

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held at 7.30pm on 10th February 2021

Present:

HHPC Councillors: Sheila Beckett (SB) – Chair
Georgina Buckle (GB)
Luisa Ferrari (LF)
Phil Grimes (PG)

Clerk: Eleanor Bannister (EB)

Other attendees: Cllr. Margaret Stone (until 7.45pm)
Shane Waterhouse, Hales Green Common Working Group Member (until 8.40pm)

21/137 Welcome – The Chair welcomed all present and opened the meeting at 7.30pm.

21/138 Apologies for Absence – Cllr. A. Woodman sent his apologies.

21/139 Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda – None were received.

21/140 Ratification of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th December 2020 – The Minutes were ratified.

21/141 Action Log from Meeting on 16th December 2020 – This was reviewed at the end of the meeting. (See pages 6 & 7.)

21/142 County & District Councillor updates - Cllr. Kay Billig sent a report attached as Appendix 1. Cllr. Jeremy Rowe sent a report attached as Appendix 2. Cllr. Margaret Stone sent a report attached as Appendix 3. and noted that her report addressed some of the issues raised in HHPC December minutes. This included information on the national speed guidelines adopted by Norfolk County Council (NCC). They also noted that the speed at roundabouts was the speed limit indicated on the approach to the roundabout (and if there were two, the lowest speed) i.e. in the case of the Hales roundabout, 50 mph. Cllr. MS highlighted flooding as a major area of concern, especially in the Waveney Valley, a flood plain. Given it was anticipated this would reoccur more often, NCC were pulling together all the agencies involved in flooding to discuss future strategies. Cllr. MS also outlined NCC's budget plans and progress with vaccinations. See Appendix 3 for full update.

Cllr. SB asked about current guidelines for landowners in relation to flooding. Cllr. MS noted 80% of ditches are owned by private landowners (the rest by NCC) and they had a duty to keep their ditches clear but there was no legislation to enforce this. However, a task force may well have to introduce legislation for this. The provision of Broadband was also raised and Cllr. MS noted that there were several 'not spots' but the Government was providing funding via district and local

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

councils to address this so given it was an absolute priority, to contact district councillors for advice.

21/143 Meeting Adjourned for Public Forum – It was agreed to discuss Hales Green under item 20/149.

21/144 Meeting Reconvened

21/145 Old Village Hall Working Group – Cllr. SB confirmed they had submitted the Assets of Community Value nomination form to South Norfolk District Council (SNDC), notifying SNDC that HHPC wanted to invite residents to consider using possible future funds for the provision of a new village hall that met the needs of the community. The Clerk confirmed that they had spoken with Mr. J. Sturman on the Village Hall Management Committee and it had been agreed that a face-to-face meeting would take place as soon as was permissible.

21/146 Planning Working Group – South Norfolk Planning applications: ‘2020/2067 – Boundary House, Yarmouth Road, Hales’ – Approval with conditions. Decision made on 21/1/2021.

21/147 Composting Working Group – It was noted this would start again in the spring.

21/148 Environment & Amenities Working Group

148.1 Playground – The Clerk confirmed that the grass had been cut in January, the reports were up-to-date and that they were meeting with a contractor to get an initial estimate for what it would cost to create a path around the playing field in the future. It was noted that fundraising and grant applications would be needed if this was progressed.

148.2 Wild-flowering in Hales – The meeting with Chet Valley B-Line and Saffron Housing to discuss this had to be postponed to March given Covid. A seating option for the land on the corner of School Lane and The Boltons (looking out over the village sign) was discussed and all agreed the most appropriate and competitive quote was for the ‘Sandringham’, from a Norfolk company made of recycled black plastic sheets used on farmers’ fields i.e. ‘closed-loop recycling’. It could be installed by the Council given it would use an earth ‘anchor’.
Action: All agreed; Clerk to order seating.

148.3 Parish Map – A full response was still pending from SNDC but anticipated shortly. Cllr. SB suggested they request support from the District Councillors if necessary. Action: Clerk to progress.

148.4 Signposting of Playing Field – This was being progressed and Cllr. GB confirmed they would check if a smaller sign could also be put up to the right of the entrance.

