

BOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

HELD: 27th JANUARY 2017 AT 7:00PM

VENUE: ALL SAINTS, BOUGHTON

Present:	The Chairman	Cllr Tom E Roberts
	Councillors	Cllr Andy S Beeston
		Cllr David Cooper
		Cllr Mark Pogmore
	BCKL&WN	Cllr Colin Sampson
	Parish Clerk	Carole Edwards
	Members of the public	1

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Ian Davis (family commitment) and Cllr Martin Storey, Norfolk County Council.

The apologies were accepted.

2. To receive declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

Proposed by Cllr Beeston

Seconded by Cllr Cooper

'That the minutes of the Boughton Parish Council meeting held on Friday, 21st October 2016 (pages 91 to 96) be accepted as a true and accurate record.'

All in favour.

Proposed by Cllr Beeston

Seconded by Cllr Cooper

'That the minutes of the Extraordinary Boughton Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 15th November 2016 (page 97) be accepted as a true and accurate record.'

All in favour.

Proposed by Cllr Beeston

Seconded by Cllr Cooper

THL

Proposed by Cllr Beeston

Seconded by Cllr Cooper

'That the minutes of the Extraordinary Boughton Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 8th December 2016 (page 98) be accepted as a true and accurate record.'

All in favour.

4. Correspondence

Correspondence had been circulated and items for discussion were on the agenda.

5. Chairman's report

Most of the activity over the last months is covered by specific agenda items. However I would like to make specific mention of the excellent work done by Mark Pogmore and Andy Beeston. Specifically fen management and organising of working parties by Mark, and fund raising for the playground by Andy Beeston. Funds raised this year have reached over £720.

As you will all know we were fortunate to secure the services of the Environment Agency to carry out a survey of the fish stocks in the village pond and help provide advice on future management. This went well and we will discuss next steps at agenda item 10.

6. Budget and Precept 2017/18

Budget and precept recommendations for 2017/2018 were made by Boughton Parish Council's Responsible Financial Officer, Cllr Tom Roberts and some adjustments were made. (Appendix 1 – figures updated after the meeting).

Members agreed that it was necessary to increase the precept for the financial year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 to enable it to continue to carry out its obligations to a good standard and to employ, as required, its qualified clerk. Boughton Parish Council had one of the lowest precepts in West Norfolk and this was expected to continue be the case for 2017/2018.

The Chairman, Cllr Roberts agreed to write an article for the parish magazine, Group 4 News to explain the reasons for the increase in the precept to residents and the effect this will have on the various bands of council tax. The draft article will be circulated for all members for their input and agreement. Members wanted to consider including the following important points in the article:

- That the cutting of the village green etc. is carried out by Councillors at no cost to residents.
- That Boughton Parish Council has the lowest precept in West Norfolk.
- The importance of employing a qualified clerk to ensure that Boughton Parish Council carries out its duties correctly and lawfully.

Proposed by Cllr Beeston

Seconded by Cllr Pogmore

'That the precept for the year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 will be £2,150.00 (plus the Council Support Grant of £20.00).'

All in favour.

Proposed by Cllr Beeston

Seconded by Cllr Pogmore

'That the budget for the year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 will be £155.00 (income of £2,795.00 including the precept, less expenditure of £2,640.00).'

All in favour.

Boughton Parish Council's current mower was old and in need of repair. Cllr Cooper had looked at two possible replacements and both were priced at £1,399.00 including VAT.

Proposed by Cllr Pogmore

Seconded by Cllr Beeston

'To have the current mower repaired and serviced so it can be used as a spare and to authorise Cllr Cooper to purchase a new mower at a cost of £1,399.00.'

All in favour.

7. Employment of Clerk

Boughton Parish Council was now registered as an employer and awaiting a Government Gateway password to enable the clerk to download free payroll software.

The Clerk confirmed that she had been offered, as required by current legislation, a pension by the Chairman of Boughton Parish Council and had declined the offer.

The Chairman, Cllr Roberts would circulate the proposed Contract of Employment, which was the National Association of Local Council's (NALC) Model Contract of Employment, to members for their agreement.

