

STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

Wildfowlers Cottage

High Street

Cley

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The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 7th JANUARY 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL at 7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Minutes of December Meeting
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Correspondence
- 5 Finance
- 6 Planning
- 7 Any Other Business
- 8 Parishioners Question Time
- 9 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2002**

*Patricia Temple-Crowe
Clerk to the Parish Council*

3rd January 2002

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 4th February 2002 at 7.00pm.

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), Roy Rogers, John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, and Michael Jordan

In attendance: The Clerk and 5 parishioners

Apologies: Mark Harrison, Mary Gerrard, Councillor Derek Baxter and Councillor Bernard Crowe

River Stiffkey - Before the commencement of the meeting the Chairman was very pleased to introduce Mr Jeavons from the Environment Agency who had kindly agreed to give a brief talk on the present management of the River Stiffkey and to answer any queries where possible regarding the water level of the river in recent months.

The following points were highlighted during the discussion:

- A booklet called "Living on the Edge" was distributed which details many of the problems and the reason why they occur in low-lying areas.
- During the past 12 months in particular, the river has been at its highest and this has occurred mainly due to the record amount of rainfall.
- Records have been kept since the 1960's which have been used as a guide.
- Parts of the village are in a flood risk area including the White Bridges, hence the reason why a considerable amount of improvement work was carried out approximately 10 years ago.
- The Environment Agency has permissive powers of maintenance which includes silt clearance, obstruction clearance i.e. weeds and trees etc. as necessary
- The Environment Agency does have an obligation to protect the environment.
- They also must maintain the sea defences at the White Bridges.
- Two areas which parishioners felt were a particular cause for concern are the road bridge and occupation bridge.
- Seven weirs have been put in the river between the village and White Bridges which it was felt restricted the water flow.
- Mr Jeavons explained that the weirs had been put in with the full approval of the previous authority (Anglia Water) – a full investigation had been carried out by the Environment Agency to ensure the weirs were not creating a problem. The Environment Agency is satisfied that they do not cause a problem further up stream.
- The banks have been lowered which means flooding occurs on Lord Buxton's land if the water levels get too high.
- During the past three years the water levels in the river have increased
- Following discussions with Lord Buxton tree clearance has been undertaken during the past three years to help the flow of the river. A machine was used during the last year and will again this year to try and ensure the obstructions to the river are reduced further

Continued



Continuation

- The Environment Agency has the power to do the clearance as and when necessary.
- The best most natural method to alleviate the floodwater is to direct it onto the flood plains.
- Parishioners expressed their concern regarding the section of river situated between the Bridge and Old Hall Farm.
- The Environment Agency has carried out some tree clearance in this area and following the concerns raised at this meeting will get a machine to remove some more of the silt, which is clearly part of the problem.
- In response to a query regarding the sluice gates Mr Jeavons explained that they are as good as any other automatic gates that have been installed in the country and the Environment Agency cannot afford to employ a person to manually operate the gates.
- Mr Jeavons thanked those present for their comments and gave an assurance that the Environment Agency would look at some of the concerns raised in particular the obstructions and silting up of the River and hoped the Environment Agency had the Council's support in the present management of the river.
- The Chairman thanked Mr Jeavons for attending the meeting and on behalf of the Council gave their support.
- On a final note, Mr Jeavons clarified a point raised regarding the use of a boat on the river and explained that if anyone wished to take a boat down the length of the River Stiffkey they would technically be required to obtain permission from the landowners. There is no right of navigation – however if anyone has been doing it all their lives, this may be sufficient reason to disregard such a ruling.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 7th January 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

2 Matters Arising

Footpaths -Site meetings are being arranged with Mr Paul Regan who is the Footpath Officer with the North Norfolk District Council regarding the damage caused by vehicles being driven on the marsh

Stiffkey – 20011600 – Conversion of former butcher shop to holiday dwelling at 64, Wells Road for Mr and Mrs J Cox - A site meeting took place

The following e-mail was received from Bernard Crowe:

Following the site visit, the planning application came before the Committee on 24 January. The decision was to '**defer to negotiate**'. Would you please advise the Parish Council including Lawrence Jordan whose recommendation helped.



3 Correspondence

Mr Peter Thomas Re: Trees in the Greenway, Stiffkey

Norfolk Health Authority Re: The Norfolk Food and Nutrition Strategy

Norfolk County Association of Parish and Town Councils: Sundry literature

Norfolk County Council Norfolk Matters Issue Feb / Mar 2002

4 Finance

Expenditure:

The following payments have been made:

Eastern Contracting Public Lighting Maintenance bankers order £13.14

TXU Energi Monthly Energi Charge £28.19

Fakenham and Wells Citizens Advice Bureau letter acknowledge for the donation of £25.

The Bank Statements were available for inspection

5 Planning

Report from the Development Control Committee West – 24th January 2002 :

Stiffkey – 20011600 – Conversion of former butcher shop to holiday dwelling at 64, Wells Road for Mr and Mrs J Cox - **Recommendation – Refuse on highway safety grounds.**

6 Reports

Councillor Bernard Crowe:

White Paper Strong Local Leadership-Quality Public Services

OUTLINE

This month I discuss some key issues that are raised by the above White Paper published on 11 December 2001. District Councils have been invited to comment by 15 February to the Local Government Association.



6 Reports Continued

The Government has acknowledged that concerns exist about the way in which 'best value' is working and the White Paper addresses the need for a better focus on achieving improved outcomes. Specifically, it promises to:

- Put in place a performance framework to help councils deliver better services for their communities
- Identity more clearly the priorities central government expects from councils
- Encourage fewer and more targeted best value reviews.

A 'balanced scorecard' produced by the Audit Commission will identify each council as either: high performing, striving, coasting or poor performing. The aim is to have the assessments completed by late 2002 for County Councils and by late 2003 for Districts.

High Performing Councils will:

- be near the top of the performance spectrum
- have high performance in priority service areas
- have no poorly performing services
- have proven capacity to improve

They will be given a number of freedoms not available to other categories of council and a much 'lighter touch' inspection regime.

Striving councils will not necessarily be at the top of the performance spectrum but have a proven capacity to improve. They will have access to a package of freedoms approaching that of high performance councils.

Coasting councils will:

- not be at the top of the performance spectrum
- have limited or no proven capacity to improve

They will be required to negotiate a proportionate action plan with the Audit Commission following their assessment. This will include their programmes for best value reviews, their audits and inspection. They will have their performance monitored against the plan and receive support for capacity building.

Poor performing councils will:

- be consistently near the bottom of the performance spectrum
- have limited or no capacity to improve

They will have their performance monitored against their action plan negotiated with the Audit Commission and receive a 'directed approach' for support and capacity building to enable their improvement. They will be subject to central government intervention where necessary to tackle either service or corporate weakness.



6 Reports – Continued

In summary, the positive changes will be limited to councils who are assessed as 'high performing' or 'striving'. 'Coasting' and 'poor performing' councils, on the other hand, will be subjected to greater monitoring against the action plan agreed as a result of their less than satisfactory assessment.

Your views are welcome with respect to the North Norfolk District Council.

FINANCE

The White Paper states that there is little hard evidence for or against the view that the current balance between national and local taxes has an adverse impact on local government autonomy. This is debatable. My view is that having 75% of council spending funded centrally, adversely affects local accountability and gives central government undue influence over local spending decisions. Ministers are more likely to want to impose their own priorities over local government. Such a high proportion of central grant also increases local government's dependence on central government and reduces flexibility. Discussions within the Local Government Association indicate that the majority opinion remains that the level of funding raised locally is critical to the democratic status of local government.

Do you agree?

CENTRALISING OR DECENTRALISING

Does the White Paper achieve, on balance, greater freedom for local government? It emphasizes the importance of providing the public with high quality services, meeting rising expectations, providing choice for customers, and providing strong community leadership. My argument is that community leadership and local choice are best achieved by strong local government free to make locally appropriate choices, listening to local people rather than distant civil servants, quangos and inspectorates. This requires significant decentralisation from what we have at present. A reduction in some centralised services would also free up resources for local service delivery.

The White Paper acknowledges the large number of plans and partnerships which central government now require of local government. The DTLR has identified sixty-six plans which councils are required to produce for central government. The government produces no evidence of added value from having to submit those plans.

The government acknowledges the problems that have been caused by too many centralised initiatives. The problems they identify include excessive use of ring-fenced grants, too many centrally required plans and initiatives, and a large and uncoordinated number of small area initiatives. I will end by quoting from the independent Local Government Information Unit: 'The government emphasizes the need to show effective performance and value for money from local government, yet does not apply the same criteria to its own initiatives'. Your comments are welcome.



Reports - Continued

COUNCIL TAX

The government has already announced that they intend to revalue domestic properties, with the work starting in 2005, ready for the tax bills that go out in 2007.

The White Paper states that the council tax has worked reasonably well but they say that they are concerned about the fairness of the tax. They propose, therefore, to listen to the views of taxpayers and local government about possible future changes to banding and other issues. Perhaps readers will have views on whether they believe reforming the council tax is a priority and may wish to suggest possible ways in which this could be achieved.

SECOND HOMES

Thank you for your views on the subject of charging the full council tax on second homeowners. At the time of writing, I am still consulting with Parish Councils. I will provide a summary of the consultation in the next Glaven Valley Newsletter.

COUNCIL TAX FY 2002-03

1. General

I do not normally introduce politics at Parish Council meetings except where Council Tax and other financial issues are involved. This is the case now. Over the last 5 years, the Lib-Lab Pact at District and County have been the majority parties and taxes have risen as follows: North Norfolk District Council up 47%; Norfolk County Council up 60%; Norfolk Police Authority up 120%.

In May 2002, the Conservative Party gained control of the County Council, has inherited the rising Lib-Lab expenditure, and is taking steps to bring it under control. In May 2003, the Conservative Party plans, with the help of local voters, to take charge of the District Council and to curb rising expenditure and higher council taxes.

2. Executive Committee 4 February 2002.

The Conservative Group proposed that Council Tax should be capped at 5.9% and that the budget gap of £110,208 should be found from undertaking savings. The Lib-Lab Group proposed instead an increase of Council Tax of 8.8% which was carried by 5 votes (Lib-Lab Group) to 3 votes (Conservative Group).



6 Reports - Continued

3. Full Council 27 February 2002

If the Lib-Lab majority push through the increase at Full Council, the combined Parish & District elements of Council Tax, at Band D, for the Parishes of the Blakeney Ward will be:

Blakeney	£136.44	6.4% increase	equiv. to 16p per week
Langham	£114.98	7.6% increase	16 p per week
Morston	£116.69	7.8% increase	16p per week
Stiffkey	£123.17	9.9% increase	21p per week
Wiveton	£121.50	7.8% increase	17p per week

Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

Fly Tipping

Norfolk's local authorities responded to some 7,800 incidents of fly tipping in 2000/2001.

The Norfolk County Council Waste Review Panel have discussed new efforts to target fly tipping and are recommending the distribution of a new leaflet telling people how to report fly tipping and warning householders of the dangers of cowboy operators who offer to take their waste away on the cheap - it often ends up being dumped at the side of the road.

Offenders can be fined up to £20,000 and even be sent to prison.

There is no need to worry if you have an old fridge or freezer that needs replacing. It may be taken away by the District Council for a small charge (less than £20) or it may be taken to a Household Waste Recycling Centre free of charge.

Progress Report on Hospital Access

Members of the County Council's Planning & Transportation Review Panel are getting a progress report on options for improving road access to the new Norwich and Norfolk University Hospital.

The options are not mutually exclusive and have all the benefits and disbenefits which will needed to be considered in more detail. All the options will require co-operation and support by a number of organisations and landowners if they are to be delivered within a reasonable timescale.



6 Reports - Continued

The options in brief are:

B1108 Watton Road link

As well as improving the B1108 this option would provide a new road from the B1108 to the area of potential future development together with a connecting road to the hospital.

Thickthorn junction link

A new road could link the existing A11 Thickthorn roundabout to the new hospital on Colney Lane.

Hethersett Lane improvement

This would involve widening and improvement of the existing Hethersett Lane from its junction with the B1172 (the old A11) to an area near the hospital which is being considered for development in the future.

Direct access road from the A47

This option should remain on the table despite being turned down by the Highways Agency.

Colney Link and Colney Lane improvement

The proposed housing development on land to the south-west of Colney Lane currently provides for a link road from the A11. This option includes increasing the width of the new road and possibly widening part of Colney Lane.

Hethersett Lane link

This would be a new road linking the Thickthorn roundabout to Hethersett Lane which could give more direct access to the development sites off Hethersett Lane but potentially less direct access to the hospital for general traffic.

Freezing weather keeps gritters busy

Since the freeze started on 21st December, the County Council have: Driven the gritting lorries over 30,000 miles (which is the equivalent of crossing the Atlantic eight times)!

Turned out over 20 times to treat the principal gritting routes, including Christmas Day and New Year.

Spread about 8,000 tonnes of salt.

The salt comes from a mine in Cheshire and is stored in seven distinctive bee-hive shaped barns in strategic locations around Norfolk. New supplies are delivered all the time to replenish stocks depleted by any prolonged cold spell.



6 Reports - Continued

A typical run involves 54 gritting lorries spreading 321 tonnes of salt. The operation takes some three hours to complete and costs about £19,000 each time.

There are over 6,000 miles of highway in Norfolk so they cannot all be treated. Priority is given to the county's busiest roads and gritting routes are reviewed each year. Some minor roads may also be treated if the Council's resources allow.

Learning Centre at Wells

Wells Learning Centre (to be situated in the current library) will provide access to a range of informal and formal learning for people in Wells-Next-The-Sea and surrounding villages. In addition, two Learning Support Officers will undertake outreach work in a number of small isolated communities in North Norfolk, introducing computer based learning to many people for the first time. Six computer learning stations will be added to the library's existing computer provision, enabling users to access on-line learning programmes and use CD-ROM based courses. Up to eight hours a week of formal courses will be provided by the Adult Education Service ranging from basic computer skills, accounting, family history and garden design.

The Centre and the working rural communities will benefit those who currently have no or only limited access to computers at home or work, with job seekers, older people and those wanting to develop their skills either to improve their employment opportunities or for leisure interests.

It is expected that the Centre will be up and running by Summer 2002.

