

NEWBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the General Meeting held in the Youth and Adult Centre at 7.30pm on Monday, 2nd November 2009

Present: Cllr. B. Skipper (Chairman), Cllr. A. Nelson. (Vice Chairman) Cllr. P. Spencer.
Cllr. W. Prince. Cllr. R. Oakley. Cllr. A. Briggs.
Mr Tony Spencer – a member of the public
Ian Colclough (Clerk)

1. Apologies:

Cllr. P. Macpherson.

2. Declarations of Interest:

Cllr. Oakley declared an interest in item 12 on the agenda.

3. Chairperson's Opening Remarks:

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

4. Public Forum:

The chairman invited Mr Tony Spencer to speak. He asked that the agenda for future meetings be made available on the village web site and that the minutes of the September meeting were still not available to view. The Clerk said he is in the hands of the Webmaster but would try to ensure these were published in future. The Parish Council does not have its own access to the web site.

Mr Spencer also wanted to raise a question over the Christmas tree lights but then realised that these were due for discussion on the evening agenda.

He went on to say that he could see no record, in the past minutes, of any reference to the Parish Council discussing the removal of trees at the playground. The chairman assured him that the trees would be replaced in time for the next growing season.

Mr Spencer asked who would be paying for the trees and the chairman said that the Parish Council would foot the bill. Mr Spencer thought this wrong and said that, as the Parish Council had removed the trees in the first place, without the consent of the Local Planning Authority, that public funds should not be used. After some discussion he was invited by the vice chairman to put his complaint to Mr David Duckitt the LL.B Monitoring Officer at ESBC. Mr Spencer agreed to do this and to report the outcome to the Clerk.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th October 2009:

The minutes of the last meeting held on 5th October 2009 were read. Some amendments were identified within the minutes:

Item 12 last paragraph – should say no more large party gatherings would be allowed in a marquee.

Item 12 penultimate paragraph – Cllr Briggs said that she had raised her concerns that the Parish Council had not had a formal reply from ESBC about the planning infringement at Poplars Farm and yet the Council were going to write to residents without these facts to hand. This had not been recorded in the minutes. This was noted.

Item 13 – Cllr P. Spencer not Cllr. Prince raised this.

It was proposed by Cllr. Phil Spencer and seconded by Cllr. Prince that the minutes were a true record of the proceedings. All were in favour.

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6. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

Village Hall.

The chairman said that following the meeting held prior to this Parish Council meeting, there had been a unanimous decision not to pursue the development of a new village hall and that the school governors had undertaken to allow the use of the school by village organisations.

Village Well.

Cllr Spencer has spoken to the landowners to say that Cllr Nelson will be in contact with regard to a meeting with them and Mr Harris, the contractor. Cllr. Nelson has been unable to contact Mr Harris but will try to arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

Action: Cllr Nelson

Highways update.

The Clerk read out an email received from Roy Carr at County Highways stating that the proposed new footway outside the Red Lion had been withdrawn from the programme due to lack of funds. However, the footway alongside the new church wall would be surfaced. Cllr Nelson said he would continue to pursue having the footway by the public house reinstated in the programme.

Action: Cllr. Nelson

The Clerk said he has written to Highways about getting the infill footway south of Squirrels Corner into a future programme but had not yet received a reply. Cllr Nelson gave a brief history of this request for the benefit of the member of the public present. There was then some discussion about ownership of land fronting the highway. The Clerk said he has made enquiries of the Highways department regarding the actual highway extent in this location and is awaiting a reply. It was suggested that the area outside the ex council houses in Yoxall Road could be improved by placing some 'stepping stone' paving flags. Cllr Nelson said he had some that could be used and would look into this.

Cllr. Nelson reported that the numerous potholes around the parish had been attended to.

Parish Mowing Equipment.

Cllr Skipper now has the strimmer in her store and asked for an item to be put on the next agenda so that its disposal can be discussed.

Action: Clerk

Speedwatch

Cllr. Spencer said that the coordinator had reported a loss of interest from the volunteers now that several sessions had taken place. Cllr. Skipper said that the permanent speed camera signs were still not ready. Cllr Oakley said that one problem was the shortage of sites where a speed check could be undertaken because of suitable sign locations.

7. Planning Applications:

The following has been received from ESBC:

1. Eton House, Hollybush Road, Newborough – reduction in height of 2 trees and crown reduction of 3 willows – ESBC has no objections.
2. Poplars Farm, Yoxall Road – ESBC decision – outline application refused.

8. Parish Plan Update:

Cllr. Briggs said that a database of addresses sent to her by the Clerk was unusable. The Clerk said this was a copy of one supplied to him by ESBC and that when a mail merge is used to compile the address labels the address information becomes 'shuffled'. Cllr Nelson suggested that a simple hard copy be produced and the envelopes hand written. The Clerk undertook to supply Cllr. Briggs with a hard copy.

Action: Clerk

9. Comments, compliments and complaints procedure – draft for review:

A second draft had been previously circulated. Several comments over the content were raised. The Clerk undertook to make the revisions requested and to bring the final document to the next meeting for signing off.

