

BOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 23 OCTOBER 2015 AT
7:00PM
VENUE: THE VILLAGE CENTRE, ALL SAINTS CHURCH, BOUGHTON**

Present: Chair: Cllr Tom Roberts
Vice Chair: Cllr Peter Agate
Cllrs: Cllr Andy Beeston
Cllr David Cooper
Cllr Ian Davis
Cllr Mark Pogmore

Additional attendee: Cllr Colin Sampson (Borough Councillor);

1. **Apologies.** Apologies received from Carole Woolnough who is still recovering.
2. **Declarations of interest.** There were no declarations of interest except for planning where Councillor Agate confirmed he would absent himself from any discussion on the planning application for his property.
3. **Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Friday 31 July 2015.** The minutes of the meeting (five pages numbered 40 to 45) having been circulated to all prior to the meeting, were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.
4. **New Councillor.** The co-option of Jason Stacey was discussed and all present voted in favour.
5. **Matters arising.**
 - **RAF MARHAM:** A presentation about the changes planned for RAF Marham would take place in Boughton Church on Friday 21st November.
 - **Correspondence:** Various items of correspondence had been received including letters about Bus Shelter grants; A review of licensing and gambling; and Mayors Nominations. There were no comments.
6. **Chairman's report:**
 - Firstly the hedge near to the playground and I must note thanks to the Mc Donnells who arranged for it to be cut.
 - In respect to the pond a very big thanks to all who have been involved in the tremendous amount of work that has been put in – the pond area really does look good. The huge amount of material on the first day (3 large farm trailer loads) is a good indicator of the amount of work completed. And of course the excellent work done since on root removal. It's worth noting here that it's not just me and other villagers who see and appreciate what goes on. Other PC's have commented on how good the pond looks.

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Speeding: The police completed a monitoring exercise in July and the summary is attached to this report as Annex A.

Crime: Neighbourhood watch – Discussion planned with Angela Faherty to understand better what is going on and what extra action we might help with.

Shooting on Fen – The Chairman reported he had a very positive meeting with the owners of a local shoot following reports of shooting on the fen. He is satisfied that they are fully aware of our concerns and what the proper practices are and that they adhere to them. However if we do get further reports of shooting in the fen we need to be able to follow these up. For the appropriate authorities (e.g. us or NE or other) to take suitable action we will need hard facts to ensure the message gets through to the right person or persons.

Removal of redundant electricity poles – The electricity board have completed removal of redundant poles.

7 Reports from Councillors

- **Communications**: There was a short discussion about the Boughton Facebook page. It appeared that some pictures had been linked to the Boughton Facebook page by someone unconnected to Boughton. The solution appears to be for the provider of the other pictures to delete any link to Boughton from his page.
- Councillor Davies has been preparing a welcome letter for new residents to Boughton and he will send this around shortly.
- **Document review**: The Chairman had circulated the Precept guide which had been updated and circulated with a few amendments. Council agreed the precept guide.
- **Fen Committee**: Cllr Pogmore reported as follows:

We have now completed our programme of summer cutting on both Highland and Lower Fens which should promote more diverse vegetation in these areas.

Our summer visitors have now flown off to warmer climes for the winter, enabling us to start our winter work programme.

Quotes are awaited from new scrub clearance contractors who will replace our long serving contractor, Greenfingers Countryside. The clearance works should be underway in the near future to help control the expanding areas of scrub and re-growth.

Our reed cutting programme should continue in the new year, with a further four to five acres in our sights.

The first working party of the year took place last Saturday, 17th October 2015. A large area of willow re-growth was successfully cut down and treated, to hopefully allow the reed to recover in this area.

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Two younger members of the village have been involved in the fen recently – one starting his Duke of Edinburgh community service put in a fantastic effort last Saturday at the working party; and the second preparing an ‘A’ level presentation on wetland management.

We have also had two plant surveys carried out in different areas of the fen which should give us a further insight into the flora that we have here.

Clearance of the Stringsides drain was discussed and Councillor Pogmore advised he had spoken to both the IDB and EA but they did not yet have any date for clearance, but would advise Mark as soon as they did.

