

**Minutes of the Meeting of Welney Parish Council**  
**held at The Parish Hall, Welney on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 at 7.30 p.m.**

Present: Cllr.K.Goodger (Chairman), Cllrs. L.Bombata, S.Dobson, J.Elliott, R.Gilbert, V.Pratley, G.Rainbird and the Clerk, together with Dist.Cllr.D.Pope and approximately 14 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Received from Dist.Cllr.V.Spikings and PCSO Esther Bortz

**2. Declaration of Interests**

None at this stage.

**3. Public Participation**

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public participation.

No information had been received regarding Croft House – update would be requested.

Mr.Paul Fox gave an update on R.U.G. He confirmed that the group had now registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission and that they had made a start on clearing an area of Sandgate Corner Field on Easter Monday, He confirmed that they were working on a 12 month project to see what could be achieved and that they certainly do not wish to double up with any facilities that are being considered for the Playing Field. He was requested to let the Clerk have a copy of any information and details of proposals including fund raising sources. He confirmed also that he had prepared a sign for the Playing Field, asking that people who use the field must clear up after their pets. This would be installed as soon as possible.

Thanks extended for the information.

**4. To confirm the report of the Annual Parish Meeting**

Copy of the minutes circulated to all councillors. All in favour. Signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

**5. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

Copy of the minutes circulated to all councillors. All in favour. Signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

**6. Matters Arising**

a. Parish Council Website – Following last meeting, it was agreed to prepare a simple agreement for signature by Cllr.Bombata and the Parish Council regarding ownership and management of the website. All Councillors had received copy. General discussion, Agreed to leave until next meeting and in meantime legal advice would be taken by P.C. from County Office.

b. Parish Council Newsletter – Further newsletter will be available in due course.

c. Houses in Chestnut Avenue – Letter from Freebridge Community Housing confirming that they are working on Nos.9 and 10 and when they are finished the tenants (who are currently living in 11 and 12) will move back. Also intending to complete Nos.21 and 22 which will then leave 4 houses to relet. Arrangements are in hand to disconnect the services to Nos.13,14,15 and 16 before removing the houses and having the gardens tidied. After discussion agreed that council should write to Adrian Lawrence at the Borough Council expressing our grave concern about the houses being taken down and asking for assistance. Clerk to circulate letter to councillors before sending.

**7. Finance**

The following invoices were received and on the proposition of Cllr.Rainbird, seconded by Cllr.Gilbert with all in favour, the cheques were signed

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Annual Contribution to Health Centre Car Park	150 . 00
Norfolk Association of Local Councils - Annual Subscription	123 . 73
Westcotec - Lighting Maintenance – March and April	115 . 76
Norfolk Rural Community Council -Annual Subscription	20 . 00

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk	
Emptying Dog Bins 1.4.14 to 28.2.15	288 . 00
Norfolk Playing Fields – Annual Subscription	20 . 00
G.D.Green – Work to Broken Door and Steps at Parish Hall	374 . 18
Geoff Beel – Flood Risk Assessment for Planning Application	180 . 00
Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk – Emptying Waste Bin	96 . 50
Paid by Direct Debit :	
Clerks Salary 1.4.15	255 . 68
E-On – Electric for Lights	60 . 19

It was also confirmed that on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 a cheque for the sum of £577.50 had been drawn and forwarded to the Borough Council as the planning application fee for the new Building on the Playing Field.

#### 8. William Marshall School

Cllr. Dobson (Chairman of the School Governors) read out a letter which had been sent to the staff, parents and carers dated 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The letter confirmed that a Formal Consultation Period of 6 weeks would commence on 13<sup>th</sup> April setting out all the conditions which must be met before the future of the School can be decided, PC would receive a copy of the Document which would also give details of a public meeting. The letter explained that a decision had been reached that the school was no longer able to offer a good enough standard of education and was no longer viable. Cllr.Dobson explained that everyone had been fighting for 3 years and more to keep the school open but it had now come to the point where it was possible that the school would be closed at the end of the Summer Term 2015. She explained that the Education Authority were looking at several other school closures in Norfolk and all schools with less than 50 pupils were at risk. She answered various questions from councillors and members of the public. It was agreed that as soon as the Consultation document was received the Clerk would circulate it to all councillors and then a decision could be made as to whether the PC call a special meeting. The Chairman confirmed that if asked, the PC would give all possible support in trying to keep the school open.

