

NOCTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Nocton Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Nocton on Tuesday, 9 September, 2014 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Ian Goldsworthy (in the Chair)

Cllr Jilly Burr
Cllr Neil Faulkner

Cllr Graham Jones
Cllr MaryAnn Williams

In Attendance: Steve Altridge, Clerk, and Cllr Marianne Overton (Lincolnshire County Council).

Ten members of the public were also present.

Apologies for Absence: Cllr Neil Summers, Cllr Kate Tyler and Cllrs. Rob Kendrick and John Money (North Kesteven District Council).

1 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Parish Council received the following written questions from a parishioner:

Use of Social Media

I see from 'The Little Green Book' that Metherringham Parish Council have adopted social media to try and improve their communication with the public – I would like to put forward a suggestion that Nocton Parish Council carry out a similar trial using Facebook as well.

In response, the Parish Council agreed in principle to the suggestion, and to consider the matter again when the website had been updated.

Village Hall

I note that the last VHMC Agenda and Minutes posted under the 'Village Hall and Local Groups' tab on the Parish Council website are for 18th September 2013 and 5th September 2013 respectively – almost a year since this was updated. However, I see some random ones have appeared in the Parish Council pre-meeting paperwork under the 'Meetings, Minutes and Agendas' tab, but there is no consistency and quite a number appear to be missing. Apart from attending the meetings, I am unsure how local people are able to be kept informed of business. As the body with 'over-arching' responsibility for Nocton Village Hall, I would like our local councillors to consider:

1. Whether a more uniform manner of publication can be adopted for VHMC Agendas and Minutes?

2. Whether the backlog of VHMC Agendas and agreed Minutes can be published for the remainder of 2013 and brought up to date for 2014 under the 'Village Hall and Local Groups' tab.

The Parish Council agreed to the suggestion and requested the Clerk to update the website with the VHMC agendas and minutes in due course.

In response to a question from a parishioner about the condition of the Village Hall car park, it was explained that arrangements had been made to re-gravel it in the near future.

A parishioner asked a question about the arrangements for transporting, storing and the use of chicken litter at the Anaerobic Digestion Unit at Nocton Fen Lane. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to contact Beeswax Farming to ascertain the position, and respond to the parishioner in due course.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No Declarations of Interest were made.

3 MINUTES – 29 July 2014

The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 29 July, 2014 were taken as read and signed as correct.

4 REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Parish Council received the following reports:-

(a) Local Police

PCSO Munroe informed the Parish Council that there had been two recorded crimes of theft in the village since its last meeting. Tools had been stolen from the Nocton Park development and a mobile phone stolen at a house party. In addition, two bicycles had been stolen from the Dunston bridle path adjacent to Nocton Camp.

Cllr Jones reported that he had been informed that there had been a lack of communication from the police to those villagers who had reported incidents of anti-social behaviour. PCSO Munroe agreed to look into the matter and to inform Cllr Jones of the position.

(b) Village Hall Management Committee

The Parish Council received the draft minutes of the meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) held on 1 September, 2014.

In response to a question from Cllr Jones about an email sent to the VHMC by Cllr Burr, the Vice-Chair explained that Cllr Burr had sought advice from the Clerk regarding the matter.

(c) **Dog Warden**

The Parish Council noted Mr Cummins' report which had been circulated previously, and that Cllr Jones had returned to their owner some car keys which had been handed to him by the Dog Warden.

(d) **Village Keeper**

The Parish Council noted the Village Keeper's activities during the past month.

The Clerk undertook to ask Mr Fisher to litter pick in the Village Hall grounds.

(e) **Clerk**

The Parish Council received the Clerk's report, which had been circulated previously, and approved additional expenditure of £45.00 for the disposal of the existing dog waste bins, as detailed in paragraph 2 of the report. The Parish Council also agreed to pay an invoice amounting to £54.00 from BDL Ltd for repairs to the Village Hall garage door, subject to reimbursement by the VHMC and/or Social Club of those costs, as detailed paragraph 3 of the report.

The Parish Council noted that the Village Hall Asbestos Management Survey had identified minor traces of asbestos in the building. The Clerk undertook to circulate the survey to Parish Councillors and the Social Club for action as appropriate.

The Parish Council noted the Clerk's report.

(f) **District Councillors J Money/R Kendrick**

Neither Cllrs. Kendrick and Cllr Money were present at the meeting due to previous commitments.