21/149 Hales Green Common Working Group – Cllr. SB had circulated a summary of the last Working Group meeting and Cllr. LF confirmed that the Group had agreed to address a few key aspects one by one initially addressing:

- a. New signage, in caps and clearly legible to drivers stating “Do not drive or park on the grass, please clean up after your dog, no horses or bikes on the grass, keep dogs under close control at all times”;
- b. Provision of better parking spaces as regularly requested by residents writing to SNDC;
- c. Pollution caused by smoke from persistent burning, contributing to increased pollution.

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

In relation to a. Quotes had been obtained from Roberts & Son Printers, and all agreed that one should be placed at each main entrance to the Common. Action: Clerk to contact SNDC for their approval and support in producing four aluminium composite signs. Option of adding the bye-laws to the back of them to be considered.

In relation to b. A member of the working group had good suggestions for this which would not be expensive to implement, and kindly offered their assistance. To be explored once Clerk had spoken to SNDC, suggesting an on-site meeting to discuss options.

In relation to c. It was agreed that initially the Clerk would contact SNDC and the owners of properties where the smoke was a reoccurring issue, to see what could be done to assist in reducing this. Later steps would include a letter to all residents outlining Government recommendations, requesting support and action to avoid polluting, and contacting SNDC Environment Officer.

Cllr. PG noted that bye-laws needed to be displayed on the Common, to be enforceable, and SNDC had been asked to display the bye-laws several times. If displayed, a fine of £200 could be applied for not following them. It was agreed to consider what else could be done to protect the Common at the next Working Group meeting and it was confirmed that the Common was a 'County Wildlife Site' and had been surveyed by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust in 2019. Action: Cllr PG to re-circulate the 2019 survey and Cllr. LF to circulate previous surveys to Cllr. GB.

21/150 Police & Safety Working Group – There was no update.

21/151 Traffic & Transport Working Group

151.1 Hales Roundabout & Highways improvements - Cllr. SB noted the limited expectation of the trees being replanted this season though HHPC had continued to chase Highways. All agreed HHPC would need to be more forceful and actively lobby for autumn planting by the summer, and potentially seek the assistance of the Tree Wardens and District Councillors. Action: Clerk to continue chasing Highways and report back by 24/2. Cllr. SB to check original scheme and what should have been planted.

151.2 Speed-watch - Cllr. GB noted that given Covid restrictions, there had been no speed-watch.

151.3 Bus Stop Visibility - The Clerk confirmed they were still chasing Highways for a response.

21/152 Correspondence Received - not covered elsewhere & previously circulated or referred to:

152.1 Norfolk's Police and the Crime Commissioner launched the annual consultation on the proposed budget for policing across the county, setting out key challenges. For further information:

<https://www.norfolk.police.uk/news/latest-news/pcc-launches-police-budget-consultation>

152.2 NCC Highways Notification of footway resurfacing work between Hales and Loddon along the A146 Beccles Road. Work completed in January.

152.3 Hales Green Common – Email from resident highlighting the drain running across the Common from old farm complex to a pit that had maintained a safe pond level until the recent heavy rain; pit now appeared to need maintenance. SNDC notified.

152.4 South Norfolk District Council - Hard copy of Bin Calendars no longer being sent to residents: To be kept informed residents could use the customer account functionality on the South Norfolk Council website which included an option to print their individual bin calendar. Alternatively, call **customer care: 01508 533830** to confirm collection dates. Details posted on HHPC facebook, and website under 'News'.

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

152.5 The [Broadland Futures Initiative](#) – Considering the long-term flood risks to the Broads and local communities with key partners. For information: Broadlands virtual exhibition as well as a series of “virtual village halls” public events in February & March. For further information: broads-authority.gov.uk.

152.6 Norwich Western Link – Norfolk County Council update sent on 11/01/2021. Noted work and consultation that took place in 2020 and that work started on environmental mitigation and enhancement proposals, including green bridges and habitat creation. If outline business case approved, it would unlock national funding for up to 85% of the total cost of the project. Goal: To start work on site to construct the NWL in late 2023 and open the road for use in late 2025. For further information: www.norfolk.gov.uk/nwl.

152.7 South Norfolk & Broadlands District Council Rough Sleeper Initiative – Requested notification of any individuals who slept rough on the night of 31st Jan. within the South Norfolk Council area. Information requested by 8/2 to Damien Millman, Rough Sleeper Coordinator, SNDC. Action: All agreed these regular requests should be posted on HHPC facebook so residents could also respond.

152.8 Norfolk County Council & the Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant were supporting the Ministry of Defence in promoting the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge; a promise from the nation ensuring that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, were treated fairly. It was noted that HHPC had no knowledge of how many ex-service men and women lived in the parish.

152.9 Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP): GNLP six-week Regulation 19 publication period started on 1/2/2021 and closes at 5.00pm on 15/3/2021. Submission documents available via www.gnlp.org.uk. Comments to be submitted via: www.gnlp.org.uk. Response forms can be requested by phone: 01603 306603 or email: gnlp@norfolk.gov.uk. Cllr. SB noted that the GNLP0308 plot of land behind HAL01 had not been included in the Regulation 19 Publication of the GNLP. Hales and Heckingham would be included in the smaller villages in South Norfolk which will be addressed through a new South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Local Plan. In the GNLP there was one site in Loddon and one just north of Chedgrave.

152.10 Email from resident noted they had reported an abandoned car near the playing field (which was then removed) and that the black dustbin in the playing field was full. The Clerk had responded with thanks. [The black dustbin is emptied every other Friday.]

21/153 Census 2021 – All agreed Census information to be posted on HHPC website & facebook. Action: Cllr. SB to email text to Cllr. PG.

21/154 Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr. SB had previously circulated a summary outline of a neighbourhood plan. It was agreed that it would be better to discuss this at the meeting in March and that community consultation was key. The Clerk suggested a regular HHPC ‘drop-in’ so residents could talk directly to the Clerk / Councillors regarding any concerns or recommendations they had. All agreed worth exploring. Action: Clerk to see whether Masala Garden could offer a central venue.

21/155 Finance & Admin

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

155.1 Statement of last quarter (Oct. to Dec. 2020) – The Clerk had previously circulated an update. For account reporting simplicity, Cllr. SB suggested that the restricted funds for the playing field (£65.05) were used to cover next playing field costs so they were reduced to ‘0’. Additionally, the restricted funds for the village sign (£707.00), should be released to allow for improvements around the village sign itself including with wildflowering, and the Council commit to all future maintenance of the sign (as it had anyway) using funds from the ‘village maintenance budget’. Action: Clerk to try and confirm origin of village sign restricted funds and add above proposal (which all agreed made sense) for consideration at the next meeting.

155.2 VAT Return – The Clerk confirmed receipt of the £2,509.23 claim submitted in November. They also estimated there would be an approximate £200 in VAT to claim in Q4.

155.3 Standing Orders – The Clerk had previously circulated revised standing orders, updated against the latest National Asso. of Local Council (NALC) model standing orders 2018 (revised 2020). Cllr. AW had previously emailed his feedback and all present agreed that they should be approved with the options recommended by the Clerk. Action: Clerk to re-circulate final, approved version for formal ratification at the March meeting.

155.4 Financial Regulations – The Clerk had previously circulated revised financial regulations with minor revisions reflecting the NALC model financial regulations 2019. These were approved by all. Action: Clerk to formalise and ensure posted on the website, with Standing Orders.

155.5 Annual Renewal of agreements on The Pit & Charity Marsh – The Clerk confirmed that the licensee of The Pit had confirmed their interest in continuing to let The Pit from April 2021 to March 2022 and had signed the agreement and paid the agreed sum of £110. The agreement for the sale and purchase of ‘grass keep’ on Charity Marsh would also be renewed from April 2021 to March 2022 at the sum of £215 and the ‘purchaser’ had confirmed that they had public liability insurance.

