

NORTH RUNCTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th September 2013

Present: -

Cllr. J Leamon (Chair, Bor. Cllr.), Cllr, R Morrish (Vice-Chair) Cllr. F Leamon, Cllr. A Towler, Cllr. B Houchen, Cllr. R Markham, Cllr. P Yates, Cllr. J Fuller and Bor. Cllr Paul Foster

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Douglas Eakins.

2. Declaration of interest / dispensations in items on the Agenda.

Cllr Markham declared a personal interest in item 17a of the agenda.

3. County and Borough Councillors Matters, PCSOs Report

The PCSO representative present confirmed that only two calls had been received since the Council's previous meeting but neither related to crimes within the Parish. Speeding through the village was raised as an issue and the PCSO asked whether the Parish had considered setting up a Community Speedwatch group. It was noted that this had been considered but that there had been no volunteers from the Parish to take part in the scheme. The PCSO also reported that the police will soon be authorised to issue fixed penalty tickets to dog owners who are caught allowing their dog to foul without clearing away; however, it would seem that the police officer would have to actually witness the event in order to issue a ticket. It was generally considered that this would be unlikely to happen.

It was noted that there had been no communication from the County Councillor.

Cllr J Leamon mentioned, on behalf of the Borough Council, that the Borough had received several Awards for Blooms and that there would be a Heritage Open Day on Sunday 15th September between 10am and 4pm.

4. Public Participation – All Members of the Public Welcome – 15 mins Session

A resident of the Parish who lives on the common noted that the Council had agreed to instruct its grounds maintenance contractor to cut the grass outside her house along with the grass outside two others as well as the rest of the common land, however, she reported that she wished to maintain the piece of grass herself purely because the only access to her property is over the grass and that if the grass is not collected when it is cut, it very easily transfers inside her property. It was noted that CGM, the grounds maintenance contractor, does not use machinery which collects grass when it is cut.

Cllr Foster looked forward to clarification over what would be discussed in item 14.

Cllr Morrish reported that he had met with a representative of CGM to discuss the cutting of the green following complaints that it is weedy and bald in places. He noted that the grass was cut as short as possible because the machinery does not collect the cuttings and if the grass was left longer, there was more chance that it would be picked up on shoes when people are walking across it. As the green is reasonably bumpy, the higher areas can be 'scalped' of grass which allows weeds to set in. The only way to combat this is to spray the whole green as spot spraying would take just as long as spraying the whole area. The Council will consider the cost of this at the October meeting.

5. To Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th July 2013

Cllr J Leamon noted some minor grammatical errors and that item 11 should refer to 'Old Hall Walk' and not 'Hall Walk'. Cllr F Leamon proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the previous meeting and Cllr Towler seconded this. All agreed.

6. To Report Only on any Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Clerk reported that NCC Highways had confirmed that they are happy with the current state of Sheeps Course/Illington Lane and on that basis, will not be undertaking any work to improve the right of way.

7. War Memorial – the Council will consider correspondence from the British Legion regarding future improvements to the war memorial.

The Council noted that the British Legion representative, David Skerritt, had suggested that a joint Committee made up of representatives from the Parish Council, Parochial Church Council and the British Legion should be formed in order to fundraise to pay for the repair work required on the War Memorial. Cllr Foster noted that the Council should consider setting up the Committee as a Sub-Committee of the Council in order to claim back any VAT on the repair costs.

Cllr Markham volunteered to join the joint Committee and it was noted that Cllr Eakins may also be interested in taking part, although this would be confirmed at a later date.

8. Hall Walk – the Council will consider the ownership status of Hall Walk and whether the Council will take on the maintenance of the whole pathway.

It was noted that information from NCC had confirmed that the piece of pathway not owned by the Parish Council is unregistered and therefore not a right of way and not the responsibility of NCC Highways. After some discussion where Cllr J Leamon warned the Council to consider the implications of agreeing to take on the maintenance of a piece of land that it does not own, the Council agreed to ask CGM for a quotation to spray and re gravel the area of the path which needs attention. The Council agreed to make it clear that it would take no responsibility for the walls and fences on either side of the path and had only agreed to undertake its maintenance because it is causing a hindrance to several parishioners.

9. Local Development Framework – the Council will agree its comments on the site specific allocations in North Runcton and the wider area.

The Council noted that North Runcton had been designated as a 'small village or hamlet'. This means that very few new houses can be built within the confines of the proposed development boundary which borders all existing development within the Parish. However, it was noted that significant development, of up to 3,500 new homes, is proposed on land in the Parishes of North Runcton and West Winch, outside the development boundary. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan Committee will make its own comments on the Local Development Framework consultation and that West Winch Council will do the same. It was also agreed that North Runcton Parish Council should provide its own response.

The Council agreed that the main impact of the new development would be on the A47 which would affect access to Kings Lynn and beyond for residents of North Runcton. It was noted that the feeder road that the Borough Council proposes to include in the development would not actually be installed before the development began which could cause further problems. The Council generally felt that the current road infrastructure is not sufficient to cope with the extra traffic the new development would generate. In addition, it was considered that the existing hospital and school facilities also would not be able to deal with the influx of people that would come to the area. It was agreed to formulate a response on this basis.

