

# Weybourne Parish Council

DRAFT MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on  
Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020, 7.30pm remotely using Zoom.

**Present:** Lyndon Swift (Chair), Pat Floyd, Penny Taylor, Valerie Stubbs, Robin Woodhouse, Ruth Gallally, Peter Gallally, Andy Crawford and Dan Howes (Clerk)

**Also present:** County Councillor Sarah Butikofer, Duncan Baker MP and two members of the public

1. **(a)** To receive and consider apologies

No apology received from Cllr Charlie Harrison.

**(b)** To receive Declarations of Interest on Agenda items and consider requests for Dispensations.

Cllr Swift has declared a declaration of interest towards item 9. (a) (ii) and will not take part in considering this planning application.

## 2. Minutes

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020.

Cllr Stubbs asked for various amendments to the draft minutes. The revised minutes were **agreed** as a true record of the meeting.

## 3. Public Participation

**(a)** The meeting was adjourned to allow correspondence from members of the public and any councillors with prejudicial interest to speak.

None received.

**(b)** To receive reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor and Police

**(discussed after section 5 (b))**

### Police

- The Police cluster newsletter has been received.

## 4. Chairman's Statement

Cllr Swift read out a statement which included the following points –

- It was Cllr Swift's intention following the last meeting to resign from the council but there were various calls and messages asking him to reconsider.
- Cllr Swift did write to all councillors to state that he would reconsider but this is subject to all councillors taking on active roles.
- Cllr Swift stated that if councillors do not want to take on an active role then they should look at standing down so an active member can be appointed.
- Cllr Swift stated that he would carry on as Chair but this is subject to changes which will be brought up in this meeting.
  - Cllr Stubbs wanted to say thank you to Cllr Swift reconsidering his position and for all his contributions towards the council.
- **Cllr Swift also wanted to make everyone aware that the meeting is being recorded and that all councillors act within a Zoom meeting as they would do in a regular face to face meeting. This means no alcohol, no smoking and no bad language.**

## 5. Windfarm Developments

(a) To receive any updates regarding the offshore wind developments

Cllr Stubbs has sent to all councillors updates on the issues with Hornsea 3 that Mr. Baker has taken up on behalf of the council and also updates on the Judicial Review. Two significant developments potentially are the National Grid co-ordination project; which is looking at establishing offshore ring mains and the PM's recent statement to the Conservative Party committing to a significant number of offshore windfarms by 2030.

(b) Opportunity to ask questions to Duncan Baker MP

Cllr Swift officially thanked Mr. Baker for joining our Zoom meeting. With the wind farms issues, developments etc., it is very important that we do hear the views of our MP.

Cllr Stubbs raised the relevant questions to Mr. Baker, which were compiled in a meeting earlier in the week.

Mr. Baker stated his thanks for his invitation to the council meeting and stated how special the village is to him. Mr. Baker stated that he and Cllr Stubbs have been in correspondence recently regarding the windfarm issues.

Mr. Baker gave some background into the windfarm projects, which includes the following –

- Ten years ago, the way the UK produced wind energy to connect to the National Grid was not fit for purpose.
- Today we are the world leaders in producing clean, green, wind energy with 60% of the wind energy being produced off the North Norfolk coast.
- Concerns are that we live in a beautiful area and the connection method of digging cable corridors has caused massive disruptions in communities everywhere.
- Mr. Baker has been elected now for ten months and in that time whilst dealing with Covid-19 we have never got as far forward in any other Parliament in the last decade.
- Mr. Baker and a team of four other MPs have pushed these issues and have met with offshore wind companies to stress that the way this is being dealt with cannot be correct and pushing that they will need to look into a different way of moving forward.
- Over the last month matters have started to fall into our laps. The group of MPs has met with National Grid, Ofgem, and wind farm operators, with some willing to change where others are more reluctant to change.
- The Offshore co-ordination report from the National Grid that has now come out has moved the goal posts, embracing a different way of moving forward with wind energy and our connection to the grid.
- What we are dealing with now is an offshore connection grid and possibly not so much a ring main. A lot of this infrastructure will be able to be completed out at sea, with much of the HVDC cabling now able to come ashore in less sensitive areas, taking away the disruption from the village and the North Norfolk coast. This is incredibly positive.
- HDD drilling issues – Mr. Baker has contacted Ørsted and they stated they wanted to be able to give a response at this meeting but unfortunately, they have not been able to but Mr. Baker is optimistic that they will agree that it is absolutely ridiculous to trench into the cliff and will go with HDD but will find out more information over the coming weeks. Ultimately Mr. Baker feels we are in a very positive situation at the moment.

