

Minutes of Parson Drove Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12th March 2014 in The Cage, Station Road, Parson Drove.

Attended by Councillors G. Booth (Chairman), P Spriggs (Vice Chairman), C Bellamy, G. Bellamy, J Cook, & A Kraus.
3 members of the public.

14/43. To receive apologies for absence.

Apologies had been received from Councillor Everett & PCSO Dave Russ.

14/44. To consider any requests by Councillors for Dispensations.

There were no requests for dispensations.

14/45. Members' Declaration of Interest for items on the Agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

14/46. Public Participation – To allow up to 15 minutes for any members of the public to address the meeting.

Members of the public expressed their concern over debris being thrown onto the public highway on 3 occasions from a building site at Church End. As a result of this action a vehicle had been damaged and although this had been reported to the Police it would appear they were unconcerned as no-one had been injured. Problems were also being encountered because of vehicles parking on the road instead of on the building site.

A member of the public expressed the view that the Neighbourhood Plan would not appear to be so difficult to produce. Specialist assistance could be obtained if necessary and an offer of a £1,000 donation towards this was made.

14/47. Community Police Officers Report.

The Clerk had received an email from PCSO Dave Russ advising that there had been no crimes or incidences since the last meeting.

In view of the concerns raised during public participation regarding the debris being thrown onto the public highway Councillors resolved that a letter should be sent to the Police raising our concern over the potential for serious injury and asking for some action to be taken also to query why this incident was not included in the report. Councillors also agreed to contact Fenland District Planning Department as a planning condition states that all vehicles are to be parked on the development site for highway safety reasons. The Clerk was requested to enquire about the laws regarding horse fouling on the public highway and footpaths.

14/48. To approve & sign the minutes of the meetings held on the 12th & 19th February 2014.

The minutes were taken as read, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

14/49. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 12th & 19th February 2014.

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

14/50. To receive reports from County & District Councillors.

Councillor Booth advised that there would be no increase in the District Council's element of the Council Tax for 2014/15. The recent renaming of the Hudson Sports Centre had been resolved with the original name now being retained.

14/51. Planning Matters & Applications for consideration.

a) Notification from Fenland District Council that the following Planning Applications have been granted approval.

1. Mrs H Roberts, Planning Application No. F/YR13/0942/TRTPO, Agent B Roberts, for works to 8 Lime trees & felling of 1 Sycamore Tree covered by Tree Preservation Order at The Old Rectory, 312 Main Road, Church End, Parson Drove.

2. Mr Woolcott, Planning Application No F/YR13/0923/F, Agent J Burton, for the erection of a two storey 4 bed dwelling with integral garage involving the demolition of the existing bungalow & outbuilding at Rupen, Long Drove, Parson Drove.

Information noted by Councillors.

b) Notification from Fenland District Council that the following Planning application has been withdrawn

Mr Woolcott, Planning Application No. F/YR13/0925/F, Agent J Burton, for the erection of a two storey 4 bed dwelling with integral double garage involving demolition of existing mobile home & outbuildings at Leyland Kennels, Long Drove, Parson Drove.

Information noted by Councillors.

c) Letter from Fenland District Council advising that the erection of the brick pillars at The Old Farmhouse, Main Road had been investigated. A letter had been sent advising the owner/occupier to cease and remove any unauthorised development by the 4th April. The Chairman advised that the owner/occupier had contacted him stating that he had believed that the pillars were permitted development. The Chairman had also received concerns that a neighbouring high wooden fence was also an unauthorised development within the Conservation Area. It was agreed to pass this matter onto the District Planning Department.

Councillors resolved for enquires to be made with the District Council Planning Department to ascertain what exactly was permitted development within the Conservation Area in view of recent planning concerns raised and also to enquire about the progress of the Conservation Area appraisal.

14/52. Accounts & Finance

a). Councillors resolved to approve the following invoices for payment.

Mrs Yvonne Reader, clerks quarter year salary & expenses £1,348.L.G.A. 1972 s.112.

Crowson & Ward, administration expenses, £20.33. L.G.A. 1972 s 111.

Citizens Advice Bureau, outreach sessions for the last year, £90. L.G.A. 1972 s 142.

b). Information regarding the reductions to the Concurrent Functions Grant.

The Chairman advised that at the District Council Meeting it was agreed that whilst the reduction in the Concurrent Function Grant could not be changed for this year further reductions over the next 2 years would be reconsidered.

Parish Councils could apply for grant funding from a £10,000 grant fund previously only available to the 4 Town Councils.

A meeting had been arranged by Benwick Parish Council to discuss the reductions in the District Council's concurrent functions grant and representatives from 7 Parish Councils had attended. At this meeting it was agreed that the Chairman and Councillor Richardson from Benwick would have a meeting with Cllrs Melton & Humphrey from the District Council to discuss what they were proposing for future years. It would appear that all but 1 Parish Council was opposed to the reduction and eventual loss of the grant.

c) To consider quotations received for the annual grass cutting & maintenance of open spaces.

The Clerk advised that 3 quotations had been received; these were for £3,217.22, £3,535 and £3,813 all excluding VAT.

Councillors resolved to continue with the same contractor as in previous years who had submitted a quotation for £3,217.22 plus VAT.

d) Email from the County Council regarding street light energy costs for Parish Council street lights.

An email had been received from the County Council advising that Balfour Beatty had provided the County Council with an updated inventory showing that the parish had 44 streetlights and on the assumption that this was correct there was an energy charge for 1st April 2013 to 30th September 2013 of £631.63 plus VAT. Future Invoices would be raised in September and on this basis our next Invoice would be for the period 1st October 2013 to 30th September 2014.