Action: Clerk

10. Inventory of PC Assets:

The Clerk produced a second draft of the asset register. Several minor amendments and additions were requested. The Clerk said he had received emails from County Highways and E-on stating that the 5 lighting columns purchased by the Council would be maintained and insured by them. The Clerk undertook to make the revisions requested and to bring the final document to the next meeting for signing off.

The Clerk was asked to determine the minimum value of an asset before it has to be individually itemised in the Councils insurance.

Action: Clerk

11. To approve amendments to the Annual Return:

The Audit Commission had identified an error in section 1 of the annual return and asked that the incorrect figures were struck out and the correct ones inserted. This was done prior to the meeting. The chairmen was asked to re-sign and date the form and insert the new minute information before the Clerk returns the papers to the Commission.

Action: Clerk

12. Public Footpath Diversion:

A letter has been received from Staffordshire County Council regarding the diversion of public footpath number 20 in the parish. The path in question leaves Yoxall Road and passes through Brook Farm. Cllr. Oakley, who had previously declared an interest in this item, said that there was a long history regarding this footpath in that the old maps showed it never actually joined with Yoxall Road. He said that SCC felt there was a drawing error made some years ago and that the path should join Yoxall Road. Cllr. Oakley said he had given approval for the path to be reinstated and shown on SCC's definitive footpath map in consideration for the slight relocation of the remainder of the route.

13. Clerks Report

The Clerk reported on the following:

Finances:

Account Balances –

Current account - £1500.00

Reserve account - £14153.49

Grants account – £2578.51

Tinks Croft account – £6581.79

Accounts for payment –

Clerk Salary - £185.14 and expenses - £46.98

Treemendous Estate Care - £180.00

-The Clerk was asked to determine how many cuts had been done as the Council had only requested ten. The account was not to be paid until this was established. The chairman said that nettles required spraying in the playground area and the holly hedge in Hollybush Road required trimming. The Clerk was asked to tell Mr Hickinbottom that no further work was required this year.

Action: Clerk

ESBC for Oak Tree - £77.00

- Parishioner Mr Tony Spencer has expressed his concerns with regards to public funds being used to buy this oak tree, and after a heated debate, it was suggested that Mr Tony Spencer contact Mr David Duckitt at ESBC to determine the legality of this spend. Mr Tony Spencer said he would inform

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the Clerk of the outcome of that conversation. The Clerk was asked to contact the tree officer at ESBC to put on hold the order for the tree.

Payments received –
None

Correspondence:

The following correspondence had been received by post or email and was read:

- i) ESBC – Plant Fairs 2010. Noted – added to circulation file
- ii) Quality Parish Councils – Community Plans and Training – Noted.
- iii) RSPCA – request for donation. Refused.
- iv) SCC – request for councillors contact details. Noted and placed in circulation file.
- v) Community Council of Staffordshire – BKV results. Newborough Village received a ‘highly commended’ for 2009. However, the judges commented, “it had lost a bit of sparkle and maybe a bit more concerted community effort is needed to put the village back to the very top echelons”. The Clerk was asked to put the judges comments on the notice board.

Action: Clerk

All other items were placed in the circulation file.

Correspondence sent:

- i) Letter of support for playground development group.
- ii) Letter of support for extension at the school.
- iii) Draft letter (sent to all councillors) in response to complainants re Poplars Farm.
- iv) Letter to all complainants re Poplars farm.
- v) Letter to Tim Corbett re grant application (enclosing completed forms)
- vi) Letter giving PC’s permission to develop playground.
- vii) Letter to E-on re ownership of streetlights.
- viii) Letter to SCC highways re footway in Yoxall Road.
- ix) Accounts – explanation of year-end balance differences.
- x) Numerous e-mails.

14. Christmas Tree:

Cllr. Macpherson had sent an email to the Clerk regarding the village Christmas tree, as he did not want to see a plastic tree, as last year. Cllr Skipper said she would find a suitable tree of around 15 feet and organise a working party to have it erected and the lights placed upon it. She also said she would speak to Mr Brian Beck regarding the possibility of planting a permanent tree in the churchyard for use each year.

Action: Cllr. Skipper.

In his email, Cllr. Macpherson also referred to a donation made to Newborough PCC to cover the costs of the clock and Christmas tree lights. The Clerk was asked to determine when the Council last made such a payment.

Action: Clerk

Cllr. Macpherson also made known his feelings with regards to the new village hall. He also notified those present of his new mobile phone number.

15. Councillors Report:

Cllr Skipper has obtained a quote to re-publish the village footpath map from Mr M R Davies and said that the Council would pay £80 towards this.

Cllr. Oakley said that the old map had a few errors and that these need to be rectified before being published. He undertook to speak to Mr Davies about these amendments.

Action: Cllr Oakley

Cllr. Skipper said that a grant application for £1250 had been made to County Cllr. Tim Corbett and this money, if granted, would be used to build the footbridge and fence in the playground. A further meeting is due to take place with 'Open Spaces' regarding the parishes grant application. There is a possibility that, with the proposed building of the new village hall being shelved, the land may be dedicated to the parish for use as a nature trail.

Cllr. Spencer said that a letter from the school governors, regarding the use of the premises by village organisations, would be copied and sent to the Clerk for inclusion on the parish notice board.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.20pm.

The date of the next meeting is on Monday 7th December at 7.30pm.

Signed Dated: