

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

Present

Cllr.K.Goodger (Chairman) Cllrs J. Barr, T.Bennett, T.Bray, S.Dobson,C.Freer, V.Pratley, and the Clerk.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. N.Fleming, Cllr.G.Rainbird, , Dist.Cllrs.V.Spikings and D.Pope, C.Cllr.H.Humphrey and PCSO Claire Law.

2. Declaration of Interests.

None at this stage. The question of declaration of interests was raised and a brief explanation was given. The Clerk confirmed that she would supply everyone with a copy of the leaflet explaining Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

3. To Adjourn the meeting for Public Participation

None.

4. Minutes of the Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th November, 2013, having been circulated to all councillors were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting, following an amendment from acting head to assistant head in section 6 (c) and an addition stating that the hedge may be replaced by the adjacent owners... in section 13 - 1st Chapter.

5 Matters Arising

a. Parish Council News – Cllr. Bennett confirmed that he was intending to work on the News over the Christmas period and would give an update of progress at the next meeting.

b. Future of the Allotment Field on Sandgate Corner. - Following advice from the Borough the Parish Council were advised that the current lease can continue for the original 10 year period at the rental of £250.00 per annum. The Borough Council have no immediate plans for the field but it was confirmed that the original heads of terms would still apply. In 2005 the Borough Council had confirmed that they would be looking for a price in their region of £25,000 per acre for the 2.7 acres of land. This area has been slightly reduced by the building of the sewage pumping station. However it was felt that the current valuation of the land would certainly not be less than this amount. Consideration would be given to community use that served the needs of the local community – i.e. Building of a new community centre, but considerable concern would still be raised with regard to access on the bad corner. The only viable means of access would be via Chestnut Avenue. Following a brief discussion it was agreed to leave the matter open until after Christmas and then make a decision as to whether the Parish Council keep the field on after the five year term or not.

c. William Marshall School – Following the last meeting the Clerk had contacted the Norfolk Association of Local Councils for advice on any remit the P.C. might have with regard to the School. The following advice was received: *It is always very difficult the relationship between the Parish Council and the School. There is no legal tie but it is obviously a big aspect of the village and the Parish Council cannot reasonably ignore it. The trick here is to make sure that no one is offended which could lead to even greater problems further down the line.*

Turning to your questions I will deal with the easiest one first. The viability of the school is certainly

of interest to the Parish Council. Not only is this vital for parents of school and pre-school children it also has an impact on the sustainability of the village – and the value of property. (A family home in a village with a school is worth more than a family home in a village without a school) This is certainly something the PC should be aware of.

With regard to the way in which the school is run or concerns expressed, this is, as I am sure you understand, more difficult. The last thing the PC wants to do is be seen as siding either with the school or with those with concerns. I would almost certainly guess that there are others who are more than happy with the school and the PC does not want to get caught in the crossfire. I think honesty is the answer here. I think it would be best for the Chairman to visit the head teacher explain that people have raised concerns and that despite his efforts at a previous meeting to dismiss it, that it will not go away.

*I then think the PC should place the matter on its agenda with an open forum session and let both sides know this is what is going to happen. It may be that those with concerns feel restrained if the head teacher is there but if that is the case their concerns cannot be that great. Before the discussion begins the Chairman needs to set the ground rules and reiterate the PC role (i.e. they do not have one!) The ground rules should in many ways be similar to your standing order – length of time for people to speak, frequency, being civil etc.) There is obviously problems in the village around the school and the PC can in this way act as an honest broker between the two sides. Hope this helps
Sue.*

Clb.Dobson (Chairman of the School Governors) advised the meeting that a public meeting cannot always be appropriate as performance and behaviour of individual children is strictly confidential and is of no interest to anyone else. It has also to be carefully checked that the individuals have spoken to the school and all procedures for complaints etc. have been correctly followed. She went on to confirm that the Assistant Head Teacher would very much like to attend the next meeting in January, to talk briefly about the way in which the Parish Council can support the school and it was unanimously agreed that she could attend and talk under the Public Participation section. Finally she advised the meeting that she is appointed as a Local Authority Governor and Cllr.Freer is a parent Governor on the Governing body of the William Marshall School.

d. Village Litter Pick - There was a short discussion regarding this matter and Cllr.Bennett agreed to speak to Mr.Levesley who had arranged a litter pick in the past. Councillor Barr also confirmed that she would be interested in helping. If sufficient volunteers could be found then the Litter Pick pack can be obtained from the Borough Council.

e. Final Arrangements for the Delta Pilots Concert - 14th December, 2014. - The Clerk had provided councillors with details of ticket sales to date and a breakdown of the total fundraising so far which stands at £1,485.00. Following a brief discussion it was agreed to attend the hall to decorate and make ready for the evening event from 2 p.m. onwards. Offers of raffle prizes were gratefully accepted. Cllr.Barr agreed to make Sausage rolls, the Clerk would make mince pies, The Chairman would prepare sausages on sticks and a glass of mulled wine for everyone on entering and there would be crisps and nuts etc on the tables as nibbles.

