

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WELNEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**HELD IN THE PARISH HALL, WELNEY, ON TUESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2013 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present**

Cllr.K. Goodger (Chairman) Cllrs T.Bennett, T.Bray, S.Dobson, T. Eyles, G.Rainbird, V. Pratley, and the Clerk.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, wished them all a Happy New Year, and introduced Mrs.Jane Scarrott, Parish Liaison Officer for the Norfolk Association of Local Councils. Mrs.Scarrott briefly explained her role and answered questions from Councillors. .

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J.Elliott, Dist.Cllrs. V.Spikings, and 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 4th December, 2012 were confirmed by those present and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of that meeting.

**5. Matters Arising**

Nothing specific as all items are dealt with under separate headings on the Agenda

**6. Finance**

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

Parish Council

Westcotec – Street Light Maintenance –November and December 115 . 76

P.J.Brown & Sons – Repairs to Heater at Pavilion 40 . 80

Parish Hall

Fenland Fire Appliance LLP – Servicing Hall extinguishers 64 . 32

P.J.Brown & Sons – Install time lag switch to outside light at Hall 68 . 62

Paid by Direct Debit

1.1.13 Mrs.P.Copeman – Clerks Salary 255 . 68

15.12.12 E-On – Electric for lights 62 . 19

Annual Grants – The request for an annual grant from the St. Mary’s Parochial Church Council was considered by Councillors and on the proposition of Cllr.Eyles, seconded by Cllr.Bennett it was unanimously agreed that the donation should be £200 and a cheque was drawn and signed.

Annual Precept – The Clerk had provided each Councillor with interim accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December and a projection of income and expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> March so that consideration could be given to the precept for 2013/14 There was a great deal of discussion regarding the precept figure and Cllr.Bray confirmed that he would like to see a contingency amount in the accounts at the end of the current financial year, and in years to come. It was agreed that this figure would be decided upon, and a correct title given at the March meeting, so that it could be included in the accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. It was then proposed by Cllr.Eyles, seconded by Cllr.Bennett with all in favour that we should precept the Borough Council for the sum of £10,000 for the next financial year.

## **7. Open Meeting**

All Councillors had been provided with a copy of the report of the Formal meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December, and a copy of the report is included in this minute book. It was also agreed that the Parish Council would ask if a copy of the report could be included in the next Welney News.

The Report was then discussed section by section as follows:

a. Proposed New Community Centre

The Chairman reported that the meeting as a whole had gone very well, and in order to move the fund raising forward a meeting should be called on any interested councillors, and members of the public either on a Monday or Friday evening to consider all possible sources of funding and make applications where possible. The Clerk confirmed that she would contact all parties to make arrangements and Cllr. Bray confirmed that the meeting could be held at his home.

b. Possible Community Shop

Cllr. Bennett confirmed that he would include an item in the next Welney News and advise Council of any feedback in due course.

c. Sandgate Corner Allotment field.

Cllr. Goodger confirmed that he would make arrangements to tidy up the uncultivated area and possibly cut a crop of hay which could be sold and used towards the rental of the field, and Cllr. Bennett confirmed that he would cut the pathways – both matters would be dealt with when the weather improved.

d. Wash Road

This matter is dealt with under Highway Matters

e. Public Footpaths and Byways

Nothing further to report at present

f. Possible Oil/Utility purchasing group

Details had been received and circulated to all Councillors from Mr. R. Gilbert regarding utility purchasing group. The Chairman also gave details of a scheme which is run by Anglian Farmers through the Rural Community Council helping community groups purchase oil etc. He had requested further details and these will be presented to the next meeting.

## **8. Parish Hall**

The electricity meters had been checked before the meeting and a total of £39 was removed.

## **9 Proposed New Community Centre**

Following the meeting in December, a meeting is to be arranged to find funding sources and hopefully move everything forward again..

Delta Pilots Concert – 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2012. – Wonderful event and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Approximately 60 persons attended and the Clerk confirmed that she had banked the sum of £635.10 – first really excellent fund raising event. A notice regarding this had been included on the Parish Council website and an e-mail had been sent to the Delta Pilots thanking them for a wonderful evening. A reply had been received stating how much they enjoyed it and suggesting that we do it all again this year. Cllr. Dobson agreed to prepare a report on the event for inclusion in the next Welney News.

Some suggestions were then put forward for possible fund raising events including an Auction in the Parish Hall, a Horse Racing Night, a Gala on the Playing Field, Car Boot Sale etc. and these would be considered in due course once a group of helpers could be put together to help organise various events.

## **10. Playing Field**

Mr. Carter, The Sands, March Road, Welney had been in touch with the Parish Council regarding four or five of the large conifer trees that belong to the Playing Field but overhang his garden. They are in need of attention as they are dangerous and he is worried they will come down in the wind. The Chairman and Vice Chairman agreed to contact Mr. Carter and have a look at the trees and see what action can be taken.

## **11. Correspondence**

1. Norfolk Association of Local Councils – Copy of Norfolk Link and details of the Fields in Trust road shows.
2. Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership – Heritage Lottery Funding development phase now started.
3. Elizabeth Truss MP – 28<sup>th</sup> Monthly report.
4. Norfolk County Council - No Smoking in Bus Shelters – Notices for display in suitable locations.
5. Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk – Introduction leaflet and details of the PCC for Norfolk on the 2013/14 Precept proposals
6. NCC Minerals Site Specific Allocations Local Development – Downloads available from 18.1.13 at NCC website and for inspection at all Norfolk Council offices.
7. Cambs CC – Ely Car Parking Consultation
8. Cambs ACRE – Connecting Cambridgeshire Broadband

## **12. Plans and Planning Matters**

E-mail from Chris Curtis, Borough Council Planning Enforcement Officer confirming that he has now had a look at the caravan at Flights End, Hundred Foot Bank and as it is only a small touring van parked to the side of the house, this does not breach planning control.

