

TOCKWITH WITH WILSTROP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Council meeting held on Wednesday 19th July 2006 in the Village Hall

Chairman: Councillor M Kennett

Present: Councillors Mrs Wardman, C Saunders, Mrs K Scholey, N Waller, I Robinson, P Pick, P Kirby, R Ward-Campbell, C Billenness

In attendance: Mrs J Bygate, (Internal Auditor), Inspector Andy Chapman, Sgt Crocker, Mrs G Firth (Clerk to the Council), 8 members of the public.

Apologies for absence - were received from County Cllr Savage, PC Place and D Cllr Sturdy.

Police Matters

This item was deferred until later when the Police Officers would be present.

Minutes of the last Ordinary Meeting and Exempt Matters

The Minutes, having been circulated and taken as read, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising from the Minutes

Tendered Local Bus Services - after receipt of the latest e mail from NYCC, a reply to be made including a map, to be prepared by Cllr Billenness, showing the present route and the proposed alternative route to include Cowthorpe village.

Cllr Mrs Wardman is still trying to contact the resident re parking which obstructs the access to the Bridlepath allotments

YLCA Branch meeting 26/6 had been attended by Cllrs Mrs Wardman and Saunders.

An address had been given by Cllr Cooper, the new Cabinet Member for Waste/Recycling.

There had been a move to rename the Joint Executive Committee the Joint Executive Board - Cllr Saunders had volunteered to become a member of the Board.

Branch business included the issue that the new system of community constables does not appear to be working well.

Attention was drawn to the web site and information therein.

An Open Forum on planning decisions had concluded that democracy was being diluted.

Apologies had been sent for the AGM as this Council's representatives are not able to attend.

The Clerk reported a phone call with Inspector Phillipot who had apologised that Police leaflets had not been distributed to every household. An outside contractor had been employed and had now been instructed to redistribute the leaflets, which probably meant some households would

receive two copies.

The Public Meeting to consider issues about noise from airfield activities has had to be rearranged to a date in October as attendees are unavailable before then.

Public Questions and Statements

Standing Orders were suspended.

Members of the public said this item should be later in the meeting so that issues arising during the meeting could be commented upon, once heard.

A resident requested that planning matters are discussed earlier in the meeting.

Concern was again raised about the lack of car parking at Cattal Station. Chaos had ensued at the time of the Great Yorkshire Show.

Residents expressed grave concern about car parking along Marston Road. Traffic parked along both sides of the road, limiting access for residents who had off-road parking and making access/egress dangerous. It was stated that the Traffic Police are not interested in the problem.

The Chairman replied that this Council has tried for many years to obtain traffic calming measures along the Main Street but Highway Authorities only consider there is a problem if there are fatalities. Residents' parking permits would not work as there would be no means of enforcing conditions and double yellow lines are not considered appropriate in a rural village. Permission would be required to erect a mirror on the footway outside property boundaries.

Standing Orders were resumed.

The concerns about car parking at Cattal Station to be passed to the County Cllr and NYCC.

Village Hall

This item to be deferred until later when the VHMC Chairman would be present.

Westfield Green Public Open Space

Concern had been expressed by residents about the trees and shrubs becoming overgrown.

Resolved that the Clerk ask the PC contractor to investigate, trim any overgrown shrubs and report back on any tree work which needs doing.

Report by County Councillor

In the absence of the Cllr there was no report.

Report by District Councillor

In the absence of the Cllr there was no report.

Correspondence

Additional items 25 to 32 and additional planning applications and decisions were made known

Hag Culvert works/closure of Rudgate - copies of the alternative route to be placed on the noticeboards.

Kirk Lane closure - notice posted on Tockwith noticeboard.

Cllr Ward-Campbell was given his Declaration of Interests form to be completed.

Planning

23, Fairfax Crescent - erection of 1 new dwelling with detached garage and detached garage to serve number 23

Following neighbour notification there were no objections to this application.