155.6 Accounts for Authorisation and Payment: All below were approved. Action: Cllr. SB to authorise.

Payee	Gross Amount	Net Amount	VAT to reclaim	Purpose
ICO	£35.00	£35.00	£0.00	GDRP/Data Protection annual renewal fee. [Fee reduced from £40.00 as paid by DD - in February.]
The Broads Society	£19.00	£19.00	£0.00	The Broads Society Annual subscription – All approved as parts of Heckingham is within the Broads Authority.
Loddon Garden DIY	£300.00	£250.00	£50.00	Installation of 3 polycarbonate panels at the bus shelter.
Mr D Foreman	£100.00	£100.00	£0.00	Playing field grass cut x 2 / December.
Mr D Foreman	£91.80	£91.80	£0.00	Playing field maintenance Nov. to Dec. '20 – 9 weeks.
TOTAL	£545.80	£446.80	£50.00	

21/156 Items for consideration of inclusion on next agenda

156.1 Annual Parish Meeting – Planning

156.2 Asset & Risk Register – Review & confirmation

156.3 Local Footpaths – Discussion regarding their condition and any requirements

156.4 HHPC Communications Policy & Code of Conduct – Review

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

156.5 Heckingham Charity Marsh – Review

156.6 Neighbourhood Plan - Discussion

21/157 To receive update from individual council members – for information only

157.1 Flooding: Cllrs. SB and GB noted the flooding in Briar Lane and Norton Road and that NCC Highways did not in all cases fully link the ‘grubs’ i.e. short, one-meter-long trenches connecting a road to the ditch running alongside a road, which did not help. It was noted that there were also occasions when fields drained onto a road to then drain off the road on to a ditch *further* down the road, this made a bad situation even worse. It was understood that using a road as a drain was illegal. It was suggested that letters were sent to local landowners encouraging them to help mitigate against flooding by clearing roads and ditches and checking no ditches accidentally drained on to road, as encouraged by Norfolk County Council (NCC).

157.2 Cllr. GB reported that the problem they had **ensuring good Broadband**, was not in accessing Broadband itself but in the old copper wiring that came off the line, to join their house to the main line. The wiring was so old, it needed replacing and BT Openreach did not maintain this aspect of the system. In wet conditions, the old conduits would flood and connectivity would be lost. Cllr. PG noted this should be reported to their internet service provider, which would then have to conduct an initial assessment before they could raise it with BT Openreach. He offered to pull together guidance on how to report and tackle this issue and to post this on facebook and the website.

21/158 The Meeting was closed at 9.35pm

Date of next virtual meeting: March 24th March 2021

Updated ACTION LOG - Items ‘closed’ or ‘completed’ at HHPC Meeting on 16/12 or on the Agenda for 10/02 Meeting have not been included.

ID	ACTION	OWNER	STATUS
20/073.1 20/110.1	One-way system for Shell Garage. 10/02: Cllr. GB reported that this had been completed.	Clerk	Completed
20/037.5 21/155.3	Standing Orders: Clerk to circulate final version for ratification at next meeting.	Clerk	By 24/3
19/124.1	Hales Footpath 7 – Cllr. SB to get reassurances as noted in 19/124.1, prior to the Council giving approval for retrospective relocation. 10/02: Discussion around bin lorry turning area which often had 3 cars parked there; the middle car illegally blocking the footpath. Clerk to contact NCC and ask for yellow cross hatching, at least the middle section.	SB / Clerk	On-going
20/131.1 21/151.1	Verges close to Roundabout & A146 tree planting – 10/02: Clerk to chase Highways re: tree planting by 24/2 . Cllr. SB to check original scheme. Contractor removing ‘bump’ – spring 2021.	Clerk / SB	On-going
20/128.3 21/148.3	Parish Map – 10/02: Clerk to chase SNDC to see if can help produce map.	Clerk	On-going

