

Knapton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 7th Oct, 2008 in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Present: Alan Young (in the chair), Clyte Venvell, Sally Dodd, Karen Herbert-Okey, Peter Kaye and 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies:

Wyndham Northam, Graham Jones, Bea Gatfield, Norman Dodd and Peter Holtam (Parish Clerk).

2. Register of Interests:

Clyte Venvell (Griffon Area Partnership), Sally Dodd (MADRA), Karen Herbert-Okey (Homewatch and Police Liaison), Peter Kaye (Planning Liaison and Pigneys Wood).

3. Minutes of Last Meeting:

It was proposed by Sally Dodd and seconded by Karen Herbert-Okey that the minutes of the last meeting be adopted with the following corrections:-

Hedge (MADRA):

The possibility of applying for the equivalent of a Tree Preservation Order, except applied to a hedge was discussed and no decision was made.

Sewage:

There are still some minor problems at the bottom of The Street, however this should be overcome by the ditches being cleared beyond the bridge on the field side. There was a discussion about mains drainage and it was agreed that Anglia Water be approached in this respect.

With the above amendments the minutes were carried.

4. Matters arising:

Youth Club

It was reported that the list of volunteers needed to supervise activities was being finalised and that when this was complete the club would be all set to go.

5. Financial Report:

Peter Kaye, acting in the absence of the Parish Clerk, reported that the balances in the deposit and current accounts with Lloyds TSB as on September 5th, 2008, were £3235.25 and £1064.91 respectively.

It was also reported that a precept payment had been credited on Sept 24th in the sum of £2125.

It was proposed by Karen Herbert-Okey and seconded by Clyde Venvell that the invoice covering the clerks remuneration in the sum of £111.65 be passed. This was carried.

Tricia Doidge, Editor of Knapton News, requested funds to cover expenses incurred in the publication and printing of the paper and it was agreed that she could draw down the sums required, on the provision of invoices, to meet costs as and when needed. These sums to be set against the amount provided by sponsors and held in council accounts. This to be arranged in co-operation with the clerk.

6. Planning:

It was reported that the planning application for a porch and rear extension to No 8, Knapton Green had been approved by the planning authorities and that an application to erect a porch over the west facing door of Autumn Cottage had been made and that no objections to this application had been made in council.

It was agreed that enquiries should be made into what appears to be the construction of a vehicle hard standing on the property adjacent to the Village Hall. Concerns were raised that this could pose a serious threat to the safety of road users and pedestrians when being used to exit the property directly into Hall Lane. An old flint wall had been partially demolished to allow entry. It was noted that no planning application had been received and, as a result, the Highways Department would not be aware of this development. Given the location it would probably be refused. The clerk was asked to investigate this.

There were no other planning matters for consideration.

7. Correspondence:

Water Tower:

A letter dated September 18th received from R.E.Brodie, Planning Enforcement Officer, NNDC in respect of the antennae being installed on the water tower was tabled explaining the legal position covering such installations and this was noted.

An extract of an exchange of emails between Norman Lamb M.P. and Councillor Graham Jones NNDC was tabled in which the former offered;

'to take up the weakness of planning rules with the Government Minister if you wish'.

It was agreed that this would be a good idea and the clerk was asked to contact Councillor Jones in pursuit of this.

The M.P. also conveyed his best wishes to Shirley Marshall, whose concerns were responsible for bringing this matter to the authorities' attention in the first place.

8. Village Matters:

Madra Hedge:

The legal status of the hedge bordering MADRA and the properties in School Close was discussed and it was agreed to clarify whether a preservation order had to be applied for or whether one was already in force as the hedge was more than thirty years old. It was also agreed to examine leasehold documents to determine whether they contained a covenant concerning the preservation or otherwise of the hedge and what was permissible in the way of cutting and pruning.

These actions were considered necessary as it has been noticed that a sizeable section of the hedge had been removed to facilitate the erection of a fence and to provide access to MADRA.

Karen Herbert-Okey and Peter Kaye will look into this and report at the next meeting.

Church Graveyard:

The chairman revealed that he had been approached by the Rev Roger McPhee to ascertain whether the parish council could make a donation towards grass cutting, trimming and tidying of the graveyard which, a member of the public had indicated, cost the church £1000 per annum. The council expressed their surprise at the cost of this operation and enquired whether this function had been put out to competitive tender to which no answer was available.

After some discussion it was proposed by Clyde Venvell and seconded by Sally Dodd to donate the sum of £100 to the church, which sum would be reviewed annually, to assist them with the cost of this operation. This was carried.

War Memorial:

It was agreed to carry this discussion over to the next meeting when the clerk would be in a position to report on the up to-date situation having carried out his investigations.