#### **Questions from the council to Mr. Baker -**

- i. With the growth of wind farms the North Norfolk coast is in a prime position for more installations over the next 20-30 years. Not just as our MP but as a resident of North Norfolk what is your perspective on this growth and the impact on our communities, in particular regarding environmental and community issues.

Mr. Baker stated that if he didn't have the passion in regards to this issue then he wouldn't have pushed forward as much as he has with fellow MPs to change what we are doing. Back in 2015, when this was brought up before, this was not an important issue for Government. Now with the growth in offshore wind energy, the Government can now see the importance of this issue and that it needs to be taken seriously.

- ii. Three projects look likely to be making landfall at Weybourne before there is any chance of an ORM. This is going to have a significant impact on our village. This includes issues with extremely large unsuitable vehicles. The impact on tourism and the businesses reliant on it. The impact on the beach area, agriculture and the environment and any long lasting, if not permanent damage.

What steps do you feel should be in place to mitigate the issues?

Mr. Baker stated the biggest issue that he sees is because of the competition regulations there is no sharing of infrastructure, so potentially you could have Equinor building at one end and Ørsted building at the other end with no joined up collaborative thinking and so there is ecological damage and disruption to the community. But Ofgem are the ones controlling this issue where the companies would like to work together to share resources etc. The basic concept which Mr. Baker would like to see move forward is 'trunking'; if this can be done in the most vital part of the village it would cause less disruption. These questions have all been asked in regards to why aren't we going forward with this 'trunking' process with the technology at hand. The MPs have gone back to the minister in regards to practical steps to mitigate the disruption this can cause and this will be fed into his reports.

Cllr Stubbs asked if there has been a response in terms of 'trunking' as she has found that Equinor have stated that this is not possible.

Mr. Baker have stated that many matters have changed and it seems the same could well be the same with 'trunking'.

- iii. In the past we have had promises made that the village will benefit from the funds these companies generate. Multibillion-pound companies that once here we as a village receive next to nothing. It is our community that suffers most and we feel we should be adequately compensated for the disruption. Instead all we get is a lip service. We would like to feel like they genuinely care.

Mr. Baker stated his annoyance and frustration towards this matter. There are some employment opportunities for residents in North Norfolk but only limited so we should be seeing more benefits coming our way. Mr. Baker stated he would liaise with Cllr Butikofer on this matter over the coming days.

Cllr Stubbs stated that the community feels downtrodden as we have to fight for community funds when all the disruption is centered on us and North Norfolk. We feel the community funds should be more pitched at areas that have deal with these disruptions etc.

Mr. Baker stated he will be meeting with the companies soon and will relay this information to make sure they prioritise whatever funds there are on the communities that will be affected.

- iv. We have previously requested that they use barges and pontoon for bring large cables to the village. With deep water it is an ideal alternative to unsuitable vehicles disrupting the village. This is just one way to mitigate the disruption.

Mr. Baker stated he completely agrees with this point and will speak to the companies about this enquiry and respond accordingly.

- v. Why will the ORM take 10 years and what is being done to expedite it? Given that this coastline cannot continually take these landfalls.

Mr. Baker stated after the PMs statement that this potentially could take less time to complete; and we will move forward on this as fast as possible. With the technology moving forward then potentially the work can be completed at sea, creating fewer issues coastal wise.

- vi. How do we open a channel of communication with the SOS and relevant government departments? We have had zero response from the SOS to the letter written. Do the government care about the impact on communities or is it progress at any cost?

Mr. Baker stated he wants the parish to be part of the entire process as much as possible and please contact him if there are any further enquiries etc. going forward.

Cllr Swift thanked Mr. Baker for answering all the questions and thanked him for attending the meeting.