This project is significant in extending access to learning to isolated rural communities. Equally important, local communities will be involve, through consultation and the use of volunteers, in determining the sort of programmes that are offered and how the Centre develops.

7 A O B

Commemorating the Golden Jubilee The Parish Council agreed to purchase a new seat for the Knoll to market the Golden Jubilee.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'P. J. Anderson', is written below the text of the meeting closure.

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The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 4th MARCH 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL at 7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

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- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 8th APRIL 2002**

Patricia Temple-Crowe
Clerk to the Parish Council

1st February 2002

1st April 2002

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 4th March 2002 at 7.00pm.

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), Mark Harrison, Roy Rogers, John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, and Michael Jordan

In attendance: Councillor Bernard Crowe, the Clerk and 2 parishioners

Apologies: Mary Gerrard, Councillor Derek Baxter, P C Durrant

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 4th February were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

2 Matters Arising

Golden Jubilee Commemorative Seat

The Parish Council agreed to spend up to £500 on the seat and Mr Stanley Sutton agreed to carry out an investigation to ensure the most appropriate type of seat was purchased

A149 Wells Road, Stiffkey (Greenways to Red Lion P H) Footway Assessment

The following e-mail has been sent to Mr Schramm:

I am in receipt of your letter concerning the above which has now been discussed at a full Council Meeting and the Councillors have asked me to organise a site meeting.

I would be very grateful if you could give me a date and time when you could meet representative from the Parish Council to look at the problem and discuss this issue in more detail.

The Clerk is waiting for a response a further e-mail has been sent and telephone message has been left at his office in the hopes that a meeting can be arranged.

3 Correspondence

Godfrey Sayers Re: Wells Maritime Heritage Centre Mr Ian Scott has requested a meeting to be held with representatives of the Parish Councils on Friday 15th March. - The Chairman, Mr John Pearson and Mr Roy Rogers will attend.

North Norfolk District Council

- North Norfolk Joint Area Committee – East and West Area committee Meeting on 14th March 2002.



- Agenda Council Meeting 27th February 2002

3 Correspondence – Continued

C P R E - The Government's Planning Green Paper : planning to ignore you.

Norfolk County Council:

- Local Bus Variation for Service Number 36 Coast Hopper – Route King's Lynn – Hunstanton – Wells – Sheringham
- Norfolk's Local Transport Plan (LTP) Annual Forum

Norfolk Coast Project - Transport – Going Somewhere? Report of the Norfolk Coast AONB Community Conference held at the Auden Theatre, Gresham's School, Holt on Tuesday 30th October 2001.

Councillor Bernard Crowe – Project Reach Out – Arrangements for Initial Training

4 Finance

The Clerk has received the following:

TXU Energi Monthly Energy Charge - direct debit £28.19

The Bank Statement was available for inspection

5 Planning

Development Control Committee (West) – 21st February 2002 – Conversion of former butchers shop to holiday dwelling: 64 Wells Road for Mr and Mrs J Cox. –

Recommendation – Refusal on highways grounds.

The following is a copy of a report to the Development Committee on 21st February from Councillor Bernard Crowe following the above site meeting:

There is a presentation on the progress of the Community Strategy to the Executive Cttee at 1230 p.m. on 21 Feb. If Application 20011600 is not called before then, I would be grateful if you would take the attached as the comments of the local member please.

Comment

Members visited the site on 17 January. The key issue is to find a solution that provides safe access from the Old Butchers Shop onto the A149. Members did not support the original proposal; i.e. to chamfer the attractive corner end of the building to provide an improved sight line of westward approaching traffic. Instead members decided to defer a decision to allow the applicant to negotiate a solution which would involve rebuilding the roadside wall on a new line. In my opinion this will meet Policy 147:



5 Planning - Continued

E-mail from Bernard Crowe – Continued

1. By providing an improved sight line of westward approaching traffics which is already subject to a 30 mph speed limit in that area.
2. By not compromising safe movement and free flow of traffic or the safe use of the road by others.

Although the Highways Officer has, quite rightly, drawn attention to the possible danger of exiting on the 30-mph limit, NCC has not found it necessary to place white lines (indicating restricted forward visibility). This despite the fact that the track immediately to the East of the Old Butchers Shop is used by Mrs Butler, next door neighbour, daily; and by the adjacent second home owner when on holiday. Neither experience difficulty in accessing the A149.

In a recent planning application by The Red Lion, Stiffkey, (Application 20011340), the Planning Officer over rode the concerns of the Highways officer regarding exit onto the A149 in the 20-mph zone. Those who visited the site will recall that I stopped the bus so that members could see the similar example.

I recommend to the Committee that the application be approved.

The additional bonus is the restoration of 150-year-old building of interesting architecture which, if not repaired, will fall down. The development will enhance the appearance and character of the area; and is wholly supported by the Parish Council including the re-alignment of the roadside wall.

I note that the Planning Officer is content with the application apart from the objections of the Highways Officer.

Finally, may I remind members that this application is for holiday use only. Permanent occupation is not allowed, and the number of occasions access onto the A149 from the Old Butchers Shop will be limited.

I hope that members will consider approval of the application.

A further e-mail to the Clerk was received from Councillor Bernard Crowe on the 22nd February which reads as follows:

"I got the refusal reversed. Please advise SPC in due course. John Cox has been informed."



6 Reports

Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe

SECOND HOMES

The Government circulated a consultation paper in November 2001. I provided a summary in this newsletter and also discussed the proposals with Parish Councils, and with those who contacted me subsequently. The key points from the Government's consultation paper were:

'We believe that long term empty homes can have a significant impact on local communities. Our main proposals are to give billing authorities discretion to:

- *Remove or reduce the existing 50% discount for second homes*
- *Remove or reduce the existing 50% council tax discount for long term empty homes*
- *Give greater freedom over council tax discounts and exemptions in response to local issues.*
- *Allow a range of options for using the additional council tax raised.*

The North Norfolk District Council took into account the views of Town and Parish Councils, and of the individuals who responded. Given below is the summary of responses made to the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR).

Do you agree that local authorities should be given discretion to reduce or end the council tax discounts for second homes?

[It is estimated that there are 5077 second homes in North Norfolk]

Answer: The Council fully supports the proposal to give discretion to reduce or end the council tax discount for second homes.

The Parish Councils of Blakeney, Langham, Morston, Wiveton and Stiffkey agreed; as did all towns and parishes who responded except Sustead parish council.

Do you agree this discretion should also extend to long-term empty homes?

[The estimate of long-term empty properties is 862].

Answer: The Council fully supports the proposal to extend the discretion to long-term empty homes.

The majority of towns and parish councils agreed, including the Blakeney Ward. 20% had no view.



6 Reports - Continued

Should local authorities also have powers to create their own council tax exemptions and discounts, including powers to grant relief on a case by case basis?

Answer: The council supports the move to enable authorities to have greater freedom to offer discounts and exemptions and in particular the power to grants relief to meet local circumstances.

The majority of towns and parish council agreed including the Blakeney Ward. 25% had no view. Runton parish council disagreed.

Should individual local authorities be able to retain the additional council tax raised, or should the additional money be spread across all local authorities in England?

Answer: The Council believes that local authorities should be able to retain locally the additional council tax raised.

The majority of town and parish councils agreed including the Blakeney Ward. 15% had no view.

If you believe there should be local retention, should proceeds be retained for just second homes or for long-term empty homes as well?

Answer: The Council supports the view that the proceeds from second homes and long-term empty properties should be retained.

The majority of town and parish councils agreed including the Blakeney Ward. 7% had no view.

If so, which option would be the most appropriate means of retention?

Answer: The Council supports the view that it should have the freedom to spend the proceeds in accordance with the Housing and Community Strategies. (Note: the latter will be developed by autumn 2002).

This response to this question was finely balanced with 45% opting for 'ring fencing' the proceeds entirely for housing purposes, especially for affordable housing. Blakeney suggested an option whereby the additional proceeds would be fed back to reduce council tax for homeowners where the second homes exist. Langham favoured a varied use including a reduction of the NNDC element of council tax. Stiffkey and Wiveton favoured varied use as per answer above. Morston favoured 'ring fencing' for housing purposes.

Do you agree that local authorities should meet the costs of any additional exemption or discounts granted?



Answer: In view of the additional income and degree of local discretion being proposed, it is only reasonable that the billing authority should bear the costs provided they can be met from the taxes raised.

6 Reports - Continued

Next Steps

The DTLR will consider the responses from the consultation and issue a Green Paper with proposals, followed by a White Paper with intentions. This process could take 2-3 years, so don't hold your breath!

Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

BACS to the future

As the County Council move towards buying and paying for goods and services electronically (e-procurement) they are reviewing the way they pay their suppliers.

In 2002 they paid 338,000 invoices submitted by 18,500 suppliers. Of those suppliers

- * 15,100 were paid by cheque (88,000 invoices)
- * 3,400 by BACS (250,000 invoices)

BACS - Bankers Automated Clearing Services - means that money is paid directly in to a bank account (in the same way as our salaries or pensions may be paid each month).

Paying by BACS is one of the first steps towards trading electronically with suppliers. It is more efficient than paying by cheque and also incurs lower bank charges.

So why is the County Council still paying over 15,000 suppliers by cheque?

Capita (a partner of the County Council) is working with existing suppliers to transfer them to ABCs payments.

County Council staff have now received information on how to set up new suppliers so that they are paid by BACS.

They have also been asked to make BACS a condition of any contracts. In general, suppliers tend to prefer this method of payment as they don't have to take a cheque to the bank.

Public Footpaths

An innovative approach to signing public footpaths that cross fields was discussed by the County Council's Environment Review Panel at the end of January.

Norfolk has a high percentage of cross-field paths and a recent national survey of Public Rights of Way carried out by the Countryside Agency found that, despite many



improvements made to the network of paths, a significant number were being obstructed by ploughing and cropping. Local surveys support these findings.

6 Reports - Continued

In the past, resources and time have been spent trying to keep these cross paths open by reminding farmers to reinstate them, serving legal notices and cutting the cropped paths as part of County Council routine maintenance.

The new approach to improve the situation, which will complement the other approaches used, is to attach signs to waymark/fingerposts at each end of the cross-field path so that ramblers know that the path is open, whatever the ground looks like. The signs will also remind farmers and contractors of the existence of the path and the need to keep it walkable. By encouraging walkers to use the paths throughout the year, it is hoped that more paths will be reinstated by use, allowing staff to concentrate on other more persistent problems.

New Code of Conduct/Register of Interests

At its meeting on 21st January 2002, the County Council agreed to adopt a Code of Conduct for Councillors and co-opted members. It came into effect immediately after the full Council Meeting on 25th February. All Councillors must sign an undertaking to comply with the Code. This must be done within two months of the Code being adopted. If any Councillors fail to sign, they will cease to become members.

The Code of Conduct also requires that within 28 days of it being adopted, Councillors and co-opted members must register financial and other interests by providing written notification to the Head of Law who is the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Training in the Code of Practice and its implications is being arranged for Councillors.

New Director of Planning & Transportation

Norfolk County Council has appointed Tim Malynn as its new Director of Planning & Transportation. Mr Malynn will take up his post at the beginning of May 2002.

Mr Malynn is a Chartered Civil Engineer and a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. He holds a B.Eng. Honours Degree in Civil and Structural Engineering for Sheffield University and an MBA from City University.

Improving Norfolk Bridges

Three Norfolk bridges - at Dunston, Wighton and Raynham - are in the first phase of a new bridge strengthening and maintenance contract announced by Norfolk County Council.

Over the next two years, some 25 bridges in all will be improved, under a pioneering contract between the Council and its partners, the construction company May Gurney. The work is worth £3 million in total.



Wighton Bridge has a substandard load-carrying capacity and the deck will be replaced.

7 A O B

Golden Jubilee Commemoration. The Parish Council discussed the purchase of a box of 'Young Queen' mugs from Impact China Limited. The Council agreed that a box of 36 mugs would be sufficient to give one to every child in the village of school age and under. Mr Stanley Sutton generously promised a donation of £50 and Mr Lawrence Jordan generously promised a donation of £20 towards the cost of the mugs.

A meeting has been arranged for the 25th March to discuss ideas to mark the Golden Jubilee.

20 m.p.h. Sign – The sign has disappeared in Bridge Street near the Manor House – a replacement will be requested.

Mr Keith McDougall from the PCC discussed the poor road surface at the Knoll and asked if it would be possible for the Parish Council to give some financial assistance. Mr Mark Harrison very kindly agreed to organise 2 or 3 loads of gravel with his vehicles as soon as time allowed. This would be a considerable improvement to the road surface at the Knoll and to the entrance to the Church. The Parish Council would finance the cost of the gravel.

The Village Sign - This needs to be repainted and John Pearson and Stanley Sutton agreed to take down the sign and take to Hill House for refurbishment.

Camping Hill Following safety concerns raised by Michael Jordan, the Clerk would ask the Highways Department if it would be possible to erect a barrier on the verge of the dangerous bend up Camping Hill.

Street Lights The No. 4 light is on continuously and the Clerk will request an inspection.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.



STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

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e-mail:

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- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the March Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
 - Code of Conduct
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 13th MAY 2002 WHICH WILL BE THE ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISHIONERS.**

Patricia Temple-Crowe
Clerk to the Parish Council

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8th April 2002 at 7.00pm

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), Mark Harrison, Roy Rogers, John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, Mary Gerard and Michael Jordan

In attendance: The Clerk, 3 parishioners, Councillor Bernard Crowe and P C Durrant the Police Liaison Officer

Apologies: Councillor Derek Baxter

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 4th March 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

2 Correspondence

East Norfolk Rural Transport - Publication: Lets Get Going in Norfolk

Norfolk County Council Planning and Transportation:

- Highways Changes to our Offices
- Local Bus Service Variation

Norfolk County Association of Parish and Town Councils - Sundry Publications

Norfolk County Council Re: Corporate Review of the District Council Services

Norfolk Health Authority

- Re: Strategic Health Authority
- 'Who Cares?' Second Edition 2002

Local Government Commission for England - Periodic Electoral Review of North Norfolk – Draft Recommendations.

