

NEWBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Youth and Adult Centre at 9.00pm on Monday, 20th April 2009

Present: Cllr. B. Skipper (Chairman), Cllr. A. Nelson. (Vice Chairman) Cllr. R. Oakley.
Cllr. W. Prince. Cllr. P. Macpherson, Cllr. A. Briggs. Cllr. P. Spencer.
District Cllr. T. Corbett
Ian Colclough (Clerk)

1. Apologies: None

2. Declarations of Interest:

Cllr. A. Nelson declared an interest in one of the planning applications to be discussed later on the agenda.

3. Chairperson's Opening Remarks:

Cllr. Skipper welcomed everyone to the meeting.

4. Public Forum:

No members of the public were present.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th March 2009:

These were read and taken as a true record. Proposed by Cllr. R. Oakley and seconded by Cllr. A. Briggs.

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

No matters arose.

7. Planning Applications:

There were two new applications to consider:

- i) Notification of application for the new Village Hall off Elton Close. There were no objections raised.
- ii) A rear extension to form an enclosure for an existing swimming pool at Thorntree Hall Farm, Yoxall Road: Cllr. A. Nelson, the applicant, left the room whilst this application was being discussed. There were no objections raised.

Other planning decisions:

- i) Extension to the school – permitted
- ii) Extension at the school – conditionally approved.
- iii) Windrush, Chapel Lane – approved with conditions.
- iv) School – demolition of existing classroom – permission granted.

8. Power of Well Being:

The Clerk summarised the information concerning this new power and how it might affect the parish. Full details were placed in the circulation file for all to read.

9. Grass Cutting Contract:

Cllr. R. Oakley reported the latest position regarding the appointment of a contractor to undertake grass-cutting duties throughout the village.

The areas of grass to be maintained have been measured and fall into 5 lots. There were initially three expressions of interest from contractors, one pulled out before the interview. Cllrs. Oakley and Nelson saw the remaining two. It was apparent that one of these would not progress his interest further, once it was known that he would be required to provide his own equipment. The one remaining candidate was Mr. Maxwell Hickinbottom, who already undertakes similar duties at two neighbouring parishes. He has received excellent references from one of them and holds the necessary certificates and insurance.

The Clerk has obtained a copy of a contract used by one of these parishes and amended it to suit Newborough Parish Council's needs which includes a schedule of areas to be cut together with the frequency. The contract will require the grass to be cut 10 times per year with one cut being undertaken this week and the other before the well dressing. The cost will work out at £180 per cut or £1800 per year. It is normal for the contract to run for 2 years.

Cllr. Prince said he thought that it was very important to schedule the cuts at the right time of year.

It was proposed by Cllr. Macpherson and seconded by Cllr. Skipper that the contract be let to Mr. Hickinbottom and that he be asked to make a cut before the coming weekend. Cllr. Oakley said he would ring Mr. Hickinbottom to tell him he was successful and to ask the first cut to be done. The Clerk was asked to send out 2 copies of the contract, one for signing and returning to the file and the other for the contractor to keep.

Action: Clerk and Cllr. Oakley

10. Clerks Report:

The Clerk reported on the following:

Finances:

Accounts for payment –
Clerk's salary and expenses - £409.47 (including Newsletter production.

RAB Consultants - £1129.30

Staffordshire County Council hall hire charges - £90.00

Payments received - £982.00 – Village Hall Committee

Account Balances – Current account - £1992.53

Reserve account - £10388.39

Grants account – £2577.56

Tinks Croft account – £6581.13

Will have still not received an invoice from the archaeologist.

Correspondence:

Letter have been received from:

- i) Burton town centre Christmas lights – request for donation.
- ii) Planning applications committee – updates – placed in circulation file.
- iii) ESBC – draft strategic housing land availability assessment consultation - placed in circulation file.
- iv) SPCA – subscriptions for 2009 / 10 - £147.00
- v) ESBC – Parish Councils Forum – 8th July
- vi) SCC – Conservation Area plan of Newborough for future reference.
- vii) Audit Commission – forms for this years audit – deadline 17th August.
- viii) Allianz – insurance renewal – 1st June - £548.48 (£513.49 last year)
- ix) Letter of complaint from Mr Jeffries.

The remaining correspondence was placed in the circulation file.

The Clerk reported that he had now been in post for 12 months and that it had been a steep learning curve for him with a major capital project to administer, the introduction of the lengthsmans agreement and FOI procedures to introduce. There was still much to be learned and he said he would attend as many training courses as was possible given his limited time availability. Two courses had been attended so far, one on 'the precept and finances' and the other on 'a well run meeting'. The later was particularly interesting as it demonstrated how the chairman should conduct and control meetings to ensure everyone present had an equal opportunity to speak and put their point across before a formal vote is taken over contentious issues. The Clerk said that training is available to all councillors on a one-to-one basis through the Staffs Parish Council's Association. Anyone requiring training should contact the Clerk in the first instance.

The Clerk then asked if the councillors would authorise an annual salary increase in-line with the nationally agreed spinal column points. This was proposed by Cllr. Briggs and seconded by Cllr. Spencer. All were in favour.

Cllr. Macpherson thanked the Clerk for his work over the last 12 months.

11. Councillors Report:

Playground

Cllr. Skipper reported on the progress being made towards securing funding for the playground improvements. Applications for awards in excess of £70,000 are being compiled. Estimates for the works are around this figure. Plans have been drawn and consultations with ESBC and other bodies completed. There is no requirement for planning permission as there is no change of use. The Environment Agency has asked to be informed once the bridge works are about to be placed.

Cllr. Nelson that the Parish Council owed a lot to Cllr. Skipper for her hard work and dedication not only in taking on this project but also for obtaining funding and seeing the church wall project through to conclusion. This was unanimously agreed by all.

Cllr. Nelson said that the county highways department have undergone significant reorganisation again and that he was unsure who his main point of contact would be in future.

No further reports were forthcoming, as some had been dealt with during the open parish meeting that preceded the general meeting.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 10.00pm

The date of the next meeting, which is the AGM, is on Monday 11th May at 7.30pm.

Items for the agenda please by noon on Friday 1st May.

Signed

Dated: