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UPWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council, duly convened on Monday, 14th July 2008 at Upwell village hall. Commenced at 7.30 pm with Councillor Andrew Harrison in the chair.

Attending:

Cllr. David Barnard
Cllr. Chris Crofts
Cllr. Jill Gooch
Cllr. Andrew Harrison
Cllr. Keith Harrison
Cllr. Frank Humm
Cllr. Prue Lester
Cllr. David Pope
Cllr. Chris Robinson
Cllr. Sylvie Short
Cllr. Ros Shorting

County Councillor - Harry Humphrey

Clerk – Kate Cobley
Assistant Clerk - Kate Bennett

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Mungham, Cllr. Morgan and Borough Councillor Spikings.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

3. Public Forum

No members of the Public were present

4. PCSO Claire Law

PCSO Claire Law attended the meeting to discuss current concerns regarding policing in the villages. Councillors raised several concerns about anti-social behaviour and speeding in the villages. PCSO Law advised the meeting that names and descriptions are being taken where possible and patrols are prioritising Upwell at the moment so an improvement is hoped for. The SAM safety camera figures and Community Speed Watch figures were discussed and she advised that these would be assessed and passed on to the Traffic division of the Police for targeted actions, further to several more months of activity.

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5. Report from Council Surgery

Cllr. Lester held a surgery for half an hour before the full meeting commenced. Mr Tibbs attended to discuss the possibility of obtaining planning permission on land he owns on Pious Drove. As the land falls outside of the permitted planning 'envelope' for the village he was advised by Cllr. Lester that he would not get planning permission at the present time but as the Local Development Framework for whole of the area is currently under review, he should investigate the possibility again in a couple of years time.

6. Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on June 9th 2008

On a proposal by Cllr. Lester, seconded by Cllr. Robinson, the minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes (information only)

Item 3.0 Public Forum. Cllr. Barnard reported that he had spoken to Mr Smith at Mill Rigg regarding the issue with the public footpath on his land. He advised that the footpath around the newly installed gates was in need of attention as it was quite dangerous. It was agreed that the Parish Council would ensure this problem was rectified, in the first instance by contacting NCC Highways and Rights of Way to establish who could repair the path and when. Mr Smith also asked for Dog Fouling signs to be erected along the footpath and Cllr. Humm offered to carry out this on the Council's behalf.

ACTION: Asst. Clerk to contact NCC Highways and Rights of Way to discuss repairs to the footpath.

Item 9.8 Planning Enforcement Procedures. Cllr. Gooch asked whether the Council's decision to act as a body when Councillors receive a complaint (or wish to make one personally) had been fed back to the Borough Council. This followed last month's report from Cllr. Crofts on the new system for reporting planning infringements. Upwell Parish Council agreed then that any issues to be reported should "come through Council" and not be dealt with on a personal basis by individual councillors. There was a discussion about this issue and the Assistant Clerk informed the meeting that the Borough Council had indeed been informed that councillors would respond through the Planning Committee.

8. Report of the Finance Committee.

The report of the July Finance meeting had been previously circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Barnard, seconded by Cllr. Pope, the finance report was accepted.

9. Report from the Planning Committee.

The report of the June Planning meeting had been previously circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Shorting, seconded by Cllr. Robinson, the Planning report was accepted.

Item 8.0 Enforcement. Cllr Barnard asked that more investigation be carried out before issues were reported for enforcement action. Cllr. Andrew Harrison advised him that as much information as possible was gathered about cases before they were reported.

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Cllr. Gooch raised an issue of some urgency regarding the notice given by BT to remove three telephone boxes from areas around the Parish. BT are proposing to remove boxes from Small Lode, Main Road, Three Holes and Main Road, Lakes End. Figures for calls from these boxes varied from between 13 to 40 over the past year. The meeting discussed the issue and agreed that there was no real desire to keep the named boxes and that BT should be contacted with regard to a phone box at the top of Tointons Road, Upwell, which is so little used that members suspected BT possibly weren't aware of it. There are a number of other phone boxes in the villages and the meeting was happy to allow BT to remove the detailed boxes as and when they sought fit. Notices have already been placed in the phone boxes to let users know that their removal is intended.

ACTION: Asst. Clerk to contact BT.

10. Report from the Environment & Leisure Committee.

The report of the June Environment & Leisure Committee meeting had previously been circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Short seconded by Cllr. Shorting, the report was accepted.

Item 13.0 Open Gardens. Cllr. Harrison offered his and the Council's congratulations to Cllr. Short for her hard work in organising the Open Gardens event in Upwell. The day had been a great success.

11. Report from the Village Halls.

A report from Upwell had previously been circulated. Cllr. Andrew Harrison advised the meeting that the Ofsted inspection of Upwell village hall, in lieu of Puddleducks pre-school starting in September, had proved positive with only a small number of minor alterations to be made to the premises.