DEFRA Re Town and Parish Councils

3 Finance

The Clerk had received the following invoice which was approved for payment:

Norfolk County Association of Parish and Town Councils – Annual subscription 2002-2003 £69.23

The following payments have been made:

TXU Energi (Energy Charge) direct debit £28.19

Eastern Contracting (standing order) £13.14

The Bank Statement was available for inspection.

3 (a)

Code of Conduct The Parish Council formally accept the Code of Conduct and provided the Clerk with all the necessary documentation duly signed. The Clerk would liaise with NNDC to ensure the appropriate advertisement was placed in the E D P.

L. Jordan

4 Planning

The following planning applications have been received:

133 Camping Hill, Stiffkey – Erection of Garage - *The Parish Council had no objection to this application.*

Scaup Cottage, Greenway – Erection of two-storey extension and conservatory - *The Parish Council had no objection to this application*

The following Notice of Decision has been received:

Conversion of former Butchers Shop to holiday dwelling at 64 Wells Road, Stiffkey – *Permission for development.*

5 Reports

Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe

Council Tax

Electors will be concerned regarding the increase in Council Tax over and above inflation for 2002/2003. So that the overall figures are shown in better perspective, I have taken Blakeney as my example. Band D is used, as this is the comparator nationwide.

Parish Precept	£36-45
District Council	£99-99
County Council	£758-52
Police Authority	£100-35
Total	£995-31

The precept for the District Council includes the National Pay Award for Local Government employees of 3.5% and the extra costs of undertaking Best Value reviews for which Government provides no funding.

‘There’s a Hole in my Bucket’

I now want to have look at the situation for 2003/04 and beyond. We forecast a budget gap in excess of £500,000 with effect from 2003/04 unless we take corrective action now. Year on year we have had budget problems that have been resolved by taking small cuts across all services. This not a sustainable way of dealing with the problem. I have advocated a Corporate Review since I joined the North Norfolk District Council, and I am pleased that this is now taking place. We will look at all the Council’s services and activities and all options will be evaluated, be it:

- Increasing services
- Reducing services
- Ceasing services
- Maintaining services
- Starting services

h. Parker

5 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe - Continued

In examining how services will be provided we will look at a range of ways including:

- Continuing with the in-house service
- Management buy-outs
- Buying goods and services with other organisations
- Offering our services to others
- Bidding for contracts
- Joint ventures
- Setting up trading companies
- Transferring services to another provider

The pressures on us from 2003/04 include major changes to our activities that need to be funded. They include the North Walsham Swimming Pool, the Fakenham Leisure Centre, On-going CCTV commitments, and the increased recycling commitments imposed by Government. It is certain that Government will not give us additional funds for basic services. We might get inflationary increases if we are lucky. In my view, we need to look at opportunities to find savings, efficiencies or additional income of circa £1,000,000 in order to eliminate the budget gap post 2003/04.

When we have proposals ready we will put them out for consultation. In the meantime, if you have any comments on the approach we are taking, I would like to hear from you.

Telecommunications Masts

In view of the concern of residents in the Blakeney and surrounding Wards, I arranged a seminar at the District Council to discuss the issues in more depth. We were able to persuade all the operators to attend. They are BT Cellnet, Vodafone, One-2-One, Orange PCs and Hutchinson 3G.

The Government's policy is to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum, particularly in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The aim of its telecommunications policy is ensure that people have a choice of the provider of their telecommunications service. The operators are in competition to offer services, and this will continue. Local Authorities are not empowered to prevent competition between different operators Nevertheless; operators may be expected to provide evidence regarding the need for their proposed developments.

The Operators agreed that they would, in future, meet with NNDC to carry out annual discussions about roll out plans. We are negotiating to discover whether the operators wish to do this individually or together.

Operators have also agreed to the Industry's Ten commitments. The key commitments are summarised below:

- Participate in obligatory pre-application consultation with NNDC. [I will arrange for Parish participation].



5 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe – Continued

- Publish clear, transparent and accountable criteria on site sharing.
- Establish workshops on technical developments within telecommunications for local authorities and elected members.
- Deliver a database of information available to the public on radio base stations.
- Assess all radio base stations for international (ICNIRP) compliance for public exposure, and produce a programme for compliance.
- Provide, as part of planning applications for radio base stations, a certification of compliance with ICNIRP public exposure guidelines.
- Support financially the Government's independent scientific research programme on mobile communication health issues.

Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

E-Procurement

E-procurement means the County Council buying their goods and services electronically. Their current system is paper intensive which is extremely costly. E-procurement gives them the chance to tender their requirements, raise and send orders, receive and process invoices and make payments by email or over the internet.

Some of the benefits of e-procurement will be:

- * information at their fingertips about who is the authorised supplier of goods and services
- * making goods and services cheaper through consolidation of buying power
- * better management information
- * better relationships with suppliers
- * lower transaction costs
- * less spending off-contract

The Council is working towards e-government targets, and these include implementing e-procurement by 2005 for low value, high volume purchasing.

Steps that will now be taken to make e-procurement easier include:

- * paying suppliers by BACS or by direct debit - both methods are also cheaper than cheques and are very important in the battle to reduce costs
- * reducing the number of invoices the Council receives by persuading suppliers to consolidate them or send them less often - say monthly instead of weekly
- * building these requirements and the ability to trade electronically into new tenders and contracts



⑦

5 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter – Continued

Over the next two years the Council plans to choose an e-procurement system, train purchasers in how to use it and work with suppliers to ensure that the whole process is trouble free.

Rail Bridge Inspections

As concerns grow about safety where roads cross or run close to rail lines, Norfolk County Council is helping to pilot a national initiative aimed at identifying high risk sites.

The County is responsible for nine bridges which cross Railtrack passenger lines. The majority of these are in urban situations where traffic speeds are restricted. Railtrack are responsible for some 35 bridges in Norfolk.

Norfolk are co-operating fully with the Health and Safety Commission to trial inspections. It is important that the Government has the very best information about where the risk could be the highest here in Norfolk and across the country as a whole. Norfolk County Council has an excellent record in bridge maintenance as well as pioneering innovative contracting methods to improve efficiency and this puts them in a strong position to pilot the new inspection programme so that lessons can be learnt and a new national approach formulated.

A second report by the National Highways Agency, which manages trunk roads for the Government, says that work to clarify who is responsible for improvement work on roads close to rail lines should be completed by June. There are ten dual carriageway bridges managed by the Agency which cross rail lines in Norfolk.

Wiveton Bridge

The County Council has been undertaking assessments of the load bearing capacity of bridges in the County. The results of the work have identified Wiveton bridge as having a load bearing capacity of 17 tonne GVW (Gross Vehicle Weight). As a result, it is proposed that a 17 tonne GVW except empty vehicles weight restriction be implemented.

Consultation regarding signage details has taken place with Wiveton Parish Council.

£90 million PFI for Norfolk Schools

Plans for over £90 million of improvements to school buildings in several parts of the county moved a step forward with the news that the Office of Government Commerce has approved the County Council's outline business case for Private Finance Initiative (PFI) funding.

The scheme is open to schools in the Greater Yarmouth, Loddon, Long Stratton, Stalham and Swaffham areas and its up to the governing body of each school to decide whether to take part.



6

5 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter – Continued

Major improvements that PFI could deliver include:

- * replacing mobile classrooms with permanent buildings
- * more classrooms to provide for changes in pupil numbers
- * additional facilities such as school halls
- * long term guaranteed standards of maintenance
- * provision for increased use of schools by the wider community

The Council expects to sign a contract before March 2004. Building improvements would begin soon afterwards for completion by the end of 2006.

Under PFI the successful bidder for the contract is responsible for school building improvements and services to buildings over at least 25 years.

The County Council has also submitted a separate bid to the Department for Education and Skills for over £160 million of PFI funding for all 114 schools in the Greater Norwich area.

6 A O B

Traffic Calming The Parish Council once again expressed their concern regarding the increasing speed of traffic through the village – it would appear that the traffic calming measures introduced in the past few years are now having very little effect. The Parish Council's concerns would be conveyed to PC Durrant.

Golden Jubilee Celebrations A meeting has taken place and it has been agreed a party with games etc. will be held on the playing field. Each child in the village will be given a mug from the Parish Council. These will cost approximately £130 - £150 and Mr Stanley Sutton generously donated £50, and Mr Lawrence Jordan donated £20 towards this purchase .

Replacement Seat for the Knoll At the last meeting the Parish Council unanimously approved the purchase of a seat up to the cost of £450 - £500 which will be purchased on behalf of the Parish Council by Mr Stanley Sutton.

Road Surface at the Knoll - Following concerns raised by the P.C.C. regarding the very poor road surface at the Knoll leading to the Church Mr Mark Harrison has kindly offered to use his vehicles to obtain some shingle which will be purchased by the Parish Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm.



5

The following correspondence was read out to the members following the Annual Report to Parishioners on Monday 14th May 2002.

Lord Buxton - Invitation to the Parish Councillors, past Parish Councillors and partners - *The Parish Council were delighted to accept Lord Buxton's invitation for Sunday 9th June. The Parish Council would give the Clerk the names and address of anyone who has had close connections to the Parish Council to ensure they also received an invitation*

Barbara Butter – Letter of thanks to the Parish Council for their support of the planning application for the 'Old Butchers Shop'

N N D C

- Notification regarding changes to the electoral role

Norfolk Rural Community Council

- Literature
- Norfolk Village Hall Service Centre Scheme

N N D C

- Temporary Traffic Order A149 Wells Road - *This work has already commenced.*
- Information schedule regarding carriageway resurfacing - *This work has already commenced.*
- Vegetation cutting on public rights of way
- Information schedule Footway and carriageway resurfacing
- West Area Committee Meeting – 14th May 2002
- Parish News – Issue 61
- Agenda Council Meeting 24th April 2002
- Council Matters – April/May Issue

Norfolk Police Authority - Fakenham Sector Community Consultation Forum

Councillor Bernard Crowe - E-mails:

- Re: Track to west of Camping Hill
- Land at Camping Hill - *The Parish Council is still waiting for a decision regarding this land.*
- Complaint regarding litter

Finance

The following invoices had been received and were approved for payment:

TXU Energi direct debit	for April	£28.19
Eastern Contracting standing order	for April	£13.14
Eastern Contracting standing order	for April	£13.14

Income

N N D C Precept	£1,325.00
N N D C Interest on land sale	£14.50
VAT	£65.50



(4)

Planning

The Clerk had received the following:

Notice of Decision - Erection of Garage at 133 Camping Hill, Stiffkey - *Permission for Development*

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S NOTEBOOK – COUNCILLOR BERNARD CROWE

Periodic Electoral Review

The Commissioner has agreed the recommendations from the District Council on the future electoral arrangements for North Norfolk. They now become the Commissioner's draft recommendations and will be subject to another round of consultation. Everyone is invited to comment by 20 May 2002. The earlier responses may be inspected at the District Council who will advise how send in your comments to the Local Government Commission for England.

The Glaven Valley ward will comprise the parishes of Blakeney, Brinton, Field Dalling with Saxlingham, Letheringsett with Glandford, Morston, Stody with Hunworth, Thornage and Wiveton. Langham and Stiffkey parishes leave the present Blakeney Ward to join the Priory Ward with Binham, Hindringham, Holkham, Warham and Wells-next-the-Sea.

The Commission proposes that:

- There should be an increase in the Council size from 46 to 48;
- There should be 34 wards;
- The boundaries of all existing ward should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of two wards, and no wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- Elections should continue to be held for the whole council.

The first election on the new arrangements will be on 1 May 2003.

The Planning Green Paper

The Planning Green Paper has raised a divergence of views amongst local authorities in the region. It is up to the Government to consider all the responses received and to consider a way forward. I believe that it will be linked to the Government's proposals for Regional Government since this was one of the major concerns at County and District level.

Grading of Councils

I advised you in March that County and District Councils are to be graded into High Performing, Striving, Coasting or Poor Performing. This will be carried out by the Audit Commission in their Comprehensive Performance Assessment. The County Council will be assessed this year with the results available by December 2002.

Councillor Bernard Crowe's Report - Continued

The North Norfolk District Council will be assessed between autumn 2002 and December 2003 when the results will be announced. The first step is self-assessment by NNDC. We are asked to make an honest assessment of the quality of our services, their corporate effectiveness and capacity to improve. This assessment must be approved in an appropriate public meeting, so all residents will have the chance to comment. The Commission will then review this assessment and discuss its validity with the District Council.

There's Another Hole in my Bucket

In the last edition, I gave you a break down of the Council Tax charges and gave you an insight of how we plan to close the budget gaps for the following years. You should be aware that a potential problem is emerging concerning national pay negotiations for local government workers. In February 2002, local government employers offered a 3% wage rise for the year beginning 1 April 2002. The unions have rejected this. They have put in a claim for everyone to receive £1750 or 6% whichever is the greater. This rise would add 11.8% to councils' wage bills.

The three unions, UNISON, TGWU and GMB, are now consulting about the offer, and recommending that it is rejected. If, when the consultation is over in mid April, the 3% is rejected, the three unions will probably ballot all their members on strike action. The result of these ballots would then be known in May or June.

The 3% National offer is:

- More than double the rate of inflation (1.3%).
- More than the current pay deals (average 2.5% in economy)
- 20% higher than national minimum wage for those on lowest rate.

I believe that a 12% increase in every council's pay bill is totally unaffordable. It would cost a further £80 in council tax bills for every household, on top of the current 10% average rise. I suspect that you will hear more about this issue in the newspapers. If not, I will keep you up to date in the next edition.



STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk's Address:

Wildfowlers Cottage
High Street
Cley
NR25 7AP
Tel: 01263 740843

5th May 2002

The Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 13th MAY 2002** at 7.00pm in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL** followed by the Annual General Meeting of Stiffkey Village Hall Committee. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

AGENDA - A P C M

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Minutes of previous Annual Parish Council Meeting
- 3 Presentation of the Annual Report of the Council
- 4 Presentation of the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2002
- 5 A O B

*Patricia Temple- Crowe
Clerk to the Parish Council*

5th May 2002

2

Minutes of Stiffkey Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14th May 2001 at 7.00pm.

