

WHISSONSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Whissonsett Parish Council held at 7.30pm in the Village Hall on Monday 11th November 2019.

Present: Cllr Sally Dye (Chair)
Cllr Bruce Andrews (Vice Chair)
Cllr James Daniels
Cllr Charles Holloway
Cllr Catherine McGee
Cllr Caroline Edge

D/Cllr Trevor Carter
Five members of the public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from C/Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris, D/Cllr Trevor Carter, who would be arriving slightly late, and Cllr John Newton.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

Cllr Bruce Andrews declared an interest in item 6(b)i.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2019.

Cllr Edge proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record, this was seconded by Cllr Dye and agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

4. Open Forum for Public Participation.

Two members of the public objected to a planning application under consideration, 3PL/2019/1275/O, for the following reasons: it is outside the settlement boundary, will spoil the rural nature of the village, is very tall and out of keeping with the existing properties nearby which are all either one or one and half storey, it will spoil the outlook and there will be privacy issues, existing flooding issues will be increased, it could possibly damage the surrounding trees and too many houses are being built in the village.

The Chairman explained that there was no right to an outlook but their views would be taken into consideration when the application is discussed later in the meeting.

On behalf of the Village Hall Committee, two representatives explained that no other grant applications had yet been submitted for the village hall kitchen refurbishment. In addition, extensive electrical work is also now required. However, it is hoped that, in addition to any grant the parish council may make, that all funds can be obtained via grants.

A member of the public thanked the Council for their efforts in clearing footpath number four.

Fly-tipping on the Raynham Road was reported, a large amount of bottles and beer cans had been dumped beneath a holly tree – this will be reported to Breckland.

A member of the public hoped that the village sign could be refurbished at some time in the future as it was looking very shabby.

It was also reported that cutting of the conservation area behind the church had not been completed and this will be reported to the contractor.

5. County & District Councillors Reports.

In his absence, C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris had submitted a written report, which is attached to these minutes.

D/Cllr Carter gave a report on Breckland issues and this is attached to these minutes.

6. Planning Issues

a) Decisions to note.

Council noted the following decisions:

Application	Parish Council Comments	Current Breckland Status
3PL/2019/0834/O - The Old Gravel Pit, Mill Lane. Outline planning for one residential dwelling	Whissonsett Parish Council has no objections - potentially good use of a largely redundant site.	APPROVED.
3PL/2019/0896/HOU - The Swallows, Wash Lane Proposed replacement single storey extension and new pitched roof to replace flat roof extension.	Whissonsett Parish Council has no objections to this application.	APPROVED.
3PL/2019/0952/F – Holmdayle, London Road Proposed new residential dwelling.	Whissonsett Parish Council object to this application on the following grounds: proposed access, visibility splay, turning and parking for the proposed property is inadequate, compound existing parking issues on London Street and on the Village Hall car park, result in restrictions to access, turning and parking for the existing property, Holmdayle, would give rise to conditions detrimental to highway safety and would result in over-development of the existing site.	REFUSED.
3PL/2019/0940/F – Field between London Street & New Road. Self build four bedroomed dwelling.	The Parish Council object to this application as this development plot is outside of the settlement boundary and is surrounded by agricultural land on all sides except one and would result in the intrusion of built development into the open countryside, detracting from the rural character of the area generally. The unclassified roads serving the site are also inadequate for any additional traffic created by the development, by reason of their restricted width and lack of passing provision and there is no evidence of any demand for additional four bedroom dwellings in Whissonsett.	Undecided.

b) Applications to consider.

The Chairman queried the use of the self-build criteria in permitting planning applications, where more than one dwelling was built by the same applicant. D/Cllr Carter will take this matter forward and advise in due course.

Council considered the following applications:

i. 3PL/2019/1275/O - Land east of New Road, Erection of two new dwellings and garages.

Cllr McGee proposed that 'the Council objects to this application as Policy HOU 05(2) of the emerging Local Plan states that development must be of an appropriate scale and design to the settlement. Existing properties in this area comprise of one and one and a half storey buildings and are generally of an agricultural or historical nature. Accordingly, this proposed development does not meet that criteria.

