

Boughton Parish Council Meeting 11th April 2014 - 19.06pm – All Saints Church

DRAFT Minutes

Present:

Frank Reid (FRE)	Councillor/Chair
Mark Pogmore(MPO)	Councillor
David Cooper (DCO)	Councillor
Tom Roberts(TRO)	Councillor
Andy Beeston (ABE)	Councillor

Public Members: 3 number (Including Sue Pogmore who minuted the meeting)
County Cllr Martin Storey
KL & WN Borough Cllr Colin Sampson
Jane Scarrott representing NALC

Distribution: Boughton Parish Council, Group 4 Magazine, Village Pump

<u>No</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Action by/date</u>
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1 Apologies

Peter Agate; Dave Horkan (Parish Clerk); Jane Edwards, PCSO

2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made

3 Minutes of Meeting 17th January 2014

Minutes of this meeting were presented and agreed by all councillors, and signed by the Chairman.

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting

5 **Chairman's report – Frank Reid**

Village Mower.

Has been serviced at a cost of £150. Mark Solomon again has very generously handed me a cheque to this value, which has been paid into PC account. I have written a letter to Mark thanking him for his support and kindness.

US. School bus route.

For some time the bus taking the children of our American families to School has driven along Chapel road, round the green, collecting the pupils at the notice board, and then travelling out along Mill Hill Road. I have in the past had a number of residents asking why this strange route was taken. I have on a number of occasions spoken to the bus route co-ordinator asking the same question, requesting a straight through route, with no success. Recently I contacted the Transportation Manager at Lakenheath, and within 24 hrs the pickup point was changed to the junction of Wretton Rd and Mill Hill road.

The green is not gritted in the winter so safer for the children to catch the bus on Mill Hill Rd; also, this has protected the green from further verge damage.

Audit & Accountability act 2014.

David has received documentation setting out the essence of this act, which basically describes revised audit processes and financial accountability, which local Councils will be compelled to follow. David, Peter and I have read the document and we have found it difficult to determine how this act will affect Boughton Parish Council. We have requested and await advice from NALC.

Internal Audit 2013/14.

Audit by J.Cross is scheduled for 24th April at "Winward". Peter, David & I will be present. Any Councillor wishing to attend will be welcome also.

Council Casual Vacancy.

I am sorry to report that I have received the resignation of Geoff Proctor from our Parish Council. Geoff has served Boughton steadfastly over the past seven years. He has given our village a great deal of commitment and desire. I am sure he will continue to help us whenever needed. Geoff states that he just does not want to continue being a Councillor. The statutory Vacancy notice has been displayed on the notice board.

6 Reports from Councillors

Public Footpaths – Dave Cooper

Dave state that the paths were being well used and he could commence cutting the following week.

Highways – Tom Roberts

1. Maintenance work associated with our roads. We have asked NCC Highways to take action on a number of issues, including:
 - Posts near the surgery
 - Catch pit in Crabb Lane.
 - Drainage ditches in many roads.
 - Dip in Gibbet Lane;
 - Verge erosion; and
 - Pot holes in Wretton Road.

I have been assured that all work is on the Highways team's programme but they have not given a date for each item of work.

2. 20 MPH speed limit. A couple of meetings ago there was discussion about vehicles speeding through Boughton as it is a continuing and increasing problem. There was a request that the limit be reduced to 20 MPH. I was asked to research the problem and to look at how one would go about getting a 20 MPH speed limit. Essentially the power to put in place a lower speed limit is vested in the traffic authority (in our case Norfolk County Council). They would need to put in place a Traffic Regulation Order.
3. To do this we (the PC) need to make a formal case to NCC to evaluate and assess. Before we do this however and to help us get as full a view as possible I spoke to a number of households in Boughton (some 25 in all) principally those most directly affected i.e. those houses on the main road through Boughton. I can say that over 90% of people spoken to were in favour of a lower speed limit to help reduce vehicles speeding thro' Boughton.
4. However I was not able to speak to all households and to ensure as wide a number of residents as possible were fully informed of the possibility the PC also placed a notice in the G4News and on the Parish notice board. As a result we had three further responses. In general I think it is fair to say that all respondents recognise there is a problem and the need for some action by NCC. Some question exactly where any lower speed limit should start and stop, and whether more enforcement (active police) is needed.
5. Overall my assessment is that there is quite strong support for this measure. I believe we have a good case to make to NCC. As traffic Authority NCC should have considerable expertise in dealing with speeding problems and once we bring the issue to their attention I would expect them to fully assess the problem and the likely effectiveness of a lower limit; or indeed they may have other suggestions.
6. I seek council's approval to take this issue to the next stage – specifically to formally approach NCC.

Councillors agreed that Tom should proceed to the next stage of pursuing the 20mph speed limit with the County Highways Department

TRO

Both Martin Storey and Colin Sampson gave some advice and information to Tom regarding the County employee, Carl Rands, and how to approach him for assistance. Both were generally supportive of the 20mph speed limit.