Present: L Jordan (Chairman), J Pearson, S Sutton, R Rogers, M Gerrard,
E Gambrill and M Harrison

Apologies: Cllr Bernard Crowe and Cllr Derek Baxter

In attendance: The Clerk and 5 parishioners

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 8th May 2000 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

2 Annual Report

Mr L Jordan Chairman of the Council thanked the Councillors for their support during the past year. He also expressed his thanks and that of the Council to Councillor Bernard Crowe, Councillor Derek Baxter and the Clerk.

The past year had been successful for the village, gaining an award for recycling following an entry into the Village of the Year Competition. Lord Buxton and Mr Harrison ensured the village was kept in a neat and tidy order.

Hopefully negotiations over the next few months would enable the Parish Council to acquire the surplus land at Camping Hill.

The Parish Council had considered 5 planning applications during the past year.

The homewatch scheme was working very well and an asset to the village as was the Shop and Post Office.

The Village Hall Committee has been run in its usual very efficient manner under the guidance of Eva Gambrill with a considerable number of improvements carried out by volunteers.

The Chairman was very sorry to report the resignation of Mrs Eva Gambrill as a Parish Councillor and wished to record a vote of thanks on behalf of the Parish Council to her for her support and assistance. The Clerk would inform the N N D C of the vacancy and an appropriate advertisement would be issued in due course.

3 Finance Report

The Clerk presented the annual accounts for the year ending 31st March 2001 that were unanimously approved and duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

There being no further business the Annual Parish Council Meeting closed at 7.45pm.

L.C. Jordan

**STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2002**

31st March 2001 £			31st March 2002 £
	Income		
2400.00	Precept		2400.00
24.26	Interest on investments		7.65
345.59	Miscellaneous		90.75
73.86	VAT		65.50
2843.71	TOTAL INCOME		2563.90
	Expenditure		
1298.11	General Administration		1444.11
30.00	Agency Services		
	S 137 Payments		50.00
827.00	Capital Spending		
249.52	Open Spaces		33.28
200.94	Established Charges		327.06
494.79	VAT		65.50
	Street Lighting		456.36
3100.36	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		2376.31
	GENERAL FUND		
1508.21	Balance at 1 st April 2001	1261.56	
2843.71	Total Income	2563.90	
3090.36	Less Total Expenditure	<u>2376.31</u>	187.59
£1261.56	Balance at 31st March 2002		£1449.15

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at **31st March 2002** and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Signed:

Signed:

Chairman

Responsible Financial Officer

Date:

Date:

STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

Wildfowlers Cottage

High Street

Cley

NR25 7AP

Tel: 01263 740843

e-mail:

tcrowe@morstonassets.com

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 10th JUNE 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL at 7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the April Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 15th JULY 2002**

PLEASE NOTE THE REVISED DATE FOR THE JULY MEETING

Patricia Temple-Crowe

Clerk to the Parish Council

7th June 2002

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 10th June 2002 at 7.00pm

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, and Michael Jordan

In attendance: The Clerk, Councillor Derek Baxter, 1 parishioners and P C Durrant the Police Liaison Officer

Apologies: Mark Harrison, Roy Rogers, Mary Gerrard, ~~Roy Rogers~~ and Councillor Bernard Crowe

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 13th May 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman

2 Matters Arising

Golden Jubilee Celebrations The Chairman was delighted to report that these had been very successful and well supported by the village.

Representatives from past Parish Councils and Councillors from the present Council were invited to a drinks reception by Lord and Lady Buxton on the 9th June which was most enjoyable. The Parish Council wished to express their thanks to Lord and Lady Buxton for their kind invitation.

3 Election of Officers

The following Councillors were nominated and unanimously elected unopposed:

Chairman:	Mr Lawrence Jordan
Vice Chairman:	Mr Mark Harrison
Internal Auditor:	Mr Roy Rogers

4 Correspondence

Norfolk Coast Partnership – Land use planning in the Norfolk Coast A O N B

Norfolk County Council:

- **Planning and Transportation** – Norfolk Local Transport Plan (LTP) Annual Report Forum Feedback
- **Planning and Transportation** – A149 Wells road, Stiffkey (Greenways to Red Lion P H) Footway Assessment – *The Clerk has already responded to this letter and sent copies of correspondence and e-mails requesting a site meeting to enable the Parish Council to discuss this issue further with Mr Schramm*

Mrs Butter – Letter of thanks to the Parish Council for their support regarding the recent planning application.



4 Correspondence – Continued

North Norfolk District Council:

- Late night opening at the Council Offices, Cromer
- North Norfolk Joint Area Committees – East Area Committee Meeting 17th June 2002
- North Norfolk District Council Website – www.northnorfolk.org
- Amendments to the electoral role

DTLT - Consultation Paper – Local investigation and determination of misconduct allegations

Norfolk County Association of Parish and Town Councils – Various publications

Thames Valley Police - Youth Shelters and Sports Systems A Good Practice Guide

5 Finance

Expenditure

TXU Energi monthly energy charge direct debit £28.19

Impact china Limited £112.81

Clerk's Salary and Expenses £375.42

Income:

Income received:

VAT Refund : £200.94

Cornhill Insurance:

- Notification of the increase in cover for the village furniture - no additional charge for each seat to be insured for £450 - £500 instead of £300 for all three seats.
- Following discussions with the insurance company an insurance claim form for the original seat on the Knoll will be completed.

Audit Commission - Further details

Bank Statement

6 Reports

E-mail from Councillor Bernard Crowe

I had a fall on Friday and suffered a sprained ankle which was an incorrect diagnosis by me. Spent Monday morning at Cromer Hospital and am now in plaster and off to see the Fracture specialist at the Norfolk and Norwich for a chipped ankle bone and stress fracture.

This will prevent me from driving for a while.



6 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe – Continued

PARISH COUNCILS

In my view the work of our unpaid parish councillors is valued. I believe also that new regulations and interference by central government may ultimately curtail the role of parish councils and entail a reduction in the number of people willing to be involved. If we look back to 1999, readers will remember the proposals to replace parish councils with 'neighbourhood forums'. Then it was agreed that parish councils should remain but include appointed officials to be known as 'neighbourhood managers'. The following year it was suggested that parish councils lacked the ability to represent rural people.

Thankfully, these draft policies never materialised. Nevertheless, some still feel that there exists a stealth campaign to abolish parish councils altogether. The rationale for this view lies in Whitehall's passion for micromanagement of local government.

The 'Consultation Paper on Parish Councils' in November 2001 outlined proposals for 'Quality Parish Councils'. In order to obtain new sources of funding, Parish Councils are required to meet rigid, centrally set targets. This mirrors the Comprehensive Performance Assessment for District and County Councils where those tiers of local government are to be assessed on whether they too achieve centrally set targets. They will be categorised as High Performing, Striving, Coasting or Low Performing councils. As a colleague commented: 'Councils will earn the right to be classed as 'High Performing' as long as they act as the direct agents of central government'.

I suggest that Parish Councils should be given freedoms automatically rather than having to 'earn' them. Only if Councils fail should such freedoms be curtailed. A blueprint of rigid conformity on Parish Councils is not the way ahead. Nor is the use of the unelected quango as a tool of micromanagement. Do you remember the outcry when the government quango, the Countryside Agency, pigeon-holed every parish in England into the categories of 'vibrant', 'active', 'barely active', or 'sleeping', without even consulting local communities?

Parish Councils cannot rest on their laurels. They need to stand back and assess their competence in delivering services to the community they represent. Some have carried out Best Value Reviews internally. Others have gone further and have undertaken Village Appraisals. I am in favour of this route because it involves all stakeholders in the community and presents a business plan to the Parish Council for implementation. Ideally, I would like to see this procedure adopted before the next round of elections in May 2003. It could form the basis of the manifesto on which Parish Councils could be elected and asked to deliver.

Whilst an internal Best Value review is a useful means of good housekeeping, it is questionable whether Parish Councils should be subject to the full rigours and cost of the Best Value regime initiated by central government.

I now want to consider the Model Code of Conduct for Parish Councils in England. This is mandatory under the Local Government Act 2000. The Order came into force on 27 November 2001.

Continued



6 Report Councillor Bernard Crowe - Continued

Under Section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000, a Code based on this Order must be adopted within six months of the Order coming into force. The deadline was 27 May 2002. All Parish Councils within the Blakeney Ward have adopted the Code. So within 28 days of the Parish Council's code of conduct being drawn up, or within 28 days of a new parish councillor being appointed, councillors must register their interests in the council's register, and make amendments within 28 days of new interests.

This is a mandatory obligation set by central government. I would have preferred extensive consultation with Parish Councils across England with redrafting where necessary. I believe the Code fails to distinguish between major and minor breaches. Its reach is too broad. It forces national investigation by the Standards Board of England for even minor infringements. Minimum infringements will be reported as parish councillors now have a duty to make written allegations about the conduct of other councillors.

I think that all will agree that there is a need for a lighter touch. Overwhelmingly, parish councillors are honest and well intentioned. The introduction of such strict rules may cause some to give up their voluntary work and discourage others from standing. Government intervention should be risk based rather than indiscriminate.

Nevertheless, my response to those who resign or who have been automatically disbarred by the Code, is to fight from within and put themselves forward again for re-election or co-option. This means reluctant acceptance of the Code. It is an item that can only be resolved by central government and at that level. It is not an item that can be solved by the parish, town, District or County tiers of local government; but we can lobby central government after experience of its use.

Key Decisions

North Norfolk District Council will discuss the Forward Plan and the Key Decisions for the next four months at the meeting of the Full Council in June. I will publish these via the Glaven Valley Newsletter in its August Edition.

Community Strategy

The Local Partners who are North Norfolk District Council (leading), Norfolk County Council, Town & Parish Councils, Norfolk Police, the Primary Care Trust for Healthy Services, local community organisations and the business community have identified, after consultation, a number of Key Challenges for North Norfolk for the next 20 years. Only the order of priority is to be determined.

- Balancing necessary development and progress with preservation and conservation.
- Modernisation without urbanisation.
- Developing the economy and providing better job/career opportunities.
- Improving education, training, skills, and personal development opportunities to support the local economy, making sure that the local economy gets a return on this investment.

Continued



6 Councillor Bernard Crowe Report – Continued

- Protecting and sustaining the environment, including making it ‘everyone’s issue’ rather than a minority concern.
- Improving public transport and the ability to get around the area without widening roads or building new trunk roads.
- Making sure there are high quality, accessible health services, along with efforts to optimise the health of residents, workers and visitors to the area.
- Trying to provide affordable housing for those who want to live in the area, ideally with choices available in terms of where to live and types of accommodation.
- Providing sufficient quantity and quality of shopping, leisure and entertainment opportunities to meet the needs and wants of the population especially younger people and those with families.
- Keeping North Norfolk a safe place to live.
- Making North Norfolk a place that will be as attractive to future generations as it is to this one.

I will provide more information as the Community Strategy emerges.

Strike Date Set

Local Government Unions plan to hold a 24-hour national strike on Wednesday 17 July if a ballot this month shows support for industrial action. The Employers’ organisation has made a final pay offer of 3%, but unions are asking for a 6% or £1750 pay increase.

Jubilee Mementos

I have been asked on behalf of the Blakeney Parish Council to announce that the Jubilee Tea Towels are now available at the Parish Office, at normal opening times, on basis of one per household. Please call in to collect your memento of the very many successful Jubilee events. Our thanks to all those who participated and especially to the organisers and their helpers.

Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

Race Equality Scheme

Public bodies across Norfolk are uniting to launch a new protocol covering the reporting of racist incidents in the county. The new arrangements mean that racist incidents reported to Norfolk County Council, District Councils, Primary Care Trusts and other bodies are to be treated seriously and investigated in the same way.

The leader of Norfolk County Council, Alison King, has approved the Race Equality Scheme as a matter of urgency in order to comply with the deadline set in legislation. The matter will be the subject of a report to Cabinet on 17th June and subsequently reported to Council on 8th July.

Continued



6 R4eport from Councillor Derek Baxter - Continued

Summer Road Surfacing

Many of you will have noticed that the County's annual road surfacing programme of work has started, as part of its routine maintenance service for the roads.

'Surface dressing' as it's called, is a thin layer of bitumen and stone chippings laid on the road to provide essential, cost effective maintenance. It improves skid resistance and keeps water from penetrating the road structure below, which could lead to the road breaking up.

The four month surface dressing costs around £3million and takes place every summer.

In my travels around locally, I have noticed resurfacing at Binham (I'm sure it's not just because I live there!), Wells, Pudding Norton and Holt but there are probably some more that have been done or are waiting to be done).

Wells Field Study Centre

On Thursday 9th May I was asked to attend the presentation of a National environment award for Wells Field Study Centre. It has become one of a few centres nation-wide to become an official EnCams Eco-Centre.

Viscount Coke presented the Eco-Centres Award certificate to the Centre's staff team and children from Salhouse Primary School helped him unfurl the Eco-Centres flag.

All present were shown around the Centre by the children and were given a detailed description of what they did during their visits (including looking after wormeries!).

The award is not easily won and staff have worked hard to achieve it. They have halved the amount of water they use, established an eco-trail around the centre to demonstrate the use of environmentally friendly alternatives to common products, arranged daily monitoring and discussion with students about their use of finite resources and examined their purchasing and considered the full effects of their choices.

It was a really worthwhile visit and I was impressed by the knowledge and commitment of both staff and children.

A bit of demographics

Latest population estimate for Norfolk (mid 2000) is 804,000.

Aged 0-14 139,000 17.4%

Aged 15-29 136,900 17.0%

Aged 30-44 166,500 20.7%

Aged 45-64 203,900 25.4%

Aged 65-74 81,000 10.1%

Aged 75+ 76,100 9.5%

Bus fares to rise

Passengers on bus services which are subsidised by Norfolk County Council will see an increase in fares from 2nd June.

Continued



6 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter - Continued

The increase is the first in over 12 months and is needed to cover the rising price of the Council's contracts with bus operators, who in turn are facing higher costs. Most fares will rise by up to 5% with a few routes seeing increases of up to 10%.

The total bus subsidy provided by the County Council is around £3.6million each year. Fares have been kept as low as possible and cheaper regular user tickets will be available for the first time on some routes.

Six term school year

Along with other local education authorities, the county has started consultations on a six term school year which would mean:-

- a slightly shorter summer holiday period
- a two week break in October
- spring terms no longer dictated by when Easter happens to fall

As well as consulting schools, Norfolk County Council will be getting the views of parents, school governors, churches, the business community, unions and other relevant organisations.

