

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELNEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE PARISH HALL, WELNEY, ON TUESDAY 2nd APRIL, 2013 at 7.30 p.m.

Present

Cllr.K.Goodger (Chairman) Cllrs T.Bennett, T.Bray, S.Dobson, J.Elliott, T, Eyles, C.Freer G.Rainbird,
Dist.Cllr.V. Spikings and the Clerk. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting,

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr.V.Pratley, Dist.Cllr.D.Pope and C.Cllr.H. Humphrey.

2. Public Participation

None

3. Declaration of Interests

None at this stage.

4 Minutes of Last Meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th March, 2013 were confirmed by those present and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting

5. Matters Arising.

a. Village Infrastructure – The Clerk confirmed that following the last meeting she had written again to UK Power Networks and had received the following reply:

Dear Mrs Copeman, As discussed in our telephone conversation today, here is a summary of what UK Power Networks have been doing to try and improve the situation and what we have plans for in the future. The high voltage overhead line circuits that feed into the Welney area do not perform as well as we or you would want. This is due to a number of factors. Without wanting to seem to be blaming the problems on migrating wildfowl, it is nevertheless a fact that swans do cause a significant number of the faults that affect the supply in your area. In your reply you mentioned that few dead swans are seen, but this is because we notify the appropriate agencies who come and remove the carcasses – often whilst we are still on site working. We have tried various approaches to reduce the number of bird strikes (which cause the wires to clash together and trip the supply circuit breaker due to the very high current that flows when this occurs), such as the fitting of 'flight diverters' to the wires to make them more prominent and whilst they help, it has seemed to move the problem along to the next section, where they are not fitted. We have installed literally thousands, but they are not the solution. In places we have undergrounded the lines, but an underground cable network is not the best solution for a rural area either, as it can be difficult to lay cables in some places and cause other difficulties when we need to work on the network to carry out maintenance etc. To help speed up restoration of the supply when it does go off, we have installed a number of remote controlled switches. These enable the engineers in our main Control Centre to either restore supply by re-closing the main circuit breaker or by re-route supplies from adjacent areas, without the previous delays whilst waiting for staff to get to the area – which could be an hours drive or more away from where they are at the time of the fault. The latest of these switches was only commissioned two weeks ago. Some of the re-routing is carried out automatically within a minute or so of the fault. In the summer time, lightning often causes problems with the supply, and joints etc. damaged by previous faults can fail during lightning induced stress on the network. We do patrol the lines regularly – by foot in most cases, to try and spot things like this before they fail. We intend to start re-building sections of the lines with the latest type of insulated conductor. Looking not much different to the lines that are there now, this new material stops the faults that occur when lines clash together and has proven to be very effective where it was first developed in Scandinavian areas. I know that work is being done to put in place programmes of re-building with this material, and that the Welney area is one of the areas being looked at. I don't have a date at this moment in time, but I know we intend to start in parts of the UK Power Networks area in summer 2013. I will see if I can find out when the programme will start in the Welney area. I hope that on the phone and in this email, I have been able to assure you that UK Power Networks are very aware of the problems and that we are trying to do what we can as quickly as we can to improve matters and are not just waiting for complaints before we act. Please accept my apologies on behalf of UK Power Networks, for the all too brief a reply that was sent out last time, and for the supply interruptions the local residents have been experiencing. If I can be of any further help or clarify anything further, please contact me directly.

Yours faithfully, Stuart Clark UK Power Networks Lead Field Engineer Network Operations
Peterborough

After some discussion it was agreed to write again confirming that we do not consider the problems to be caused completely by the swans and birds as the supply is affected at all times of the day and night. Most of the swans have now left and in any case they do not fly after dark. It was agreed also to thank them for the information on what they are doing at present and request that they keep the Parish Council up to date with developments.

b. Parish Council Newsletter – There was a short discussion regarding the articles in the current Welney News and it was agreed that the Council would try to make sure that their Newsletter was delivered to every house as soon as possible. Councillors were requested to come up with headings and content and that items can be forwarded to the Clerk or brought along to the next meeting.

c. Catterick or Bust – Council were reminded that towards the end of last year we were approached by a group requiring accommodation for their tents on the playing field for the evening of Sunday 12th May as they were walking from Newmarket to Catterick to raise money for Help the Heroes charity. Council agreed that this would be in order and confirmation had now been received that they would be arriving midday with a support van and one car and the Clerk had agreed to meet them on site to show them where they can set up camp. It was agreed that the best possible spot would be along the line of trees just off the car park, and it was agreed to ask them if they would need any facilities i.e. toilets for their stay..

6. Finance

On the proposal of Cllr Rainbird, seconded by Cllr.Eyles and agreed, the following cheques were signed:

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| Mrs.P.Copeman – Clerks Expenses | 15 . 20 |
| Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk Yearly contribution to Health Centre Car park | 144 . 11 |
| Environment Agency – Rental for Parish Hall Site 1.4.13 to 31.3.14 | 178 . 00 |
| Norfolk Association of Local Councils Subscription 2013/14 | 121 . 39 |
| Norfolk Rural Community Council Membership 2013/14 | 20 . 00 |

An invoice had been received from the Borough Council regarding the emptying of the dog waste bins, but before this was approved for payment the Clerk was asked to confirm which period the invoice covered and also to advise that the dog bin situated near the Parish Hall had now been removed and we should only be charged for 3 bins for the current year. If all was in order, then the invoice would be approved for payment at the May meeting.

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| Paid by Direct Debit | |
| 1.4.13 Mrs.P.Copeman – Clerks Salary | 255 . 68 |
| 15.2.13 E-On – Electric for lights | 62 . 19 |

The Clerk confirmed that the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March would hopefully be ready for the AGM in May. The paperwork had only been received from Mazars two days before, and the completed forms having been internally audited and confirmed by the Parish Council have to be returned to Mazars by 5th July, 2013.

7. Parish Hall

The electricity meters had been checked before the meeting and a total of £21 was removed.

8 Proposed New Community Centre

Cllr.Eyles gave a brief description with photographs of the new building which had been erected on the Playing Field at Upwell, which some councillors visited on 30th March. There was then a lengthy discussion regarding this building and whether something of similar construction might be suitable for Welney. It was suggested that consideration may have to be given to scaling back the proposed building to something the village can afford and needs.

It was agreed that we ask Mrs. Ros Shorting who kindly showed us around, whether she would be prepared to come and talk to the Parish Council about the costings and grants and funding she had

managed to achieve, and to see if she could come at 6.45/7p.m. on Tuesday 7th May, 2013 before the AGM. It was also agreed that as soon as a date was confirmed the Clerk would let all Councillors know as well as Mrs. Barr, Mrs. Wood and Mr. Fleming who had been involved in the previous meeting. It was also agreed to contact English Brothers to ask for a quotation for a timber framed building on the lines of the plans which we have already had approved.

The Clerk confirmed that she had written to Marshall's Charity regarding the Contributing Third Party for WREN funding, and had received a reply. However, the Trustees next meeting is not until 19th April. She had also asked Salmon Brothers for a price for fittings etc.

Fund Raising Events – Cllr.Pratley had now booked the Hall for a fund raising event on 23rd May and Cllr. Elliott would be holding her Treasure Hunt for Dog walkers and Horse Riders on Sunday 29th September on the Playing Field.

The Clerk also reported having received 3 sets of tickets from Delta Force Paintball who have a site at Squires Drove at Three Holes. The company have a charity section which gives local organisations tickets for fund raising and they can either be sold, or used as a prize in a raffle or auction. Either set of 10 tickets is worth £59.99.

9. Playing Field

Cllr.Bennett confirmed that he had spoken to Mrs. Thompson regarding the trees on Mr. Carter's boundary and she had confirmed that 8 trees were planted by her Father to fill in a gap in the fence in 1976. The Chairman and Vice Chairman agreed to meet on site and inspect the problem trees and see if the work to the trees is something that could be done in house.

10. Correspondence

1. 31st Monthly report from Elizabeth Truss MP – The first line of the report reads: *Elizabeth has supported local councillors who have secured dot matrix signs that give real-time updates on the flooding of the Welney Causeway.*
2. tchc and BCKLWN – Details of a business start up support programme which is running in the local area with brochures for display.
3. Creative Arts – Promoters Showcase Event – The Carnegie Room, Cage Lane, Thetford Sunday 31st March
- 4,BCKLWN – 9 Chalk Rivers Project – Details of £1.9 million of Environment Agency funding that has been secured through collaborative working between the Norfolk Rivers Trust, NCC, Gaywood Valley Project and the Norfolk Coast Partnership to restore the natural functioning of the rivers, improve water quality, improve habitats for a variety of species, sustain food production and minimise flood risk and support communities by enabling them to help shape the future of their rivers.
5. Norfolk Citizens Advice Bureau, Norwich – 13.3.13 Requesting donations to continue their work
6. BCKLWN – Details and notice for display regarding County Council Elections on 2nd May
7. NALC – 22nd March – Weekly Update for Association Members.