Councillors resolved to respond to this email advising that the parish do not and never have paid energy costs for the parish streetlights. The Clerk had already replied requesting details of the location of the 44 streetlights as this was less than expected. The Clerk was asked to make enquiries with other Fenland parishes to ascertain if they had received a similar request.

e) Receipts & payment and budget update report.

Councillors resolved to approve the budget report presented by the Clerk and agreed that the under spend on the Precept Budget headings would be allocated to the specific allocated cash reserves budget headings for the next financial year.

f) Review of S137 grants and determine if any further funding can be provided to the Youth Club.

Councillors resolved by a majority vote to give a further grant of £340 to Parson Drove Youth Club as this amount was remaining in the grants & donation budget for this financial year.

14/ 53. To review Standing Orders & Financial Regulations and agree on changes in view of new Model Standing orders issued by NALC.

Councillors resolved to defer the adoption of the revised Standing Orders presented by the Clerk until the next meeting.

Councillors resolved to make no changes to the Financial Regulations at the present time pending the publication of new model Financial Regulations by NALC.

14/54. Chairman's update report on lettings & shared ownership of Affordable Homes on Exception Site at Church End.

The Chairman had met with 2 representatives from Circle Anglia Roddons Housing Association and an Officer from the District Council when changes to the local lettings plan had been discussed to address the concerns raised at the Parish Council Meeting on the 12th February. A revised Local Lettings Plan was subsequently being drawn up.

Regarding the provision of two units for Shared Ownership no-one in Parson Drove was currently registered for Shared Ownership with Orbit Homebuy and the Housing Association were still looking into the costs of the units.

The housing association were going to contact the registered applicants on the Home Link Lettings Register to see if they were interested in Shared Ownership and the Parish Council also needed to promote the Shared Ownership scheme. It was expected that the homes would be ready for tenants by the end of May.

14/55. To discuss information received at the last meeting regarding Neighbourhood Planning.

A copy of a completed Neighbourhood Plan for a Parish larger than Parson Drove had been issued to Councillors prior to the meeting provided by Cambridgeshire ACRE together with information on services they could provide to assist in the process but these would incur charges.

In view of changes made to the District Councils Core Strategy Councillors considered that it was necessary to consider producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillors resolved by a majority to set up a working group to look into taking this forward. The working group would consist of the Chairman and Councillor Kraus and six parishioners who had already indicated that they were interested in assisting with preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

14/56. To discuss and agree on anything to be arranged to commemorate the Great War.

The Clerk was requested to contact the Royal British Legion to enquire if they had any plans and it was agreed that this item would be raised at the Annual Parish Assembly Meeting on the 30th April.

14/57. To debate & respond where appropriate to items of correspondence received.

a) Email from Circle Housing Roddons regarding the New Horizons Bus and asking to bring the bus to Parson Drove.

Councillors resolved to suggest that the bus visits Parson Drove on the Annual Car & Bike Show to be held on the playing field on Sunday 20th July.

b) Email from Police & Crime Commissioner advising of a multi-agency mental health agreement.

Information noted by Councillors.

c) Email from Cambridgeshire County Council with information on accessing adult social care services.

Information noted by Councillors.

d) Email from Fenland District Council providing a briefing note on the A47 Alliance.

Information noted by Councillors.

e) Email from Fenland District Council inviting members to attend a Planning Advisory Service Review on Tuesday 25th March at County Hall, March.

The Chairman & Councillor Kraus agreed to attend on behalf of the Council.

14/58. Street Lighting & Highway Matters.

a) Highway issues to be reported to Cambridgeshire County Council.

The following matters were raised by Councillors:

Footpath flooding outside the entrance to the Alderman Payne School, wooden fence still not repaired at Swanbridge, metal fence railings in front of the pond still not repaired, footpath outside the Bowling Green being pushed up causing a tripping hazard, the reinstated drain at Ingham Hall Gardens/Brewery Close was unsatisfactory as there was now a dangerous dip.

Some markings had been placed along the Main Road and work was being done to some of the kerbs and footpaths. The Clerk and Chairman had made enquiries with the Highways department as it was rumoured that the road was soon to be resurfaced but as yet had not received a reply.

Vehicles were parking on the roadside along Murrow Bank, just past the School and this was considered to be a hazard.

b) Email from the County Council advising that our application under the Local Highway Improvements scheme has been successful for Church End, Parson Drove.

An email had been received stating that our application had been successful but a comment had been added stating that members had only scored and considered the 40mph buffer at Church End.

Councillors therefore resolved to ask for clarification on what had actually been approved from our application.

c) Faulty street lights to be reported to Cambridgeshire County Council.

The Clerk was requested to report 2 faulty street lights along Main Road.

14/59. Amenities 95 Management Committee Report.

Councillor Cook advised that no information on their grant application for a new village hall had been received at the present time. A working party were re-decorating the village hall on Saturday 15th March.

14/60. Councillors questions to Chairman & Clerk.

There were no questions asked by members.

14/61. Any other business (information items only).

Concerns had been raised by residents opposite the Affordable Housing site that vehicle headlights would shine into their property in view of the slope of the driveways.

14/62. Dates for future Council meetings.

The next meeting was confirmed for Wednesday 16th April.

The Annual Parish Assembly Meeting would be held on the 30th April.

Meeting closed 9.55pm.