#### 9. Parish Hall

The electricity meters were emptied before the start of the meeting at the total sum of £22 was removed.

Following the last meeting, a letter was sent to the Environment Agency setting out questions raised with regard to a possible extension of the Lease. A reply was received by e-mail dated 2<sup>nd</sup> April and the Clerk read this to the meeting: *“Thank you for your enquiry – Yes, the Environment Agency will consider a review of our commitment with the Parish Council at the expiry of the current lease (March 2016). The Environment Agency will expect an annual rent in the region of £400 p.a. Unfortunately I will not be able to give you a value without an actual inspection of the property internally and externally. Alternatively you can appoint an independent valuer at your own cost.”* The reply was considered briefly and it was agreed to leave the matter until the next meeting.

A request had been received from R.U.G. To book the hall for various meetings and events and asking if the P.C. would waive the hire charges. Some councillors felt that any new community groups should be given use of the hall free for one or more events, but others felt this would set a precedent. The proposal was made by Cllr.Rainbird, seconded by Cllr.Gilbert that the fee should be waived for the R.U.G. Meetings. The vote was then taken with 3 for the proposal, three against and one abstention. Following further discussion, Mr.J.Loveday advised the meeting that he would pay the £8 hire fee for the event in question.

#### 10. Proposed new Hall/Pavilion

The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken to Geoff Beel regarding the Flood Risk Assessment for the Planning Application and he had agreed a fee of £150.00 plus VAT for this. It was understood that the planning application had been lodged with the Borough Council planning portal on 20<sup>th</sup> March. A report was received from the Action Team which was forwarded to all Councillors advising that there had been a delay in the planning because the Borough Council were querying the fee submitted with the application. However the Architect was hoping to agree with them that the fee of £577.50 which had been forwarded would be the final amount. The Action Team confirmed that contact had been made with Highways regarding clarification of the responsibility for the road at the top of Hurn Drove and this was awaited. Concerns were raised by the Action Team following advice that RUG

would be investigating possible sources of grant funding for the Sandgate Corner field about duplicate applications to the same funding body from the two organisations. It was agreed that contact would be maintained with RUG and the Action Team as to possible funding applications.

#### 11. Playing Field.

a. Dogs – A decision would be required as to how to approach the village with regard to a questionnaire as to whether or not dogs should be allowed on the playing field, and it was agreed to leave the wording and timing until after the 7<sup>th</sup> May when the new council is appointed.

b. Playing Field Charity Trustees - Councillors had been provided with a copy of the Report of the Meeting of the Trustees held at the Pavilion on 17<sup>th</sup> March – a copy of which is included in the Minute Book. An on-line form to the Charity Commission had been completed setting out the Trustees request and a reply had been received stating a response will be issued providing the enquiry falls within their regulatory remit. Nothing further had been heard and the Clerk was requested to contact them again.

c. Insurance - Following the last meeting, one Councillor raised the question with regard to the Insurance Cover – particularly public liability – if anyone were to be injured for any reason, and with particular reference to dog poo on the field. The Clerk contacted the insurance brokers who advised that the Playing Field should be included on the present Insurance policy so that should any claim arise it would be directed at the Parish Council rather than the Charity who of course have no insurance. There was no extra cost involved and a new Schedule and Employers Liability Certificate had been received and displayed. The brokers confirm that in the event of injury or damage arising despite these measures being taken and the injured party being able to prove that the Parish Council or the Playing Field Charity is legally liable, the policy which has been arranged will respond to a claim. After discussion it was agreed to go back to the Brokers and ask for clarification of the insurance cover regarding dogs using the field. It was agreed that an appropriate sign should be placed at the field as proposed by Mr. Paul Fox under public participation.

d. Clean up at the Playing Field – the Cricket Club had originally agreed to have a clean up at the field with help from whoever was available on 12<sup>th</sup> April, but in view of two bookings that weekend, this was postponed until a later date.