11. Plans and Planning Matters

Following the last meeting the Clerk confirmed that she had returned the forms relating to the planning application No. 13/00237/F Laburnum House, March Road, Tipps End, recommending approval from the Parish Council.

12 Highway Matters

The Clerk confirmed that a separate Report of the meeting held on Friday 22nd March, 2013 with the MP and MEP in attendance had been prepared and forwarded to all parties who attended, and also to C.Cllr.H.Humphrey who had sent his apologies. Cllr.Bennett reported that after the meeting he had a discussion with Mr.Wallace and Mr.Rands of NCC Highways and they had confirmed that the trigger levels for the Wash Road will not be changed, and the matter was not up for discussion. It was also reported to the meeting that several of the road closed signs were still open even though there had been no water on the road for several days. Many of the signs in the Cambridgeshire area were also left open as well. It was agreed to write to the MP and the MEP confirming that we had been let down by Highways once again because the signs had not been closed as soon as the road was clear. There was then a discussion regarding the funding aspect for future work on the road which was discussed at the meeting on 22nd March and it was agreed to write to both the MP and the MEP thanking them for attending the meeting, and asking them to keep us informed of developments regarding any funding pots for future proposals, so that the matter is not put on the back burner again and forgotten.

Following the meeting on 22nd the Clerk had received a telephone call from Mr.Andy Wallace of Highways advising that he is making arrangements for a meeting to discuss the signs and what is required and was hopeful that this will take place during week commencing 15th April.

Confirmation has been received that the Community Rangers would be visiting Welney during the week commencing 15th April to carry out highway work identified through inspections and reported by the Parish.

The following outstanding Highway matters were reported to them and Martin Edmunds called with the following information:

1. Problem with the surface of the A.1101 opposite Bells Drove, Suspension Bridge – **Work completed**
2. Dangerous dip in the road outside Briard Lodge, March Road – **Programmed to be dealt with as soon as possible..**
3. Road surface in Main Street is now in a really bad condition and in urgent need of some attention – cracks, potholes, uneven surface etc. **He would be speaking to Andy Wallace to find out exactly when this is programmed and try and bring it forward.**
4. Gratings and drain covers on Wisbech Road/Main Street are now standing proud and causing problems **This comes under the same heading as No.3 and would be dealt with at the same time**
5. Hedges at Tipps End. Some of the hedges have been trimmed but others are badly overgrown and large vehicles are having problems negotiating the bends. **He is going to obtain a quotation to take out the hedges completely hopefully during the 2013/14 budget.**
6. Dangerous dip in the road near Flights End, Hundred Foot Bank – **Dealt with.**
- 7 Potholes at the entrance to Chestnut Avenue. These have now increased in number as there are some nasty holes further down Chestnut Avenue **Done**
8. Pothole on the Rutland Arms corner, Wisbech Road. Tipps End **Programmed to be done asap**
9. Diamond Farm, Wisbech Road, Tipps End – Drain is blocked and needs jetting to allow the water to get away instead of flooding. **Was not sure of the location – contacting Ken for more information as I could not enlighten him any further.**
10. Bad rut on the verge between Elder Farm and Isle Farm, Tipps End where a large lorry went off the road. **Programmed to be done as soon as possible**

The question of the possibility of having notices stating that Back Drove was unsuitable for vehicles had also been made but at the time of writing no comment had been received.

Two further points were raised for Highways attention: Pothole at Bells Drove (near 4th Beech Tree) and the footpath curb between the Parish Hall and the Lamb and Flag is broken away and dangerous

13. Environmental Matters

1. Hundred Foot Bank – Concrete Access Road

Cllr. Elliott reported that the Council had now installed two extra bins for the use of the properties and these were being emptied every week.

2. Parking Area at the Side of the Parish Hall.

Nothing further had been heard and it was agreed to ask for an update as soon as possible.

14. Items for Next Agenda

1. What impact the empty Houses in Chestnut Avenue will have on the Village School.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Signed ...K.Goodger..... (Chairman) Dated ...7th May, 2013.....