(g) **County Councillor M Overton**

Cllr Overton updated the Parish Council regarding her concerns about planning issues locally, and in particular, about the Local Plan and its implications for housing development in the area. The Parish Council agreed to consider its response to the Local Plan consultation at its next meeting on 21 October, 2014.

Cllr Overton also highlighted her ongoing concerns about the proposed

wind farm on Nocton Fen, and offered to publicise the launch of the Youth Group in her monthly newsletter.

5 NOCTON PARISH COUNCIL – STANDING ORDERS

The Parish Council endorsed an amendment to its Standing Orders to reflect necessary changes following the enactment of The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations, 2014.

6 NOCTON HALL – RESOLUTION OF COUNCIL

The Parish Council considered the following Resolution as submitted by the Vice-Chair and Cllr Jones regarding its ongoing concerns about the lack of progress at the Nocton Hall site.

“This Council wishes to place on record its complete and utter frustration at the continued failure of LEDA Properties to engage meaningfully with councillors and the local community over its plans for the future development of Nocton Hall and the associated former RAF hospital site.

Yet again, LEDA Properties has shown its complete disregard for the local community by not only failing to meet its own timetable for preparing an initial site development plan, as promised at the meeting held on 8th April, 2014 with the Chair, Vice-chair and Portfolio Holder, but also not even having the courtesy to acknowledge the Council’s request for a progress report. In addition and despite various promises to the contrary, LEDA Properties has similarly failed to take any action whatsoever to minimise the incidence of unauthorised access to the site and fly-tipping, all of which has had a significant and negative impact on the residents of Nocton.

Under its stewardship of the site and through its failure to provide proper security, LEDA Properties has presided over the unauthorised removal of many of the Hall’s Grade 2 listed features followed by its total destruction by fire, the demolition and vandalism of the buildings and site of the former hospital and the desecration of the grounds comprising the former “pleasure gardens”. The entire area is now an overgrown eyesore and an unwelcome attraction for fly-tippers, “zombie hunters” and other undesirable visitors whose activities cause a major nuisance to local residents. The Parish Council notes that the increasing costs of dealing with this situation fall to the hard-pressed Council Tax payers and not to the Developer.

This Council calls, therefore, on the District Council, County Council, English Heritage and our local Member of Parliament to take whatever action they can to bring about an end to what has become an intolerable situation for the residents of Nocton. On behalf of the community it serves, this Council reaffirms its total support for the future development of the site as agreed by the District Council following its consideration of the “Options Appraisal”. As such, it wishes it to be noted that it is not opposed, in

principle, to the construction of a limited number of houses as part of the necessary enabling development – despite Nocton being classified as a Tier 3 village with extremely limited infrastructure and negligible facilities.

Since purchasing the Hall and associated former Hospital site some 14 years ago, the LEDA Properties' lack of any meaningful action to date would strongly suggest that it has, in fact, little or no intention of developing the site until at least the arrangement whereby a significant part of any development profit is required to be passed to the Ministry of Defence (the former owners) ends in approximately nine years' time. It therefore calls upon LEDA Properties to engage in an honest and open way with the local community through its democratically elected Parish Council regarding its future intentions for the site. Should, in fact, this restriction be the main reason for the lack of any action to date, then we call upon our Member of Parliament to pursue its possible removal with his colleagues in the MoD so that a sustainable development along the lines envisaged in the "Options Appraisal" can take place to the benefit of all concerned at the earliest opportunity."

The Parish Council agreed to adopt unanimously the Resolution as set out above and requested the Clerk, in consultation with the Vice-Chair, to arrange for its publication and circulation to NKDC, LCC, LEDA Properties, our MP and local media.

7 NOCTON VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT PROJECT TEAM

The Parish Council received a verbal report from the Clerk about the Village Hall refurbishment.

The Parish Council noted that the options plans for the Village Hall refurbishment had not yet been provided by Mr Saunders. The Clerk undertook to inform Mr Saunders that it would be most helpful to have the plans available for the next meeting of the Village Hall Refurbishment Team on 25 September, 2014, and to seek advice on how best to obtain estimates for the work involved to help inform the grant application process.

8 NOCTON YOUTH WORKER

The Parish Council received a verbal report from Cllr Burr and the Clerk about the appointment of the Nocton Youth Worker and considered a proposal to allocate funds towards the Youth Group start-up costs.

The Parish Council noted that Miss Louise Crick, who had been appointed previously to the Youth Worker post, had not been able to start in the role because of her other commitments. Instead, the post had been re-advertised and Mrs Vicky Rowding appointed to the position. Mrs Rowding

had been unable to attend the Parish Council meeting to introduce herself because she was on holiday, but would be invited to attend the Parish Council meeting on 21 October, 2014 instead.