Roads:

Speeding:

A member of the public reported how dangerous it was to exit Lawn Close into The Street in the face of fast traffic, mainly large farm vehicles, approaching from the east and obscured by Autumn Cottage. The council agreed to report this situation to the highways department to see whether they would be prepared to take action to erect the necessary warning signs. The clerk was asked to contact the highways department to look into this.

Flooding:

Councillors expressed their concern at the threat posed by the flooding which occurs at Knapton Green and Bakers Pit on almost every occasion when it rains heavily. Of particular concern was Bakers Pit where drivers heading towards North Walsham avoid the water by veering into the oncoming lane with the ever present possibility of meeting traffic headed in the opposite direction. This manoeuvre is made all the more dangerous as the floodwater occurs on a right handed bend obscuring a clear line of sight.

It was agreed to ask the clerk to address the highways department and ask them to improve drainage in this area to avoid flooding and improve safety in the future.

Boundary Commission:

Nothing further to report. To be discussed at the next meeting.

North Norfolk Local Development Framework:

The Chairman and Peter Kaye attended a meeting at the council offices, Cromer, on October 1st where a presentation was given covering the 'Core Strategy' and incorporating 'Development Control Policies'. There was no debate and little time for questions and the impression gained was one of 'fait accompli' or a 'done deal'. We were told that planning decisions were already being taken in accordance with this strategy and that all future planning decisions would be so guided. This is particularly true of planning decisions in respect of the building of houses and in particular 'affordable housing'. The meeting was well attended.

We have only one copy of this document and Peter Kaye will make arrangements for a copy for each council member to enable them to acquaint themselves with the detail. It is a well produced and runs to some 170 pages.

Lottery Funding – Community Centre.

Following last years unsuccessful attempt to obtain lottery funding for a new community centre it was agreed that we should re-submit our application under the expert guidance of Tricia Doidge who has in depth experience of such applications. It was noted that first phase of the application has to be submitted by the end of April, 2009.

Village Website:

Sally Dodd reported, in Normans absence, that he was currently engaged in updating the website. He requested that material, in particular, the minutes, should be submitted as soon as possible after meetings in order that the site was kept fully up to date.

Grass Cutting:

At the chairman's suggestion it was agreed to write a letter to Matt Wilby of NNDC thanking him for the services he has provided in cutting the grass in the village. To be actioned by the clerk.

Reports:

Griffon Area Partnership – Clyte Venvell

Clyte reported that she had been unable to attend the meeting of the partnership on August 13th due the date having been changed at very short notice - the new date clashing with a previously arranged engagement. The meeting was attended by Peter Kaye in her stead.

She further reported having read an article in the North Norfolk News reporting on dissension between members of the Partnership and some members of the North Walsham Town Council over the degree of democratic representation of a non elected body, who are not accountable to the electorate, and elected members of the town council over decisions affecting the town.

Some other members of the council had also seen this report.

A general meeting is to be held in the near future which Clyte will attend.

MADRA – Sally Dodd

Sally reported that MADRA were well pleased with the results of the Hog Roast and surprised at the number of villagers that attended which she felt had 'laid' some preconceived ideas to rest. She expressed her thanks to the villagers for their support.

The Zinc Alloy Meltdown Rally was also well received.

There were no complaints from residents on any account.

MADRA's next meeting takes place on October 16th and councillors are invited to attend.

Plans are afoot to arrange another village event on the run-up to Christmas. This will take place on December 5th. Details will be published in due course.

Homewatch and Police Liaison – Karen Herbert-Okey

As the Police Liaison representative, I attended a K.I.N. meeting on the 15th September in Worstead. This was to discuss the three previous policing priorities set and to recommend another three.

The three priorities were chosen after a discussion from the panel of seven members and were put forth to the Safer Neighbourhood Team. None of the priorities chosen relate to Knapton village and, as such, are of no concern here.

The meetings are now taking place within the 25 parishes surrounding North Walsham, and there is an awareness of the problems other parishes suffer with.

There is nothing further to report in respect of Homewatch at the moment.

Village Plan – Active Travel Footpath Project - Tricia Doidge

Tricia reported as follows,

The Village Plan:

Now almost complete, with a draft village history currently being edited. It was suggested that Gillian Shepherd be asked to write the foreword.

Active Travel Footpath Project

The feasibility study has now been completed, with the cost estimated at £630,000. Grant funding cannot be obtained for such a huge amount, but other strategies are being explored to find most cost effective ways of providing a footpath.

Pigneys Wood – Peter Kaye

Peter reported that the first of two phases of a bid for lottery funding had been successfully achieved and that the second phase with the aid of a 'facilitator' was due to begin shortly. The amount being bid for is £50,000 which, if we are successful, will be used for the enlargement of the car park, re-siting and improving the picnic area, repairs to the barn, marking out footpaths and for the planting of shrubs, trees and general rejuvenation.

The next meeting of the parish council will take place on Tuesday, November 4th 2008 in the Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