Members agreed that The Chairman Cllr Roberts, who had been carrying out the role of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) since the previous RFO left the council, would hand the role over to the Clerk with effect from 1st April 2017. The Clerk would monitor the hours spent carrying out the RFO role and be paid accordingly. For the financial year 2017/2018 the RFO salary would be paid as expenses and from reserves if necessary.

TOV.

8. Transparency Code requirements and funding application

Under the requirements of the transparency code, Boughton Parish Council's website needed to be updated with the latest financial information. The RFO, Cllr Roberts would look at this.

In order to meet the requirement to publish draft minutes from all formal meetings not later than one month after the meeting has taken place, the Clerk requested that, going forwards, Boughton Parish Council draft minutes were checked/authorised by the Chairman and Boughton Fen Committee draft minutes were checked/authorised by the Boughton Fen Committee Chairman rather than the whole council or committee. Members agreed to this request.

Proposed by Cllr Pogmore

Seconded by Cllr Cooper

'To apply to the Transparency Fund for Smaller Authorities to purchase a laptop and scanner for Boughton Parish Council.'

All in favour.

Purchase of a printer is not covered by the Transparency Fund for Smaller Authorities. Cllr Roberts will investigate the possibility of buying a combined printer/scanner, with Boughton Parish Council contributing the cost of the printer element.

9. Reports from Councillors

Communications – Cllr Davis

There was no report.

Fen report – Cllr Pogmore

During the latter part of October, 2016, the EA were as good as their word, and created another section of bank to assist with water retention at the Oxborough end of Stringside Drain. This happened more quickly than expected, and I arrived home from a short holiday to find the work was completed very neatly. Ironically, since then, it has been exceptionally dry, so we are unable to put it to the test.

Since then, a number of successful working parties have been held. The first was to complete the clearance of the overgrown brambles and other plant life, caused by the very wet summer, from the ride into Highland Fen. This was followed by another team effort to remove growth from the rest of the walk, giving a nice clear route for all to enjoy.

Our scrub clearance contractor was able to get started early this year, before things became wet, and made a great deal of progress, helped by the favourable conditions.



Paul Smith, a member of the Fen committee had a very busy time with his work colleagues who were able to engage in a day's voluntary community work, instead of driving a desk, and cleared a huge amount of sallow from the reed beds.

Since Christmas, we have held another party with local volunteers, and have erected another seat and made further efforts with clearance of scrub on several parts of the fen.

Two further working parties are planned for February, and it is likely that there will be some ad hoc sessions to clear and burn reed as soon as possible after the reed cutting has taken place.

A good number of people have participated in these sessions, and we are grateful for all their input to keep improving the environment of our fen at minimal cost.

The Clerk had recently been on a council staff visit to RAF Marham. The Community Liaison Officer from Balfour Beatty (RAF Marham's main contractors for the current upgrade work taking place) had offered to provide staff volunteers to assist with local community projects until 2018. The Clerk had put Balfour Beatty in contact with Cllr Pogmore and he was pleased that they had offered to provide staff to help on the Fen. A party of Scouts from Downham Market had also offered to help on the Fen.

The Fen Committee had replied to a letter received by the Chairman, Cllr Pogmore from a parishioner who was unhappy about management of and work carried out on the Fen.

There had been some inaccurate comments made about Boughton Fen in a report by the Landscape Partnership. The situation was being reviewed and Cllr Pogmore would advise members at the next meeting.

Financial report – Cllr Roberts (Responsible Financial Officer)

Budget and precept had already been covered.

There were still ongoing problems with Barclays Bank and the Clerk was tasked with investigating the possibility/cost of moving to Lloyds Bank, now the only other bank with a branch in Downham Market. The Clerk would obtain the relevant information and circulate it to members.

Highways report – Cllr Roberts

A member of the public had alerted The Chairman, Cllr Roberts to cracks appearing on Oxborough Road. Norfolk County Council Highways had agreed some time ago to inspect the road and take action. Nothing had been done yet so Cllr Roberts would chase them up.