Cllr Swift asked a further question to Mr. Baker –

- The Government is setting out in a white paper in proposals to shake up the planning system. Proposals include developers no longer required to provide affordable housing in developments under 50 dwellings. Weybourne is in desperate need to have affordable housing. The village had approx. 25 family sized social housing units with a further 19 for elderly and those for single storey for health reasons. Currently within all this housing we only have four families. Properties that had covenants preventing them from being used as second homes have been ignored. Our community is in real danger. Families and young people can not afford to live here. Lowest skilled workers and those on minimum wage simply can not live here. None of the proposals look at helping them. Do the Government not realise that areas such as ours can simply not survive. Any white papers need to include proposals for real, genuine, affordable and social housing projects to help our communities to rebuild and prosper. We are desperate for real housing and not just houses.
  - Mr. Baker stated that the consultation on the planning white paper ends at the end of this month, the following day there would be a back-bench debate which Mr. Baker would be part of. There is delegated legislation going through so Mr. Baker can speak on behalf of North Norfolk. Mr. Baker stated that the present planning structure is cumbersome, bureaucratic which most people agree with. The rest of this does need a lot of work. There are many issues. There are very real concerns with taking away local control and centralising. In terms of affordable homes there is a Government program to cover this of approx. 11 million. But the planning white paper does not include everything that needs to be dealt with. Again, this would be discussed with fellow back benchers who agree with these concerns and would respond accordingly.

At this point Mr. Baker thanked the council and left the meeting.

**(3 (b)) –**

**County Councillor Sarah Butikofer** spoke to the meeting:

- Deficit at County Council – this has not changed but they are looking at ways to try to save some money over the next few months.
- ‘Hate not Welcome Here’ has been relaunched – there has been a resurgence of some anti ethnic behavior so the message has been pushed forward again.
- CV19 outbreak in Great Yarmouth – dealing with this to keep this under control. NNDC have been assisting Great Yarmouth council with EH officers for help and support.
- Highways Emergency Team at County Council – They have done a great job over the weekend with all the bad weather. In a 50-hour period we had approx. 1000 emergency calls in regards to fallen trees etc.
- Works on Norwich City Centre – consultation with this is going ahead with an approx. £52 million in development resource.
- Keeping people active – a campaign to improve people’s fitness.

Cllr Stubbs stated an issue regarding tree planting; stating that she is under the impression that this was going to be free. But found out today that this is not going to be free and that the parish council will need to contribute.

- o Cllr Butikofer stated that there is a budget for this and will be working through this budget. Confirmed 90% of this County will be paying for but we are asking people if they wish to make a contribution. Cllr Butikofer to investigate this further.

## 6. Covid-19

To receive any other updates regarding village issues with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic

Cllr Swift stated that he wants to put up new posters around the villages highlighting the new guidelines for reference.

## 7. Parish Council Structure

To finalise who will take responsibility for each section going forward

Cllr Swift stated that there is a lot going on within the council and we need to spread the work out to all councillors. We need to make sure we have check lists and liaising with the Clerk to make sure everything is covered.

It was **agreed** that councillors would email Cllr Swift by the next meeting to state what they would like to be responsible for going forward.

## 8. Finance

- (a) To note the bank reconciliation to –
  - i. 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

The bank reconciliation was noted.

- (b) To note the account summary’s to -
  - i. 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

The accounts summary was noted.

The Clerk noted that a Covid-19 Business Grant Payment of £10,000 was made to the Community Account on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020.

Cllr Butikofer confirmed that first and foremost the grant needs to be used in respect of Covid issues but then it can be used for whatever is needed. Cllr Swift stated that we need to be careful with what we use this money for and will look into this when setting the budget/precept etc.

- Cllr Butikofer stated there were some news on the toilets – the team our setting up proposals to add this into next year’s budget which is on the relevant agenda so this has moved significantly forward.

- (c) To approve the following invoices for payment:

i.	D Howes	Salary for September	£ 330.00	
ii.	E.On	Streetlight Electricity	£ 74.50	(VAT £3.55)
iii.	D Howes	Expenses/postage/toner for September	£ 74.66	(VAT £3.50)
iv.	TT Jones	Street lighting maint (Oct to Dec)	£ 55.85	(VAT £9.31)
v.	P Gallally	Postage expenses	£ 2.94	
vi.	Secret Gardens	Grass verge cutting – September	£ 156.00	
vii.	Gardenaid	Churchyard & Cems maint – September	£ 352.00	
viii.	Play Inspection	Outdoor annual inspection	£ 108.00	(VAT £18.00)

All eight invoices were **approved** for payment.

- (d) To approve payment of invoices received since the publication of the agenda:

None received.

- (e) To make note to the council regarding Clerks 2.75% pay rise, backdated from 1 April 2020

The Clerk stated that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services announced that an agreement was reached between the National Employers and the NJC Trade Union Side on the new pay scales for 2020-21 to be implemented from 1 April 2020. Clerk to work out additional payments and will bring this to the next meeting.