## **13 Highway Matters**

The Clerk confirmed that nothing had been heard from Martin Edmunds or Andy Wallace since the meeting at Welney regarding the list of outstanding items both of whom have a copy. It was agreed to contact them again to see if any progress had been made and to ask for a regular update of the situation.

Following the water receding after the December meeting, and then of course coming back up again, the Clerk contacted Andy Wallace at Highways, who confirmed that the signs would be replaced at the top of New Road – this took two e-mails to him before anything was done. This time they put up a diversion sign – which was obviously better than nothing. At the suggestion of our chairman, Council asked him if we could have a sign at the top of New Road stating NO TURNING FOR HGV'S BEYOND THIS PONT. He promised to discuss this with the powers that be but if agreed it will need to be manufactured and therefore with Christmas in the way may take a week or two to source. Nothing further has been heard so an update will be requested.

Following the meeting in December, Andy Wallace promised to try and come up with some figures for the Dot-Matrix signs. He rang just before Christmas to say that he had come up with a figure of £10,000 for both the two signs from Westcotec. He did explain that the NCC Highways are operating a Parish Partnership Scheme and would possibly pay half the cost of these signs if the village could come up with the other half. If this was not possible, he suggested approaching affected organisations to see if they would be prepared to come up with some funding. However, he is going to press for NCC to pay the whole amount because Welney have not had anything done about this despite the problem being in place for many years. It was also explained that it would be impossible for the Parish to find the £5,000 and would be similarly impossible to ask affected business to come up with funding, because the road being flooded covered such a wide area and affected so many people – both businesses and private people. Also following that meeting it was noted that a further meeting would take place within 2 months and the Clerk was instructed to contact Highways to arrange a meeting on a Friday afternoon towards the end of January/beginning of February 2013.

The Chairman also explained to the meeting that he had received confirmation from the Environment Agency that they would be sandbagging the bridge over the New Year period. This was partly a safety precaution and partly an exercise, and although the water did not come up high enough to reach the sandbags it was certainly a good safety measure.

The Clerk also e-mailed Elizabeth Truss MP regarding the Wash Road and asked if she had some spare time, she might like to visit Welney over the Christmas recess and meet Councillors to discuss the matter. The following reply was received on 24<sup>th</sup> December.

*Thank you for your e-mail and I do understand your concerns. Over the past two years I have met the Environment Agency and discussed the situation at Wash Road. I am very familiar with the road and the current design is in place to prevent flooding further afield. However the exceptional wet*

*weather is creating longer term problems. I will raise this with Dr. Geoff Brighty from the Environment Agency to see if the overall approach can be reviewed and if any other measures can be put in place*

Councillors were very disappointed with her reply as the problems do not lie with the Environment Agency. They have always kept the village fully informed and their website is excellent in keeping people up to date with water levels. The main problem lies with Highways and signage, and whilst the previous MP raised this matter in Parliament a few years ago, Elizabeth Truss has missed this point completely. The Chairman confirmed that he would write a letter direct to her setting out Council's disappointment.

A letter has been received from Highways confirming that the Highway Rangers will be visiting Welney during the week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> January. The following items were raised for their possible attention:

1. Clearing of the dyke around Sandgate Corner
2. Replacement of broken reflector posts at Suspension Bridge

The following points were raised for attention of Highways – in addition to the list they already have:

1. Potholes at the entrance to Chestnut Avenue
2. Pothole on the Rutland Arms corner, Wisbech Road, Tipps End
3. Drain covers on the road surface at New Road/Main Street junction causing problems
4. Diamond Farm, Wisbech Road, Tipps End – Drain is blocked and needs jetting to allow water to get away instead of flooding as at present.

Norfolk County Council 6<sup>th</sup> December – Delivering Local Highway Improvements in Partnership with Town and Parish Councils. Bids for funding for certain highway work requested – these will then be considered and up to half the total cost will be supported by the NCC. Proposals have to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2013. Short discussion – no action at present.

Village Data Base – It was agreed to include this in the Welney News once again asking if residents would be prepared to sign up and be included on the Data base. Information such as road flooding could then be sent out on a regular basis.

#### **14. Environmental Matters**

##### 1. Hundred Foot Bank – Concrete Access Road

Brief update of the current situation from Cllr. Pratley. Reported that thousands of pounds are being spent on replacing fences but they are no further forward with the road problems.

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

Nothing at all had been done regarding the potholes in the area of the Parish Hall and it was agreed to contact the Environment Agency to see if they could carry out some repair work to the very large potholes,

##### 3. Dog Mess

It was reported to the meeting that a resident of the village had been experiencing problems with people putting dog mess near her gateway so that she stepped in it. After a brief discussion it was agreed to ask the Village PCSO Esther Bortz to look into the problem and also possibly put a brief report in the Welney News.

#### **15. Items for Next Agenda**

1. Village Infrastructure – water pressure, electricity supply, broadband etc.
2. Parish Council Newsletter.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

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

Dated ...5<sup>th</sup> February, 2013.....