

## UPWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council, duly convened on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009 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. Roger Mungham  
Cllr. David Pope  
Cllr. Ros Shorting

PCSO Steve Ross – Norfolk Constabulary

Clerk – Kate Cobley  
Asst. Clerk – Kate Bennett

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**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Short, Lester, Morgan and Robinson.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**3. Public Forum**

No members of the public attended the meeting this month.

**4. Report from Council Surgery**

No one attended surgery this month.

**5. Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on September 14<sup>th</sup> 2009**

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

**6. Matters arising from the Minutes (information only)**

**Item 11.b Rubbish in Dyke at Health Centre.** Cllr. Shorting advised that she had spoken to the owner of the land on the other side of the who had given permission for Community Service Teams to come on and clear the area of any litter and debris.

**7. To receive the report of the Finance Committee**

The report of the October Finance Committee meeting had been previously circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Mungham, seconded by Cllr. Barnard, the Finance report was accepted.

**8. To receive the report of Planning & Transportation Committee**

The report of the September Planning & Transportation Committee meeting had been previously circulated. On a proposal by Cllr. Gooch, seconded by Cllr. Shorting, the report was accepted.

The meeting heard from Cllr. Pope regarding a miscommunication which had led to him receiving a letter from the Highways Department at Norfolk County Council notifying him to cut back a hedge on his property. He suggested that a new procedure should be adopted where a councillor or clerk **familiar with the local area** should accompany Highways visits in order to prevent such an incident recurring.

The Clerk then raised the issue of other incidents where complaints made by residents had been investigated formally and the subject of the complaint had then complained to the council about the way in which the incident had been handled. She suggested that a new procedure be added to the Council's documentation detailing a 'Complaints Handling Policy'. She suggested that feedback from residents confirmed that a personal visit from a councillor or clerk (in the first instance) would often resolve an issue without the need to refer it to a higher authority. There was a discussion about the practicalities of such a scheme and the following proposal was put forward:

**Proposal:** To create a new 'Complaints Handling' Procedure. This procedure outlines the method for dealing with complaints received from residents about issues within the Parish (**not** about the Parish Council itself).

**Proposed By:** David Barnard

**Seconded By:** Frank Humm

Agreed unanimously by a show of hands.

**ACTION:** The details of this procedure will be produced by the Clerk and presented to councillors at the next full council meeting.

**9. To receive the report of the Environment & Leisure Committee**

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

Cllr. Pope asked the meeting about continuing fundraising efforts for the sports pavilion. The meeting heard that there were problems generating new funding as there are issues with the playing field currently only hosting football events and not other sports.

Cllr Crofts then informed the meeting about a possible change to the current Section 106, which provides money for community facilities from large building developers working in the area. He reported that a new scheme was under development which would see developers pay a levy to the Borough Council at Kings Lynn. Money would then be allocated to villages that could demonstrate a need for specific infrastructure projects. It was stressed that this scheme was still in the development stages.

Cllr. Humm reported on his visit to the Wash Estuary Strategy Group's Green Infrastructure seminar in Wisbech. It was agreed that the E&L committee would investigate working with this group where appropriate.

Cllr Humm informed the meeting that the Home Watch scheme had undergone some structural changes and would in future be run directly by the SNT. He was tasked with further clarifying the effect this would have on members.

**ACTION:** Cllr. Humm to report back at the next E&L committee meeting.

**10. To receive the Village Halls' reports**

Cllr. Shorting gave a report on activities at Upwell village hall since the last meeting.

Cllr. Humm gave a verbal report on activities at Three Holes Village Hall since the last meeting.

**11. Health and Safety Issues**

Cllr. Humm reported that a section of footpath on Lakes Avenue, Lakes End had become dangerous for residents due to being 'cut up' by bin lorries as they used the road.

**ACTION:** Asst. Clerk to advise NCC Highways and to notify BCKLWN refuse collection team of the issue.

**12. Correspondence**

The Clerk drew members attention to a number of items received and reminded them to look at the correspondence file for information about training and meetings.

**13. Parish Affairs**

**Item a. Three Holes scrap yard/vehicles on verges/car sales.** The Clerk reported on meetings she had had with PCSO Steve Ross and Mr Trotman of Waterways Garage. She informed the meeting that the cars parked opposite Waterways garage were there legally and that the vehicles belonging to Mr Hempson had been moved – albeit not particularly satisfactorily.

The Clerk and Cllr. Andrew Harrison had met with Mr Trotman to discuss the investigation of the complaint received from a parishioner. The Clerk reported on this meeting and recommended to Council that no further action was required with regards to Waterways Garage or the other garage in Three Holes. There were still some concerns about the premises owned by Mr Hempson but it was felt that there was insufficient will on the part of higher authorities to make any further action here fruitful.

The Clerk again raised the issue of how complaints made by residents about people/premises/activities in the parish were handled and referred back to the discussion at Agenda item 8. Mr Trotman had complained to the Parish Council about the formal way in which the investigation had taken place and asked why someone had not come to see him in the first instance - before he received formal letters/visits from other authorities.

The Clerk reported that this situation had now been resolved amicably.

There was general agreement that the process should change (as per the proposal in Agenda item 8) and it is hoped that this should prevent such a situation recurring.

Members agreed that no further action was required with regards to either of the garages at Three Holes.

**Item b. Town Street Numbering .** The Clerk informed the meeting that two evenings had been booked at the village hall to present information about the numbering of Town Street to residents. She read an email from Borough Councillor Vivienne Spiking about informing landlords of houses rented and advised Council that she would seek information from Christopher Copeland at BCKLWN about letters being sent to each property marked for the attention of the home owner.

**ACTION:** Clerk to contact Christopher Copeland.

- Item c. Cemetery Maintenance.** Cllr. Shorting reported on developments in the effort to return the cemetery to a high standard of maintenance. Community Service teams have again been used to clear areas and cut back vegetation. There was a discussion about the dangerous state of the ground in some parts due to rabbit activity in the closed churchyard and it was suggested that a meeting take place with Tony Porter, David Clayton and Alistair Beales from BCKLWN to produce a final programme of works with regard to the area.

**ACTION:** Clerk to organise a meeting ASAP.

**14. Internal Council Affairs**

- Item a. Revised Standing Orders & Code of Conduct.** The Clerk issued the revised Standing Orders and ran through changes with councillors. The matter of issuing the new model Code of Conduct for Councillors was postponed after Cllr. Croft reported that an instruction on this issue to Parish Councils was imminent.
- Item b. Democracy Champion.** The Clerk had previously circulated a document outlining democracy and citizenship, with the view to getting a democracy champion nominated by councillors. This was necessary for the council to obtain re-accreditation as a Quality Council. There was a discussion about the role and it was agreed that Cllr. Neil Morgan would be asked if he would take on the role on his return from holiday next month.

**ACTION:** Clerk to add to next month's agenda.

**15. Agenda Items For The Next Meeting**

- Democracy Champion
- Members' Code of Conduct
- Report on meeting regarding cemetery works
- New 'Complaints Handling and Investigation' procedure
- Village hall bar
- CCTV & police interpretation/use of images

**16. Date and time of the next meeting.**

Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Commencing at 7.30pm at Upwell village hall.

Signed as a true record of the meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_