The consultation period will end on 30th June.

P C Ken Durrant

Concerns were once again expressed by Councillors regarding the speed of traffic through the village. It would appear the traffic calming measures have had little effect, particularly with some regular drivers going through the village. PC Durrant asked for any information regarding regular offending i.e. location, day of the week, time of day etc. which would enable him to be in the vicinity at the right time to catch the offender. The speed is now in use and as soon as the appropriate training is complete this will also be in use in the village.

7 A O B

Road Signs The Chairman suggested that larger 20mph and 30 mph road signs would serve as a reminder to motorists that these speed limits apply. Warning hazard signs were also promised on the Wells Road when the road improvements were carried out, these have still not appeared – Councillor Derek Baxter agreed to investigate.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm



STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

Wildfowlers Cottage

High Street

Cley

NR25 7AP

Tel: 01263 740843

e-mail:

tcrowe@morstonassets.com

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 22nd JULY 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL at 7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the June Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 2002**

Patricia Temple-Crowe

Clerk to the Parish Council

15th July 2002

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 22nd July 2002 at 7.00pm

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), John Pearson, Mark Harrison, Stanley Sutton, Roy Rogers, Mary Gerrard and Michael Jordan

In attendance: The Clerk, Councillor Derek Baxter, 1 parishioners and P C Durrant the Police Liaison Officer

Apologies: Councillor Bernard Crowe ~~and Councillor Derek Baxter~~

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 10th June 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman

2 Matters Arising

EDP Village of the Year Competition Mary Gerrard was delighted to inform the members of the Parish Council that Stiffkey had won in their category for villages under a population of 300. It had come as a complete surprise, but was not be allowed to make it public until the official announcement in a few days time. A presentation for representative of the various Council's who had won an award will be held on Wednesday 4th September at 11.00am at Cringleford.

Land at Camping Hill, Stiffkey – Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe:

It remains on the NNDC asset register and the Council is seeking the best return from its potential sale. It remains unlikely that SPC will be able to lease or buy it at a peppercorn price as the Best Value Review has determined that NNDC should realise its assets when no longer required. I have asked for a report, which can be submitted at the next SPC meeting.

3 Correspondence

E-mail from Councillor Bernard Crowe Please give my apologies for Monday 22 July and explain that I did turn up last week. You might also mention that I spent a quarter of an hour with a lady out side the hall waiting for the key to arrive. I thought she was an interested member of the public and would attend the Council meeting; she thought I was the guest speaker for the WI !!

Norfolk Police Authority Annual Reports of the Police Authority and the Chief Constable

Norfolk County Council Planning and Transportation – Norfolk Bus Strategy – Consultative Draft.

North Norfolk District Council - Polling Station – Village Hall Stiffkey

North Norfolk District Council - Service Improvement Plans 2002 – 03

The Countryside Agency - New Countryside Agency Publication

Norfolk Matters - Issue No. 4 June/July 2002



4 Finance

The following invoices was approved for payment:

Cornhill Insurance - £184.13

Eastern Contracting - standing order £13.14

TXU Energi direct debit £28.19

The bank statements were available for inspection.

5 Reports

Councillor Bernard Crowe

Local Democracy

Voting at General and Local Elections has been disappointing for some years. A MORI poll was carried out in February 2002 and its findings showed that people would be more likely to vote if they had:

- More information about the candidates and their views
- More scope for councils to make decisions about what happens locally
- More information from the council about the election and how to vote
- More opportunity to participate in council decisions between local elections
- More scope for councils to set taxes and charges locally and decide on spending
- Scope for councils to hold referenda about important local issues on the same day as local elections
- Voting by Internet at home
- All postal voting

Top of the list are factors about having information and being involved. I believe that turnout is more likely to increase if we address why people should vote, as well as how. The powers of councils to make decisions, including financial decisions, were among the most highly rated in the survey. People will vote, I suggest, if there are genuine local choices at stake. The MORI poll related to District and County elections. You may feel that several of these points apply to Parish and Town elections also.

Local Government

The independent Commission on Local Government has called for councils to be given the same freedoms enjoyed by businesses. 'Local authorities are multi-million pound organisations and yet are not given the same freedom as the average sweet shop'. The Commissioner went on to state: 'Councils lag way behind the private sector in terms of controlling their own destiny. Most businesses wouldn't last a week if they had to jump through the number of hoops that councils face every day'.

As I have reported in earlier contributions, over regulation is stifling the ability of councils to deliver effective services. Councils are being forced into a kind of 'exam fever', continually rushing to meet central targets instead of being able to work for the real needs of local people. I believe that the introduction of the Comprehensive



5 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe – Continued

Performance Assessment (CPA) must deliver freedoms and flexibilities to all councils, and that the Government's Spending Review must set out additional resources to help councils to improve. The CPA must focus on producing improvement plans rather than council league tables.

But all is not gloom. The Local Strategic Partnership with the private, public and voluntary sectors is taking shape, and the draft Community Strategy is being prepared for consultation with the residents of North Norfolk. We meet again with our partners in September to develop effective governance and accountability arrangements. This activity will recognise the inevitable diversity and possible tensions within the sectors, and take steps to resolve them. Research shows that local authorities are generally leading Local Strategic Partnerships, and that this role is accepted by partner organisations. I am pressing for this solution to be adopted in North Norfolk. Within the next five years, local authorities will expect to see more services to be provided by multi-agency partnerships. The Local Government Association believes that the successful local authority of the future could be the one playing a coordinating role across a wide range of services delivered by arms-length partnerships.

Telecommunications Masts

An Appeal decision in Harrow was allowed where a Planning Inspector dismissed a proposal for an 8 metre telecommunications pole for Orange PCS in a residential street. He took the view that 'the perceived risk on health grounds was a material planning consideration'. This is not in line with the guidance of the National Radiological Protection Board. A recent decision by another Planning Inspector to dismiss two telecommunications poles in Thurrock Borough Council on health grounds was overturned by the High Court on the ground that the Inspector had incorrectly applied government policy on health issues. The policy remains that provided that the base station meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure, it should not be necessary to consider further the health aspect and concerns about them. North Norfolk District Council takes this view and will continue to follow it unless the guidance from central government is changed.

Second Homes

It seems likely that the provision to allow councils to levy the full council tax on second homes will be at the discretion of local authorities. The decision will be published in the final version of the Local Government Bill. In the case of North Norfolk a figure of £2M per annum has been estimated as the sum which could be utilised by the District Council for the benefit of the community. Until the Bill is published, we will not know if local councils will have the freedom to count this as additional funding or whether the annual standard spending assessment from central government will be reduced accordingly. Watch this space.



5 Continued - Councillor Derek Baxter

As Vice Chairman of the Planning (Regulatory) Committee I have to assist in making major decisions on minerals, waste, schools and other planning matters.

Each year around 3 million tons of minerals are extracted from Norfolk. The bulk of this is sand and gravel for the building industry but it also includes some carstone used as a traditional building material in some parts of the County. A large sand quarry near King's Lynn supplies foundry and glass making sand on a nation-wide basis. Other materials such as chalk, clay and even peat are extracted on a smaller scale.

The Planning (Regulatory) Committee met today and debated a number of applications regarding sand and gravel extraction also a school extension and the development of land as a Park and Ride Site at Sprowston.

After a very lengthy debate, the Committee approved the Park and Ride development but this will be subject to the views of the Secretary of State and the resolution of drainage matters to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.

Sitting in on the meeting was Norfolk County Council's new Director of Planning and Transportation, Tim Malyn. His appointment was announced in January, following the retirement of Martin Shaw.

Tim comes to us from the unitary Luton Borough Council where he was Corporate Director of Environment and regeneration. He is a Chartered Civil Engineer and a Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

More about footpaths

Norfolk has over 2300 miles of public rights of way and many of these cross or run alongside fields used for agriculture. The Rights of Way Act 1990 allows farmers to disturb the surface of some paths, for example by ploughing, as long as they are re-instated within 14 days and are kept free of crops.

Although farmers are regularly reminded of the need to comply with the law, about a quarter of access problems are a result of crop ploughing.

The situation with Norfolk footpaths is somewhat different to that of Buckinghamshire where all the footpaths that I used to walk (I worked in Bucks for over 30 years) were kept scrupulously clear of vegetation and always had stiles in good condition. Mind you, a Norfolk County Councillor and farmer told me that they only "play at farming" in Buckinghamshire!

Pudding Norton

Pudding Norton is a small Parish to the South West of Fakenham. It is split into two communities, one part ribbons down the B1146 Fakenham to Dereham Road and the other part is off the A1065 Fakenham to Swaffham Road. The former road is very busy with much HGV traffic as well as normal car and public transport usage. To date there is no speed limit in the village despite petitions and representations from the Parish Council.



5 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter – Continued

However I am pleased to report that after a recent planning permission for a veterinary practice in the Parish, the North Norfolk District Council contacted the Council requesting that a 40mph speed limit be considered. This was backed up by the County Councillor, Roy Banham and by myself as District Councillor.

The response from County has been positive and there will be a Traffic Management Programme to investigate and promote a speed limit, hopefully with a view to implementation around October/November 2003.

6 A O B

The Chairman expressed his concern regarding the lack of wardens that are employed by the National Trust to look after this part of the North Norfolk Coast. Vehicles are an increasing problem on the marsh and he reported that he was constantly on the receiving end of complaints from visitors.

Mark Harrison offered to have a word with Simon Garnier of the National Trust to enquire if there was shortage of wardens and why it was that those that are employed by the Trust appear to rarely visit Stiffkey.

Vegetation overgrowth in Bangay Lane Again this problem was discussed by the Parish Council. If anything it had got worse over the past few months and despite informal approaches to Mr White at the Old Rectory the problem continued to be unresolved.

Councillor Bernard Crowe had also investigated this problem on behalf of the Parish Council, but because it is an unadopted Lane it was not the responsibility of the Highways Department, but of the individual property owners adjoining the Lane.

The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk should write to Mr White to request that the vegetation growing from his property into Bangay Lane be removed.

Hazard Warning Signs The Chairman reported that the road markings of 'SLOW' have been removed and asked if anyone knew why. The Clerk explained that due to objections received by many Parish Councils the Highways Department no longer put hazard-warning sign on the surface of the road. The Chairman also asked if the Clerk would investigate if the hazard signed 'two people in a triangle' had been taken down by the Highways Department when A149 improvements were carried as they appear to have been removed.

The date of the next meeting would be on Monday 2nd September 2002.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm



STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

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The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL at 7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the July Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: MONDAY 7th OCTOBER 2002

Patricia Temple-Crowe
Clerk to the Parish Council
26th August 2002

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 2nd September 2002 at 7.00pm

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, Roy Rogers, Mary Gerrard and Michael Jordan

In attendance: The Clerk, Councillor Bernard Crowe, 1 parishioner and P C Durrant the Police Liaison Officer

Apologies: Mark Harrison and Councillor Derek Baxter

There were no declaration of interest.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 22nd July 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman

2 Matters Arising

Bangay Lane Following receipt of a letter from the Clerk to Mr White at The Old Rectory a site meeting was held between Mr White and the Clerk and the following was agreed:

- The Lylandi trees would be cut back to his boundary fence
- The Ivy would be cut back to the Fence
- The Tree Preservation Officer would be invited to attend a site meeting with Mr White and the Clerk to discuss the Elm tree and other trees which overhang the Lane to obtain professional advice regarding the removal of any boughs which overhang the Lane.

Mr White made it clear he has no wish to cut back the Elm tree, but agreed that an independent professional opinion should be obtained. Mr White also offered to clear the verge on his side of the lane (which has considerable amounts of garden waste etc. dumped along his boundary by tenants and house owners on the other side of the Lane) if the tenants or the Parish Council is prepared to clear the opposite side of the Lane.

The Parish Council agreed the Clerk should instruct Norfolk County Services to inspect the Lane and tender for the clearance of the right hand verge. Once a price has been obtained and if it is within the budget for open spaces maintenance the work would be carried out and the tenants and home owners of the adjoining properties would be sent a letter to explain why the Parish Council has carried out the verge clearance and to ask that they refrain from depositing their garden waste in the Lane.

E D P Village Of The Year Competition The Councillors and guests had attended a very enjoyable presentation ceremony at Cringleford to collect the 1st Prize for the village under a population of 300 Competition. Councillor Bernard Crowe had conveyed his congratulation on Stiffkey's success.



2 Matters Arising - Continued

A149 Footpath Greenway to the Red Lion P.H. The Clerk has arranged a site meeting with Mr Philip Schramm and representatives of the Parish Council on Friday 6th September at 10.00am.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 54 North Norfolk County Council. Stiffkey CRFE2 (Damson Lane) CRF3 (Bangay Green Way) CRF6 (Stiffkey Greens) and CRF 9 (Greenway) Reclassification Order 1999 – Venue for the Public Inquiry.

Following receipt of correspondence from Denise Bale (it would appear until the 29th July all correspondence had been sent to Mr Bassingthwaite and it was not until they had some returned marked 'no longer at this address – return to sender' did they realise they had not amended their records).

It is anticipated the Inquiry will be held in the next few months, although to date this has not been confirmed.

Concerns were expressed regarding the use of Stiffkey Village Hall. An alternative suggestion for the use of Blakeney Village Hall had been put forward, but after consultation with the Lawrence Jordan the Clerk has informed Denise Bale that the only appropriate place to hold the Inquiry would be in Stiffkey. All necessary steps will be taken to facilitate the Inquiry in the village hall.

Brass Plaque The Clerk has obtained a suitably engraved brass plaque to be put on the memorial seat at the Knoll. Discussions would take place between the Council and the Church to agree an appropriate time to have a short ceremony for the seat and plaque to be formally handed over to the village.

3 Correspondence

E D P Village of the Year Ceremonies 2002 - This will be held at Cringleford on Wednesday 4th September at 11.00am at Patterson Parish Room and on the Village Green adjacent to the Parish Room.

Norman Lamb MP Letter of congratulations regarding the above competition.