The Parish Council also noted that Cllr Overton had previously provided a £250.00 grant towards the Youth Group start-up costs, and that grants were also available from the Lincolnshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services. Cllr Burr was preparing a publicity leaflet to advertise the launch of the Youth Group. Two free ‘taster’ sessions would be held initially.

The Parish Council agreed to:

- (a) confirm the appointment of Mrs Rowding to the Nocton Youth Worker post with effect from 1 September, 2014, subject to the receipt of a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- (b) ask the Youth Group Sub-Committee to prepare a costed list of items that would be needed for the Youth Group start-up for consideration at a future Parish Council meeting.

9 **NOCTON VILLAGE TRAIL - PAMPHLET**

The Parish Council considered an application for grant aid of £1,000 from the Nocton Village Trail Association towards the costs of the refurbishment and installation of new trail markers, and the publication of a new Nocton Village Trail pamphlet.

The Parish Council indicated its support in principle to supporting the Association but asked it to provide a more detailed explanation of how the grant was to be spent including a breakdown of the pamphlet printing costs for consideration at a future meeting.

10 **HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

(a) **Community Speed Watch Scheme**

The Parish Council considered a proposal to participate in the Community Speed Watch Scheme. The Scheme was making available battery powered Speed Indication Devices at a cost of approximately £2,000, and passive ‘Check Your Speed’ notices could be purchased at a cost of £8.00 each. However, the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner had agreed to contribute free of charge six passive signs for each of the first 200 applications received. A fee of £40.00 would be incurred for a site assessment and approval of the sign locations, and an application would take approximately eight weeks to be processed.

The Parish Council agreed to:

- (1) request Cllr Jones to submit an application to the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership for six 'Check Your Speed' passive notices free of charge, and should they no longer be available, to purchase them at a cost of £8.00 each.
- (2) authorise the payment of the £40.00 fee for the site assessment and approval of the sign locations.
- (3) request the Clerk to remind Alan Brown, LCC, that a reply to the email requesting the provision of a 'Welcome to Nocton' road sign was awaited.

(b) **Speed Indicator Device**

The Parish Council considered a letter from Metheringham Parish Council regarding the Speed Indicator Device loan agreement. Cllr Jones tabled a revised loan agreement form in the light of those comments.

The Parish Council agreed to :

- (1) endorse the revised Speed Indicator Device loan agreement form.
- (2) request the Clerk to circulate the revised Speed Indicator Device loan agreement form to the members of the Cluster Group for their information.
- (c) **'30 MPH' Wheelie Bin Stickers**

The Parish Council agreed not to purchase '30 mph' wheelie bin stickers, in light of the decision to proceed with an application for 'Check your Speed' passive signs, as detailed in minute 10(a) above.

(d) **Mill Lane Bus Stops**

The Parish Council considered the following request from a parishioner:

'I am writing to ask the Parish Council to request the appropriate authority for some bus-stop yellow lines at the above bus stops, please.

Here we have two stops opposite each other at the narrowest point of the road. Cars have always parked in the street between the 30mph limit and the Post Office, but recently they are frequently parked right by the bus stops, not just for a few minutes, but for hours at a time. Notes under windscreens regarding the danger and inconvenience for passengers and bus drivers have done no good at all.

There is no point in the County Council spending tax-payers' money to facilitate access by disabled or infirm passengers if the bus can't access the raised area'.

Whilst expressing some sympathy with the request, the Parish Council did not feel that the provision of yellow lines as proposed would have a material effect on the position and, in any event, were unlikely to be approved by the Highways Authority. Nevertheless, it was agreed to keep the matter under review and to raise the matter at the next meeting with the Highways Officer, Alan Brown.

The Clerk undertook to inform the parishioner accordingly.

11 **NOCTON BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION**

The Parish Council considered a proposal to include the Best Kept Village (BKV) Competition within the remit of the Parish Council, and, if so, to allocate it to a Parish Councillor portfolio.

The Parish Council agreed that it did not have a formal responsibility to take the lead on the village's entry into the BKV Competition. Rather, it was considered more appropriate for it to become a community activity, which could, for example, better be organised by groups such as the Nocton Gardening Club. The Clerk undertook to approach the Gardening Club to ascertain whether it would be in a position to take on that role.

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Burr for organising the village entry into the BKV Competition in the past. The Parish Council also noted the BKV Report 2014.

