding should be sought from Babergh's CIL pot as a start and that the Parish Council would support the project with any additional funding needed. The Play area inspections have been received from Babergh District Council and do not highlight any major issues.
The hedge along Cinder Path has now been cut back but concerns have been expressed about how low this has been cut.
- b) To consider/approve any other actions or expenditure as required – none.

3. Planning Committee

- a) To note recommendations made by the Committee – Committee members reviewed the recent Planning Committee meeting held on 22 February 2023
- b) To note the planning decisions received – see minutes of the meeting on 22 February 2023.

4. Village Hall Management Committee

- a) To receive a report from the VH Management Committee – Cllr Heywood informed the Council that the next Committee meeting will take place on 15 March 2023.



The new kitchen will be installed in the near future

The Committee will host a fundraising "Elvis" night on 01 April 2023 and a quiz night on 24 June 2023.

b) To consider/agree any actions/expenditure necessary – none.

5. Legal Sub Committee

a) To receive an update on the BOC/BMCIC Lease negotiations – Cllr Bridgeman confirmed that he would be meeting Darren Smith on 06 March 2023 to discuss.

b) To consider/agree any proposals received from the Legal Sub Committee – none.

6. BMCIC Representative – nothing further to report

7. SNT Representative - No Cllrs present at the meeting.

8. CEP Representative – Cllr Couchman confirmed that there had been three attendees at the recent training session. There had been one representative who had been unable to attend and they would be booked in to a later training. Some rest centre volunteers are no longer available and the CEP therefore needs to be updated.

PC 03.23.10 CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE/ACTION

The Clerk reviewed the correspondence that had been received in February 2023 (copies had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting). Councillors noted the following:

- An email from Julie Price querying whether Roger Dann can be awarded the Parish Cup posthumously. Following discussion Cllr McCraw proposed that Roger Dann be awarded the Brantham Parish Cup in recognition of the impact that he had on the community of Brantham through his work with the Scout and Guide Group. This was aif. **ACTION** – Clerk to inform the family and arrange for the cup to be awarded at the Parish Meeting.
- An email from Granville developers querying if the Parish Council would like the three benches at Brantham Place to receive a dedication. Following discussion Cllr McCraw proposed that the benches should receive the following dedications; Roger Dann, Rev Steph Van Der Toorn and Brantham Amateur Theatrical Society. This was seconded by Cllr Bridgeman. 6 Cllrs vote in favour of the motion, 1 Cllr abstained from the vote. The motion was carried. **ACTION** – Clerk to liaise with Granville Developers.
- An email from a local resident highlighting the closure of the footway at Brantham High Bridge. The Clerk confirmed that she had responded to this email.

PC 03.23.11 MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

All miscellaneous correspondence by email had been forwarded to Councillors during the month. The Clerk highlighted the email referring to a Spring Litter pick and queried whether the Parish Council would like to host a litter picking event. Following discussion it was agreed that a litter pick should take place on a Saturday morning, 10am – 12pm in April or May 2023. **ACTION** – Clerk to find a suitable date and advertise to the local community.

PC 03.23.12 KINGS CORONATION 2023

- a) To review the costs of purchasing coronation coins – the Council considered the purchase of the commemorative coins as circulated by the Clerk. Following discussion it was agreed that the Council would purchase a coin for each child at Brooklands Primary School and Brooklands Young Explorers and St Michaels Pre school. **ACTION** – Clerk to purchase coins.
- b) To review the additional information provided by LMadley re: coronation event – following discussion Cllr Bridgeman proposed that this event should be supported with up to £2000, as long as it took place on Sunday. This was seconded by Cllr Lancaster and aif. **ACTION** – Clerk to inform LMadley.
- c) To consider/agree next steps as appropriate – see above.

PC 03.23.13 PRIVATE ROAD

- a) To receive an update on the project to improve parking options on New Village Private Road – Cllr Heywood informed the Council that a quote of £13,700 + VAT to tarmac this area had been received. This would enable vehicles to park in this location without blocking the road for drivers. Other quotes will be sourced.



- b) To consider/agree any next steps as necessary – following discussion it was agreed that the residents in this location should be contacted to see if they would support this work.

PC 03.23.14 INDUSTRIAL SITE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

- a) To receive an update on recent/forthcoming activity on Industrial and Greenfield site – nothing to report.
- b) To agree any other next steps as necessary – none.

PC 02.23.13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 05 April 2023, 7.30pm at Brantham Village Hall

The meeting closed to the public at 9.16pm.

SIGNED.....DATED.....