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

20/125 21/145	Village Hall - proceeds from sale: 10/02: Clerk to arrange meeting with the trustee and Cllrs. SB & AW, once face-to-face meetings were permitted.	Clerk	On-going
19/125.2 21/046	Increasing footpath on east side of Green Lane to bus stop. 9/9: Agreed to reconsider in spring given cancellations by company leasing roller.	PG	Spring
19/71.2 21/015	Community Police Officer – 12/2: Cllr. AW to invite constable to HHPC meeting – Deferred to post Covid-19.	AW	Deferred post-Covid
19/129	Code of Conduct - Behaviour to Councillors & Parish Council staff – 12/2: Clerk to run final proof and to send all four documents to Cllr. SB for formal approval. On approval, to post on website. (Finalising as part of CiLCA training.)	Clerk / SB / PG	Spring
19/90	Parish Council external communications - It was agreed to add the approved statements to HHPC 'Standing Orders' when reviewed.	Clerk	March
20/013.3 20/071.6	Litter Pick – 28/10: Agreed to defer to spring given weather and social distancing concerns.	SB / All	Spring
20/073.4	Reduction in Speed Limits on Country Lanes – To be considered in 2021. [The Council for the Protection of Rural England could provide guidance.]	HHPC	2021
20/128.2 21/148.2	Wild-flowering verges & Seating close to village sing– 10/02: Meeting re-arranged for 3 rd March with Chet Valley B-Line, Saffron Housing, available Councillors and Clerk. Clerk to order seating.	Clerk / All	On-going
20/093.1	Neighbourhood Plan – For research and consideration for 2021/22.	SB / All	On-going
20/128.1 21/148.1	Rough quotes for hard surface path in playing field – Clerk to check with other Parishes for estimates.	Clerk	On-going
20/110.4	Lower Speed Limits (On to and off Hales roundabout including around central reservation between bus stops) – Cllr. AW to request records from the Police.	AW	On-going
20/112.6 21/151.3	Roundabout - 50 mph sign; Option to heighten – 10/02: Clerk to continue chasing Highways for a response.	Clerk	On-going
20/113.3	Accessibility of Key Parish Council Documents – Cllr. PG & Clerk to ensure key documents are easily accessible on website.	PG / Clerk	Spring 2021
20/128.4 21/148.4	Signposting of Playing Field – 10/02: Cllr. AW considering options. Cllr. GB to check if additional, smaller sign could be placed to right of entrance.	AW / GB	On-going
20/133.3	Heckingham Charity Marsh – Clerk to add to 2021 agenda for discussion on scope. Ex-Cllr. A. Mason to be invited to participate.	Clerk / All	2021
21/149	Hales Green Common – signage, parking & pollution – Clerk to contact SNDC re: clear signage and improved parking. Clerk to initially contact SNDC and key residents to consider how best to minimise pollution from burning. Working Group to consider how else to protect the Common at next meeting.	Clerk / Working Group	New
21/152.7	SNDC Rough Sleeper initiative – To post on facebook.	Clerk / PG	Twice-yearly
21/154	Neighbourhood Plan; Facilitating consultation – Clerk to ask Manager of Masala Garden if could offer a central venue for 'drop-in' surgery.	Clerk	New
21/155.1	Restricted Funds – Clerk to check origin of village sign funds and add proposal to next agenda for consideration.	Clerk	New
21/155.2	VAT Return Q4 – Clerk to submit end March.	Clerk	New
21/155.4	Financial Regulations - Clerk to post revised version on website.	Clerk / PG	New

Re-occurring Items:

	Contact Magazine – Content for April issue due by 12.00 noon on 8 th March. Cllr. SB to circulate draft by 4/3.	SB	Monthly
	Accounts for authorisation – Second authorisation for outstanding payments. Cllr. SB to authorise by 25/2. All to consider unsung heroes & other items.	SB / All	Post Meeting

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

APPENDIX 1. - Councillor Kay Billig – February 2021 Report

Loddon Roundabout - I chaired a meeting between the developer, the County Council and South Norfolk in mid-January to try to iron out the last few issues.

The S278 legal agreement between the Developer and Norfolk County Council is yet to be finalised. Progress has been made but we are not quite there yet. The tenders have gone out and come back from contractors to build the roundabout. An award should be made shortly for the work.

The NCC were saying that they needed six weeks to post the road traffic order for the works (this is a legal requirement for road closures). Once this has been posted we will have a definite start date. At the moment, we are looking at a start date for construction earliest end of March but more likely April.

Wherryman's Way - I attended the meeting of the working group recently and we have some good news.

The Broads Authority have the dredging required to reinstate the footpath across Hardley Floods in their program for this autumn. They are going to try to get the whole stretch dredged and build up the bank where the footpath runs during next winter.