- **Financial:** Councillor Agate reported as follows:
 - A copy of the accounts to 21/10/15 has been circulated to all councillors. Income in the period has been derived from;
 - a) Playground donations £536.10
 - b) Wishing Bucket £11.05
 - c) Interest £0.23 + £0.55 to Fen
 - Consolidated expenditure incurred;
 - a) Fuel £45.26
 - b) Grass cutting £200.00
 - c) External audit Fee £120.00 – part to be offset by Fen
 - d) Playground Inspection £71.94
 - e) Playground repairs/maint £1,141.44
 - f) Fen clearance & cutting £1,462.00
 - g) Fen website costs £90.95
 - Various balances within the accounts are;
 - Wishing Bucket £30.73
 - Playground Fund £630.33
 - Playground maintenance £38.36 – subject to council decision on swing repairs
 - Current account balances are;
 - Community Account £3,059.58
 - Saver Account £1,189.87
 - Fen Accounts £7,893.43
 - The Council also has £80 in National Garden Vouchers, awarded in the Pride in Norfolk awards a few years ago.
- There was a discussion about the manner in which the “playground” element of the available funds was shown. It was agreed that Councillors Agate and Beeston would get together to agree how best to show the various elements including any funds “ring fenced” for the playground.
- The paper on “Reserves” circulated earlier by Councillor Agate was discussed. Cllr Agate will suggest some changes to the paper and will check what level of reserves is acceptable. These will be discussed at the next meeting.

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- Precept setting comes up in January and Cllr Agate will prepare a paper for discussion at the January meeting.
- **Highways:** The Chairman confirmed that we had provided input to NCC Highways for the Traffic Management plan that RAF Marham were preparing. The problem of potholes was discussed with the lack of action by NCC down to funding shortages at NCC. Speeding was still a problem and the possibility of using “Bin” stickers to reinforce the 30 MPH message was discussed. This seemed a very good idea and it was agreed that we should pursue this option. Cllr Agate will further research the option with a view to our purchasing a number for free distribution to Parishioners.

Playground: Cllr Beeston reported as follows: The play area is looking in tip top condition thanks to Frank for cutting the grass on a regular basis and also thanks to Victoria McDonnell for arranging to cut the hedge around the area.

I am currently experimenting with pieces of pipe around the base of the posts in the playground to prevent damage by strimming.

Fund raising continues with special thanks to the Boughton Challenge Committee for donating 75% of the proceeds to the Playground Fund, the other 25% was donated to EACH.

Our Clay Play Day took place on Sat Sept 19th; several families attended and enjoyed the day. Special thanks go to David, Matthew, Marion and Sandy for their expertise with the modelling and for Anne for the cupcake decorating. Many items were fired in David’s kiln prior to them being painted, or not, as the case may be.

As last year, the Muckathon is on the go with orders for bags of well-rotted FYM being taken for delivery in mid-November. We are grateful to Ed Lankfer for allowing us to plunder his heap of muck and to Angela who will help deliver the bags in due course.

The next event is a variation on the usual wine tasting event, “Taste and Tipple” will be held on Sat November 21st in the church. We will provide suitable tasties to complement the wines on offer for a lip-smacking experience. Tickets are available at £12 each, but we are limited to 40, so be quick!

A large bag of daffodil bulbs had been given to Ed Lankfer, Angela asked if they could be planted around the playground and anywhere else on the green. Following advice from Frank Reid, the “Greenkeeper”, they will be planted around the edge of the grass in the playground and under the beech tree on the green.

- **Public footpaths & signage:** Cllr Cooper reported that he would be clearing the footpath between Mill Hill Road and Church Lane.
- 8 Village Assets:** There was a short discussion about Oak Seedlings and the possibility of planting these where trees had been felled. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

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The options of placing a new / additional memorial bench or picnic table in the pond grass area were discussed. It was agreed that Cllr Agate would cost out both options so that we could consider choices and siting at the next meeting.

The grass cutting contract for the Churchyard was discussed. It was agreed to get three quotes on the assumption that there would be 14 cuts per year.

Information matrix:

A copy of the current Matrix has been circulated to councillors and the Clerk. There is some information outstanding.

It is, subject to council agreement, intended to update it just twice a year, unless there are significant changes.

The council is reminded that the Matrix is for internal use only. Cllr Colin Sampson agreed to check what the practice was in the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.