ACTIONS

MINUTE NO.	ACTION	WHO
PC 03.23.03	Write to Cllr Aherne informing him of the decisions made by BPC	Clerk
PC 03.23.10	Inform Marian Dann of award of Parish Cup and arrange for presentation at Parish Meeting	Clerk
PC 03.23.10	Liaise with Granville Developers re: dedication of benches	Clerk
PC 03.23.11	Find a suitable date for a litter pick and advertise to the community	Clerk
PC 03.23.12	Purchase Commemorative coins	Clerk
PC 03.23.13	Confirm support of up to £2000 for coronation event with Lous Madley as long as it takes place on Sunday	Clerk



APPENDIX A

FEBRUARY 2023 FINANCE REPORT

ACCOUNTS TO BE AGREED FOR PAYMENT	Chq/Debit Card/SO	NET	VAT	TOTAL	Powers Used
Wicksteed (Installation of football goals)	003461	£10,123.64	£2024.73	£12148.37	Public Health Act 1875, s.164
Dave Childs (Inv. No. 1559)	003462	£150.00		£150.00	Public Health Act 1875, s.164
BMCIC (Donation towards Youth Club as per FC 02.23.??)	003463	£225.00		£225.00	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE THE LAST MEETING	Chq/Debit Card/SO	NET	VAT	TOTAL	Powers Used
Parish Clerk –salary	BACS	£1480.82		£1480.82	LGA 1972, s. 112
Parish Clerk – office costs	BACS	£20.00		£20.00	LGA 1972, s. 112
Phil Wainwright – Litter Picker	BACS	£225.27		£225.27	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Tina Bird – Litter Picker	BACS	£270.83		£270.83	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
B.M.L Maintenance Payment	SO	£332.00		£332.00	Local Government (miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
Brantham Village Hall Maintenance Payment	SO	£250.00		£250.00	General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, ss.1-8
Microsoft 365 Apps for Business July 2022	DD	£7.90	£1.58	£9.48	LGA 1972, s.111
Postage (4 x 1 st Class stamps)	DC	£3.80		£3.80	LGA 1972, s.111
NEST (Clerk’s Pension)	DC	£84.75		£84.75	LGA 1972, s.111
Sam Turner & Sons (New strimmer for BOS)	DC	£329.00		£329.00	General Power of Competence
Babergh District Council (Installation of signs at Cattawade Street and New Village)	DC	£299.50	£59.90	£359.40	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s.72(1)
SLCC (The Clerk’s Manual)	DC	£52.30		£52.30	LGA 1972, s.111
RECEIPTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING				TOTAL	
Bank Interest				£53.67	



APPENDIX B

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT TO BPC AT THE BPC MEETING HELD ON 1ST MARCH, 2023.

Since October 2021, Councillor Mark Aherne has subjected the Clerk and Members of this Council to an unending series of attacks, harassment by email, and threats. It continues to this day. In fact, it has escalated over the last week.

The Clerk is an employee of BPC, and we have a collective duty of care to our employees. Members are entitled to expect that in their duties, they will receive the respect and behaviour due to them under both our Standing Orders, and here in particular, the Suffolk Code of Conduct contained within them.

Cllr. Aherne accepted these rules in signing his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. He voted for them repeatedly within our annual review of the Standing Orders.

The opportunity to apologise to the Clerk for his behaviour was repeatedly offered, and refused, before the Code of Conduct complaint was even made.

The ruling on that has already been discussed, along with his non-compliance as recently judged by a panel of Councillors from outside our Local Authority area. We have now ruled on their recommendations.

Here at BPC, for his non-compliance, we have already, successively:

- 1) Removed Cllr Aherne from all appointments previously made, including Vice Chair and Chair of Finance by Motion and vote.
- 2) Repeatedly asked if he will comply with the Code rulings and been refused.
- 3) Required him to leave those meetings attended by him for disruption of the meeting.
- 4) Walked out of a meeting as a Council in public protest at his actions and behaviour.

Throughout the entire period, since the end of 2021, Cllr Aherne has subjected the Clerk, Chair, Members of BPC and others to a continuous stream of harassing, offensive and insulting communications. In general, the tone of these has been either threatening, petty, irrelevant, or bizarre in the extreme. As is publicly known, this has been and still is, the subject of Police Investigation.

In these communications Mark Aherne displays an almost complete lack of knowledge or understanding about our own rules, Parish and District Councils, governance law, the law in general, standards of behaviour to colleagues and sensitivity to others.

In my view, he is not serving this Parish Council and the Community which elected him to serve and is totally unsuited to the role and responsibilities of a councillor.

I make this statement with a heavy heart, as so much was avoidable by Cllr Aherne, whom I once regarded as a friend.

I ask that, if the Council is so minded, that they affirm the general thrust of this statement by a formal vote and so propose that affirmation.



Report for March 2023 to the Parish Councils of Peninsula

Homes for Ukraine: One Year Anniversary of War

The 24th February marked the one-year anniversary since Russia's illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine. Suffolk continues to do its part through the Homes for Ukraine programme – hosting refugees fleeing the war.

