

Minutes of the Meeting of the Welney Parish Council **held at The Parish Hall, Welney on Tuesday 3rd September, 2013**

Present

Cllr.K.Goodger (Chairman) Cllrs J. Barr, T.Bennett, T.Bray, S.Dobson, C.Freer, V.Pratley, G.Rainbird, Dist.Cllrs.V.Spikings and D.Pope, Mr.J.Loveday and the Clerk.

Empty Houses in Chestnut Avenue. Councillors met at 7 p.m. when Mr.Robert Clarke and Mr.Andy Edmunds of Freebridge Community Housing attended to talk about the renovation work being carried out on the Houses in Chestnut Avenue.

The Chairman introduced both gentlemen and thanked them for attending. Mr.Clarke confirmed the details of the work they would be carrying out – new kitchens, bathrooms, heating, electrical and plumbing, new roofs with the addition of solar panels, and new rendering to the exterior. He confirmed that the work had commenced on the first block of houses and it was hoped that these would be ready to advertise for re-occupation in January/February 2014. It was hoped that the whole programme of work would be completed by October, 2014. He confirmed that where-ever possible it was hoped to let the houses to local people with families, but the new tenancy agreements would not be a secure tenancy, but would be for a probationary one year period, and the tenancies would be reviewed on a regular basis. If a family moved into one of the houses, with children, and the children subsequently grew and left home, then the tenants would be required to move to a smaller property within the Freebridge Area, so that best use could be made of these three bedroom houses for families. Part of the delay in starting the project was because of the nesting house martins and the fact that evidence of bats had been found. Mr.Clarke also confirmed that as the houses were being rebuilt Freebridge were required to install bat boxes in the appropriate places and also nesting boxes for the birds. The question of numbers of children attending the village school was also discussed, and it was confirmed that there were 27 on the role last year, but this year there were only 18 children. Cllr.Dobson confirmed that numbers were down by 4 children because of the empty houses, and everyone hope that numbers would increase again once the work was completed and the houses were re-let. After answering questions from Councillors, the Chairman thanked them very much for attending.

Proposed New Community Centre – At 7.30 p.m the Chairman introduced Mr.Chris Neill of Martin Reynolds Construction. Mr.Neill had been requested to speak to the Council regarding the proposed modular design for the new Community Centre and he brought along plans based on the original approved plans which he had drawn up for consideration. The Clerk confirmed that she had copies of the plans and was requested to forward a copy to all councillors so that they could consider it in their own time. Councillors asked Mr.Neill several questions and he confirmed that the building had a 60 year design life and the roof covering had a guarantee of between 20-25 years. Although the building was modular timber construction the exterior was covered in Plastosol Steel which offered a choice of colours for the final finish. He did confirm that the cost of the building as shown on the plans would be in the region of £150,000 but a final figure would be prepared in due course when all requirements were known and agreed. After a brief discussion and answering a few further questions from Councillors – i.e. Would it be possible to include the Clock Tower to give the building a little character? - Mr. Neill was thanked for his attendance and advised that Council would be in touch again very shortly.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from the Police Community Support Officer and also from C.Cllr.H. Humphrey.

2. Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council.

An e-mail had been received dated 28th August from Joe Elliott confirming her resignation from the Parish Council. The Clerk confirmed that she would advise the Borough Council in the normal way and that no doubt in due course the Council would be required to fill the Casual Vacancy by co-option. It would also be advertised in the next issue of the Welney News. Other points, with reference to the local school, were mentioned by Mrs.Elliott in her e-mail, but the meeting was advised that the points she had raised had all been dealt with.

3. Public Participation

The Chairman then closed the meeting for Public Participation. Cllr.Pope and Spikings both addressed the meeting regarding items on the Agenda. Mr. J. Loveday also asked if there had been any talk of the Village School closing. The meeting was advised that whilst there is funding for the current year, nothing further is known at present regarding the future. The Chairman then reconvened the meeting.

4. Declaration of Interests

None at this stage.

5. Minutes of the Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th August, 2013, having been circulated to all councillors were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting, following the addition of the following sentence under Section 6 c Future of the Allotment Field ... Cllr.Bennett asked to explore the possibility of further usage for the allotment field....

6. Matters Arising

a. Parish Council News – The meeting were advised that Cllrs.Dobson and Bennett attended the meeting held at Cllr.Bray's House on 20th August with regard to the Parish Council News. A great deal of information had been collated and this was in the process of being put together. The Clerk confirmed that she would send details of the current councillors to Cllr.Bray, and in due course a draft would be sent round to all Councillors for their consideration. Grateful thanks were extended to those councillors who were working on the project.

b. Low Water Pressure in and around Welney - Following the last meeting the Clerk had written again to Anglian Water regarding the problems being experienced and the information which was being given out regarding Headings Farmers and the water pipe which crosses their land. A gentleman from Anglian Water's office in King's Lynn telephoned and promised to put his info into an e-mail but at the time of writing this has not been received. He confirmed that the water pipe which crosses Headings land is a very shallow one and they are fully aware of the problems caused when they do work on the land. Apparently they have been in touch with Anglian Water to get an idea of the cost to put the pipe much deeper so that the problem is eradicated. At present they have been given an idea of the cost no final agreement has been reached regarding the actual cost and the carrying out of the work. Anglian Water are aware of the problems this causes to Welney and are trying to get this issue solved so that at least this will not be a future cause of low water pressure. Councillors agreed that the pressure had been improved lately, but the situation would be monitored and reported as necessary.

c. Future of the Allotment Field on Sandgate Corner. - Contact had been made with the Borough Council and it was agreed that the field could be returned to them at the end of the five year term - 31st May, 2014 which was when the first rental review was listed in the original tenancy agreement. If a letter is sent 6 months before the date confirming Council's intention to give up the field then this will be acceptable. It was agreed to contact them again to see what plans if any the Borough Council have for the future of the field, and also to include mention in the Newsletter to see if there are any ideas from the Community as to what the field could be used for if the Parish were to retain the land and funding could be obtained.

d. Delta Pilots Fund Raising Concert - 14th December, 2013 - Final arrangements were then confirmed for the Concert so that an advertisement can be included in the next Welney News. It was agreed that the tickets would be £10.00 each, there would be a raffle (any prizes gratefully received) bring your own drink, and light refreshments will be supplied. The evening will commence at 7.30 p.m. It was hoped that the evening would be another huge success and enjoyed by everyone.

e. Fund Raising Treasure Hunt originally planned for 29th September – It was agreed that this event should be postponed, as originally advertised, and as the Cricket Club had requested to use the field for an additional cricket match on that day, confirmation would be sent to them that this would be in order.

7. Finance

a. Approval of Accounts for Payment

On the Proposal of Cllr.Bray, seconded by Cllr.Rainbird and agreed, the following cheques were signed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman:

Westcotec – Lighting Maintenance – July and August	115 . 76
Mrs.P.Copeman – Clerks Expenses	22 . 35
Fenland Fire Appliance – Service of Extinguishers at Pavilion	30 . 66
Angian Water – Water to Parish Hall 21.5.13 to 6.8.13	83 . 46
Mazars – Audit Fee 2012/13	120 . 00

Paid by Direct Debit:

Mrs.P.Copeman – Clerks Salary 1.9.13	255 . 68
E-On Electric for Lights 11.9.13	62 . 19
E-On Electric for Parish Hall 10.9.13	82 . 48

b. Parish Council Insurance

Following the last meeting the Clerk spoke again to game and Company who deal with the Aviva Policy for the Parish Council. It was confirmed that the wording in their e-mail dated 8th June as previously advised to the Parish Council was as clear as they can possibly make it. After further length discussion it was proposed by Cllr.Dobson, seconded by Cllr.Bennett and agreed that the Parish Council are aware that they are underinsured but that we leave everything relating to the Insurance as it is for the time being.

8. Empty Houses in Chestnut Avenue.

This item is covered by the information provided from Mr.Clarke and Mr.Edmunds at their visit at the start of the meeting.

9. Parish Hall

The electricity meters were checked before the meeting at the sum of £3.00 was removed.

10. Proposed New Community Centre

The Clerk confirmed that she had made contact with Mrs.Francis Wood regarding an application for funding to the Big Lottery, but this was on hold for the present in view of the possible change of construction and the need for a new Planning Application.

A further letter had been sent to Elgood and Sons setting out the situation and advising her of the current state of the village development area, but nothing had been heard at the date of the meeting.

Nothing further had been heard from English Brothers regarding the plans they had provided and our request for them to come and talk to the Parish Council. Thanks had been extended to them.

There was then a lengthy discussion regarding the modular building plans provided by Chris Neill of MRC, and the information he had provided when he addressed the council at the start of the meeting. Council agreed that the plans were more than suitable for our requirements and it was proposed by Cllr.Bennett, seconded by Cllr.Bray and unanimously agreed that we should proceed along the lines of the plans provided for a modular building on site and to also look into the possibility of siting the building on the original site in the top left hand corner. The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken to the planning office who confirmed that a new planning application would be required and the forms for this can be downloaded from their website. However before any decision is made and forms are completed, the Clerk was requested to look up the details for the refusal of the original application and present this to the next meeting. The matter would then be discussed in detail and a final decision made.

The Clerk also confirmed that she had passed the request from the Cricket Club onto Marshall's Charity and asked if they would consider the application for funding for an artificial wicket. Nothing further had been heard.