6 Tools and Equipment for the Parish Council:

- Council had been offered a trailer. There was a short discussion and it was agreed on a vote to investigate further and purchase if suitable. Cllr Cooper will action any purchase.
- Council owns a sprayer which is currently with Alan Hale. Cllr Roberts will obtain it and check whether or not it is still fully functional. It was agreed that we will purchase a suitable long lance for use in the pond on the reed beds if the current lance is not adequate.

7 Reports from County and Borough Councillors: Councillors Sampson noted that devolution was high on the list of priorities from Central government. Norfolk might be a flagship rural area because the local MP (Elizabeth Truss) was Secretary of State for DEFRA. Planning issues were likely to become much higher profile because of the government's aim of building large numbers of new houses. The implications for all the various communities in West Norfolk were not yet known.

8 Public Questions. There were no public questions.

9 Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be on Friday 22 January 2016.

14. Planning. After the main meeting had closed and visiting Borough councillors had left planning was discussed. Councillor Agate left the meeting while a planning application for his property was discussed. Councillor Pogmore reported:

- There has been one planning application since our last meeting:

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Variation of Condition 2 to attached Planning Permission 13/00874/F:

Single storey extension to provide bathroom and second entrance.

Location: 1 Chapel Road, Boughton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE33 9AG

Council returned a “No observations” decision.

- Further to the chairman’s request, the following is a summary of the District Council’s recent correspondence regarding section 106 planning obligations:

Explanation of Letter received from WNDC regarding the threshold for Sec 106 Planning Obligations

Following a change in government policy in November 14, regarding Sec 106 planning obligations, WNBC resolved, in December 2014 to apply a 5 unit threshold for affordable housing and tariff style contributions, with a 10 unit threshold applying to the larger settlements as listed.

Two District councils have challenged the Secretary of State in the High Court to introduce changes to the threshold for affordable housing requirements, and won.

This effectively quashed both the ministerial statement and amendments to the National Planning Practice Guidelines, and these have now been removed and no longer apply.

The new arrangements were found to be unlawful, which has left an absence of any ministerial statement or planning guidance.

This means that the position reverts to the policy held pre 28.11.14, and West Norfolk BC will consider planning applications in this context as outlined in their Core Strategy 09: i.e. provision in line with policy will be made one site (from the policy this appears to be minimum of 10 dwellings and flexible).

However, it is very likely that this will change again before too long.

ANNEX A

SPEEDING IN BOUGHTON

As many of you will know a police monitoring exercise took place from 16th to 31st of July 2015. The monitoring equipment recorded all vehicle movements (not the registration marks) and the times and the speeds of all vehicles passing the equipment for a total of sixteen days. Key points:

- A total of total of 7964 vehicle movements were recorded at the monitoring point.
- On the basis of 16 days monitoring this equates to 497 vehicle movements per day.

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- 96.5% of vehicles were compliant i.e. not speeding.
- 3.5% (298) vehicles, equating to 17 per day, were not compliant.
- The majority of the vehicles speeding were only slightly above the legal limit. However there were a small number, around one a day, where the recorded speed was over 40 MPH.
- By comparison Norfolk Police tell us that the average non-compliance (i.e. speeding) level on many roads and villages in Norfolk is much worse. For example in one village where the police recently conducted a similar monitoring exercise, over 30 % of vehicles were found to be speeding.

Clearly the above shows that we have an annoying and concerning problem of speeding vehicles but by comparison with other areas Boughton is relatively good. As many of you know the police have already carried out a number of mobile speed checks with action already taken on offending vehicles. From the information gained in the survey they now know when the worst times and days are and they have said they will continue checks at regular intervals.

What else can be done? Well clearly it would be nice if we could have much more police enforcement activity. However with the very recent announcement from Norfolk Police that there are looming budget cuts which will likely lead to a reduced workforce with the police targeting their activities on the most serious crimes it is unlikely that we will see much more police assistance, at least in the short term.

We have asked Norfolk County Council (NCC) about installing road humps (sleeping policemen) and they have told us that the cost and good safety record (i.e. no recorded accidents) in Boughton means that such measures are not a high priority on their work programme.

If you have an idea to help reduce speeding which might be introduced in Boughton then do let the Parish Council know.

Tom Roberts

1 October 2015