Some general discussion took place around this matter, the need for the limit to be enforced if it comes into place.

7. Street Furniture – Frank Reid (for Peter Agate in his absence)

Work will begin in the next period to treat the remainder of the village Notice Board and Frank Savage Memorial Bench.

8. Planning - Frank Reid (for Dave Horkan in his absence)

One new application had been received today for a Storage Shed on the land next to Tony Golds in Wretton Road

Mark Pogmore gave a short report on the planning appraisal process which the Parish Council will use in the future to assess new planning applications. He explained the 'dummy run' that he and Peter Agate had done on a recent application to extend a pair of semi-detached houses.

9. Playground – Andy Beeston

As mentioned in the previous report, the playground received its annual inspection. Several items were noted to be monitored with no immediate action, however due to changes in legislation, we may incur some expense to comply and the council will of course budget for such changes. Most other items requiring action have been carried out, including removal of rotten wood, cleaning off the algae from various items, removing sharp edges and repainting the hand rails over the bridge. The above actions have been carried out at minimal cost to the parish, just using the talents of council members. We will of course continue to monitor and make suitable improvements to this popular facility.

The hedge has been trimmed as planned and Chairman Frank continues to keep the area tidy, receiving several favourable comments from visiting parents using these facilities.

Frank Reid thanked Andy for his efforts to repair and paint the handrail mentioned above.

10. Boughton Fen – Mark Pogmore

Since my last report, the heavy rain during January and February has caused the fen to become very wet, but the new banks created by the EA have helped to retain some of the water. We will watch the new ponds formed behind the bank with interest, to see what arrives there.

Various people from Natural England have visited the fen recently, to refine some aspects of the HLS agreement with a view to enhancing habitats in localised areas.

Our major volunteer efforts for winter works have now come to an end, with large areas of scrub removed, pathways cleared and a new seat built on Highland Fen. Five working parties were held throughout the winter, with excellent numbers attending, including several new recruits, and my thanks go to all of them.

Over the next few days, the grass areas of Highland Fen will be cut to different levels to give varied habitat over the area. The cutting will be done by the Hawk and Owl Trust, who are kindly giving us an owl box for this part of the fen.

On 26th April, we are hosting a visit from CPRE Norfolk. We are one of six award winning sites opening their doors to guided tours. As of today most of the places on the walk have been booked.

A number of seats are being built around the walk for you to break your stroll; we hope you enjoy them. Cutting of the path will, of course, continue during the summer. If you would like to help with this, please give me a call on 01366 500461.

Frank Reid mentioned that on 21.06.14, Joy Boldero had accepted the Parish Council's invitation to officially open the Fen Walk. Invitations will be sent out shortly.

7 Financial Report – Frank Reid (for Peter Agate in his absence)

A copy of the accounts up to 15th March 2014 has been circulated to all councillors.

A) Since the last meeting income has been derived from;

- a. £150 for mower repairs kindly donated by a parishioner.
- b. £9 from the Wishing Bucket. We currently have a total of £30.37 to be decided upon for donation.
- c. £176.95 was passed between the Council and Fen Committee by way of VAT refund as noted last meeting.

B) Since the last meeting expenditure incurred has been; a. £150 for mower repairs b. £71.94 for the annual playground inspection. c. £85 for cutting the playground hedge.

C. Payments to be made; a. Fuel for the mower, invoice awaited.

Current Balances:

Parish Council Community Account £2,249.27

Parish Council Savers Account £1,868.00

Fen Committee Account £10,466.29

The surplus Playground fund was discussed at this point. £1000 had been left in the bank, but it is now being used to maintain the playground, and will be written down steadily to pay for this, along with safety inspections and other improvements.

The Council agreed that the Parish Council accounts will go for audit on 24th April, and be adopted on 2nd May 2014

8 Audit and Accountability Act

Jane Scarrott from NALC gave a talk on the Audit and Accountability Act

Much of it has still to be interpreted before guidance can be given on how the Act will affect smaller Councils.

9 Correspondence

In Dave Horkan's absence, Frank Reid reported on the e-correspondence that has been received.

Of most concern was the proposal that meetings can be recorded or filmed, and then posted on social media, with the possibility that adverse comments could be added by the person making the recording.

Jane Scarrott's advice was that Councils could record their own meetings, so that any false representations can be refuted. Both Colin Sampson and Martin Storey gave their own views on this matter.

There was no significant other correspondence

Frank Reid asked all Councillors and Jane Scarrott if they had anything to add. Colin Sampson stated that Norfolk Wildlife Trust were to visit the Fen in May.

Martin Storey raised the issue of the end of the incinerator debate, and the final cost of this.

10 Meeting closed at 7.55pm

The Chairman asked if there were any questions from the public. There were none.

Date and Venue of next meetings

The date of the next meeting is Friday 2nd May 2014 - AGM