Norfolk County Council - Legal Services - Venue for the Public Inquiry

Norfolk Coast - Review of the Management Strategy for the Norfolk Coast AONB

North Norfolk Community Transport Partnership - Dial-a-Ride

North Norfolk District Council

- What to do with Waste – Frequently Asked Questions
- Focus on Living
- Parish Newsletter Issue 62 August 2002



2 Correspondence – Continued

DEFRA - Parish and Town Councils to retain role in Planning

Environment Agency - The North Norfolk CAMS

Norfolk County Council - Street Lighting Policy – Environmental Lighting Zones
- Norfolk County Council Department of Planning and Transportation Partnership Brochure.

John Townsend, Clerk to Warham Parish Council – Letter of information he has resigned as Clerk due to failing eyesight and Mr Roger Muncey has undertaken his duties until a replacement can be found.

Norwich Cathedral - Major Development Programme - Dates for tour of project sites

The Boundary Committee – Periodic Electoral Review of North Norfolk Final Recommendations

North Norfolk District Council - Service Improvement Plans 2002 – 03
- Agenda Council Meeting 21 August 2002

Commission for Racial Equality – Statutory Code of Practice.

4 Finance

Eastern Contracting direct debit	£13.14
Clerk Salary and Expenses	£380.70
TXU Energi direct debit	£28.19

Parish Precept request for 2003 – 2004. The Council discussed the previous financial transactions for the past 3 years and estimated expenditure for 2002-2003 and agreed that the precept for 2003 – 2004 would be £2,650.

5 Planning

The following report had been received from the Development Control Committee (West) – 8th August 2002.

Scaup Cottage, Greenway - Erection of two-storey extension and conservatory and change of use of land to residential garden land – Recommendation – approve subject to conditions. A Notice of Decision received on the 2nd September 2002 – Approved.



6 Reports

Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe

1. Electoral Commission

The Boundary Committee of the Electoral Commission has agreed the changes to parish boundaries which were proposed by the North Norfolk District Council after consultation. The key recommendations are:

- NNDC should have 48 Councillors, two more than present.
- There should be 34 Wards, instead of 36 as present.
- The boundaries of all 36 existing Wards should be modified, resulting in net reduction of two.
- Elections should continue to take place every four years.

The Electoral Commission will make an order implementing the recommendations on 10 September 2002. The election for the District Council on May 2003 will be based on the re-warding of Parishes.

The new Wards in our area are:

Glaven Valley comprising Blakeney, Brinton, Field Dalling, Letheringsett with Glandford, Morston, Stody, Thornage and Wiveton. (Electorate 1889).

High Heath comprising Cley-next-the-Sea, High Kelling, Kelling, Salhouse and Weybourne. (Electorate 1695).

Priory (with 2 Councillors) comprising Binham, Hindringham, Holkham, Langham, Stiffkey, Warham and Wells-next-the-Sea. (Electorate 3553; per councillor 1777).

District Councillors will support their existing Wards until May 2003 so please keep in touch with matters of your concern.

Regional Government

Support for elected regional assemblies varies widely between England's eight regions. The white paper proposed that assemblies would only go ahead in areas with one tier of local government. Two-tier areas such as the East of England are less keen on the idea. The Government acknowledges that the process would involve 'some distraction for local authorities'. It appears unlikely that Norfolk and the rest of East of England will see early referendums. Nevertheless, the Government plans to have a referendum in at least one region before the next election. Once a region has agreed to hold a referendum, the Boundary Committee will carry out a local government review and draw up maps of new unitary structures.



6 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe – Continued

Community Information Bus

You have heard about the Mobile Police Station and some residents visit the staff when the Station calls at Wells and Blakeney.

Last week, I visited the Community Information Bus which calls, (among other towns/villages) at Blakeney Village Hall, Wells, (Stearman's Yard), and Holt Police Station. It is a double-decker bus specifically designed to offer open or private consultation. The service is for people who find it difficult to travel outside their immediate area. It is staffed by three experts who advise on the Pensions Service, Norfolk Fire Service, Immigration Authorities, Norfolk Constabulary, Citizens Advice Bureau, Age Concern, Norfolk Volunteers Service, and the East of England Development Agency.

I was very impressed. The Bus will call every four weeks on the same day between 10.00-12.00:

Dates are: Wells Tuesday 10 September, Blakeney Wednesday 11 September, and Holt Friday 13 September. Do visit even only out of curiosity. You will meet Rick Noon, Paul Tyrrell and Adrian Hillier. Tel: 0781 0181 831 and 0781 0181 830.

Summer in North Norfolk

We are blest with a multitude of activities here in North Norfolk and these are wonderfully captured in the Glaven Valley Newsletter and in Local Lynx; a special thanks to all contributors and to our editors.

Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

Longham composting decision

At the meeting of the Planning (Regulatory) Committee on the 2nd August, the committee considered a proposal for in vessel composting on land at Longham Quarry. As part of Government targets, the County has to recycle larger percentages of waste materials and composting of clean garden waste is one of several options to accomplish this.

Many farms in Norfolk are keen to utilise composted materials as a soil improver. There is already a small in vessel composing facility at the Mayton Wood household waste site which works cleanly and efficiently.

After a comprehensive presentation by a county planning officer there was a long and detailed debate attended by two current MPs and one retired MP. All spoke against the proposal and, after much discussion, the proposal was rejected on a majority vote of the committee.



6 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter - Continued

It was interesting to note that nearly all speakers against the proposal prefaced their remarks by saying that they were not against composting and realised that the County had to meet Government targets!

The reasons for refusal will again be debated at the Planning Committee on the 6th September as some confusion arose at the last meeting when most of the objectors had left but the decision to refuse permission stands. It will be interesting to see if the applicants appeal against the decision and what the results of the appeal are.

Scrutinising the County Council's performance

As well as being a member of the Planning (Regulatory) Committee, I am also a member of the County's Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. Last week The Committee visited Norwich Airport to hear about proposed expansion and communications issues. I will report on this in due course but this week we started to have an in-depth look at the County's performance. Norfolk County Council. Like all other local authorities and major public sector organisations, has its performance measured against a plethora of indices. Some of these are national, imposed by the Government and others are agreed locally as being good measures of how well the authority is doing in delivering what it sets out to do.

Doing well against the indicators helps the authority know that it is performing efficiently for local people and, in some areas, it is also a critical factor in attracting Government cash rewards and new flexibilities for how it operates. As a consequence the whole area of performance indicators is to come under the watchful eye of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. In particular the Committee want to examine those areas where the County's performance is in either the top or bottom quartiles (compared with other authorities). In this way it can better understand how that has come about and what needs to be done to improve things if necessary.

More Recycling

Norfolk County Council has underlined its commitment to recycling road materials by signing a new contract with Lafarge Contracting, a division of Lafarge Aggregates Ltd.

It means that another 30 roads in Norfolk will get the recycling treatment over the next 12 months.

Worn out asphalt and bitmac road surfaces and edges are repaired using materials recovered at the site, which are mixed with new binders and relaid.

Recycling is a cost-effective way of re-using materials which means the County doesn't have to haul away as much material or buy in such large quantities. It also means lower waste disposal costs and is better for the environment.



6 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter – Continued

News in brief

The next Planning, Transportation, Environment, Waste and Economic Review Panel will hear a report recommending an increase in Norwich Park and Ride charges. Peak hour charges at Park & Ride schemes could go up by 25p to £2.25 if the Review Panel agree. Charges did go up last December!

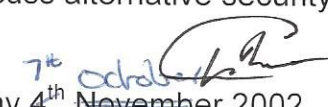
Norfolk County Council has appointed Lisa Christensen as its new Director of Social Services. Ms Christensen will take up her post in three months time and succeeds David Wright who retires as Director on October 31st.

Report from PC Ken Durrant

Telephone Box PC Durrant reported the telephone box had been severely damaged – the culprits had been apprehended and all the pieces, which had been removed from the telephone box, have been returned. BT has been informed and the necessary repairs will be carried out.

Village Hall PC Durrant also reported on the recent unauthorised removal of alcohol from the Village Hall of stock which had been placed there in readiness for the Fete. PC Durrant explained that due to the ongoing investigation this could not be discussed at the meeting and that once his investigation was complete he would be in a position to give a full report.

Appropriate action regarding the installation of a new security system should also be left in abeyance until the investigation has been completed. It was also anticipated that the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee Mrs E Gambrill would make a report at the next Village Hall Committee meeting and it would be appropriate for the Village Hall Committee to discuss alternative security arrangements.

The date of the next meeting would be on Monday 4th November 2002. 

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm



STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

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Tel: 01263 740843
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tcrowe@morstonassets.com

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 7th OCTOBER 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL** at **7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the September Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2002**

Patricia Temple-Crowe
Clerk to the Parish Council
1st October

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7th October 2002 at 7.00pm

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, Roy Rogers, Mary Gerrard, Mark Harrison and Michael Jordan

In attendance: The Clerk, Councillor Bernard Crowe and 1 parishioner.

Apologies: Councillor Derek Baxter

There were no declarations of interest.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 2nd September 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman

2 Matters Arising

Bangay Lane A site inspection will be taking place this week and they will provide a formal quote for the work to be carried out.

The Chairman has had an informal meeting with Mr White and felt that all the issues of concern could be resolved.

Public Inquiry - A meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 15th October at 11.00am between the Clerk and Norfolk County Council, Legal Services regarding the venue for the Public Inquiry, at the moment they are not convinced the facilities at the village hall are adequate. The N C C anticipate that the Inquiry will take at least 2 days. The Chairman expressed his concern that the venue for the Inquiry is being considered for either Blakeney or Wells and stressed that the only place this should be held is in the village of Stiffkey.

The Chairman felt this was such an important issue that if agreement was not reached by the N C C Legal Department that this is where it will be held he would resign as Chairman and Councillor of the Parish Council. Mr Stanley Sutton was in complete agreement with the Chairman and indicated he would also resign if the Public Inquiry was not held in Stiffkey. The Clerk would convey the concerns raised with the N.C.C. Legal Department at her meeting on the 15th October.

3 Correspondence

Information Commissioner - Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Publication Schemes.

Norfolk Coast Partnership - Norfolk Coast A N O B Community Conference 8th October 21002.

Tanya Arkle - Phocine Distemper Virus (PDV) Outbreak in Seals.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'L. Jordan', is located at the bottom right of the page.

3 Correspondence - Continued

North Norfolk District Council - Launch of their website.

Norfolk County Council, Norfolk Police Authority – Fair Funding for Norfolk

Norfolk Matters - Issue Number 5 = September/October

Norfolk County Association of Parish and Town Councils - Sundry publications.

Norfolk County Council - Public Inquiry - Venue

Norfolk Police Authority - Fakenham Sector Police Authority
Community Consultation Meeting on Monday 14th October 7.30pm
at the Burlington Hotel, Sheringham.

North Norfolk Disability Forum – Friday 18th October at 2.30pm at
N N D C, Cromer

4 Finance

Income:

Parish Precept 2 nd instalment	£1325.00
E D P Village of the Year Competition	£ 100.00

Expenditure:

TXU Energi direct debit	£28.19
Eastern Contracting standing order	£13.14 (October)

Bank Statements were available for inspection:

Bank Balances:

Current Account	£901.73
Deposit Account	£853.58

5 Planning

The following Notice of Decision has been received.

Warborough House, 2 Wells Road, Stiffkey – Renovation works including internal alterations and revised door and window openings - Listed Building Consent



Signage

Concerns were raised regarding two unsightly large 'To Let' signs are displayed on Apple Tree Cottage, 24 Wells Road and the Clerk would make enquiries with the planning office to see if signs of this size and prominence were permitted.

Trees

Following the recent gales the Chairman expressed his concern regarding the trees that overhang the wall opposite the village Post Office Roy Rogers informed the Council that he had understood that the land owner has had an inspection of the trees carried out.

To ensure there was not a safety problem the Clerk would contact Mr John Sizer, the Tree Preservation Officer at N N D C to request an inspection of the trees

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. J. G. L. L.' or similar, written in a cursive style.

STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

Wildfowlers Cottage

High Street

Cley

NR25 7AP

Tel: 01263 740843

e-mail:

tcrowe@morstonassets.com

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL** at **7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the October Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 2nd DECEMBER 2002**

Patricia Temple-Crowe

Clerk to the Parish Council

4th November 2002

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 4th November 2002 at 7.00pm

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, Roy Rogers, Mary Gerrard, Mark Harrison and Michael Jordan

In attendance: Councilor ~~Derek Baxter~~ ^{Bernard Crowe}, P C Ken Durrant, the Clerk and 1 parishioner.

Apologies: Councillor Derek Baxter

There were no declarations of interest.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 7th October 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman

2 Matters Arising

Bangay Lane Following a site meeting with Mr Norman Woodhouse from Norfolk County Service, the clearance of the verge on the right hand side of Bangay Lane will cost £480. If this is acceptable to the Parish Council the work will be carried out in the next 2 months.

This area can be included on the yearly grounds maintenance contract for a cost of approximately £40 - £60 per year.

The Councillor felt that before a decision should be made regarding such a large expenditure for the clearance of the verge, they would all meet to inspect the area and consider if it would be possible to get the work done by a team of volunteers. Mark Harrison offered the use of a tractor and trailing. The loan of a strimmer from Michael Jordan was also available and would be of considerable assistance. Those Councillors that were available agreed to meet at 10.00am on the 8th November.

Once this clearance had been done it could then be added to the yearly maintenance contract.

Public Inquiry

Following concerns raised at the last meeting regarding the proposed venue for the Public Inquiry, the Clerk and Councillor Bernard Crowe held a site meeting with Denise Bales and her assistant from N C C Legal Services. It would appear this was a productive meeting and the concerns raised by the Parish Council were conveyed to Miss Bales. As long as satisfactory park facilities can be made available i.e. The Knoll, Bridge Street, the Car Park area outside the Village Hall for the legal team, she will recommend that the venue should be in Stiffkey.

Documentation - In order that there is no misunderstanding regarding this Public Inquiry and the length of time this was originally discussed (1992) the Clerk has obtained copies which were distributed, of correspondence from supporters and objectors to the proposed reclassification order which will ensure all Councillors are fully informed.



