

**Draft Minutes**

Present:

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

Public Members: 3 number (Including Sue Pogmore who minuted the meeting, & Carole Woolnough who was later co-opted onto the Council)

Jane Scarrott representing NALC

Distribution: Boughton Parish Council, Group 4, Village Pump

<b><u>No</u></b>	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Action by/date</u></b>
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1	<u>Apologies</u>	
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District Councillor Colin Sampson and County Councillor Martin Storey

2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
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No declarations of interest were made

3	<u>Minutes of AGM 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014</u>	
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Minutes of this meeting were presented and agreed by all councillors, and signed by the Chairman.

4	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
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There were no matters arising from the previous meeting

5	<u>Council Vacancy – Co-option</u>	
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Following the resignation of Geoff Proctor, the appropriate procedure has been followed, and the Parish Council has been given authority to fill the vacancy by co-option. Carole Woolnough had expressed an interest in joining our Parish Council. Members had already met Carole at an informal meeting.

Frank Reid proposed that Carole be invited to join the Parish Council, and was seconded by Peter Agate. Carole then joined the other members and was welcomed by the Chairman.

6 Chairman's report – Frank Reid

Parish Clerk

Dave Horkan has regretfully resigned from his role as Parish Clerk. Following his change in employer, a very much increased workload has left him unable to meet the commitments required of a Parish Council Clerk.

A method of working without a Clerk has been instituted. This has been put in place during the time that Council decide on their desired course of action. May I now ask Council what that desired course of action is.

Fire Hydrant, Bell Corner.

This was observed to be limited in water supply pressure during a recent emergency.

Following contact with Kings Lynn Fire Service and Anglian water, the fire hydrant at Bell Corner has been examined. The measured line pressure of 3bar gauge, and flow of 8l /sec meets the requirements of the Fire Service.

Horse chestnut tree. Weeping canker

The horse chestnut tree on the village green has for a few years now suffered from weeping canker. A number of broken and dead branches have been cut down to improve safety. Pictures of the trunk and large branches have been sent to Borough Council tree officer. There is little advice that he can provide other than keep aware of its condition to observe any further deterioration. My thanks to Peter, Tom and David for their help in cutting away the dangerous branches.

On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July I invited Trevor Howe, a local tree specialist, to inspect the tree. He has advised us that it is terminal, and needs to be removed. He can give no guarantees regarding the trunk, or large branch integrity. His written report to follow.

Verge damage Methwold school bus.

Our verges in the village have suffered considerable damage over the winter months.

The edge of the village green close to the Methwold School bus stop has been badly cut off. Repairs had been carried out, but the bus was observed cutting the edge off again one morning.

Peter contacted Bishops, the Bus Company, requesting that they make the driver aware and sent pictures of the verge. There has been no further damage to this area since.

### Donation Village green upkeep

I record my thanks to Morton and Jean McConnell for their very kind donation of £40 towards the upkeep of the village green. I have of course sent them a letter of thanks.

### Playground committee.

I mentioned the setting up of a Playground Committee at the AGM, and have communicated with all Councillors. I request Council's formal ratification of this committee.

Current members are :- Councillors Beeston and Agate, Carol Lockett, Laura Bliss, Julianna Hawley and Angela Langfer.

### Boughtonclerk e-mail account.

This account was severely compromised and scammed recently. Following this our e-mail address has been changed from AOL to g-mail. My thanks to Kevin Fisher for an extremely tenacious exercise, and a considerable number of hours work.

Our new e-mail address has been sent to Council's list of contacts, and we are now receiving mail into this address.

### Dog Fouling.

This regrettably remains an annoyance in the village, in the Churchyard, and on Boughton Fen.

Jane Edwards will be supplying us with some leaflets highlighting the increased powers granted to PCSO'S to combat this very unpleasant behaviour.

In addition a notice has been placed in the August edition of G4 to request all dog walkers to please clean up after their dogs and to consider other users of public places.

We do thankfully recognise that the majority of dog walkers in Boughton do act responsibly and we appreciate that. This is an agenda item later.

Following his report, the Chairman asked for the opinions of the members with regard to the lack of a Clerk. Carole Woolnough volunteered to take on some of the duties in relation to this for the time being. Peter Agate thought that a clerk should be sought, but in the meantime, the tasks could be shared amongst members. This view was generally held by all members. Frank Reid stated that he would advertise for a clerk in the long term.

Some discussion took place regarding the water pressure at the hydrant on Bell Corner,

After advice from Jane Scarrott (NALC), the Council agreed that the Playground Committee will be regarded as an Action or Working Group, with Andy Beeston

reporting back to Council. This will negate the need for an overly formal committee with agendas, minutes etc, which was not felt to be appropriate in this situation.

## 7 Reports from Councillors

### Highways – Tom Roberts

Since our last meeting we have had two meetings with Norfolk County Council (NCC). The first to find out their views on possible measures to reduce speeding; and the second to seek their advice on one specific measure.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> meeting 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014

This was a very useful meeting as we discussed with NCC a wide range of options from speed bumps, speed platforms, 20MPH speed limits to village gateways.

1. The message from NCC was essentially that the combination of cost and the good (i.e. lack of accidents) safety record in Boughton meant that the majority of the measures were unlikely to feature highly on their priority list.
2. There was a useful discussion on village gateways which appeared to offer the best way forward. The range of allowable wording was fairly limited (proscribed in statute – see attached). The various forms of gateway were relatively inexpensive. NCC explained that there was nothing to stop the PC building the village gateways BUT they noted that they would prefer (indeed expect) to position and install them – not least for liability and insurance reasons.
3. It was up to the PC to now consider the next steps.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2014

4. Following from the above a second meeting was held with NCC to consider the realities of village gateways. After checking the sites (at both the Mill Hill Road and Stoke Road entrances) there are no obvious problems. At the Mill Hill entrance the gateways would be best located up to 1 (one) metre in front of the existing 30 MPH speed limit signs. At the Stoke Road entrance the gateways would be best located around 5 (five) metres in front of the existing 30 MPH signs. There are ditches in Stoke Road but NCC saw no problem in installing gateways there. NCC recommended they install the gateways to ensure all possible liabilities are covered. The estimated installation cost would be £300 (all inclusive).
5. The signs would be approx 925 mm wide so gateways need to be wider – perhaps 1 metre wide in three locations and possibly (to take account of the wider verge) 1.5 metres for the gateway on the LH side going up stoke road. Height 1 to 1.5 metres. Estimated cost £300. The cost of the actual gateways is estimated at £150

6. If the PC decides to go ahead with village gateways (at a total estimated cost of around £750) we will need to complete the required "Notice of Works" form and submit it to NCC for approval.
7. However before proceeding I suggest we "publicise" the proposal – perhaps by way of the G4 magazine so that parishioners are able to comment and ask questions if they wish.

Some discussion then took place concerning village gateways, and the style that Boughton would hope to adopt for maximum impact. It was suggested that the subject be included in Group 4 News to enable parishioners to comment. All agreed to this.

#### Street Furniture – Peter Agate

The Notice Board, playground dog sign and Fen information board have all been given preservative treatment during the last period.

The Frank Savage picnic table still needs treatment but has been in use on the occasions treatment has been planned.

#### Playground – Andy Beeston

This has been a busy period for the play area, with several repairs completed, formation of a Playground action group and a play area safety inspection report.

The changes include replacement of one balance beam, replacing the apparent worn bushes to the swings and erecting a new fence in the corner of the area.

A double row of spikes has also been added to the cross beam above the swings to prevent pigeons from fouling the seats, an idea put forward by one of the local Mums using the facilities. Thanks to Laura Bliss for reporting the problem and providing the solution!! All the above changes have been completed for the cost of materials alone, well done to those handy people.