**(f)** To discuss preparation for 2021 budget and precept

It was agreed that a sub-committee will take place at the pub over the next couple of weeks to discuss the way forward with the budget and the precept. The sub-committee will include Cllr Swift, Cllr Taylor, Cllr P Gallally, Cllr Woodhouse, Cllr Floyd and the Clerk.

## **9. Planning**

**(a)** To consider the following planning applications

i. Single-storey extension (North Elevation)

Turnip House, Home Farm Rise, Weybourne, Holt, NR25 7SP

It was **agreed** the council **supports** this application. On the proviso of the Dark Skies agreement.

ii. Single storey rear extension & raised decking

16 Station Road, Weybourne, Holt, NR25 7HQ

It was **agreed** the council **supports** this application. On the proviso of the Dark Skies agreement.

**(b)** To consider planning applications received since the publication of the agenda

None received.

**(c)** To discuss the land disposal at Sandy Hill

After discussion it was confirmed by Cllr Butikofer that NNDC believes it is their land. This particular land is a surveyor's allotment; which there is a number across the district. NNDC have been assessing these allotments and if unused then the intention is to sell them on. Cllr Ward from NNDC has been made aware that the parish will need to be kept updated on the situation so we do not come at a disadvantage; and there is the possibility that some money from the sale could go to the toilet project.

Cllr Butikofer at this point left the meeting.

## **10. Highways & Footpath matters:**

**(a)** To receive any updates regarding the placement of bollards on the corner of Church Street and The Street

All completed with good feedback from residents.

**(b)** To receive updates on installation of white lines on The Street and Sheringham Road

The Clerk stated there was a hold up with Norfolk County Council mislaying payment but all confirmed this is now moving forward and the Clerk is waiting on the local designer to contact.

- Cllr Swift stated there is a piece of land by Cherry Tree Cottage and The Old Stables where highways land is being used privately. There are small posts in place on this land which doesn't belong to the residents and shouldn't actually be there. These posts are a hazard to traffic in the dark.

It was **agreed** that Cllr Swift would draft correspondence to Highways regarding the post issue. Cllr P Gallally would send the Clerk photos of the area.

## **11. Allotments**

**(a)** To receive the allotment report

The report was received by all councillors. Cllr Crawford highlighted that he does have a logical structure to the charging and had made significant changes to tenants who had very large plots who were paying very little rent. The income from the allotments is more than three times that of the annual water bill charges. So, at present the annual income covers the water bill plus any future maintenance costs.

Cllr Swift stated that the Clerk will send round the allotment current charges to all councillors so this is all open and transparent.

**(b)** To consider allotment charges

It was **agreed** that there will be no uplift in charges for the next two years.

## **12. Village Hall**

To receive the Weybourne Village Hall Management Committee report

The report was received by all councillors. Cllr Crawford stated it was encouraging that they are busier now the hall has reopened. Cllr Floyd asked if we can have our next meeting there but due to Government guidelines this is not possible at the moment.

Cllr Crawford stated that the sub-committee worked really well when composing the question to Mr. Baker, so this concept going forward is good.

## **13. Cemetery & Churchyard**

To receive any updates regarding the repair of the churchyard wall

All completed and payment received from the driver's insurance company.

- Cllr Swift asked if someone could take a look over the cemetery and report back any maintenance issues. It was **agreed** Cllr Taylor would do this.

## 12. Harry Dawson Playing Field

- (a) To receive the Harry Dawson Playing Field Committee report

Cllr Taylor stated because of Covid they have not been able to have any meetings. There is an upcoming meeting to discuss and arrange the closing down of the Harry Dawson Playing Field Committee.

Cllr Swift wanted to say on behalf of the council how sad this news is and would like to thank the Committee for the efforts that have been made; as without it there wouldn't have been a playing field.

Cllr Swift has stated going forward the field is going to need major investment and infrastructure projects and would like to think that anyone who has been part of the Committee would like to be involved in its future going forward.

Cllr Taylor has spoken to residents who would like to be part of the working party, and they are going to look around the field individually. They will report back to state what they would like to be seen done going forward. Also had some volunteers in regards to starting work on the picnic area.

The Play Inspections Report was received by all councillors and Cllr Swift has stated it does need much investment for the next few years. It will need fund raising, grants etc. to bring in the infrastructure.