3 Correspondence

Norfolk County Council:

- Legal Services -- Venue for the Public Inquiry
- Public Inquiry – Supporting Documentation

Norman Lamb MP - Footpath: Church Street, Stiffkey

Norfolk Special Constabulary - Re: The Special Constabulary and the STEP Scheme

Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path - Re: Norfolk Coast Path Resigning

North Norfolk District Council:

- Development in designated flood risk area
- North Norfolk Joint Area Committees – West Area Committee Meeting – 13th November 2002
- Agenda – 30th October 2002

Countryside Agency – Publication

4 Finance

Income:

Precept - Second Instalment	£1,325.00
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Expenditure:

TXU Energi direct debit	£28.19
Clerk Salary and Expenses	£479.79
Refreshments for Dedication	£32.25
Polly Appeal - Wreath	£25.00
Local Lynx	£25.00

The District Auditor has completed their audit of the accounts for 2001 – 2001 for Stiffkey Parish Council everything is in order, no areas of concern have been highlighted and no action required.

5 Planning

The Clerk has received the following planning application:

The Old School, Church Street, Stiffkey - Construction of two dormer windows. *The Council had no objection to this application*



6 Reports

Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe

Funding Threat

Plans to change the way Government money is allocated to rural areas could hit local services in North Norfolk. Rural Authorities are worried that the new system will take money from hard pressed country communities in favour of cities. We feel that too little notice has been taken of rural deprivation and the extra costs of providing services in rural areas. The proposed changes are set to come in from April 2003 and Ministers are deciding on which range of options for the grant system they should adopt. We have written to the Minister, Nick Raynsford, to MEPs and to the local MP calling for changes to be made to the proposals currently on the table.

Budget Gap

The Financial Forecast for 2003-04 shows a short fall of £390,000 unless remedial action is taken when the budget is prepared. Options for council tax increases are being examined and range from 6.5% to 17%.

On 9 December 2002, the recommendations of the Corporate Review will be presented to Members in the form of short and medium term options. It is my view that if the short-term options are implemented, we will be able to reduce the Budget gap and limit the increase in council tax to 6.5%.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

The CPA will commence in January and conclude in late April 2003. County Councils have been assessed and the results should be notified in December 2002. District Councils in Norfolk are in the first raft of the national performance assessment of this tier of local government.

There are four elements:

- Self-assessment by NNDC. To consider our priorities and how these help to drive service improvements for local people. This is to be a balanced strengths and weaknesses assessment and not a promotional document.
- Peer challenge. NNDC is to be assessed by a team from other councils.
- Cross cutting inspections. NNDC is to be inspected on 'Balancing housing markets', (we are not sure what this means yet), and on 'Clean, green and safe public space' in order to assess local service performance and corporate capacity.
- Corporate assessment. This will take information from the self-assessment and the cross cutting inspections to provide evidence about the council's corporate capacity.

The Team will make a judgment to provide an overall score. This will range from Excellent to Unsatisfactory. The Team will then work with councils to agree improvement activity based on local priorities and a package of audit, inspection and improvement work.



5 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

Local Planning & Transportation News

Work began on Thursday 31st October to strengthen the carriageway of the B1105 in West Barsham. The road will be closed during the work, except for access. A diversion route is in place via the B1355 and A149. The work will take 5 weeks.

Work started in Mid-October to reconstruct the footway on Kettlestone Road and Oaklands in Little Snoring. The work is estimated to take about 5 weeks with a 'give and take' system in place during progress.

I have also informed Planning & Transportation about the poor state of the footway on The Croft at Little Snoring. They have said that it will be patched this Financial Year and slurry sealed next year.

After a meeting of local County Councillors with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Transportation, he reported to County Council Cabinet that during 2001, the amount of heavy goods vehicles travelling through Thornage on a daily basis was not particularly high at 40 vehicles per day two way flow. He felt it would be inappropriate for the B1110 to finish at Piggs Grave as this would mean less maintenance for this stretch of road, it would not be gritted during the winter and it would be unhelpful for tourists making their way to North Norfolk. Proper signing was also important for the economy of North Norfolk. The Cabinet Member thus proposed at the last Cabinet Meeting that the B1110 be retained and included as main distributor route between the B1146 at Dereham and the A148 at Holt and gave an undertaking that the possibility of a restriction on the length of heavy goods vehicles at Broome Green would be considered.

The Cabinet resolved that the B1110 be retained and included as main distributor route between Dereham and Holt; that approval be given to the completion of the route hierarchy signing; that all Parish Councils and local members be consulted again in those areas already signed.

Vital reconstruction work to Blakeney Quay means that it will be closed to vehicles from Monday 28th October right through to next Spring. This major improvement scheme is being carried out by Norfolk County Council to secure the future of the Quay, which is in the Blakeney Conservation Area and an important feature of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Although it will not be possible to moor boats to the Quay or walk along the top, there will still be pedestrian access between the bottom of the High Street and Westgate Street. Vehicle access will be maintained for the Blakeney Hotel and all other properties along the Quay.

A 130 metre long section of the Quay, built in the 1930s has reached the end of its useful life. Parts of the road and pedestrian promenade have suffered from settlement, while the reinforced concrete wall has cracked and moved forward in places. The reconstruction work will include a new sheet steel pile wall, concrete capping and cladding to give the Quay a secure future and an attractive appearance.



5 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter - Continued

The work includes:-

a new anchored steel sheet pile wall, about 1.5 metres in front of the existing wall - the gap filled with a draining granular material and surfaced a concrete capping beam along the full length, replacement landing steps, cladding on the front face of the wall to improve its appearance and allow the mooring of small vessels, new mooring bollards, a resurfaced promenade and new attractive post and rail fencing between the carriageway and the footway, a new ramped access at the western end of the promenade, bollards at the eastern end to prevent unauthorised vehicular access.

Some maintenance for the coming year

B1156 at Field Dalling - Holt Road to be haunched due to edge deterioration.

B1105 at Wells - Fakenham Road - install gullies and pipe to new open ditch to improve drainage (wayleave required from landowner).

Waveney Close at Wells - patch existing footway surface, replace damaged kerbs and slurry seal.

Northfield Avenue at Wells - rekerb and resurface footway.

Mill Court at Wells - reconstruct footway.

Traffic Management Program

the B1146 at Pudding Norton has now been placed on the priority 1 pending list 2003 for a 40mph speed limit.

Local School Bus

After receiving complaints from parents about overcrowding on the service 58 school bus between Sheringham and Fakenham, I asked the County Council Passenger Transport Unit to see if they could put on a double decked vehicle.

The County have now discussed the problem with Sanders Coaches and where possible operationally, they will deploy a double decked vehicle over the route. Hopefully this will mean a far more comfortable journey for schoolchildren, particularly over the last 8/9 miles when up to 14 have been left standing.

Rogue Firework Traders

Rogue traders in Norfolk who flout the law by selling fireworks to children have been warned that they face a crackdown by County Council Trading Standards Officers.

The Trading Standards department will be carrying out spot inspections of outlets selling fireworks in the coming days to check that traders are complying with the under-age law.



5 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter - Continued

Officials have already inspected a number of local outlets and found that, whilst most traders are acting responsibly, others are putting the public at risk. The service will be taking tough action on those who fail to comply with Firework Safety Regulations; they face prosecution and a fine of up to £5000, a prison sentence of up to 6 months, or both.

Report from PC Ken Durrant

PC Ken Durrant reported there had been one incident since his last report. An attempted burglary at a private residence had been made by someone who had recently been released from prison, the person had been apprehended and is now back in prison once more. He asked everyone in the village to be vigilant and reminded everyone that if they see anything that raises cause for concern to please report it to the Police immediately.

Mark Harrison explained that the attempted burglary had taken place at his house and he had made a citizens arrest. The man had parked his car at the pub car park and had been seen walking through the village.

The investigation regarding the removal of the alcohol that had been stored in the village hall has been completed. The alcohol was in the ownership of the Fete Committee and this will be dealt with by them and the removal of the alcohol from the village hall will be dealt with by the Village Hall Committee.

6 A O B

Village Hall Security for the Public Inquiry

The Clerk reminded the Councillors that a complete review of the security for the village hall will be required to be undertaken in the new year to comply with the requirements to enable the Public Inquiry to take place in Feb/March 2003. The Clerk explained that it is anticipated that the Inquiry will be of 2 days duration and the Village Hall will have to pass stringent security measures because the documents etc. will be left on the premises overnight and no access whatsoever will be allowed into the hall unless the Inquiry Officers are present.

As soon as a date for the Inquiry has been agreed a firm booking will be entered into the hall-booking diary. A minimum of 2 ½ days will need to be booked to ensure the setting up of the furniture is in place and the hall is warm ready for the start of the Inquiry. The bonus side to the Inquiry will be the income for the village hall from the hire charges, which must reflect the need for the additional heating to be on.

Speed Signs

30 m p h speed sign has been removed from the post on the Greenway - The Clerk will make a report to the Highways Department to request a replacement.



6 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe

Draft Local Government Bill 2002

The District Council has commented on the Bill. Many of the changes proposed have the potential to be positive in their impact provided they are implemented effectively and without unnecessary prescription by central government. I will raise now some of the concerns that the Council has about the Bill.

- The effect of the Bill could permit an increase rather than a reduction in central government intervention in local affairs.
- We believe that the central/local government relationship should be subject to an independent and on-going scrutiny.
- As part of the process of defining the spheres of responsibility, central government, the Local Government Association and stakeholders should negotiate a framework of minimum service delivery standards; beyond that framework, government should accept diversity
- The Council views discretion over council tax levels for second homes and empty properties as an opportunity for action on some key local issues. To permit this, it is essential that additional tax proceeds be retained locally.
- The Bill would enable the Secretary of State to require local authority capital receipts to be paid into the Government for redistribution. The Council opposes such transfers in principle. It believes that resources generated locally should be used locally.
- The Council is concerned that the proposals for the new standard spending assessment and formula grant distribution may not have sufficient regard to the issues of sparsity and rurality as we have in North Norfolk.
- On the issue of housing, the overall impression gained from the proposed changes on housing finance is that the Government views housing as national service and that money from one authority can be readily moved to others. We do not agree this concept. Local decision-making in the light of local knowledge is important but is becoming more and more difficult.

We await the response from Government

Norfolk Citizens Panel

The latest survey was completed on 5 July 2002 and was based on a statistical sample of 529 North Norfolk residents. I thought you might be interested in some of the results.



6 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe – Continued

- There is majority support for introducing Community Support Officers who will free up police officers to concentrate on more serious crime. There was some concern that the Community Support Officer will not receive enough powers to be effective in dealing with anti-social behavior. Nevertheless, the majority stated that they would feel much safer in their communities if they had a Community Support Officer.
- Around 65% of those who last contacted the Police were satisfied with the way the Police handled their problem. Those who were dissatisfied felt that the matter they reported was trivialised; and they were not kept informed about the outcome or progress of enquiries.
- We have regular consultation with the Police at meetings within North Norfolk chaired by a member of the Police Authority, in our case Mrs Paddy Seligman. All are welcome and the timings are published in the 'Parish Newsletter' sent out by NNDC. Do attend if you a point to make.
- The key items that would be most effective in making people feel this neighbourhood is a safer place to live in are: better access to the police; better street lighting; more CCTV; and Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- The survey asked about voting in local elections. There was a high response for alternatives to the polling station. The question asked which option would you most like to use if it was available. The order of preference was: voting by post, voting at weekends, voting from home using the telephone, ditto using the Internet.

It is likely that one urban and one rural Ward will be selected to test postal voting in the local election on 1 May 2003.

Settlement for Council Workers

A pay proposal for council workers has been hammered out by ACAS and is currently being considered by councils and the unions. The two-year deal would see council workers receiving 3.58% this year and 3.6% in 2003. It would ensure that all workers receive a £5-an-hour minimum wage. Unions had originally asked for pay increases averaging 12%, but accepted during the talks that councils did not have limitless resources. The District Council had allowed 3.5 % for this year, and 3.5% plus inflation for 2003; so we can accept these figures and hope that our negotiators come to a successful conclusion.

Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee under review

As a member of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee I will be very interested to see it open up its own track record for public review.



6 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter – Continued

The Council's Cabinet Scrutiny Committee examines issues of concern in detail and can offer recommendations on how things can be done differently in future.

It can turn the spotlight on decisions taken by Norfolk County Council. Any two members of the Committee can "call in" items decided by the Cabinet for discussion - with relevant Cabinet members and senior officers called to account for why a particular decision or policy was reached. Obviously this is mainly done by the opposition groups who use the committee to query decisions made by the ruling Cabinet. It is thus a very important part of the local democratic process.

The Cabinet Scrutiny Committee also looks at a range of important issues. Recently I chaired a small sub group looking at the Council's relationship with Capita (who run many of the Council's IT and Treasury functions) and the performance statistics by which aspects of the relationship are managed.

During its first year in operation many issues have been looked into and debated such as School Admission Arrangements, the working of the Passenger Transport Unit and of Norwich Airport. There has been seven Cabinet decisions "called in" for Scrutiny.

Celia Cameron, leader of the main opposition group and Chairman of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, said that after a year in existence, the time had come for the Committee to consider what progress had been made. She believes that Scrutiny has made a very useful start and whilst there is always room for improvement she is generally pleased with the way in which it is developing and with the positive suggestions that it has made.

She went on to say that the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee has a vital role to play in making the Council accountable for the decisions it takes whilst carrying out the Scrutinising role in a constructive and non-threatening manner.

County Truancy Sweep

Norfolk County Council education social workers have teamed up with local police officers to tackle truancy in King's Lynn in the county's first ever truancy sweep.

Police officers and education social workers patrolled the streets of King's Lynn on 27th September and challenged children who should have been in school.

This is the first time that truancy patrols have been used in Norfolk. King's Lynn was chosen because of concerns about the levels of school attendance there. It has an average secondary school unauthorised absence rate of 2.86% compared with a county average of 1.00%.



6 Report from Councillor Derek Baxter – Continued

More building at County Hall

On October 7th work begins at County Hall on a new building to contain both a new housing scheme for frail older people and a 50 place nursery for children of those who work for the County Council.

The loss of some 200 car parking spaces at County Hall site will be offset by the recent move by Norfolk Police to their new headquarters, which freed 270 spaces, and the move of around 70 NPS staff to other office locations around the County.