In addition, the unclassified roads serving the site are inadequate for any additional traffic created by the development, by reason of their restricted width and lack of passing provision, this would give rise to safety issues if the development is permitted.

Finally, there is no evidence of any demand for additional four bedroom dwellings in Whissonsett. Many of the recently approved applications have been for larger properties and Council is of the opinion that further approval should only be considered for smaller two bedroom, affordable housing application.' This was seconded by Cllr Holloway and agreed by Council

ii. 3PL/2019/1314/VAR – Queensforth, London Street, Variation of Condition 2 of 3PL/2018/0235/F - revised eaves height & dormer window to bedroom 1.

Cllr Daniels proposed that 'Whissonsett Parish Council objects to this variation of conditions as Policy HOU 05(2) of the emerging Local Plan states that development must be of an appropriate scale and design to the settlement. Previous variation has already significantly increased the size of the properties and assuming that raising the eaves height would also raise the ridge height, this variation would mean further significant increase in overall size.'. This was seconded by Cllr Andrews and agreed by Council.

c) To consider taking initial steps towards a Neighbourhood Plan for Whissonsett.

Council agreed that the first step would be to have a meeting with the Breckland Planning Officer to ascertain if a Neighbourhood Plan would be suitable for Whissonsett.

7. To consider any Highways matters.

a) To receive an update re matters previously discussed.

The following two issues will be discussed at item 13.

- Grass cutting around Village Sign.
- To ascertain responsibility for East & North View.

The following two updates were noted:

- Footpaths 3 & 4 blocked – footpath 3 has been cleared but 4 remains blocked (should be cleared within next ten days).
- Footpath 5 – steps to be installed at the section recently diverted.

b) To receive an update re Community Speedwatch.

There were currently not enough volunteers to make a group viable. D/Cllr Carter reassured Council that his experience had shown that volunteers were not assaulted, in any way, as a result of their membership of a Speedwatch Team. An item to encourage volunteers to come forward will be included in the proposed, forthcoming newsletter.

c) To consider an application to the Parish Partnership Scheme for Highway Improvements – Potential pull-in at Telephone Exchange and Village Gateways.

Unfortunately, it was reported that contractors, on behalf of Open Reach, continued to park at the pull-in and this will be reported back to Open Reach, who had recently assured Council that they would ensure the pull-in was not by their vehicles.

In respect of applications to the Parish Partnership Scheme, Council agreed not to go ahead on the grounds of cost. The cost to the Council for the pull-in would be £2,500, and for the village gateways the cost would be at least £1,375.

8. To receive a report re the grass cutting.

Council were generally pleased with the service provided by the contractor during the year but it was noted that the conservation area cut had not been completed and the contractor will be notified.

9. To consider employing a contractor to carry out a winter clear up.

Cllr Edge advised that a local contractor would clear up the Church Lanes, overhanging branches, overgrown hedges etc, for a fee of £500, for a minimum of 33 hours. Cllr Edge will assist with the clear up and it was also hoped additional volunteers would come forward.

Cllr Dye proposed that the contractor be engaged, as set out above, this was seconded by Cllr Edge and agreed by Council.

10. To consider maintenance required for Spring Well, the Campingland railings & turnstiles.

One quote had been obtained but it was agreed to obtain at least one more before any decision was made.

11. To consider issues relating to the Play Area.

a) To consider the inspection report and any recommendations contained therein.

Cllr Edge will make an inspection and advise at the next meeting as to the works required, with any associated costs etc.

b) To consider repairs to play area fencing.

Cllr Edge will report to the next meeting.

c) To consider any further action prohibiting vehicles on the playing field site.

Signage had been obtained and will be erected. No further action deemed necessary at the present time and the situation will be monitored.

12. To consider any issues relating to the Allotments.

Council noted that a new tenant will be commencing with effect from 1st January 2020.