11. Playing Field.

The meeting was advised that there was nothing further to report at this stage regarding Mr. Carter and the trees on the playing field boundary, but that the matter was in hand. The meeting was also advised that the Cricket Club have put a different Fridge/Freezer in the pavilion because the old one no longer worked, but it will be necessary to remove the old one. It was agreed that this would be attended to as soon as possible and Cllr. Bennett stated that he would be able to assist. Cllr. Freer also confirmed that she would assist with the moving of tables from the Pavilion back to the Parish Hall, as these would be required for future lettings at the Hall.

12. Correspondence.

1. E-mail from Graham Biggs Chief Executive of The Rural Services Network. The Rural Share Petition. The Rural Services Network is a membership organisation devoted to safeguarding and improving services in rural communities. Petition attached for signature by Councillors if in agreement, and return by 30th September.
2. NCC 6.8.13 Advance Notice of forthcoming consultation by NCC on the 2014/15 Budget and savings proposals for 2014/17 Consultation starts on 19.9.13 and lasts 12 weeks.
3. e-mail from Greg Murphy – Environment Agency 23.8.13 Ouse Washes E.A. Planned maintenance briefing. Details of all works planned from August 2013 through the Autumn with a plan showing affected areas.
4. NCC Details of charges for Highway Boundary data.
5. Norfolk Association of Local Councils – Copy of Norfolk Link and various leaflets.

13. Plans and Planning Matters including LDF

Confirmation has been received from Mr. Alan Gomm at the Borough Council that he will be attending the Parish Council meeting on 1st October, 2013 to talk to Council about the LDF

A copy of the CD of the Detailed Policies and Sites Plan Preferred Options Consultation from the Borough Council had also been received

Residential Caravan – Flights End, Hundred Foot Bank – This matter had been reported to the Borough Council and confirmation had been received from the Enforcement Team that they are investigating the report and will keep us informed of developments.

Following receipt at the last meeting, of the e-mail from Mr. & Mrs. Haycock and their negotiations with the Enforcement Team at the Borough Council the Clerk duly replied confirming that this was not something that the Parish Council could become involved with. Regarding planning matters the Parish Council were only asked by the Borough Council to give their observations on actual Planning Applications.

The following planning application was received from the Borough Council and considered Ref No. 13/01183/F

Mr. R. Giles – Demolition and reconstruction of front addition on new foundations at Bramley House, Back Drove, Welney, Wisbech, Cambs.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the application be recommended for approval.

14. Highway Matters including Wash Road.

The meeting was advised that the problem of overgrown trees at Tipps End was being attended to by the relevant owners but the Chairman requested that Highways be advised that the hedge around the Rutland House Corner needs trimming back. Martin Edmunds from Highways had previously advised that hedges should be cut back to 1 metre and this hedge is considerably more.

The following information had been passed to Highways for attention – request to check on the barrier at Suspension Bridge and a pothole needing attention on the north side of Hurnside. The flood gate on the Delph Bridge had at long last been repaired and replaced. Two items were also raised for the attention of Highways – 1. Large Dip in the road surface near Briard Lodge, March Road, and 2. A large dip in the road surface where the new tarmac is when leaving Suspension Bridge.

Confirmation had been received from Highways that the Highway Rangers would be visiting the village week commencing the 14th October and would try and attend to any items raised.

Footpaths – Cllr.Bennett confirmed that he had contacted Mr.Andy Wallace of Highways and whilst the Sandgate Corner footpath had been cut twice this year, it was possible that it would only be cut once next year and there was also the possibility of all roadside verges being cut only once next year

Dot Matrix Signs – Nothing further had been heard regarding the new signs. The Clerk confirmed that she had passed Westcotect's number to Dave Gillett of the Environment Agency so that they could make contact and sort out the software needed to keep the signs up to date once they were installed.

A reply had been sent to Mr.Fox of Fish Tales, New Road, Welney regarding his enquiries about the speeding traffic and the possibility of hanging baskets along Main Street. He was grateful for the information given and hopes that sometime he will be able to attend a Parish Council meeting in person.

15. Environmental Matters

1. Fishing Debris on the Delph Banks – Nothing had been heard from Mr.S.Booth or the Environment Agency and it was agreed to write to them again.
2. Problems with Motorcycles – The matter had been passed to PCSO Bortz and request that she contact Cllr.Bennett who was aware of the details. Cllr.Bennett confirmed that he would be speaking to the person who originally raised the problem and would then liaise with PCSO Bortz.
3. Ragwort on the River Banks – This problem has now been dealt with.
4. Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership Meeting – Cllr.Bennett confirmed that he was hoping to attend the meeting on 8th September and would make a report to Council at the next meeting.
5. Parish Councillors Training - Cllr.Barr raised the question of training, and it was agreed to contact Sue Lake at County Office to see if there was any training being arranged locally that one or possibly two new councillors from Welney could join in with.

16. Items for Next Agenda

None.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

SignedK.Goodger.....(Chairman)

Dated1st October, 2013.....