Road Closure at West Barsham

Norfolk County Council has made a Temporary Traffic Order affecting the B1105 Wells Road from the junction with the C586 Fakenham Road westward for a distance of approximately 1000 metres in the Parish of Barsham because of carriage edge strengthening. The road will be temporarily closed, except for access, from 28th October 2002 to 20th December 2002 for the duration of the works, expected to be about 8 weeks.

7 A O B

Memorial Seat and Village of the Year Award The Councillor agreed the memorial seat would be dedicated after the next family service or after a service to be agreed with the Church Wardens. The plaque for the Village of the Year Award would also be put up at the same time and it was suggested the most appropriate place would be the gable end of the village hall. The Councillors also felt this would be a good opportunity to invite everyone from the village to attend the dedication of the seat and plaque and to be provided with some light refreshments in the Village Hall. The Clerk would produce some invitation as soon as a date and time has been agreed.

Village Hall The Village Hall Sub Committee held a meeting to discuss the issue of the removal of alcohol which had been stored in the bar area that had been purchased by the Fete Committee. The Chairman of the Village Hall Committee had read out a statement on the incident. The Police investigation is ongoing and a report will be issued by P C Ken Durrant once his investigations have been completed. The Chairman reminded the Councillors that the alcohol had not been the property of the Village Hall or the Parish Council in their capacity as Trustees. It was of course in the ownership of the Fete Committee and it would be for them to decide what action needs to be taken once the investigation is complete.

However an issue that would need to be thoroughly investigated would be a full review of the security measures in place for the village hall by the Village Hall Sub Committee.



7 AOB

Access for Cottages Eddie Procter expressed his disappointment to the Council that the Village Hall Committee had felt it necessary that the access through the car park and round the back of the hall to the Cottages would be closed for one day per year.

Although he did understand that this would be done to ensure the access did not become a right of way in years to come, he had personally given his word that the privilege of being given this facility, which is renewed on an annual basis, would not be abused by him and was sad that the Committee had felt this was not sufficient.

The Councillors assured him that this measure had been taken purely to protect the Village Hall if an access problem should arise from future tenants in the Cottages.

The date of the next meeting would be on Monday 2nd December 2002.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'L. Procter', is written on the page.

STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

Wildfowlers Cottage

High Street

Cley

NR25 7AP

Tel: 01263 740843

e-mail:

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The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 2nd DECEMBER 2002** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL** at **7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the November Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 6th JANUARY 2003**

Patricia Temple-Crowe

Clerk to the Parish Council

Minutes of Stiffkey Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 2nd December 2002 at 7.00pm

Present: Lawrence Jordan (Chairman), John Pearson, Stanley Sutton, Roy Rogers, and Michael Jordan

In attendance: Councillor Bernard Crowe and the Clerk

Apologies: Councillor Derek Baxter, *Mary Gerrard*

There were no declarations of interest.

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 4th November 2002 were read approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman

2 Matters Arising

Bangay Lane At the last meeting due to the considerable cost quoted for the clearance of this area the Councillors agreed that those who could, would meet to inspect the area and consider if it would be possible to get the work done by a team of volunteers. Following this site inspection John Pearson, Michael Jordan and Stephen Wright (on behalf of Mark Harrison) cleared the verge. The Chairman asked for a vote of thanks to be recorded in the Minutes for their hard work, which had saved the Parish Council a considerable sum of money.

Once Mr White has had the opportunity to clear his side of the Lane it was hoped the area would continue in a clean and tidy state.

Mark Harrison offered to carry out *once or twice a year*
The verge clearance would be included on the ~~yearly maintenance contract~~, which will hopefully ensure that this situation does not arise again in the future. *1-9-03*

Public Inquiry Documentation

In order that there are no misunderstandings regarding this Public Inquiry and the length of time this was originally discussed (1992) the Clerk had obtained copies which were distributed, of correspondence from supporters and objectors to the proposed reclassification order which will ensure all Councillors are fully informed ready for the Public Inquiry which is due to be held in the Spring of 2003. The Clerk reminded the Councillors to ensure that the documents were returned to her when everyone on the Council had been given the opportunity to study them.

Land at Camping Hill

Still no news to report on this piece of land. Michael Jordan expressed his concern that the vegetation on this land needs to be cleared. It has become a plot of overgrown wasteland.

3 Correspondence

Parish and Town Council - Norfolk Link Issue December 2002

Norfolk County Council:

- Norfolk Matters Issue Number 6 for November and December
- Norfolk Structure Plan Review Report
- Norfolk Local Transport Plan 2001 / 2005 Annual Progress Report 2002

3 Correspondence - Continued

North Norfolk District Council

- East Area Committee Meeting 5th December 2002
- Christmas and New Year Refuse Collection Arrangements

East of England Development Agency - £3 million competition to provide broadband Internet access for communities.

4 Finance

The Clerk had received the following invoice which was approved for payment:
District Audit - £58.75

Precept for 2003 2004 - After careful consideration of the actual income and expenditure for the year ending 2001 and 2002 and the anticipated income and expenditure for 2003 and the anticipated reserve the Parish Council agreed that no increase would be necessary to the precept for 2003 – 2004.

5 Planning

The Clerk has received the following report from the Planning Committee:
The Old School, Church Street, Stiffkey - Construction of two dormer windows.
Recommend approval.

6 AOB

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - The Clerk gave a detailed report on this new legislation and went through the documents from the Information Commission. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to adopt the Parish Council Model Scheme and the Clerk's details would be provided as a point of contact.

Sign at Muckledyke During the road surface improvements the 'walking' sign at Muckledyke and the Knoll were removed – the Clerk will make a request to the Highways Department that these are replaced.

Street Lighting Street Light Number 1 is not working. The Clerk would inform Eastern Contracting.

Keys for the Village Hall - The Chairman of the Village Hall had produced a list of key holders which detailed 9 names but 12 keys have been issued, and the Council was asked if they knew who's names were missing from the list. Unfortunately the Council could not help.

Due to the Public Inquiry in the Spring 2003 and the security requirements by the Inspector, the Parish Council agreed that the issue of security for the village hall would have to be considered early in the New Year.

In the meantime the Clerk asked the Council to give some thought to the type of security that they would like to see installed.

The Chairman closed the Parish Council Meeting to enable the following reports to be made.



Reports from Councillor Bernard Crowe

Funding Threat

Plans to change the way Government money is allocated to rural areas could hit local services in North Norfolk. Rural Authorities are worried that the new system will take money from hard pressed country communities in favour of cities. We feel that too little notice has been taken of rural deprivation and the extra costs of providing services in rural areas. The proposed changes are set to come in from April 2003 and Ministers are deciding on which range of options for the grant system they should adopt. We have written to the Minister, Nick Raynsford, to MEPs and to the local MP calling for changes to be made to the proposals currently on the table.

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Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

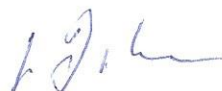
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In our case the work already undertaken by the Corporate Review, the formation of the Local Strategic Partnership and development of the draft Community Strategy will assist. Nevertheless, Members and Staff will be heavily engaged during the run up to the local elections on 1 May 2003. Some staff will have to work full time on the CPA at the expense of their normal duties. The incoming Council will be required to action any improvement activity required.



5 Report from Councillor Bernard Crowe - Continued

In our case the work already undertaken by the Corporate Review, the formation of the Local Strategic Partnership and development of the draft Community Strategy will assist. Nevertheless, Members and Staff will be heavily engaged during the run up to the local elections on 1 May 2003. Some staff will have to work full time on the CPA at the expense of their normal duties. The incoming Council will be required to action any improvement activity required.

Project Reach Out

As Chairman of the Project Reach Out Board, I plan to sign-off the project as meeting the requirements of delivery on time, on cost, and to specification this month. The Project is a community based, interactive website, (Northnorfolk.org). You can buy car park season tickets, make online payments for council tax, business rates, NNDC housing rents and sundry services, view planning applications, find refuse collection dates and so on. Visitors can find accommodation and details of what is going on. Business people should make sure they are listed in our business directory, and everyone can find out about grants and funding opportunities.

You can access the website from your home computer or from a variety of access points such as libraries or more locally. For example, the Bluebell pub at Langham has an Internet access point, and Langham Glass will have an Internet kiosk.

This supplements face to face contact and does not replace it. The project costing £450,000 was result of an Invest to Save bid and funding from the East of England Development Authority. NNDC put up £50,000 and gained £400,000 match funding. Government requires all services to be offered online by 2005. This is an area where NNDC is succeeding.

Royal British Legion Blakeney, Blakeney, Cley & District Branch

I would like to thank the Chairman of the Blakeney Parish Council and the Chairman of the Royal British Legion Blakeney, Cley & District Branch for their public speaking at the NNDC Planning Committee on 31 October 2002. This assisted us in gaining unanimous support for demolition of the old hall, and the erection of a replacement hall and three terraced dwellings. I drew attention to the willingness of the RBL Branch Committee to pass on one of the terraced properties to Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society Limited. I would also like to thank Richard Kelham, Chairman BNHS, for his letter of advocacy. The next stage is to raise the funds to build!

Christmas 2002

May I wish all readers and their families a happy and holy Christmas.



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Response from the Chairman

The Chairman thanked Councillor Bernard Crowe for his report and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, but wished to clarify one misunderstanding relating to the planning application for the new hall and houses at Blakeney, Cley and District Royal British Legion. The Club Chairman had attended the planning meeting at NNDC not the Chairman of the Branch. The planning application was submitted on behalf of the Branch who are the owners of the Club. The Club Committee are the tenants.

Although it is the wish of members to sell one of the plots of land to Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society for social housing, due to the requirements laid down by the Charity Commission this may not be possible and permission will have to be obtained from Headquarters. The Branch is therefore required to ensure that best value is obtained through the sale of the plots of land and negotiations on proceeding with Headquarters.



Report from Councillor Derek Baxter

Planning Decisions

Since May of this year I have been a member of the County's Planning (Regulatory) Committee. Up until November the only development applications in North Norfolk had been for school extensions but this month there were three applications relating to local gravel pits.

Permission was granted for the Glaven Pits in Walls Lane, Glandford to continue with mineral extraction for six years; to infill part of the pit with inert waste as part of the restoration plan; and to recycle brick, block, concrete and other inert building materials not suitable for restoration purposes.

Permission was also granted for RMC (Eastern Counties) Ltd (subject to being re-advertised as a departure from the adopted Waste Local Plan) to use part of the existing quarry in Hunworth Road, Holt for inert waste recycling.

Finally, it was resolved that permission be granted for NEWS Ltd to continue landfill operations at the Edgefield Landfill site until the end of 2013. This permission only was granted subject to certain conditions; that progressive restoration of the whole quarry and progressive landscaping takes place; that noise minimisation including the provision of an appropriate bund be carried out; and that there is a discontinuance of sand and gravel processing and that the washing and screening plant be removed.

Sticking with planning, a planning code of conduct member/officer working party has been set up to consider a draft Code of Best Practice and to raise any other matter relating to the practice of the County Council in dealing with planning applications. As well as this, it is intended to modernise the County's approach to planning by improving the quality of the reports and presentations.

Environmental Issues

Intrusive street lighting, energy and water conservation and the future of the tidal River Glaven will be discussed by members of the Planning, Transportation, Environment, Waste and Economic Development Review Panel (affectionately known as TWERP) on the 5th December.

The majority of parish councils have given their support to proposals aimed at limiting the amount of light pollution caused by street lighting and other lights in public areas.

The County Council has been working with district councils to produce a new policy which would see more orange low pressure sodium lights replaced with white high pressure sodium lights when they are due for renewal. These lights are less intrusive but more expensive.

64% of the parishes who responded to the consultation were in favour of the policy but some have raised concerns about cost and energy consumption.

The Review Panel will also be asked for its views on Environment Agency proposals to try to solve the problem of blockage of the tidal River Glaven at Blakeney. The outfall of the river into the North Sea is under threat because Blakeney Spit (which includes Blakeney Point) is moving landward. If the channel became permanently blocked, the important freshwater marshes could be lost as the Glaven forced another channel into the sea.

A presentation on the Environment Agency's proposals to prevent this will be given at the meeting.

Finally, a draft strategy to ensure that the County Council minimises its use of energy and water will be discussed by the Panel before being forwarded to the Cabinet for approval.

It is hoped that the strategy will be an example of good practice to other organisations within the county and beyond. It also aims to raise the profile of energy and water conservation amongst staff and County Councillors, challenge existing practices and encourage change where necessary.

Passenger Transport Unit

Norfolk County Council's Passenger Transport Unit has a wide range of services, responsibilities and activities. They include home to school transport arrangements, transporting social services clients, publicising bus routes and timetables, park and ride arrangements and public transport. It waste up in 1999 and brought together the transport units from Education, Social Services and Planning and Transportation to improve and co-ordinate the County Council's transport, purchasing and commissioning arrangements.

The work of the unit is the subject of examination and discussion next week by the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee when it meets on 3rd December.

Cabinet Scrutiny Members will receive a report from a working group set up to look into a number of aspects of the PTU's work and formulate conclusions and recommendations for further discussion.

As part of their review, the working group interviewed and took evidence from a number of people and organisations who work with or commission services from the Unit.

The working Group notes that despite some tensions between the Unit and other departments, it has come a long way since it was formed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Spiller', is located at the bottom right of the page.

Stiffkey Parish Council

Meetings for 2003 would be as follows:

Monday 6th January

Monday 3rd February

Monday 3rd March

Monday 7th April

Monday 12th May

Monday 2nd June

Monday 7th July

Monday 18th August

Monday 6th October

Monday 3rd November

Monday 1st December

STIFFKEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr L Jordan

Clerk's Address:

Wildfowlers Cottage

High Street

Cley

NR25 7AP

Tel: 01263 740843

e-mail:

tcrowe@morstonassets.com

2nd January 2002

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on **MONDAY 6th JANUARY 2003** in **STIFFKEY VILLAGE HALL** at **7.00pm.** All parishioners are welcome to attend.

A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of the December Meeting
- 4 Matters Arising
- 5 Correspondence
- 6 Finance
- 7 Planning
- 8 Any Other Business
- 9 Parishioners Question Time
- 10 Date of Next Meeting: **MONDAY 3rd FEBRUARY 2003**

Patricia Temple-Crowe
Clerk to the Parish Council