Following this there is a period of stabilisation required, whilst the material deposited settles. This can take between 6 and 18 months depending on the weather. Once this has stabilised, they will reprofile the footpath.

We still have the issue of a missing bridge but that too is being looked at. All of this work has been budgeted for and is in their program, so we can be reasonably sure that it will happen. The footpath will not lose its status and it will not be diverted forever.

All this is not going to open the footpath immediately but it shows the level of commitment that we have been asking for and we should end up with a footpath for the future and more robust. They are also applying for a grant to update the signage, maps and sculptures along the whole footpath, so if you have any items in your Parishes that could benefit, please let me know.

If you have any questions, please do get in touch with me.

Clr. Kay Mason Billig, Deputy Leader, South Norfolk Council, Member for Loddon & Chedgrave

E: KBillig@S-Norfolk.Gov.UK

APPENDIX 2. - Councillor Jeremy Rowe - March 2021 Report

In conjunction with South Norfolk's excellent early Help Hub, our ChetChat group are continuing to offer help and support across our area. The number, to reach our fifty volunteers is: **07867 050110**. If you would like to speak to the Help Hub team, their number is: **01508 533933**.

The Covid vaccinations, a testament to both our NHS, and world-class British science and research, are providing genuine hope for so many.

As well as an increasing number of issues that matter to people locally, I've also been following the progress of the proposed Norwich Western Link road, linking the western end of Broadland Northway with the A47, which is planned to be open and in use in late 2025. A public consultation is planned for later this year, which I would encourage getting involved in.

Thanks for putting your trust in me when you voted; it has been a great privilege to be able to serve the voters of our fantastic community. My regular surgeries will resume when it is safe to hold them again. In the meantime, please ring me anytime on **07733 323581** if I can help you. Let's carry on looking after each other during winter. One day, all will be well again, and we will come out of this stronger.

District Councillor Jeremy Rowe
Member for Loddon & Chedgrave

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

APPENDIX 3 – Councillor Margaret Stone – January & February 2021 Report

National Speed Guidelines fully adopted by Norfolk Country Council Highways

Policy is available online - National Speed Policy. Reduction in Speed Limits on Country Lanes: To be considered in 2021. [The Council for the Protection of Rural England could provide guidance.]

Local councils can introduce their own speed limits, although these must be clearly signed. Look for signs featuring a number within a red circle. In areas where vulnerable road users such as children and cyclists are frequently found, a 20mph limit is often enforced. These could be on small residential roads or near schools and are often enforced by traffic calming measures such as speed bumps and chicanes to physically slow cars down. Research from 2019 found that [20mph speed limits are only proving effective in areas that also have speed bumps](#). On single lane carriageways with sharp bends, local councils can enforce a 50mph limit rather than the usual 60.

Lower Speed Limits e.g. on to and off **Hales Roundabout** including around central reservation between bus stops. Where several roads with different speed limits enter a roundabout, the roundabout should be restricted at the same level as the majority of the approach roads. If there is an equal division, for example where a 30 mph road crosses one with a limit of 40 mph, the roundabout itself should take the lower limit.

With reference to HHPC flooding issues, I have just sent this announcement to all my Parish Councils. This is a Norfolk County Council initiative bringing together all agencies to tackle flooding:

A new taskforce aiming to strengthen Norfolk's resilience to flooding is to be chaired by former head of the British army Lord Dannatt. Norfolk has suffered from [increased flood events](#) in recent months, and calls for coordinated action have grown among residents. With an independent figure guiding round-table discussions of the county and district councils, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency, internal drainage boards, and others, it is hoped greater collaboration between the authorities can be fostered.

Lord Dannatt, who will not be paid for the role, said: "Flooding and tidal surges are an increasing threat to the safety and prosperity of people in Norfolk in the coming years so the time is right to address these challenges vigorously." "On that basis, I am more than happy to accept the invitation to chair the Norfolk Flooding Alliance and bring all interested parties together to develop a strategy for the future. There is no time to lose." Following the recent floods, we are investing £1.5 million in flood repairs. And we will also protect our footpaths and cycle routes, which have been so valuable for our health and wellbeing during the pandemic.