12. Correspondence

The Clerk drew members' attention to a number of items received and reminded them to look at the correspondence folder for information about activities.

Item a Upwell Charities. It was agreed that Cllr. Crofts and Mrs Hazel Medlock would remain as the Council's nominated trustees on the Upwell (Cambridge) Consolidated Charities board for a further four years.

ACTION: Clerk to send reply forthwith.

Item b Allotments. A letter had been received from Mr & Mrs Lawson at Three Holes enquiring about the possible purchase of allotment land adjoining their premises. Councillors replied that the land was in fact rented from the PCC so any request would need to be made to them.

This led to a discussion about the provision of allotments in the village. There are a number of people on the waiting list for allotments and Parish Council land is fully let. There was a suggestion that more land could be acquired and turned into 'garden' sized plots, rather than the acre sized plots currently let. There was discussion about a piece of land currently owned by BCKLWN at the rear of Upwell cemetery.

Proposal: To investigate the possibility of purchasing or renting the land at the rear of Upwell Cemetery for use as garden allotments.

Proposed By: Cllr. Chris Crofts

Seconded By: Cllr. David Barnard

Unanimously agreed.

ACTION: Clerk to approach BCKLWN.

Item b Footpaths in Three Holes. An email had been received from Mrs Veal in Three Holes complaining about the state of footpaths in the village. The clerk read out the email and the response which had already been sent (due to the nature of the initial email requiring an immediate response.) There was a discussion about the issue as Mrs Veal had also approached a number of the Councillors personally about the issue. It was established that the footpath outside the council houses alongside the main road through Three Holes is not in good repair and has not been properly maintained for some time. County Councillor Humphrey was asked to look into the performance of the Highways contractors regarding a number of similar issues where work had been judged to be carried out to poor standards.

ACTION: Asst. Clerk to contact Highways regarding the problem with the footpaths at Three Holes.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to Mrs Veal informing her of the intended action.

Item b Newsletter Response. A letter had been received from Mr Byton regarding the request for information about Cycle shop that used to exist near the Globe pub. The Clerk read the letter and it was agreed that it would be published in the next Newsletter as an interest piece and a way of encouraging locals to share their knowledge and experiences in the village.

13. Health and Safety Issues.

Item a Risk Assessment – Village Hall. At the last Full Council meeting Councillors had received a sample Risk Assessment document and had been asked to read it and bring any thoughts or responses back to this meeting with a view to carrying out a full Risk Assessment for Upwell village hall. The meeting agreed that the document appeared to cover all aspects that could be thought of although the issue with vehicular movement in the car park could not be covered in any assessment or policy devised by Upwell Parish Council. Cllr. Shorting advised the meeting that Puddleducks Pre-school had carried out their own Risk Assessment and Ofsted had also visited the site.

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14. Parish Affairs.

Item a Town Street Railings. County Councillor Humphrey reported to the meeting on his investigations regarding the ownership and responsibility for the river side railings. Norfolk County Council Highways had categorically stated that they neither own the railings, nor have any responsibility for them. Highways do not judge the railings to be a safety issue other than that they do not meet current safety standards and may therefore be a safety hazard as they may lend an sense of false security to road users. The County Council considers the railings to be more of a heritage issue for the village than a road safety issue and Cllr. Humphrey advised the meeting that a number of potential funding sources could be utilised to obtain sufficient funds to repair or replace the rails.

Cllr. Barnard raised the issue of a section of railings and footbridge opposite Pious Drove which had recently been damaged in a road accident and which NCC Highways had taped off in lieu of repair. Cllr. Humphrey replied that these were railings installed and maintained by NCC and were not the railings in question above.

The issue of responsibility was raised. Councillors were worried that if the Parish Council repairs the railings it will then become responsible for them and liable for any claims made against them as a result of any action.

Item b Community Speed Watch. The results of this had been discussed earlier as part of the conversation with PCSO Claire Law.

Item c Recycling Facilities. Following last month's decision not to pursue the installation of recycling facilities at the new car park near Upwell Health Centre, councillors were asked whether there were any other locations where such facilities could be located in the village.

Cllr. Andrew Harrison advised that there was some 'spare' council owned land at Three Holes but it was felt that this was too far from the centre of Upwell to be a useful site for the whole community. There was a discussion about recycling facilities generally and it was agreed that Cllr. Crofts (as a Borough Councillor) would contact BCKLWN to find out what plans they had for improving the range of items that could be recycled in the household green bins.

ACTION: Cllr. Crofts to investigate.

15. Agenda items for the next meeting.

- Quality of Highways work

16. Date and time of the next meeting.

Monday, 11th August 2008. Commencing at 7.30pm at Lakes End village hall.

Apologies were received in advance from Cllr. Andrew Harrison who will be away on holiday.

Signed as a true record of the meeting: _____

Date: _____