Dog mess had become an increasing problem in the village, particularly in Wretton Road. Other parish councils had improved the situation in their parishes by spraying high-vis spray around the mess. Members agreed to give this a try. The Chairman, Cllr Roberts would circulate a draft article for Group 4 News alerting residents to the problem.

The Chairman, Cllr Roberts would once again raise the ongoing problem of serious verge erosion in the village with Norfolk County Council Highways.

Planning report – Cllr Roberts

Boughton Parish Council had received a letter asking for its support regarding a proposed planning application. The Chairman, Cllr Roberts agreed to reply saying that the application would be considered as and when Boughton Parish Council was asked to comment on it by the planning authority, the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (BCKL&WN).

The Chairman, Cllr Roberts would check with the BCKL&WN regarding concerns about trees being removed from Norfolk County Council Highways land as part of a current development in the village.

Playground report – Cllr Beeston

The play area has been kept tidy over the winter period. There's only been the need to clear up the leaves and odd small branches falling from the ash tree in the corner. The notice boards within the area have been preserved along with the benches, tables and village sign on the green.

The playground funds have been increased following the sales of bagged potatoes and bagged FYM, both kindly donated for the fund. The Wine Tasting was, yet again, a very successful and enjoyable evening. The total proceeds amounted to £428.

At our last meeting of the playground group, several ideas were suggested for the coming season. I will be running in the King's Lynn GEAR 10k again so will be looking for further sponsorship soon. A hog roast could be on the cards, but it's early days to finalise any details for any of the suggestions.

For information, several years ago there was the possibility of extending the playground, however, after further enquiries this option is no longer available.

Public footpaths and signage – Cllr Cooper

Public footpaths and signage were all ok.

Members agreed to add "Village Green" and "Pond" to this section of the agenda in future.



Village assets – Cllr Cooper

The Asset List needed updating. The Chairman, Cllr Roberts would circulate it to members to work on. Cllr Pogmore would prepare a list in relation to Boughton Fen.

10. Village Green and Pond

The replacement trees had now been planted.

Cllr Beeston had enlarged the tops of the fence posts around the pond so they could now be used as seats.

The Chairman, Cllr Roberts thanked Cllrs Beeston and Cooper for all of the work they had done to keep the village green and pond looking good. This was much appreciated by members, residents and visitors.

The Environment Agency had recently dredged the pond. Fish weighing a total of 365lbs had been found. The Environment Agency had reported that the water quality was currently ok, but would be adversely affected by ducks during the Summer. There were three options to consider:

- Reduce the number of ducks.
- Keep the water cleaner by using Barley Straw.
- Keep the water cleaner by using Siltex.

Members considered the use of Barley Straw was the best option at this stage. It was relatively cheap and had a proven good track record. The best time to use it would be Spring. Members agreed to identify suitable ways of keeping the straw on top of the water.

Reducing duck numbers by relocating them will also be investigated as a possibility for later in the year. Cllr Pogmore would approach WWT Welney to ask if they would be prepared to take some of the ducks.

11. Reports from visiting officers – County and Borough

Borough Councillor Colin Sampson reported that the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (BCKL&WN) were currently debating increasing the precept by around 4%. This was because less and less money was going to be provided by central government from now until 2021 when government funding was expected to cease completely.

Food waste bags had been found to be degrading too quickly and this was being looked at. Recycling in general was also being looked at and a new method of disposal was being tested in Downham Market.

Cllr Sampson urged members to look at the Recycling Rewards Project, a new campaign to encourage people to recycle the right materials in the right way, details of which were on the BCKL&WN website.

Members reported that black bins were not being replaced in the correct location after being emptied. Cllr Sampson agreed to raise the issue.

12. Public questions

There were no questions from members of the public.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Friday, 28th April 2017 at All Saints Church, Boughton.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10pm

U.S.M.

