

Page 104 (2013/14)

Minutes of a '**Full Blakeney Parish Council Meeting**' which was held on **Tuesday 4th February 2014** at 7.00pm.

Present:- Tony Faulkner (Chairman), Glenn Aikens, Margaret Benson, Alban Donohoe, Mary James, Louise Leonard, Leanne Welch & Ann Wootten.

Clerk:- Tracey Bayfield

Public:- 5.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Were received ***accepted*** from Roger Hall (*work*), Jenny Girling & Barry Girling (*travelling home.*) PCSO Becky Taylor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were none.

3. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that the following **MINUTES** are signed as a true record.

3.1. FULL COUNCIL – Tuesday 7th January 2014.

3.2. FINANCE COMMITTEE – Wednesday 15th January 2014.

3.3. RECREATION COMMITTEE – Monday 25th November 2013.

4. GUESTS –

4.1. **Wells Police (Safer Neighbourhood Team)** – Since the last Parish Council meeting there has been no crime in the parish, just 3 calls to the Police, nothing of note. As always we are asking people to be vigilant and report anything suspicious, we are still in the season for burglary, heating oil theft and marine crime, all information gratefully received.

5. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS – There were none.

6. PLANNING – *A meeting of the Planning Committee follows after this Full Council Meeting.*

7. COUNCILLOR REPORTS –

7.1. **District Councillor** - Lindsay Brettle.

It is sad to report that our North Norfolk has featured recently in the national media for two reasons; the tragic American helicopter crash at Cley marshes and the North Sea surge and flooding in December. NNDC's response to the North Sea emergency was outstanding and many have expressed their gratitude. At present an information pack listing the damage and associated costs as far as we can tell at the moment, including maps and photographs, has been prepared for presentation to central government as we lobby for financial support to help cover some of the costs. Given recent events around the country it is unlikely that our 'pack' will be the

only one. Applications for help from the Flood Appeal fund are now being received and assessed, with sessions being held at Walcott where the Housing Team is available to help advise and assist with completion of the forms. We are also accepting applications from affected businesses. The fund has now around £150,000 available. The Environment Agency has distributed a leaflet; Morston to Blakeney sea bank storm surge repairs – which details the work to be undertaken. Further information from sophie.fallon@environment-agency.gov.uk

7.2. **County Councillor** - Dr. Marie Strong gave a report.

Adjourned at 7.18pm for the OPEN PUBLIC SESSION and reconvened at 7.20pm.

*It was **proposed & agreed** to bring forward item no. 9.5. as John Sizer from the **National Trust** (N/T) had come along to update us on the Trusts thoughts following the tidal/storm damage.*

John explained that the N/T will be present throughout the entire drop in session with the Environment Agency (E.A.) in the Scout Hut on Thursday 13th February from 2.30pm til 7pm and that they will make the E.A. aware of the need for short term solutions for Easter and this season's tourism as well as the long term solutions. The National Trusts view is that to do nothing is not an option and will be challenging the E.A. and Halcrow for the best outcome for the environment.

Halcrow (Kevin Marsh); I met with Kevin on Friday last week and as per his e-mail Halcrow have been appointed by the Environment Agency to complete an appraisal covering Brancaster West Marsh, Blakeney Freshes and Cley/Salthouse. Essentially, gathering data and exploring options. This will inform EA in advance of the Blakeney public drop in meeting and also be used by EA to develop their plans following the drop in session. We will be providing lots of data covering socio-economic, wildlife/habitat, agricultural/management, local contacts/interested parties etc. The more data the better and we will provide as much as we can which I hope will be of use for the drop in session. I would urge Blakeney PC to do likewise and asap as this will make for a more informed drop in session.

Funding; It is abundantly clear that finance is key and we cannot expect EA to come up with all the answers. They are under immense pressure and under a great deal of scrutiny about how they allocate their funds. There is obviously a political choice as to where Government directs its funding but the early signs are cause for concern. Halcrow have already identified the need to consider funding opportunities and EA will almost certainly seek best value for any project through partnership funding. So, I suspect that to lever as much Government funding we will need to have strong partnership which demonstrates positive outcomes for the natural and socio-economic environment. Halcrow are already exploring funding opportunities and are looking at, RSPB, N/T, E.A. NCC, NNDC, Euro, Heritage, Wildfowlers & Natural England etc.

The area is due further high tides and with the wind in the right direction flooding is still a problem and the Anglian Water sewerage works pumping station on Friary Hills

Page 106 (2013/14)

remains vulnerable also. Given the extent of damage to the floodbank and in turn the closure of the Norfolk Coast Path, any rerouting of this path will require the support of other landowners.

The sluice has had the breached material from the channel removed, but the two ineffective sluices need to be looked at as an asset in their own rights. The banks breaching did without a doubt, save other places from being flooded such as Morston and Wiveton.

9.5. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that the Parish Councils response on the state of the **Flood Defence Banks** and the future is;

It is immensely important to our local economy and community that this stretch of coastal path is reinstated somehow, even if it has to be rerouted. We do not necessarily agree that the bank needs totally reinstating. We insist that the E.A. looks hard and wide for the money and whilst undertaking the works we would ask if dredging of the New Cut can be undertaken as part of the scheme in order to help drain the marshes.

8. FINANCE

8.1. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that the **Accounts** to date are paid.

8.2. **Clerk/RFO Report** was presented to the members and showed the balances held.

8.3. It was ***proposed & agreed*** to instruct the contractors as per the quotations received, with regard the following items which do not form part of the **Insurance Claim** following the tidal surge damage; i) Clearing of tangle/debris on parish owned land, ii) Repairs to the Electricity Supply outlets on the Carnser. The latter could be added to future insurance policy if the members so wish, the first cannot.