Land to the rear of Rose Cottage, Cowthorpe - crown clean, thin and lift 1 Sycamore Tree, T4 of TPO 20/1993

No objections.

1, Norfolk Gardens - erection of front porch. There were no objections to this application.

Land at Warfield Lane, Cowthorpe - erection of 2 detached agricultural buildings. No objections.

The Barn House, Moorside - erection of detached decking area. No objections subject to neighbour notification.

17, Westfield Green - erection of single storey side extension.

Although a modest extension, concern was expressed about the possible noise nuisance to neighbours given the proposed use as a music room and the proximity to neighbouring residents.

Cllr Kirby to do neighbour notification and report back to the Clerk.

Planning decision

Buildings to the North of Nethercarr Farm, Blind Lane, Tockwith - change of use from agricultural to Light Industrial (Use Class B1, B2 & B8). The Clerk made known the response from the Planning Officer.

Planning decisions, notice of withdrawal and results of enforcement investigations were made known.

Village Hall - proposed extensions.

The application had been withdrawn and attempts were being made to address the concerns of

the Planning Department before an amended application is submitted.

The Chairman explained the planning process to residents who were present.

Enforcement issue - use of a portacabin as a cafeteria on the disused airfield.

Cllrs expressed concern at the result of the investigation as it was believed the building was being used differently to that stated. Resolved that the Clerk contact the Enforcement Officer asking for clarification and confirmation that the area is being used as a "refreshment/rest area" and not as a commercial café.

Yorkshire Air Ambulance - rumours that the Air Ambulance is hoping to relocate to an area to the west of Rudgate were reported. Resolved that the Clerk contact Bilton and Bickerton Parish Council to ask for any information to be shared. If a planning application is submitted it is hoped that this Council will be consulted and any planning approval would be restricted to this specific operation.

Acorn House, Cowthorpe - following the letter from the landowner, seeking the Council's views on possible change of use to a public house, and discussion, it was resolved that Mr Newis be invited to attend the September PC Meeting to explain the proposals in more detail.

Cllr Robinson declared an interest in this item and left the meeting.

At this time the Police Officers arrived and the current item was deferred until later in the meeting.

Police matters

Inspector Andy Chapman and Sergeant Crocker introduced themselves.

Inspector Chapman reported on the new Neighbourhood Policing system, effective since 1st April and the changes from the previous system.

The area covered by the Knaresborough Police Station is Knaresborough and South Harrogate, including Starbeck, Hookstone, Pannal and many widespread rural villages, from Wighill in the east to Castley and Weeton in the west.

PC Place is the local Officer and point of contact with the community.

Police Officers based at Knaresborough include the Traffic and Dog Sections as well as the Community Policing Team, who have responsibility for problem solving, and the Response Team, who respond to incidents especially in Harrogate Town Centre.

A huge rural area is covered by two Police Officers, PC Ayre covers the South area but works closely with PC Place.

Neighbourhood Policing is the latest Government initiative and considered to be the way forward for the Police Service. Intelligence is needed from communities. This is a very low crime area and the aim is to reduce crime and improve detection rates with improved technology being used.

The staff complement is 1 Inspector, 2 Sergeants (3 after 1st August), 3 Community Support Officers and 5 Special Constables.

Does the Inspector consider the manpower is adequate to cover the area?

Although additional staff would be appreciated, Starbeck has not taken as much manpower as was feared.

Officers have to cover the area 24 hours a day and cannot deal exclusively with problem solving.

Although this PC fully supports the police, the perception is that Police Officers are rarely seen due to a lack of manpower and resources.

The Inspector answered that the Police Service is doing the best it can with the resources it has available.

Cllrs asked questions and made comments about the increase of antisocial behaviour, the lack of a police presence as a deterrent, the lack of visibility of the Police and the need for foot patrols as well as police vehicles and the increase in vehicles speeding through villages.