10. Correspondence Received (as per attached schedule.

Cllr Morrish took the newsletter and associated pamphlets provided by the Norfolk ALC for perusal.

11. Neighbourhood Plan Committee update.

Cllr J Leamon noted that should the Neighbourhood Plan Committee be successful in securing any grant money to help with its costs, the money and associated transactions would have to be dealt with by either West Winch or North Runcton Parish Council. It would be extremely difficult to split the funds between the Councils. Therefore, she asked that the Council formally agree that West Winch Parish Council should be responsible for administering any funds that the Neighbourhood Plan Committee should secure. All Councillors agreed to this proposal. Cllr Morrish explained that any funding received would be used to pay the design, printing and distribution costs of the finished plan. In addition, a Drainage Strategy had been requested which the Borough Council and Internal Drainage Board have both agreed to help fund. Cllr Morrish noted that it is most important for the Committee to put in its

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comments on the LDF at present, however, the Committee hopes that a draft Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared by November 2013.

12. -

There was no subject allocated to item 12.

13. Planning site visits – the Council will consider adopting a policy on making site visits.

The Clerk had produced a draft policy for the Council to consider adopting so that should a site visit be preferable for any planning applications in the future the Councillors would have a set procedure on how these should be dealt with. This will ensure that the Council acts appropriately. Councillors, in general, agreed that it was good practice to put such a policy in place and agreed broadly with the draft that the Clerk had produced. Cllr J Leamon wished to consider the policy further and perhaps make some amendments. It was agreed that she would do this and an amended draft will be considered for approval at the October meeting.

14. Future development within North Runcton – the Council will consider a proposal from Mr Morrish on how the Council can work with developers of sites within the Parish on an on-going basis.

The Clerk explained that this agenda item was intended to allow the Council to consider putting in place a blanket policy for working with specific developers of sites in the Parish over a period of time to help shape something which the whole Parish is content with. However, it was acknowledged that the Neighbourhood Plan, when completed and adopted, would largely encapsulate the Council's response to planning applications in the future so this idea could not be pursued. Cllr Morrish had drafted a letter to the owner of the Kings Lynn Caravan and Camping Club, mainly in response to an email the Council had received from him, but also to express the Council's views on the future boundary treatment and tree work on the site in the future. All Councillors considered the draft letter and felt that it was reasonable to send and would not set a precedent for the Council to work with developers in the future.

15. Village Meeting Place report and decision on how much to charge for the hire of chairs and tables outside the Hall.

The Council noted that it needs to formalise the charging structure for the hire of the chairs and tables to be used outside of the Village Meeting Place. Although this does not happen often, it is important that a charging structure is in place. Cllr Fuller proposed that hire of the chairs and tables for up to 24 hours should be charged at £30 and hire of the chairs and tables for up to 48 hours should be £60. Cllr Yates seconded this and all agreed. The Clerk reported that the Council's insurance policy covers the chairs and tables for use outside of the Village Meeting Place.

16. Highways – the Council will discuss any Highway issues.

Cllr J Leamon noted that the 'Main Road' sign on the A10 is obstructed by overgrown weeds. This will be reported to NCC Highways.

17. Planning

a) Applications to consider

Construction of a new dwelling at 22 New Road, North Runcton, Kings Lynn

Cllr J Leamon suspended standing orders to allow the public to speak. This also allowed Cllr Markham to express his opinion although he could not take part in the final decision made on the application. Cllr Markham raised concerns regarding the new property not being in keeping with the existing development line of the Parish. He also raised concerns about what would happen to the wall surrounding the plot of land and the existing trees. There were comments from the public that the plot is very large and would not be overdeveloped by one new property, however, it was noted that it would probably be seen from New Road once constructed. Cllr J Leamon reinstated standing orders and the Council acknowledged that the application had been made before but had been withdrawn. It was noted that the Council had made a formal response on the application at the time which raised

concerns about ensuring that the wall and trees are retained. It was agreed to resubmit the Council's initial comments on the application as there appears to be no change in the new application.

b) Decisions received from BCKLWN / NCC

Take down existing sun room and replace with kitchen extension and sun room at 3 West Winch Road, West Winch

APPROVED

c) Any applications considered between meetings.

Take down existing sun room and replace with kitchen extension and sun room at 3 West Winch Road, West Winch

The Council had no objections to this application.

Loft conversion to provide two new bedrooms at Holkham House, 5 Babingley Place, West Winch.

The Council had no objections to this application.

Removal for variation of condition 4 for Permanent change of use from domestic dwelling to place of worship at Jacaranda, 65 New Road, North Runcton.

