

Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Welney Parish Council
held on Wednesday 22nd April, 2015
at the Parish Hall, Welney at 7.30 p.m.

Present : Cllr.K.Goodger (Chairman) Cllrs.L.Bombata, R.Gilbert, V.Pratley, G.Rainbird, approximately 38 members of the public and the Clerk. A reporter from the Lynn News and Advertiser and Fenland Citizen also attended just prior to the start of the meeting.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs.S.Dobson. J.Elliott, and Dist.Cllrs.V.Spikings and D.Pope.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the reason for calling this meeting was because of the letters received from Children's Services at Norfolk County Council regarding the possible closure of the William Marshall Primary School. This meeting had been called to discuss how the Parish Council can help to support the newly formed Parents Action Team, to try and avoid the closure of the Village School. The meeting was advised that an Action Team have been formed and that they would be holding their first meeting on 23rd April.

The Chairman read out information supplied by Cllr.Dobson (Chair of the Governing Body) relating to the costings for the school – Staff Costs £150,000 per year, Normal Expenses (utilities, training, insurance and maintenance etc) £50,000 per year. This total sum is paid by Norfolk County Council who provide all the money to run the School.

Cllr. Gilbert confirmed that he had asked NCC to provide every household in the Parish with a copy of the letter and Consultation Document and this had been done. He had also communicated with Marshall's Charity (owners of the School building) who are keen to keep the building as a School and would support all efforts to do so. Everyone was encouraged to return the forms to NCC and also if appropriate to write letters. The Children were particularly encouraged to write.

There followed a lengthy discussion session with reference to how parents feel about their children having to move to another school, how the children feel about their school, how much does NCC need money wise, to keep the school open, how can savings be made? It was reported that of the current 24 children, most would have to transfer to Upwell, with one having to go to Ten Mile Bank – if at a future date Upwell should become full or overcrowded, what would happen to the children from Welney? It was unanimously agreed that these and many other questions will need answering.

It was then proposed by Cllr.Goodger, seconded by Cllr. Bombata and unanimously agreed that Welney Parish Council are in full support of the campaign to keep the William Marshall School open and will do their utmost to help in any way possible to achieve this.

It was also agreed that a letter should be sent to NCC Children's Services setting out the points raised and asking questions. The Clerk to prepare the letter and circulate to councillors for amendments or additions before sending it off at the earliest opportunity.

Following a further reminder of the Parents Action Meeting the following evening, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

SignedK.Goodger.....(Chairman)

Dated20th May, 2015.....