Cllr Swift stated that he will rope off the bottom end of the field which is now a danger to residents.

Cllr Stubbs stated there are a number of high-risk pieces of equipment; and asked if these should be roped off.

Cllr Swift has stated we need to act now on this issue but we need to know what children and families want from their park and plan this properly so we have an amenity moving forward for the next 20 years.

Cllr Taylor to keep us updated on the construction of the working group.

- (b) To receive report regarding the playing field weekly inspections and consider any recommendations

Cllr Taylor has reported some maintenance issues which have been addressed and now completed.

- (c) To appoint a member to carry out the weekly playing field inspection between 7th October 2020 to 4th November 2020

It was **agreed** to appoint Cllr P Gallally.

- (d) To receive any updates in regards to appointing a working group to consider funding possibilities and future developments at the HDPF

Please see section 12 (a)

## 13. Weybourne Community Fund

- (a) To receive the Weybourne Community Fund report

Cllr Woodhouse stated that some rotten posts are to be replaced and the field is scheduled to be cut before Winter.

- (b) Charges etc. for 2021 onwards

It was **agreed** that the Weybourne Community Fund will not be charged for the field for this year. Ongoing to be a 1% increase per year for the next five years. Clerk to update the new lease agreement accordingly.

Cllr Woodhouse said thank you on behalf of the Community Fund.

## 14. The Beach

- (a) To receive any updates regarding the provision of toilets

This was covered earlier in the meeting.

- (b) To consider a response to the Coastal Adaptation initial consultation

It was **agreed** that if councilors do have a response to contact the Clerk.

## 15. Governance:

- (a) To agree to a new structure of Council meetings going forward

Cllr Swift proposed to go to 10 meetings per year rather than the current 12. This is in accordance with the Standing Orders.

Cllr Swift wanted to make councillors aware that we can always have an emergency meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Taylor and seconded by Cllr P Gallally to go to 10 meetings per year (excludes January and August) from 2021 onwards. All councillors in agreement.

Cllr Woodhouse stated if some issues can be placed bi-monthly. This was **agreed** but to make sure that issues will not be forgotten.

- (b) To receive any updates regarding dog waste bins/litter bins

The bin fitted to the pole on Beach Road is part of the Summer Barn property. The holiday let has been contacted who have stated that a gardener is scheduled to cut back the hedge over the next few weeks.

- Cllr Woodhouse asked if a sticker for the bins stating clearly that this is also for dog waste can be sent from NNDC. Clerk to follow this up.

**(c) To action the printing and distribution of the village survey**

Cllr Swift stated that just prior to Covid this was agreed by Council and would like to now carry on distributing the survey. Will then need a group of people to sub division the village to distribute the surveys and then collect them accordingly.

Cllr Crawford asked if we can change the survey if needed and Cllr Swift stated if anyone does have any amendments then to contact him over the next week.

It was stated that we can have a collection box at the shop and at the pub.

**16. Correspondence to consider and respond to the following:**

**(a) Items received since the publication of the agenda**

- Notice of Consultation - Planning White Paper

Information was sent round to all councillors. The government is currently consulting on some significant and far-reaching changes to the planning system. These are outlined in a new White Paper. Formal responses are due by Thursday 29 October. If you do have any responses please get back to the Clerk.

There are two Zoom meetings – Wed 14 Oct (6pm) and Thurs 15 Oct (10am) – short presentation followed by Q&A with NNDC

- Update on planning application - PF/20/1136 Turnstone Barn, 18 Home Farm Rise, Weybourne, Holt, NR257SP

The application has been recommended for refusal by NNDC. The report and decision are currently being reviewed by the management team. A decision is expected by next week.

If management does not agree with the recommendation of refusal, and is of the opinion that the application should be approved, NNDC to get back to us to discuss further.

- Cllr Swift stated we had some positive correspondence from a vice chair of another parish council; which was great feedback. Clerk to apply the correspondence to the notice board.
- Cllr Swift asked the Clerk to send thank you correspondence to Mr. Baker for attending the meeting and answering the council's questions.
- Cllr Stubbs asked for a copy of the meeting recording from Cllr Swift.
- Cllr Taylor asked Cllr Crawford if there have been any further allotment thefts. Cllr Crawford stated that there was a theft in September which has been reported to the police but this has been covered in his report.

**17. To confirm date of the next Parish Council Meeting.**

The next parish council meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9:51pm