In total, 1256 Ukrainian refugees have arrived in Suffolk through the programme. Currently, we have around 330 host families, supporting 750 Ukrainians – with others in private accommodation.

Suffolk is in need of new hosts, to continue to offer a safe haven for Ukrainian refugees who are not yet ready to enter private accommodation. Based on numbers, Suffolk needs 50 new hosts in the coming months.

If you think you can help, please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/Ukraine.

Hosts are entitled to £350 per month, which increases to £500 after 12 months.

New Highways Services: Contract Agreed

Milestone Infrastructure, part of M Group Services, has been awarded SCC's new highways services contract. The contract, worth between £800m-£1bn, will begin 1st October 2023 and will last up to 20 years. The service will provide maintenance of roads, pavement, Rights of Way, drainage, hedges, construction of new roads, and snow clearing – this is not an exhaustive list.

Our Group campaigned last year for Suffolk Highways maintenance to be brought back in-house. This was due to the extortionate prices the previous provider, Kier, gave for simple jobs such as tree cutting and speed bump designs (i.e., £5,000 for a pair of dropped kerbs, £7,500 to cut down a single tree, £10,000 to design four humps in a road).

Our Group has been given reassurance from Suffolk Highways that the contract is more robust, and will provide better performance and value for money.

SCC Financial Budget

At the beginning of February, the Council's budget for 2023/24 was voted in. The Conservative budget will now increase tax by 3.99% - broken down into a 2% rise in the Social Care Precept and a 1.99% increase in general tax.

Our Group's amendment which was voted down included a Carbon Budget Officer, to help develop a stronger pathway towards Net Zero. In addition, we proposed to facilitate a review into Suffolk's speed limits, in the hope to provide residents with a clearer path to more appropriate travel in their communities.

We proposed using £1m to actively recruit, retain and reward frontline staff in adult social care, as well as providing more for Suffolk Libraries to help maintain services through the cost-of-living crisis. In addition, we wanted to invest £1m in providing wider capacity of community transport to be used to help achieve Net Zero through EV vehicle usage.

SCC Cabinet Meeting

The Cabinet met in February to discuss the forecasts for the Council's current budget. The latest forecasts show that SCC is having to use more Reserves than anticipated to cover additional costs in running its services. Our Group are concerned



with the long-term effects of the Council's financial strategy, especially when the Conservatives voted against our amendments to create extra revenue and additional income generation.

In addition, the Cabinet agreed to move the West Suffolk Archives in Bury St Edmunds to a new location in the town on Western Way. Our Group were concerned about the lack of sufficient public transport access to the new location – being far from the train station with an irregular bus service.

Finally, the Cabinet discussed the Fire & Rescue Service's new risk management plan. The plan outlines all foreseeable risks in Suffolk and indicates the service's priorities and proposals to improve the service. Currently, the service suffers from low recruitment, poor retention of officers, unmet response targets, and an increase in demand through extreme heatwaves caused by climate change. Our Group support the plan, hoping more investment can now be provided to the essential and increasingly ever-needed service.

Household Support Fund: Extension Granted by Government

The Government has agreed to extend the Household Support Fund, meaning local authorities will continue to receive funding to help residents through the current cost-of-living crisis. The grant is distributed through small payments to support vulnerable household meet daily needs such as food, clothing, and utilities.

To apply for help, visit Suffolk's Cost-of-Living support leaflet at: <https://suffolk.pagetiger.com/cost-of-living-support/scc1>

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](#)

I wish you a peaceful New Year

Simon Harley Suffolk County Councillor for Peninsula Division



APPENDIX D – List of common abbreviations used

Aif	All in favour
AGAR	Annual Governance and Accountability Return
APM	Annual Parish Meeting
APCM	Annual Parish Council Meeting
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
BACS	Bankers Automated Clearing Services
BDC	Babergh District Council
BLC	Brantham Leisure Centre
BMCIC	Brantham Management Community Interest Company
BMSDC	Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Council
BPC	Brantham Parish Council
CEP	Community Emergency Plan
CAS	Community Action Suffolk
Chq	Cheque
Clr	Councillor
Cttee	Committee
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
FC	Finance Committee
FOI	Freedom of Information
FR	Financial Regulations
GPoC	General Power of Competence
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LPF	Lower Playing Field
LSC	Legal Sub Committee
NHS	National Health Service
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
PC	Parish Council
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
RFO	Responsible Finance Officer
RFSC	Recreation, Footpaths and Services Committee
SALC	Suffolk Association of Local Councils
SCC	Suffolk County Council
SID	Speed Indicator Device
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SNT	Safer Neighbourhood Team
SO	Standing Order
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
VAS	Vehicle Activated Sign
VCSE	Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations
HMC	Village Hall Management Committee