28 APRIL 2017

BOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL						Appendix 1
Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2017 and budget for the year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 V2						
COMMUNITY ACCOUNT	Budget 2016/17	Actual at end month 12-30/12/16	Estimated 01/01/17 to 30/03/17	Year end total 31/03/17	Budget 2017/18	NOTES
	INCOME					
Precept	£1,530.00	£1,530.00	£0.00	£1,530.00	£2,150.00	
Parish grant					£20.00	
Wishing well	£0.00	£17.21	£0.00	£17.21	£0.00	
Donations	£0.00	£40.00	£0.00	£40.00	£0.00	
Playground fund raising (ring fenced)	£0.00	£721.92	£0.00	£721.92	£0.00	
PCC contribution to grass cutting	£250.00	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00	£250.00	
Fen contribution to Mazar audit fee	£90.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£75.00	
VAT refund	£780.31	£780.31	£0.00	£780.31	£300.00	
Bank interest	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	Interest on savings A/c
Grant from transparency fund				£299.14		
TOTAL Community Account Income	£2,650.31	£3,339.44	£0.00	£3,638.58	£2,795.00	
EXPENDITURE						
Employer						
Clerk's salary	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£600.00	
Clerk's pension	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	Clerk has chosen not to take this option.
Clerk's expenses	£0.00	£0.00	£320.00	£0.00	£100.00	
Administration						
Internal audit fee	£30.00	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00	£25.00	
Mazar audit fee	£125.00	£150.00	£0.00	£150.00	£130.00	
NALC fee	£90.00	£92.76	£0.00	£92.76	£95.00	
Postage	£10.00	£6.60	£0.00	£6.60	£10.00	
Donations	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Insurance	£265.00	£277.55	£0.00	£277.55	£285.00	
Sundry	£5.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£15.00	
Village upkeep						
Grass cutting - churchyard	£600.00	£395.00	£40.00	£435.00	£600.00	
Fuel for lawnmower	£150.00	£102.15	£30.00	£102.15	£150.00	
Mower service / repairs	£175.00	£0.00	£202.14	£202.14	£200.00	
New mower	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,449.00	£0.00	
General maintenance (signs/posts/benches/pond)	£100.00	£20.41	£0.00	£20.41	£200.00	
Donation to Village Centre (heat/light)	£35.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£50.00	
Trees for village green	£0.00	£0.00	£360.00	£360.00	£0.00	
Tree pruning of Copper Birch	£0.00	£120.00	£0.00	£120.00	£0.00	
VAT refund to Fen account	£478.83	£478.83	£0.00	£478.83	£0.00	
Playground						

Playground repairs	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£100.00	
Playground inspection	£80.00	£75.00	£0.00	£0.00	£75.00	£80.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£2,143.83	£1,738.30	£952.14	£3,789.44	£2,640.00		
Bank balance at 01/04/2016							
Community A/c balance @	£3,392.59						
Income		£3,339.44		£3,638.58		£0.00	
Expenditure		£1,738.30		£3,789.44		£0.00	
Balance		£4,993.73		£3,241.73			
Bank Balance at 31/03/2017		£3,241.73		£3,241.73		£0.00	One cheque issued (for £300) but unrepresented at 31/03/2017
Transfers to reserves		£2,800.00			£2,800.00	£0.00	Playground repair/renewal
Actual/estimated current account balance							
Business premium A/c (Savings) at 01/04/2016	£1,870.33				£3,241.73	£0.00	
Business premium A/c (Savings) - Interest		£0.00	£0.00		£0.69		
Business premium A/c (Savings) - Year end Total		£0.00	£0.00		£1,871.02		
Total community funds at Year end					£5,112.75		
FEN SUB COMMITTEE ACCOUNT							
INCOME							
Interest+VAT refund +RPA payment + comensation		£0.00	£0.00		£3,102.10		
EXPENDITURE							
Total expenditure		£0.00	£0.00		£6,915.96		
Bank Balance at 01/04/2016							
Fen A/cs Bank balance:	£8,252.01				£0.00		
Income		£0.00			£3,102.10		
Expenditure		£0.00			£6,915.96		
Balance		£0.00			£4,438.15		
Fen A/c's Bank Balances		£0.00			£5,923.15		One cheque issued (for £1485) but unrepresented at 31/03/2017
TOTAL PARISH COUNCIL FUNDS							