8.4. It was ***proposed & agreed*** to accept the quotation from our street lighting contractors to supply and install a new lantern following storm damage to the current one at **Hayward Close**.

8.5. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that we are delighted to appoint Mr David Wright as our new **Internal Auditor**.

8.6. Applications for the **2014 Community Fund** were received and considered. A total of 13 groups applied this year, some for the first time and some regulars did not apply. Given the devastation caused by the tidal surge in December, it was ***proposed & agreed*** that this year we take a different approach and take each application individually, with the aim being to give as much as possible to the Blakeney & District Wildfowlers to help restore the duck pond which is a huge focal point and visitor attraction. Therefore it was agreed to give as follows; Blakeney History Centre; £100, Blakeney Scout

Group Executive Council; £200, Blakeney Methodist Church £200, Blakeney Cubs & Beavers; £300, Blakeney Bingo; £100, Blakeney Sports Club; £200, Holt Area Patients Group; £100, Blakeney Village Hall Trust, Coastal Rowing Association of Blakeney, Norfolk Age UK, Norfolk & Suffolk 4x4 Response and Magpas, (The Emergency Medical Charity); £0, leaving £2,800 for the Blakeney & District Wildfowlers Association.

8.7. It was ***proposed & agreed*** to implement the recommendation from the Finance Committee to make the visitors side of **Coronation Car Park** a pay & display car park. The pricing will be; up to 30 minutes free, and a daily charge of £3.00 as per the Carnser. Due to the limited number of spaces there will be no seasonal or weekly tickets. Residents who are eligible for a Carnser permit will find that it also covers the visitor's side of Coronation Car Park also. A solar powered machine will be ordered from our current suppliers.

8.8. The Parish Council has been quoted £10k - £15k to install **Wooden Posts** such as telegraph poles, along the front length of the Quay, in order to stop damage to boats and boats mounting the public footpath and the railings (both NCC Highways) when such tidal and weather conditions are in force. The Finance Committee were presented with this quote, and agreed that due to the significant costs and the fact that we are neither landowners, or harbour master, nor boat owners that we should not take this forward. It was therefore ***proposed & agreed*** that we do not take this forward, that we wait and see what happens in the next 12 months and if there is a need to action this, then outside funding is sought, as the Parish Council is not responsible.

8.9. Members were in receipt of information in order to set the **2014/15 Precept**. The Finance Committee did not agree a proposal to share with the Full Council as they awaited the Full Councils thoughts on the previous two items and further information from NNDC. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that we set a Precept of £33k including the grant element from NNDC.

9. TRANSPORT ITEMS & REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

9.1. Concerns have recently been raised about large vehicles and builders vans regularly blocking **Coronation Car Park**, especially near Coronation Lane, due to inconsiderate parking. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that we install a bollard with a reflective band to stop the parking close to the actual Coronation Lane which should then allow space for vehicles to pass. (Simon Strong has been commissioned to install bollards on the Red House Land, hence we will ask him to add this to the works.)

9.2. Members wished to thank Roger Hall (in his absence) who attended the **Superfast Broadband** meeting for rural areas in North Norfolk for his excellent report. The plan is that Blakeney will be upgraded between January & July 2015.

9.3. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that Louise Leonard and Jenny Girling, both members of the **Personnel Committee**, will participate in the interviews for the Carnser Car Park Attendants, along with one National Trust representative and the Clerk, with Roger Hall as the reserve member if need be, subject to his availability.

9.4. Tom Green had offered to give a presentation following the December **Tidal Surge**. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that we ask if he would like to do this at the Annual Parish Meeting on 20th March, and if the Environment Agency would be happy for him to show his pictures at their drop in session on 13th February.

9.5. The Parish Councils response on the state of the **Flood Defence Banks** and the future. *This item was dealt with earlier on in the meeting.*

9.6. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that **Gray's Fair** will be in Blakeney on the Carnser from Monday 11th August until 18th August. Sadly they will miss the Greasy Pole etc, as they will be attending Wells Carnival.

9.7. **Remembering WWI** – The Secretary to the Royal British Legion has confirmed that they will be holding some sort of event to mark this occasion, as will the Blakeney History Centre.

9.8. **Annual Parish Meeting** (Thursday 20th March) and who to invite. BPC has already had confirmation from Rev. Jenny Pathmaragah that she can attend and will give an oversight into the Café TMC. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that we also ask *Steve Hayman from the Environment Agency, Tom Green (as mentioned above) & Norman Lamb MP.*

9.9. The Clerk had received good feedback from the open public meeting with **Victory Housing** which was held on Thursday 30th January 2014. The meeting was well attended with around 55 people present, the majority of people felt that their questions were answered, even if in some cases the answers were not particularly what we wanted to hear.

10. COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS – There were none.

11. CORRESPONDENCE – Various documents were available to read/for information on the table.

11.1. **Sustainable Communities Act** and how Parish & Town Councils can consider using it. Swaffham Town Council has proposed that the Norfolk Association of Local Councils lobbies government for free non-domestic rates on public toilets, which we have supported as it affects us also. It was ***proposed & agreed*** that we ask NfKALC to do the same for i) free public car parks & ii) Parish & Town Council offices and storage buildings.

Page 109 (2013/14)

Meeting closed at 9.08pm.

Chairman _____

Items of interest which will be on the table.

- i) Blakeney Parish Council Website Statistics – well worth a look; In August 2013 there were 14,776 requests for pages, the quietest was our first month, July 2012, but still with 1,760 requests!
- ii) Blakeney Area Historical Society Newsletter – Then and Now: *January*.
- iii) The Almshouse Gazette – *Winter 2013*.