The Playground action group has been formed by several Mums who have this splendid facility at heart. We have held two meetings so far mainly to a) report any potential problems in the area, b) make any suggestions for improvements, and c) investigate future funding for maintenance and replacement of items in the playground. The items in the play area have a suggested life of 5 more years, so future funding for replacements/maintenance is necessary hence the priority for fund raising. It is a tribute to the green light thinking of these Mums that their suggestions are too numerous to mention at this point, needless to say we will require the help of several parishioners in the near future to mobilise these ideas. Please check the notice board for future developments. The "Boughton Village Caravan" have already designated the profits from their Wine Tasting evening to this cause, so many thanks to them and I hope this will be well supported this coming weekend.

Finally, a playground inspection report carried out on the 10<sup>th</sup> June on behalf of RoSPA found that, and I quote, “This play area is in excellent condition”, and “The present overall risk rating for the play space is LOW”.

My thanks to Chairman Frank for his weekly grass cutting and equipment inspection and to the Mums for their continued support.

Peter Agate proposed that the next independent playground safety inspection be moved from January to July, to bring it into the next financial year.

### Boughton Fen – Mark Pogmore

Since our last meeting, the summer weather has arrived along with all our summer visitors, including nightingales and cuckoos. We have also had the arrival of a number of human visitors.

On 26<sup>th</sup> April, we gave two guided walks around the fen as part of the CPRE award winner open days, with both trips being fully booked. Most of our visitors were from the east of the county and were surprised at the fantastic site we have here, especially when they were able to see four Marsh Harriers and a pair of Red Kites flying over the fen.

On 19<sup>th</sup> May, a group from Norfolk Wildlife Trust visited the site for an evening walk around the fen, led by Allan Hale. This was enjoyed by all the visitors, especially as a bittern flew over while they walked. We thank NWT Fakenham group for their donation of £25.

We had our own village get together on the fen on 21<sup>st</sup> June, when we celebrated the official opening of Boughton Fen Wildlife Walk with about forty people out for the afternoon. Joy Boldero, who had previously presented us with the CPRE Boldero award for access to the countryside, cut the ribbon as we all enjoyed a glass of fizz on Highland Fen.

Winter work concluded with the grass areas of Highland Fen being cut to a lower level as part of our management scheme. This was done by the Hawk and Owl Trust from Sculthorpe Moor, who also installed a new owl box for us..

The ‘cutting team’ has kept the wildlife walk clear so that people can enjoy the walk, and will continue with this until the grass slows down in September. Thanks to all those volunteers who have helped with this work.

We are now planning our autumn & winter work, which will be done along with Natural England, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Hawk and Owl, the Environment Agency, specialist contractors and of course, our loyal band of volunteers.

We hope to start a series of work parties in October this year, so if you are on email, I will be contacting you fairly soon. If you are not, and would like to help, please call me on 01366 500461.

## Public Footpaths – Dave Cooper

Mr Cooper explained to the meeting that the footpath between Mill Hill Road and Church Lane is now open again, following the concerns about the presence of ringworm. The footpath entrance to the horses' field fence is in poor condition, but no one is sure whose responsibility it is. This will have to be investigated.

He then asked about details coming via email regarding public footpaths, as he was aware that some people had received these, but he had not. It seems that a circular has been issued by NALC, but the link has not worked. Tom Roberts had received it directly from Jane Scarrott, and he will forward it.

Frank Reid then added that Dave Cooper was going to be looking after all of the Parish's mechanical assets. The plan is to keep them centrally so that he is easily able to access them for maintenance etc.

## 8 Financial Report – Peter Agate

A copy of the accounts up 22<sup>nd</sup> July has been circulated to all councillors.

- A) Since the last meeting income has been derived from;
  - a. £1350 precept.
  - b. £40.25 from the Wishing Bucket
  - c. A donation of £40 from a parishioner towards the upkeep of The Green
  - d. £144.12 VAT refund
  - e. £92.05 Fen Account for VAT refund, Interest & Donation
  
- B) Since the last meeting (consolidated) expenditure incurred has been;
  - a. £413.31 for playground costs, grass cutting and fuel.
  - b. £120.00 for donations and Village Centre hire.
  - c. £353.20 NALC subs and Insurance
  - d. £65.93 VAT passed to Fen Committee
  - e. £20 Audit Fee
  - f. £74.78 Fen for fuel/repairs and Open Day expenses.