The Council does not feel it can support a meeting place for any purpose, not just worship, in a quiet residential area without imposing, as a condition to the application, that the proposed hours of typical use are stated and fixed with a timetable that is agreeable to all, and consultation with neighbours. The Council feels that reasonable hours of restriction would be appropriate, given that this is a predominantly residential setting and that the original concerns about Jacaranda being used as a place of worship related to the perception from neighbours that the hours of use were leading to disturbance. The original application was contentious because of disturbance to neighbours and the Parish Council is still awaiting the clarification it requested as to how the Borough Council justified the regular assembly of potentially 40 people in one place for purposes other than residential in a predominantly residential area.

Variation of Condition 3 to allow up to 54 permanent pitches for touring caravans at Kings Lynn Caravan and Camping Park, New Road, North Runcton.

North Runcton Parish Council objects to this planning application as it feels that the planning officers' justification for imposing the restrictions in condition 3 (to allow occupation of the site by touring caravans only) still stands. 'To ensure that the use of the site and the occupation of the caravans are restricted to holiday use since permanent occupation is inappropriate in this location in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework'. In addition, the Parish Council has continuing and serious concerns about the intensification of use at this site. Although the 54 caravans will technically still be mobile – in effect, as there will be no need to move them throughout the year, they will be static. Although the Council understands that other features commonly associated with static caravan sites (external stores, paved areas, hardstand areas, gardens) would require additional planning consent – it would seem likely, perhaps inevitable, that this will be a later stage of the on-going process. The Council's view is that this incremental creep towards a permanent or semi-permanent community at the site is contrary to previous consents and to the National Planning Policy Framework and would lead to deterioration in the environmental quality of the site and the wider setting. In the Council's view this is very likely to lead to the owners of touring caravans and campers finding the site less desirable for their own style of holidaymaking – most likely exacerbating the commercial need to have more long-stay residents. The Council understands that residents of the 54 caravans will be required to retain a primary residence elsewhere. However, the Council has doubts that this can be easily monitored or enforced and feels there is great potential for 'loopholes' in such requirements to be exploited. The Council understands that the highways authority has indicated that there might be advantages from the application as there will be less frequent movements of the large caravans. However, in the Council's view any such advantage of this type would easily be outweighed by the more regular vehicle movements expected from having up to 54 caravans consistently occupied. It is the

Council's view that a detailed traffic study should support this application. Although the caravans will not be widely seen from outside the site due to boundary hedges, they will be seen from the New Road entrance. The relatively recent arrival of camping pods and the current construction of cabins are visible from the gateway and the general appearance of the site from this viewpoint has changed greatly in the last two years – from a predominant view of lawns and trees with some caravans to a view of an unprepossessing arrangement of small buildings and pavements. In response to the previous application (Ref 12/01879/F | 4 Log Cabin Holiday Homes) the parish council requested that the cabins were set further into the site and that space was allowed to set a new boundary screen hedge. This condition was not made – but as noted at the time, the existing leylandii hedge is unlikely to provide an effective and permanent visual screen in years to come, and there is evidence, even in the last year, that the bottom of this hedge is thinning. Replacement of screening along the same boundary would inevitably leave a period of open views or the need for a solid fence or wall. The likely-long term view of fencing and/or the rear of log cabins and a substantial group of effectively permanent caravan homes will have an adverse effect on this gateway to the village, and an adverse effect on the essentially rural character of the wider setting. In these respects the Council does not believe the intensification of the site or the lack of previous mitigation conditions constitutes sustainable development.

Take down existing conservatory and erect a lounge extension at Woodlands, Willow Drive, West Winch.

The Council had no objection to this application.

18. Finance

Mrs Kate Senter	1 month's Clerk salary - AUGUST	BACS	£	203.89
HMRC	PAYE	BACS	£	51.00
Mrs Kate Senter	1 month's Clerk salary - SEPTEMBER	BACS	£	203.89
HMRC	PAYE	BACS	£	51.00
CGM	Village green grnds mtnc - June, July, August	100993	£	201.81
W. Winch Par. Cncl	Leaflets ref Sites Specific consultation	100994	£	13.20
			£	724.79

Cllr Fuller proposed that the payments listed should be made and Cllr Towler seconded this. All agreed.

19. Items for report of future agenda only.

It was noted that some trees had been taken down on the common near the Scout Hut and appeared to be blocking the bridleway. The Council acknowledged the difficulties suffered by the farmers who graze their cattle on the common, in relation to dog owners not clearing up after their animals and vehicle users neglecting to shut the gates after they have passed through. This issue will be considered at the October meeting to consider how the Parish Council could possibly help in this matter.

20. Resolve to exclude the press and the public in light of the following item of a sensitive nature.

Cllr Markham proposed that the press and the public should be excluded and Cllr Morrish seconded this. All agreed.

21. School Road – the Council will discuss the on-going issue of access rights to the Building Plot with comments from NCC Highways.

The Clerk reported that no further advice had been forthcoming from the Norfolk ALC Solicitors so the Council is not in a position to respond to the owner of the building plot. A letter confirming this will be sent to the owner. Once further advice has been received, the Council will consider its position again.

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22. Dates of forthcoming meetings in 2013: -

The following meeting dates were agreed: - 8th October; 12th November; 10th December.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.21pm

Signed

8th October 2013