12 **NOCTON VILLAGE PLANTERS**

The Parish Council considered a proposal to allocate the planting and maintenance of the Village Planters to a Parish Councillor portfolio.

The Parish Council emphasised the need for an annual maintenance plan for the planters, and noted that Winchester Growers had agreed to provide winter plants for them in the early New Year. The Parish Council also agreed to reimburse Cllr Williams in the sum of £8.07 for green manure that she had purchased for the planters.

The Parish Council also indicated that it did not have a formal responsibility to maintain the Village Planters, but that rather it was more appropriately a community activity which might be best managed by, for example, the Nocton Gardening Club. The Parish Council would welcome an application for grant aid from the Gardening Club to help meet the maintenance costs of the planters should it be in a position to do so. The Clerk again undertook to approach the Gardening Club to ascertain whether it would be in a position to assist with the matter.

13 **NOCTON BRIDLE PATH – DOG WASTE BAG DISPENSER**

The Parish Council agreed to purchase a new supply of 500 bags for the dog waste bag dispenser on the bridle path.

The Clerk undertook to ask the Dog Warden to maintain a weekly log of the number of bags installed in the dispenser.

14 **NOCTON BRIDLE PATH – BENCH**

The Parish Council considered a request from a parishioner to support an application for the provision of a bench on Nocton Bridle Path.

The Parish Council indicated its support for the proposal, and suggested that the parishioner should themselves approach Beeswax Farming for approval for the installation of the bench on its land.

15 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND ISSUES**

- (a) The Parish Council considered the following application for works to trees within a conservation area:

The Old Vicarage, The Green, Nocton

The Parish Council agreed not to comment on the application.

- (b) The Parish Council noted the decision by NKDC to consent to works on trees located at Embsay Cottage, Main Street, Nocton.

- (c) The Parish Council noted the decision by LCC to grant planning permission in respect of the following application:

Anaerobic Digestion Unit, Nocton Fen Lane, Nocton

16 **PROGRESS REPORTS OF PARISH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Faulkner reported that Phase 2 of the Nocton Park development was due to be completed by Christmas, 2014. He also expressed concern about the condition of the large “containers” at the B1202 railway bridge which had been installed, presumably, to prevent vehicles from driving onto the railway line in the event of an accident.

The Clerk undertook to write again to Network Rail to ascertain the status of the “containers” on the bridge and to enquire about when it was proposed to reinstate the hedging which was removed for access to the construction site, etc. The Clerk was also asked to invite a representative of Network Rail to attend a future Parish Council meeting to provide an update on the railway works.

The Vice-Chair reported that he had approached the Woodland Trust for it to provide 30 trees to be planted in the village, as agreed by the Parish Council previously. The trees would be available for planting in March, 2015.

17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (a) The Parish Council noted that its next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 21 October, 2014 at 7.00 pm.
- (b) The Parish Council agreed to adjourn to allow members of the public to ask questions on matters relating to items discussed at the meeting.

Anaerobic Digester – Nocton Fen

It was explained that the Parish Council had not objected to the planning application at the Nocton Fen Anaerobic Digestion Unit because it had not been made aware of any concerns on the part of local residents.

(The Parish Council agreed to pass a resolution under Standing Order 1(y) to extend the duration of the meeting by up to thirty minutes).

18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Parish Council agreed to pass a resolution under Standing Order 1(d), that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting, and they be instructed to withdraw.

If the press and public were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information of the following description:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

19 NOCTON PARISH COUNCIL – STAFFING MATTERS

The Parish Council approved an extension of the Dog Warden's contract from September, 2014 to September, 2015, as detailed in the tabled terms of the contract letter.

The Clerk undertook to inform Mr Cummins accordingly.

20 NOCTON PARISH COUNCIL – LAWN MOWER

The Parish Council considered a proposal to purchase a second hand "sit and ride" lawn mower to mow the Village Green. The Parish Council also

considered a quote from Shears Landscaping (Lincs) Ltd for the provision of a Village Green grass cutting service during the next financial year.

The Vice-Chair explained that the Parish Council had the opportunity to purchase a second hand lawn mower for £250.00. He had been advised that the mower was in good working order and had been serviced regularly. The VHMC had agreed to the mower being stored in the Village Hall garage if the Parish Council decided to purchase it.

The Parish Council agreed unanimously to the purchase of the lawn mower for the sum of £250.00. The Vice-Chair and Cllr Jones agreed to make the arrangements for its purchase and delivery to the village.

(The meeting ended at 9.20 pm)

CHAIR