

Dereham Town Council

Heritage and Open Spaces Committee

24th January 2023

Agenda Notes

6. To consider taking over the Management responsibilities for the Neatherd from Breckland Council.

The was considered by Councillors previously, the offer is for the Town Council to take over Breckland Council Management responsibilities for the Neatherd, Breckland Council have offered £120,000 to cover the ongoing costs. While the offer seems generous, it doesn't cover all the costs.

Previously Councillors have asked for confirmation regarding tree surveys. Breckland Council carried out the last tree inspection in 2020. Inspections are carried out every 5 years despite the Witley Parish Council v **Cavanagh** [2018] case which showed that inspections once every three years was not sufficient. There for once we take over responsibilities a new survey will need to be carried out, this is likely to show that work is needed.

Breckland Council are not being speedy in their responses to questions and a point seems to have been reached where this has become a 'take it as it is or leave it' – offer. If Councillors are minded to take the offer it should be recognised that the £120,000 probably doesn't compensate for the responsibilities being taken on. In addition to the running costs, there will also be initial costs of tree inspection / tree works and other maintenance where Breckland Council seem to have reduced their maintenance in recent years e.g. the wooden posts, ditch and culvert maintenance.

If Councillors are minded to take over responsibilities then this should be from January 2024, to allow time for legal matters to be dealt with and contractors to be mobilised and prepared.

7. Consider gritting routes

A separate report is enclosed.

9. To confirm wording for J J Wright Plaque (Cllr Duigan)

The original suggested wording was



This is the wording agreed by Councillors.

J.J.Wright & Sons LTD
36-38 High Street Dereham

1888 – 1985 **(Councillor Duigan to confirm date***)**

Founded on this site by JOSEPH JAMES WRIGHT as agricultural engineers, J.J.Wright & Sons Ltd moved on to sell and service motor vehicles, from Norfolk's first tractors to vans and cars.

It became a Ford main dealership and one of Dereham's largest employers.
Commemorating the company's pioneering founder and dedicated workforce.