The Inspector answered that most incidents of antisocial behaviour involve alcohol and although a deterrent effect does work and is reassuring to residents when marked police vehicles are present, plain cars are successful also in detecting and catching wrongdoers.

Cllrs expressed concern at the difficulty in contacting the Police and the fact that calls are taken by non Police Officers.

The Inspector replied that the 0845 number does not work successfully because of overuse. Non-urgent calls require a lot of questions to be answered so that they are directed to the correct resource. It would not be a good use of manpower to have Police Officers sat answering phones.

Cllrs commented that the crime figures cannot be accurate because many people are reluctant and therefore do not report crimes because it takes too long to get a response or no response is received.

Inspector Chapman said that Neighbourhood Policing is in its infancy. It is hoped that surgeries will be held on a regular basis with opportunities of distribution points able to collect and disseminate information becoming available in the future. New technology is being used and old systems updated or replaced. A plea was made that residents number/name their homes in an easily seen manner to assist with location.

The Police Officers were asked if they were confident that the public could be convinced they are getting a better service with so few Officers spread so thinly over such a large area. The Chairman said that it was useful to see the local Officer at PC Meetings as more direct contact meant concerns could be passed on and lines of communication kept open.

Inspector Chapman said that Tockwith gets little crime. CaP Group meetings are the way to communicate with the rural areas. CaP Group meetings are a Police Authority initiative and they should be contacted to suggest rural Cap group meetings e.g. attend Pannal rather than Knaresborough.

Police Officers cannot attend PC Meetings if operational duties do not allow.

Other issues were raised with Sgt Crocker.

Monthly crime figures, which used to be provided, would be very useful for the PC's information.

Speeding traffic - an e mail would be circulated about this common theme linking i) engineering, ii) education and iii) enforcement.

Residents could be asked to sign a pledge to agree to drive at an appropriate speed in the villages. This pledge could be pinned up on noticeboards.

Road Safety Quizzes could be held in the local pubs.

A Driving Skills Day could be initiated locally, possibly in conjunction with the Driver Training Centre.

If all the above have been done the Police would be prepared to come and take Enforcement action.

A real problem must exist not the perception of one. The Fire Service can be used to measure speeds on local roads.

Traffic calming measures can be considered, especially on commuter routes which are usually the worst affected.

Standing Orders were suspended.

Problems of litter, youths congregating and possible drug use were mentioned.

Problems of cars parked outside village centre pubs causing a noise nuisance by having car stereos on much too loud were reported. It had been said that it was the responsibility of the pub Landlords to deal with this matter.

All incidents of drug related behaviour, vandalism and intimidation should be reported to the Police.

The PC has a big part to play as the new Licensing Laws mean problems can result in a Licence being withdrawn.

The Police Officers were thanked for attending the meeting.

6. Village Hall

Amendments to the latest draft Lease have been agreed. The Clerk to contact the Council's Solicitor for finalisation of documents preparatory to signature.

Planning application -

A Public Meeting had been held to explain the proposals to interested residents.

Various concerns had been raised by the Planning Officer including the size and massing of the proposed extension,

proof of need for the facility and the lack of car parking. The architect was to meet with the Planning Officer to try and address the concerns before re-submission of the application.

Standing Orders were suspended.

Residents expressed concerns and commented as follows:

Has it been considered that building adjacent to the Sportsfield Pavilion would be preferable and cheaper to develop?

This possibility was addressed twice in the recent past, a feasibility study done and outline planning approval obtained but grant applications were unsuccessful.

Has the current site been considered as a site for residential development?

Restrictive covenants on the Village Hall mean it is impossible to dispose of the building and land for residential development other than possibly for "affordable housing", which would not generate sufficient capital to allow development of a village hall/community centre elsewhere.

If the building was disposed of back to NYCC the problem of building constraints would still apply.

If the current building remains as it is, a lot of money would be required to comply with current legislation regarding disabled access and toilet facilities and maintenance of a very old dilapidated building. Grants are not available for general maintenance and the current facility does not have enough useable space to generate additional income.