13. To consider information regarding maintenance responsibilities within the parish.

Council considered a list of the sites in question, together with the group/company who may be responsible, and additional information was added by Councillors. Further research is required prior to a final list being drawn up.

14. To consider any issues relating to tree maintenance.

Cllr Edge had drawn up a map indicating where the trees, which the Parish Council were responsible for, were located. In addition, Cllr Holloway had inspected relevant trees and actions would be carried out in respect of the following:

- Oak Tree at East View – it was agreed to research who was responsible for this tree (see item 13 above).
- Church Lane trees – many of these trees are subject to a tree protection order and an application will need to be submitted prior to any works being carried out.
- Oak tree adjacent to Bett's Field – this is a Church Lane tree, see bullet point above.
- Dead Cherry tree on the conservation area at the playing field – Cllr Holloway will obtain a quote for removal.
- Dead Ash tree on London Street – it was agreed this was the responsibility of the owner.
- Dying Ash tree on New Road – it was agreed to research who was responsible for this tree.

15. To consider the publication of a Parish Newsletter.

Cllr McGee suggested that the most suitable way forward was to publish a newsletter based upon the current website. However and in addition, she had discussed with the website provider a way forward and an additional charge would be required for more updates to the site. The annual fee was adequate for the work currently required but if the workload was to be increased then it would need to be revisited. The Chairman felt that local groups should be able to make changes to the site under the current contract, as had been previously agreed when the contract was renewed recently. Council agreed that they would need to see a draft of the proposed website prior to any decision being made.

16. To consider a change to the website contract.

This had been discussed at item 15 above.

17. To consider the purchase of a sign for the Village Hall to publicise meetings.

Council agreed to look at alternatives, such as a new notice board, to bring forward at the next meeting.

18. To consider a request from the Village Hall Committee for a donation towards the kitchen improvement scheme.

Village Hall representatives had outlined the proposed scheme at item 4. Cllr Edge proposed a donation of £2,500 be made to the Village Hall for the required renovations, subject to the full costs of the works being obtained by the Village Hall Committee. This was seconded by Cllr Holloway and agreed by Council.

19. Correspondence

Council noted the following correspondence.

- Police Parish Newsletter
- NCC Minerals & Waste Consultation
- NCC Boundaries Consultation
- Parish Path Seminar – 28th October 2019
- NCC Budget Consultation 2020/21
- Breckland Local Plan Update
- NCC Norfolk Fire & Rescue – Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan
- Digging up Norfolk – Wind Farms Extensions Project

20. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive financial statement for the year ending 31st March 2020.

Council noted the financial statement and there were no queries raised.

b) To appoint an internal auditor for the year ending 31st March 2020.

Cllr Daniels proposed that Mr Bergin be appointed once again at a cost of £25, this was seconded by Cllr Edge and agreed by Council.

c) To consider supporting the Clerk's attendance at an Essential Update Seminar (£6.81)

Council proposed approval of the Clerk's attendance, this was seconded by Cllr Andrews and agreed by Council.

d) To consider a draft budget for the year commencing 1st March 2020.

Council considered the draft budget and, taking into consideration the donation to the Village Hall, agreed the precept should remain at the same level. Accordingly, Cllr Dye proposed that the precept be set at £13,000 for the year commencing 1st March 2020, this was seconded by Cllr Daniels and agreed by Council.

e) To approve the following payments:

Cllr Edge proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Dye and agreed by Council.

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|---|-----------|
| • Clerk (Salary/Allowance – Oct/Nov) | £257.84 |
| • Grass Contractor | £2,140.00 |
| • Whissonsett PCC (wreath) | £17.25 |
| • Brisley PC (see 20c above) | £6.81 |
| • Brisley PC (Renewal of SLCC Membership) | £19.31 |
| • Play Area Inspection | £54.00 |
| • Play Area Contractor | £940.32 |

21. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

22. To note the next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 13th January 2019 in the Village Hall.

Council noted the date of the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

Signed:

Date:

DRAFT