#### 12. Correspondence

1. A copy of the Spring edition of Signpost – Magazine of Norfolk Rural Community Council. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, NRCC will be merging with West Norfolk VCA and will become known as Community Action Norfolk.
2. Campaign to Protect Rural England – Copy of the Light Pollution Survey recently carried out and details of the Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> June at the University of East Anglia in Norwich
3. West Norfolk Village Games – Leaflets
4. E-mail from Paul Fox of RUG regarding Sandgate Corner Field with full update of the current situation given under public participation.

#### 13. Planning Matters

Nothing at the time of writing

#### 14. Highway Matters

Following the last meeting, Main Street was successfully resurfaced in much less time than they had originally planned for.

The work to the road near Flights End, Hundred Foot Bank had still not been carried out – contact Highways/

Also included in the e-mail from Paul Fox was a request for the Council to consider a feasibility study of the idea of installing three sets of wooden gates on the three roads entering Welney at the site of the existing 30 mph signs (with the correct permissions) The Angled wooden gates on the verges would like other villages that have installed these – add to a sense that motorists are entering a village that residents care about. It would improve the look of the Village. I believe that the outstanding feature of our village are the swan fields every winter when thousands of Whooper and Bewick swans take up residence and seek sanctuary at night at Wetlands Trust. Seeing them fly over our village every morning and evening is a highlight for many residents. I wonder if the WWT would consider

*helping to sponsor these gates, perhaps by providing signage to go on them with a large graphic of a swan in flight. Underneath could be written something like: Welney, Home of Swan Fields and the Wildfowl Wetlands Trust.* He did go on to say that he would be happy to make enquiries regarding costs etc to see if the Parish Council wished to take the matter further.

Contact was made with Andy Wallace at Highways and the following information was received:  
These gates are becoming increasingly popular across the area and have been successful in raising awareness of the speed limits. But the cost (which varies considerably) would be in the region of £600 (including installation) per pair. If you choose to go ahead with these we would need to agree that the locations are suitable and you would need to complete a "structure in the highway licence" which we would sign and a copy returned to you, The gates are available through the Parish Partnership Scheme which means you would receive 50% of the funding from ourselves. Unfortunately this year's scheme is fully subscribed but we are hopeful that there will be funding next year also. Regards Andy.

There was a brief discussion and Mr.Fox confirmed that he had information from a gentleman who might be prepared to pay for the gates., If this benefactor was prepared to pay half the cost and the other half could be obtained under the Parish Partnership Scheme, then it was agreed that Council would support the idea in practice provided that there would be no call on the Parish Council for any funding whatsoever., It was agreed that Mr.Fox would speak to his benefactor and any decision would be left to the New Parish Council.

Highways to be reminded of the footpath around Sandgate Corner.

15. Parish Council Standing Orders – Correspondence – Communication Policy

Councillors voted, following a debate, that they should adopt a Communications Policy. The vote was a tie – no casting vote was used. Agreed to leave the status quo.

16. Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership

Representative required from the Parish Council – leave in abeyance until next meeting.

17. Items for the next Agenda

None.

Finally Councillors were advised that Nominations for the Parish Council close on 9<sup>th</sup> April and a list of all candidates would be issued immediately after that date. If there are sufficient nominations to hold an election on 7<sup>th</sup> May, then the AGM and first meeting of the new council would be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May. (the Count is not taking place until 11<sup>th</sup> May so it would be impossible to call the meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> May.. If there are not sufficient nominations for an election and those who are nominated are returned unopposed, then the AGM and first meeting can go ahead on 12<sup>th</sup> May. The Clerk confirmed that she would advise everyone of the final date as soon as known.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.23 p.m.

Signed ....K. Goodger.....(Chairman)

Dated .....20<sup>th</sup> May, 2015.....