**BOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 APRIL 2018
 IN ALL SAINTS CHURCH, BOUGHTON**

**Present:**

**Parish Councillors**

Tom Roberts (Chairman), Andy Beeston, Mark Pogmore, Tim Scrivener

Parish Clerk – Helen Carrier

Borough Councillor – Colin Sampson

County Councillor – Martin Storey

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1. No apologies were received.

Absences: David Cooper and Ian Davies.

1. **To receive declarations of interest**

 There were no declarations of interest.

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 January 2018 and an Extra-ordinary meeting held on
 27 March 2018.**

 Having been previously circulated, it was proposed and accepted that the minutes be agreed.

1. **Matters arising**

 There were no matters to discuss.

1. **Visiting officer reports**

Verbal reports were received from the County and Borough Councillors.

1. **Correspondence**

The Clerk read out the correspondence she had received. No postal correspondence had been received.

1. **Chairman’s report**

 Most activity is dealt with in other agenda items. However KL&WN BC have just begun PC Network meetings. I attended the first earlier today and there was a range of interesting speakers. Of particular note were:

* Norfolk libraries now, apart from lending books, also “sponsor a range of interesting and useful activities. We were promised details will be sent out electronically.
* Policing – lots of cuts but also very active work on speeding. Active work on establishing safer neighbourhood teams. Of particular note is the increased number of unmarked police cars being used. We were told this was as a new covert policing team has been established in the Downham Market area to help tackle crime.
* On highways a very interesting presentation where, amongst other things, we learnt about the on-line reporting system. This enables problems with highways to be reported at any time of the day and also has the facility to check what progress has been made on reported problems.

Finally the Chairman reminded all, as mentioned at earlier meetings, that this would be his last as Chairman. Family and travel commitments meant that he was likely to be away for extended periods.

1. **Reports from Councillors**
	1. Communications

 No report received.

* 1. Fen report – Cllr Pogmore

*The weather since Christmas has been terrible. We have been lucky to have achieved three further working parties before the end of the season, and one of these was spent making safe several trees which had succumbed to the high winds. One very large willow had significant damage on two separate occasions due to the high winds, the upshot of which was that our specialist contractor has taken down the greater part of the tree as it had become completely unsafe.*

*Further scrub clearance has been carried out in a number of areas, and a thorough inspection has been made of the boardwalk in middle fen.*

*The huge amounts of rain which have fallen, accompanied by ice and snow rendered it impossible to fit the outfall weir inside the allowed time. Both the contractor and I reviewed the situation several times through Jan & Feb, but both the water levels and the ground conditions rendered the site unsafe for any such work. Natural England have granted a new permit for the installation in readiness for the next working season, in the hope that we have a drier summer, and can therefore get straight on to the work. Funding has been received from the EA to assist with this, as part of the bank works project.*

*Our expected reed cut has not been able to take place either, due to the exceptional amount of water in the fen, topped off with a layer of frozen snow. NE are happy for us to attempt a ‘double cut’ next winter, conditions permitting, to compensate for the area lost this February.*

*An application has been made for the first stage of the new Countryside Stewardship scheme. The staff at NE are not very hopeful of any success with this for smaller sites, but nonetheless are doing their best to help. If the Fen Committee get through the first part of this, the next stage will be done by staff at Natural England on our behalf.*

*We have had a spot NE inspection – the officer turned up giving less than a day’s notice to look at works connected with the requirements of the HLS scheme over the last nine years. He seemed very happy with what he saw*

* 1. Highways report – Cllr Roberts

*Councillors will be aware of the continuing problem of significant flooding, after any degree of rainfall, in Mil Hill Road. NCC Highways have advised that they hope to carry out remedial works this financial year.*

* 1. Planning report – Cllr Roberts

No new planning applications received.

* 1. Playground report – Cllr Beeston

*Again not a lot to report, the grass has not grown and the ground is saturated so unable to cut anyway.*

*There is a need to repair the ground in the entrance to the playground. An existing concrete footing around an old wooden post has become exposed and could cause a trip hazard. I’ve secured the necessary materials, FOC, to form a concrete ramp through the gateway plus a couple of slabs beyond to enable wheelchairs to enter safely. The neighbouring gate can be used for entry whilst the work is in progress, hopefully this will be done at the end of this month, weather permitting.*

*As soon as the village seats and other furniture have dried out, they will be treated with preservative.*

* 1. Public footpaths, signage and village assets

 No report received.

1. **Weed control around Pond**

It was reported that vegetation around perimeter of the pond has increased and the Irises were spreading and causing concern. The Environment Agency (EA) has advised that to spray the vegetation a licence will need to be obtained and only persons with a licence to spray could do the work and this would need to be done in the spring. It was agreed to obtain two quotes from companies with a spraying licence and then contact the EA to obtain the appropriate licence.

1. **Recycle Charges and Fly Tipping**

Councillors agreed to monitor the local area for fly tipping and will make a report to Norfolk County Council if the rise in fly tipping increases.

1. **HGV ban on Gibbet Lane**

The request by a Parishioner for a ban on HGV vehicles was noted. Following advice from NCC highways the process was likely to be both lengthy and expensive with no certainty of success. It was agreed that in view of the likely costs and procedures NCC highways would not be asked at this time to place a weight limit on the road. As an alternative councillors agreed to write a letter to British Sugar at Wissington asking them to require hauliers to avoid using Gibbet Lane in the future.

1. **Defibrillator**

 This was discussed in full at the earlier meeting.

1. **Planning Applications**

None received.

1. To discuss, update and adopt Council policies in preparation for Audit:
* Financial Regulations – reviewed, agreed and adopted.
* Register of Assets – councillors to review and will discuss at next meeting.
* Risk Assessment – councillors to review and will discuss at next meeting.
* Publication Scheme - – reviewed, agreed and adopted
* Disciplinary and Grievance Policy - – reviewed, agreed and adopted
1. **Health & Safety**

The Clerk will distribute a model Health & Safety policy to councillors for review and discussion at the next meeting.

1. Authorise payments – all agreed to authorise payments as listed below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Details** | **£** | **VAT** | **Total** |
| Helen Carrier | Clerks salary and expenses April 2018 |  £37.31  |  £ -  |  £37.31  |
| HMRC | PAYE 2017-2018 End Payment |  £69.00  |  £ -  |  £69.00  |
| HMRC | PAYE April 2018 |  £22.40  |  £ -  |  £22.40  |

1. **Public questions**

 No public attended.

1. **Date of next meeting**

The date of the Annual Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 8 May 2018 at 7pm in the village centre, All Saints Church.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10pm