WOODNEWTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY 1st APRIL 2019 IN THE VILLAGE HALL,
ORCHARD LANE, WOODNEWTON PE8 5EE AT 8.00PM

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Hansford (Chairman), Cllr Flack, Cllr Neville, Cllr Blackmore and the Parish Clerk/RFO.

1. Declarations of Member’s Interests from Councillors

Cllr Neville Declared an Interest in Agenda Item 5(a).

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jenner and County/District Cllr de Capell Brooke.

3. Public Time

No members of the public were present.

4. Minutes of Meeting Held on 4th March 2019

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th March 2019, having been previously circulated, were AGREED and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising

Item 10(b): (Having declared an interest Cllr Neville did not take part in this discussion). The Clerk reported that the Woodnewton Players had requested an amendment to the proposed Agreement which removed reference to the named person signing the original lease. As the inclusion of the named individual in the Agreement was to enable reference back to the original lease, Council did not accept the proposed amendment. Cllr Neville was asked to explain this to the Woodnewton Players.

Item 12(b): The Chairman advised Council that the bin in the cemetery had been emptied.

Item 12(c): The Village Hall had been booked for Clean-Up Day on 6th April.

6. Replacement of Street Lights

Cllr Blackmore circulated and spoke to a report on the Replacement Street Light Project, comprising the cost of replacing and installing the new lamps by E.on (alternative and updated quotes are being obtained for comparison/assessment purposes), current electricity and maintenance costs, and potential savings arising from installing the new lamps. Salix could provide a five-year interest free loan of some 65% of the total cost leaving 35% to be funded from reserves or another loan provider. It was estimated that savings could potentially pay for the scheme over a 7.4 year period.

Cllr Blackmore would get other quotes for comparison following which the Clerk would seek the required approval from Ncalc and the S of S to take out a loan. A full report would be submitted to the next meeting.
7. Playing Fields and Playground

(a) The monthly inspection report had been prepared. The condition of the benches and rubbish bin would be considered later in the meeting. Replacement screw covers would be bought for the hedgehog rocker (£0.50p each x 2), the rotten posts had been replaced, the power-washing done and the replacement parts for the zip wire fitted, but the renovation of the roundabout was still to be done.

The Parish Council is aware of problems with the rubber/plastic protective coverings and rails of the infant swings and AGREED to spend up to £125 + VAT per swing to overcome any safety and/or maintenance issues arising. Cllr Blackmore would de-construct the swings to investigate if repairs could be carried out.

(b) The new goal posts had been fitted but the sockets on the down-slope side protruded above the playing surface. In order to overcome this problem, while maintaining level cross bars it was agreed to shorten the sockets by the appropriate amount. The installer would be asked to do this work.

(c) Council AGREED to replace the litter bin in the Village Hall car park with a “Topsy Royale” costing £169.52 + VAT.

(d) Council discussed the future use of the three benches in the hedges around the children’s play area and playing fields that were not being used. Council AGREED to refurbish and relocate the best one to a site near the zip wire, and to dismantle the two others for either spare parts or for sale to any resident who wanted one. The Chairman would include this in his Newsletter report.

8. Wildflower Meadow

Wildflower Meadow Update: Cllr Flack advised Council that the turf had been lifted on 15th and 16th March. Some weed growth had subsequently occurred, but this had been removed. Although not the ideal time, Cllr Flack would sow the seed following rain or after watering the area.

9. Controlling Speeding Through the Village

Council AGREED to defer consideration of this item to the next meeting.

10. Alleged Unauthorised Change of Use

The alleged unauthorised change of use had been reported to ENC’s Planning Enforcement Officer who had asked for evidence supporting this claim. The Clerk would advise the ENC that it did not have any evidence other than the allegation made by a resident.

11. Arrangements for the 2019 Internal and External Audits

The Clerk outlined the time-tables for the 2019 Internal and External Audits. Because the next meeting was not scheduled until 13th May Council AGREED that the date for the Internal Audit could be arranged to take place before that date. The External Audit submission had to be made by 1st July and the Period of Public Rights had to cover 30 days between 17th June and 26th July but include the period 1st to 12th July. The Parish Council could be exempt from making a full submission if either its gross income or its gross expenditure was less than £25,000 in the year 2018 – 2019.

12. Insurance Arrangements

Council considered a Client Risk Presentation prepared by its Insurance Broker and provided clarification where required. The Clerk would advise the Brokers.
13. Parish Clerk Update

The Chairman had conducted the Clerk’s annual appraisal. Following which the Chairman proposed that the Clerk’s salary be increased in line with the national pay award 2019/2020, together with an additional two incremental points on the pay scale to reflect the outcome of the annual appraisal. This would give an hourly pay rate of £12.15p/hr - £263.24p/month equivalent as from 1st April 2019. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Blackmore and AGREED unanimously.

Cllr Hansford advised Council that, following the Clerk’s statement in August 2018 (see minute 17) he had been seeking (with the knowledge of the existing Clerk) a possible replacement. Someone had been identified but could not take over until September. On the advice of Ncalc, that person could be appointed without advertising the position.

14. Accounts

Council AGREED the following payments:

- Churchyard Grass (March) £300.00p
- Ncalc (Street Lighting Workshop) £75.00p
- Wildflower Meadow (netting/pegs) £137.99p
- Clerk’s Salary (March) £195.49p
- HMRC (Income Tax) £48.80p

15. Correspondence

(a) An email from a resident of Lindsey Close asking why the grass verge had not been cut/included in the grass cutting contract was considered. The Clerk would advise the resident that those verges had never been included in the contracts issued by the Parish Council but may have been cut when the Highways Authority undertook this work. Where verges were not cut under the Parish Council contract local residents volunteered to do the work.

The Chairman reported that he had received an email from another resident of Lindsey Close volunteering to cut the verges. The Chairman would respond accepting the offer.

(b) The Clerk reported that due to the extension of their periods in office due to the reorganisation of local government in Northamptonshire, Cllrs Registers if Interests may need updating.


(a) Cllr Flack reported that the oak tree planted in the cemetery was now showing signs of life.

(b) Cllr Hansford reported that he would try and encourage residents to join Clean-Up Day on Saturday (6th) either by leaflets or verbally.

(c) (during the meeting) Cllr Hansford had received an email for Cllr Robinson resigning from the Council for family and work commitment reasons. The Clerk would advise ENC.

17. Date of next meeting.

Monday 1st May 2019 at 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

18. There being no other Items for discussion the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.40pm

Chairman’s Signature …………………………………………………. 13th May 2019