The current facility can only be used by one user at a time and is costly to run and keep maintained.

Part of the site is outside the village development limit, the building is in the centre of the village Conservation Area and is in use as a community facility, the loss of which would be against current planning policy.

Residents stated that the business case would show that building on the Sportsfield would be less expensive than extending the current facility.

Residents would not accept that agreement with NYCC about the disposal of the facility for open market housing could not be reached. Residents also believed that a potential developer would be prepared to invest in the site even though there would be no certainty that open market housing would be allowed. Residents believed the current facility was on a brownfield site in the village centre and therefore ripe for development. Residents also believed that a developer would be prepared to take the risk of future housing development, cover the costs of the Parish Council regarding the mortgage and outlay on the current building and contribute to the costs of a new village hall on an alternative site.

Standing Orders were resumed.

Following lengthy debate Cllrs stated that it was encouraging to see people who would be prepared to use their expertise to bring about the desired outcome. The PC resolved not to resubmit the planning application for a period of three months during which time progress could be made on an alternative way forward. There are time constraints on various grant applications and it was considered very important not to miss out on the opportunities available.

Planning - continued

Harrogate District Local Development Framework - consultation

The Chairman outlined the purpose of the consultation regarding settlement development limits,

housing and employment land allocations up to 2021.

It was reported that not all households had received a copy of the newspaper "Plan with Us", this to be mentioned in the PC response.

Cllrs were asked to look at the development limit and decide if any areas could be included as additions.

Cllrs were asked to decide if any additional land should be included to accommodate new housing and businesses during the time framework.

The Chairman declared an interest and the Vice-Chairman took the Chair.

Development limit - Cllrs agreed to extend the development limit to include the Village Hall and grounds to the rear and the site of the Methodist Church.

Standing Orders were suspended.

A local resident had been approached about selling land to provide for car parking should residential development be allowed on the site of the Methodist Church, this had been agreed to.

Standing Orders were resumed.

The Chairman resumed the Chair.

It was considered that the consultation was too comprehensive and not easily understood by lay people, having been prepared by planning officers whose main occupation this is.

The Clerk to respond to HBC before the deadline of 4.30pm on 21st July, including additional comments as per last month's Minutes.

6. Village Hall - continued

(2) and (3) Management issues and General

Ceiling repair/replacement - quotations to be discussed under exempt matters owing to commercial sensitivity.

CH/Hot Water - ongoing

Drains - contractor details awaited

Roof - a reply is awaited from the Planning Officer dealing with District Enhancement Grants

The VHMC asked about possible use of the larger field at Tockwith Community Fields for use by the Battlefield

Trust/Sealed Knot Society on the first weekend in July for camping and possible car parking during an event, hoped

to become an annual event. The Parish Council expressed a general feeling of support for the venture.

Cllr Pick agreed to discuss the matter with Mr Burnell at Millfield Farm and report back to the next Council meeting. Cllr Billenness agreed to contact the Sportsfield Trust about use of the pavilion and investigate the system of drainage

Cllrs were asked to contribute bottles for the bottle tombola to be run at the Tockwith Show as a fund raiser,

contributions to the Clerk before the end of July please.

Accounts

Bank balances

Lloyds TSB Treasurer's a/c (as at 21.06.06) 2,500.00

Deposit a/c 15,366.33

Accounts to pay

Ray Farrer (grounds maintenance) 231.00

Resolved that the Bank balances be accepted, and the accounts be paid as above.

Resolved also that delegated authority be given to the Clerk to pay the annual Insurance premium which becomes due on 1st September, i.e. before the next PC Meeting

Date of next Meeting: WEDNESDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2006, in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending, read out the resolution for exempt matters and declared

the meeting closed to the public.

Delegated authority was given to a sub-committee of Cllrs to decide upon any urgent business before the September meeting.