C. Payments to be made;

- a. None

D. Budget

The Budget is currently forecasting a deficit of circa £900 due to i) provision for costs of dealing with diseased horse chestnut tree and ii) possible provision of village entrance gateways, subject to village consultation and approval. The second item may not proceed but is provisionally allowed for.

Current Balances:

- Parish Council Community Account £2,743.08
- Parish Council Savers Account £1,868.46
- Fen Committee Accounts £9,344.28

Were all the forecast/budgeted costs to be incurred in this financial year the approximate balances would be;

Parish Council Community Account £1,325.00  
Parish Council Savers Account £1,868.74  
Fen Committee Accounts £3,000.00

9 Dog Fouling

Further to the Chairman's report, PCSO Jane Edwards has forwarded some flyers which will be distributed amongst the Councillors to be posted in suitable positions on footpath signs and in G4 News. It is planned that MP, FR and Jane Edwards will hand these notices to people walking on the fen. Discussion also took place about an aggressive dog on the fen.

10 Horse Chestnut Tree

The Horse Chestnut tree surrounded by the circular seat is definitely diseased and Frank Reid is awaiting a report from Trevor Howe. Peter Agate stated that we can afford to have the tree removed, and a suitable replacement obtained. Mark Pogmore enquired about the cost of the planning application for this. Mark Pogmore will speak to Hugh Jenkins about the seat, as it is a memorial to Hugh's wife, and it will be necessary to contact Richard Clark as the seat also commemorates his sister. Warning notices are to be put up advising that the tree is in a dangerous condition.

Peter Agate will make the necessary arrangements for the planning application to have the tree removed. All in agreement.

11 Correspondence

The Weekly Crime Summary for 9 -15<sup>th</sup> July, 2014 was read out by Frank Reid. A letter from NALC had been received concerning the new regulations for openness of meetings. It had been circulated by email.

Due to the confusion over the updated Agenda that some members had printed off, but not others, it was agreed that in the future, correspondence would be circulated through the gmail a/c.

12 Planning – Peter Agate

Since the last PC meeting (April) the following planning applications have been submitted.

- a. Ref. No: 14/00539/F 10/4/14. Steel framed building adjacent The Firs Wretton Road. The council objected on the basis of size, construction and risk to trees/hedging. Application permitted with conditions in respect of tree/hedge protection and height.



- b. Ref. No: 14/00061 23/5/14. Cutting back of overhanging trees at Bank Side, The Green. No observations made. Application permitted. (It is noted that the lopping (if complete) has left the tree very lopsided with considerable imbalance in the braches to one side.)
- c. Ref. No: 14/00062 2/6/14. Removal of horse chestnut tree at The Old Stables, Mill Hill Road. No observations made. Application permitted.
- d. Ref. No: 14/00856/F 10/6/14. Front extension at Fern Fill Farm Mill Hill Road. Council recorded a 'No Observations' response. Application permitted.

The PC will need to make an application to remove the chestnut tree on The Green, following Council's approval. (See item 10)

The work carried out to the tree at Bankside has given cause for concern. It is very lopsided and looks in a poor state. FR will speak to Wendy Baines as well as the owner of the tree regarding this.

10 Meeting closed at 8.0pm

The Chairman asked if there were any questions from the public.

Tom Roberts mentioned that he had been approached by the father of a young lad from Barton Bendish who fishes in the pond, and had been worried by the number of adults fishing on a particular Sunday afternoon, and was concerned that we may impose a restriction . Following discussion it was decided that no action would be taken.

Post Meeting note. :- The Chairman had the opportunity to speak to the young man when he was recently brought to the pond by his mother. It was confirmed that as a frequent and responsible visitor he would always be welcome to enjoy our pond.

Date and Venue of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2014 – 7.00pm