6. Finance

a. Approval of Accounts for Payment

On the proposal of Cllr Bennett, seconded by Cllr.Bray and agreed, the invoice for the subscription to Norfolk Association of Village Halls was withdrawn and it was agreed that we would not be joining that organisation. On the proposition of Cllr.Dobson, seconded by Cllr.Freer and agreed, the following cheques were signed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman:

Anglian Water – Welney Pavilion 7.8.13 to 8.11.13	23 . 31
D.A. Pest Control – Moles on Playing Field.	60 . 00
Anglian Water – Welney Parish Hall 7.8.13 to 8.11.13	34 . 71
Paid by Direct Debit:	
Mrs.P.Copeman – Clerks Salary 1.12.13	255 . 68
E-On Electric for Lights 11.12.13	62 . 19
26.11.13 E-On electricity for Pavilion	48 . 66
11.12.13 E-On Electricity for Parish Hall	112 . 04

Councillors were also advised that at the next meeting in January they will have to decide and set the precept from the Borough Council for the year 2014/15. All relevant paperwork will be sent in good time for consideration prior to the meeting. The Clerk had also received the usual request from the Church for the Annual Grant towards the upkeep of the Churchyard and this will also be considered at the next meeting. Cllr. Dobson asked if the Parish Council were able to make grants to the School as she explained that they were hoping to take the children to London by Train and were looking to raise funds to help with the trip. Advice on this would be sought from County Office.

7. Parish Hall

The electricity meters were checked before the meeting and the sum of £24.00 was removed.

The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken to Mr.Stittle the plumber and he will be replacing the stop tap in the kitchen as soon as possible.

8. Proposed New Community Centre.

Following the last meeting, the Clerk confirmed the following information:

- a. Possible refurbishment of the Parish Hall and Pavilion (Item 2 from the Minutes) – A detailed e-mail had been received from Mr..Neill at MRC recommending that neither buildings were suitable for refurbishment as they were too old and would need considerable expenditure. He did give approximate costings for a replacement hall on the site of the existing Parish Hall (Approximately £100,000) and a smaller building at the Playing Field to accommodate toilets, showers and small kitchen area.(Between £30,000 and £50,000)
- b. Contact Environment Agency regarding renewal of the lease and possible purchase of the site. No information was forthcoming as yet, but an acknowledgement had been received and details would be forwarded as soon as possible.
- c. To make enquiries with regard to the disconnection and reconnection of services at the playing field should it be agreed to build one modular community centre on the site. Anglian Water had replied stating that there would be no costs to the Parish Council for this because the Anglian Water side of the supply would not be altered. The existing supply can be maintained and just connected to the new building when it is built. No reply had been received from E-On or UKPowerNetworks but this was expected shortly.

There was then once again considerable discussion particularly with regard to whether Council should consider one building or two and Cllr.Bray suggested that we should obtain full costings for two buildings so that an informed decision can be made. Cllr.Bennett suggested that we should have a meeting with the user groups to see what they require and then formulate a proper business plan. Cllr.Goodger proposed that we build one facility that we can afford and that will be suitable for the village, on the playing field. This was seconded by Cllr.Dobson and carried with 2 votes for and 5 abstentions. It was agreed to try and have all costings available at the January meeting.

9 Playing Field.

Mr.Loveday had been thanked most sincerely for his offer of the goal and he had advised that he would be making arrangements for it to be installed in a suitable position. A letter had been received from Country Grounds Maintenance introducing themselves in case we require any work done at the playing field.

was Cllr.Bennett confirmed that he had spoken to Mr. Carter at The Sands regarding the trees, and he confident that he is aware of the situation. Mr.Carter had advised that he would be giving the Parish Council until the end of the year to carry out the work otherwise he would arrange for them to be removed and send the Council the bill.

10. Correspondence.

1. Elizabeth Truss MP - 38th Monthly report
2. Norfolk Age UK asking for donations to help with their work
3. Downham Market Safer Neighbourhood – dates of meetings for 2014 and notes/actions from meeting held on 6th November.
4. Norfolk Association of Village Halls – Newsletter 2013
5. Elizabeth Truss MP Details of Government funding for Community Projects – ie.new playgrounds renovating empty homes or making plots available for house building
6. Environment Agency – Ouse Washes Flood Storage Reservoir Leaflet – copies handed to councillors
7. NCC Planning Services – Introduction of charges for pre application advice.

11. Plans and Planning Matters including LDF

The following planning permissions both dated 14th November had been received 13/01325/F and 13/01327/F – Pisces Country Park – Removal of conditions 2 & 4 of consent 2/99/1034/CU and variation of condition2 on planning application 2/78/0572/F – as recommended for approval at the last meeting.

Cllr. Bennett advised the meeting that he had been informed of a residential caravan which had been placed at the rear of Brampton Villages/Wigston Villas, Wisbech Road, Welney. No planning applications had been received and it was agreed to look into this further.

12. Highway Matters/Wash Road.

Dot Matrix Signs – Andy Wallace of Highways confirmed by e-mail dated 18th November, as follows *I am aware that the Cambs Highways have ordered three dot matrix signs. The idea is that they are erected at the same time as ours (order is definitely raised and they are in manufacture) Of course they will be using our monitoring equipment and therefore they would not be operational until our work is in place. I will let you know a definite date as soon as possible.*

The following items were confirmed

Welney Wash Closed Sign on Suspension Bridge has been damaged – repairs in hand.

The bend warning sign at the end of the Bridge is lying on the grass – repairs in hand

Pothole outside Bridge Farmhouse badly in need of attention. - Nothing has been done and the matter will be reported to Highways again.,

The pollarding of the willow trees was nothing to do with Highways. The work was carried out by Country Grounds Maintenance on behalf of the Environment Agency.

A letter had been received confirming that the Highway Rangers will be visiting the village week commencing 13.1.14 and anything requiring their attention must be sent by e-mail to them prior to their visit.

13. Environmental Matters

None

14 Items for Next Agenda

1. Problems with illegal shooting on the Washes. Cllr.Bennett confirmed that he would speak to the WWT representative and ask if there is anything the Parish Council can do to support any action the WWT may take.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

SignedK.Goodger.....(Chairman)

Dated7th January, 2014.....