National CENSUS - March 21st 2021 - Households across Norfolk will soon be asked to take part in the nationwide survey of housing and the population. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941. Information from the digital-first census will help decide how services are planned and funded in your local area. This could mean things like doctors' surgeries, housing or new bus routes. Households will receive a letter with a unique access code in the post, allowing them to complete their questionnaire online. Paper questionnaires will be available on request. Census day: 21st March. For more information, visit www.census.gov.uk.

Highways - Lease report issue online on Norfolk County Council (NCC) website.

Budget - The County Council will only increase the Council Tax precept by 4% for the coming year: A 1.99% general increase in council tax, plus a 2% for Adult Social Care. Adult Social Care is increasing at an alarming rate, increasing from: £355m in 2016 to £448m in 2020 and this is not simply COVID related. We are still awaiting a White Paper from the Government on funding social care.

Budget proposals - "The budget will not only support the most vulnerable people in our county but will also shift investment towards key community services like libraries and invest in broadband and physical infrastructure, to kickstart our battered economy." We will continue to press the Government for sustainable future funding for all council services, including adult social care, so that we can continue our investment in future years

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

Raise general Council Tax by the Government's guideline figure: Council Tax– 1.99%. Adult social care precept by 2% in 2021/22 and an extra 1% the following year. This would raise the county council's overall share of Council Tax by 3.99%, increasing the share of band D bills by £56.43 to £1,472.94 for 2021-22.

Invest £45.7 million to meet cost and other pressures in services; £28.2 million in adult social care; £7 million in children's services and £10.5 million in community and environmental services.

- Make provision of £18.8 million, set aside for Covid-19 costs in 2021-22.
- Make savings of £41.2 million, including a net £20.4 million of new proposals.
- Invest £102 million in the capital programme, taking the total infrastructure programme to £537.66 million.
- New items include £11.5 million for supported housing for young adults.
- £4 million for children's residential homes.
- Investment in the Long Stratton bypass, new libraries and green trails.
- Existing schemes include 500 new special school places.
- Planned new housing with care for adults,
- Better broadband links.
- Great Yarmouth third river crossing.

Flooding - Norfolk County Council are working with ALL agencies and have established a Resilience and Strategy Group, chaired by Lord Dannatt to address the problems and strategic solutions as well as mitigation to deal with this national as well as local flooding issue and how we can improve a coordinated strategy.

80% of ditches are owned by landowners NOT Council. NCC are responsible for clearing their ditches not those owned by landowners.

It has been awful to see the extensive flooding along the Waveney Valley and Communities worked hard to support with sandbags etc. District Councils can provide the sandbags I understand and locals have been working hard to support those at risk or experiencing flooding of their home. Thank you to everyone who did their best to help others

Exceptional rain fell recently and caused severe flooding in some of this Division. The exceptional is increasingly becoming the norm. Reasons: Undoubtedly, global warming is causing extreme weather patterns, and saturated fields unable to cope with excess water. Solutions:

- Ensure County Councils clear ditches on a regular basis.
- Parish Councils encouraged to work with local Landowners to ensure they clear their ditches.
- Norfolk, Suffolk, County and District Councils, Environment agencies and Flood alleviation agencies to work in a more coordinated way to reduce flooding.

There is no one agency responsible or to blame, this is a national problem and those living along the Waveney Valley are particularly at risk. Preparation, coordination and response remain the most important elements. We will be looking at the issue of flooding and how we can improve a coordinated strategy.

Vaccinations

Primary Care Networks and Clinical Care Groups Organizing NOT GP surgery's! Vaccinations are being organized locally at specific Centres and in our Division of Clavering, Poringland Community Centre is the central location. If the person is very elderly, lives alone or is in need of transport, this may be arranged accordingly. For those unable to attend, the vaccination may be given in the persons own home.

Individuals will be contacted personally and offered an appointment according to the priority waiting list. This is based according to age or specific vulnerable conditions basis. The majority of over 70-year-olds should be vaccinated by the middle of February.

Please feel free to contact me if there are areas in which you need support.

Cllr. Margaret Stone MSc.BA(hons), Norfolk County Councillor for Clavering Division

E: margaret.stone.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk