

GEDDINGTON NEWTON AND LITTLE OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH SEPTEMBER 2013

Members present: Councillor K Barber, Chairman
Councillors A Gordon, K Harden, P Hopkins, I Kelman,
J Padwick, and D Watson

Apologies: Councillors T Bailey and M Rowley
Borough Councillor J Bullock

One member of the public was present at the meeting.

CO-OPTION

52/14

Mr Tony Locock's name was put forward for co-option to the Parish Council. Councillor Hopkins proposed and Councillor Padwick that he should be co-opted to the Parish Councillor. All in favour. He will be formally invited to attend the October meeting as Parish Councillor.

POLICE REPORT

53/14

JULY 2013: Geddington - 1 burglary (other), 1 theft/handling
Newton - 0
Little Oakley - 0

AUGUST 2013: Geddington - 1 burglary (dwelling), 1 criminal damage, 3 theft from motor vehicles, 2 theft/handling, 1 violence
Newton - 0
Little Oakley - 0

PUBLIC MEETING

54/14

A member of the public informed the Parish Council that the 'Grafton Road' had not been fixed securely and therefore had been removed and taken by Roger Miles for safe keeping. Mr Miles had offered to screw the sign back on or alternatively, the County Council could be contacted to let them know that the sign was not fit for purpose. Councillor Harden was of the opinion that it would be quicker if Mr Miles was asked to screw the sign back on. However, there is another sign in Newton Road which needs attention. Councillor Barber agreed to email Mr Miles about the 'Grafton Road' sign and it was agreed that the County Council should be contacted regarding the 'Newton Road' sign.

PLANNING

Applications

No applications were received for consideration by the Parish Council.

Eastern Kettering development

Councillor Gordon expressed concerns that the plans to build 5,500 new houses to the east of Kettering (KET/2013/0514) were now subject to 103 special planning conditions. Councillor Gordon considered that conditions 80-81 were of particular interest because they referred to access. It is alleged that the amount of traffic and movement of traffic is not so great as anticipated at first. This implies that there is no need for access to the A14 and also no need for the Elizabeth Road access as originally planned. Borough Councillor Bullock is attending a Borough Council meeting this evening to discuss this further.

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MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th July 2013 were read confirmed and signed.

KETTERING BOROUGH COUNCIL ISSUES

No matters were raised.

NORTHANTS COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES

55/14

With regards to the verges alongside Clay Dick, Councillor Barber contacted the Wildlife Trust who were going to get back to him in due course. The Wildlife Trust are not happy to persuade wild flowers to grow along this section of land because the wild flower meadows have to be cut and the cut grass taken away. Councillor Watson suggested it may be worth talking to Boughton Estates to ask if they could tackle this. Councillor Kelman felt that the main issue was actually taken the cuttings away. Councillor Barber agreed to speak to Chris Sparrow from Boughton Estates

Councillor Barber also agreed to check what is happening with the problematic tree roots in Grange Road. This is a protected tree, but Councillor Watson felt that nothing will actively be done about the tree until it causes more damage to the road surface. Councillor Padwick was particularly concerned about the damage it may be causing to the drainage system.

YOUTH CLUB

56/14

Councillor Hopkins reported that his search has revealed that the Stonepit Land was transferred to the village by Deed of Gift. As this was proposed to be used for charitable purposes, a return should have been submitted by the Geddington Parish Trust to the Charities Commission on an annual basis. Since this was not done, the Trust was removed from the register. Councillor Hopkins has spoken to the Charities Commission who suggested that the way forward is that the Parish Council request that the Charity be reinstated. Councillor Watkins was of the opinion that it would be better to speak to the Borough Council to determine the implications of such action before proceeding. Councillors Barber and Hopkins agreed to contact the Borough Solicitor for their advice.

There followed some discussion regarding archiving Parish Council documentation in a central location. Councillor Barber agreed to set up a digital ‘drop box’ for scanned images of important documents so that they were easily located.

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT AND PLAN

57/14

Councillors Padwick, Hopkins, Gordon and Barber had a meeting with Northants ACRE regarding the Village Plan. It was agreed that the Parish Council would seek funding for a Parish profile document from ACRE which will help with the Village Plan. It was agreed that a further meeting would be arranged with the Village Plan Committee, Northants ACRE and the Borough Planners.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

58/14

Councillor Harden reported that there are increased incidents of number plates being stolen which are then being used to obtain petrol fraudulently. Catalytic exhaust thefts are also on the increase.

Councillor Harden had further discussion with the Sergeant at Kettering Police Station regarding the use of handheld speed monitoring devices and enquired whether the Parish Council would be interested in the use of these by residents in the villages. Penalties cannot be issued but letters can be sent out warning residents of their offence. The Parish Council were in favour of this if Councillor Harden was able to find volunteers to operate the devices.

Councillor Watson’s concerns were more that the speed cameras were switched off and felt that drivers would become complacent and ignore the cameras. Councillor Harden stated that he has written to the Police Authority on several occasions about this but has never received a response. It was agreed that an email should be sent to County Councillor Harker requesting that **some** of the speed cameras be switched back on. Councillor Watson suggested that once the new road is in place, heavy vehicles will be taken off this stretch of the A43 which may result in cars travelling at increased speeds. It was agreed that this situation should be monitored.

NEWTON AND LITTLE OAKLEY

No report.

ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION

59/14

Councillor Harden again raised the issue of debris in the river. It was suggested that this was the responsible of the Environment Agency, but that a letter to Boughton Estates requesting that they clear the river may be more fruitful.

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VILLAGE HALL

60/14

Councillor Rowley submitted his apologies for this evening’s meeting but requested that the issue of responsibility for the Village Hall sports extension should be

discussed. There followed lengthy discussion regarding the fact that the Parish Council is Custodian Trustee of the Village Hall and therefore has no responsibility for the building whatsoever. The Management Committee make all the decisions. It is the role of the Parish Council to ensure that everything is carried out legally and that any plans are for the benefit of the whole Parish. Councillor Watson's concerns were that any money that is raised to fund the extension is appropriately controlled by the Extension Committee. Councillor Hopkins stated that this should in fact be the Management Committee. Councillor Hopkins also queried a rider attached to the original Charity Commission document which states that it should '*not to carry on any trade or business or occupation*' and whether this would be applied to a licensed bar on the premises.

Councillor Barber proposed and Councillor Watson seconded that there should be a separate working party on this so that ideas and suggestions could be brought to the Parish Council for approval. All in favour.

Councillor Hopkins expressed concerns that in a structural survey carried out on the Village Hall lounge in 1994, it stated that there was evidence of movement of several internal walls and that this should be taken into consideration should any further work be carried out in this area. KET/1981/0289 refers to the original plans for the lounge area. These plans could be requested from the Borough Council, should they be required.

With regards to a potential claim in relation to a member of the public allegedly sustaining an injury whilst accessing the Bowls Club, it was agreed that the Village Hall Management Committee had accepted responsibility. This information will be passed to Zurich Municipal.

ROAD SAFETY

61/14

The Parish Council agreed to a proposal from Northants Highways that there should be no right turn from the junction of Geddington Grange and the A6003.

As part of construction of the A43 link road, part of Little Oakley road will be closed from 19th August 2013 to mid-March 2014 for a new road bridge to be completed.

With regard to the repair work that was carried out to the road surface in Newton Road, it was agreed that a letter should be sent to County Councillor Harker stating that the work would appear to be of a temporary nature only since they have been filled in with hardcore and not tarmaced over. This has resulted in hardcore being thrown up when the potholes are driven over.

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Councillor Gordon reported that he had received complaints that the hedge between the entrance to the pub car park on the A43 and the entrance to the dog walking area needs to be trimmed. Councillor Barber suggested that the Parish Council contacts the County Council about this.

With regard to the problem of overgrown trees in New Road, Councillor Barber has tried to contact the local tree expert, but nothing can be done to the trees whilst they are in leaf. Councillor Barber agreed to contact Borough Councillor Bullock for his advice on this matter.

With regard to progress on the link road, Councillor Hopkins reported that updates are regularly put on the village website.

LIGHTING AND FOOTPATHS

62/14

Councillor Barber reported that County Council officers were called to look at the electric fence which had been installed by the tenants of Mill Farm, close to the hedge of the public footpath. This has now been attended to and the bull has been removed from the field.

Three lights were reported as being out: one in the gitty, one in Lees Way and one in Ferndale. These have all been attended to.

RURAL FORUM

63/14

Councillor Watson will chair the next meeting of the Rural Forum which is due to take place a week on Thursday. The only issue he is aware of, other than policing issues, is the question of ownership of street lights and responsibility for replacement.

CORRESPONDENCE

64/14

The Parish Council were in receipt of copies of 'Countryside Voice', 'Society of Local Council Clerks' magazine and 'Clerk and Councils Direct'.

Councillors Gordon and Barber (and possibly Hopkins) will attend the next meeting of CPRE.

Items for Next month's Agenda

Councillor Barber submitted his apologies for the October meeting, which will be chaired by Councillor Rowley.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20 pm

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ACCOUNTS

Community Account Statement as at 16.8.13	£ 3,039.06
Business Premium Account Statement as at 17.6.13	£15,706.42

Accounts received

No accounts were received

Accounts for payment

Sharon Baker	Secretarial services	(1556) £	35.00
	¼ Clerk's salary including 1% increase (£6.23 backdated to April)		502.44
	Backdated salary increase at 1% (to April)		6.23
	Tax overpayment		124.61
	Expenses		33.90
			(£702.18)
Post Office Ltd	Employee tax (£124.61 in credit. This payment is the full amount of £127.00 less overpayment)	(1557)	2.39

Councillor Padwick proposed and Councillor Watson seconded that the above payments be made. All in favour.

With regard to the following invoices for payment:

BDO LLP	Annual audit fee	(1558)	396.00
HM Revenue & Customs only	Initial penalty – failure to submit P35 by due date	(1559)	100.00

Councillor Watson queried why the external audit fee had risen to £396.00 this year and proposed that this question should be raised with BDO before cheque number 1558 is signed. This was seconded by Councillor Hopkins. All in favour.

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Issues with end of year return (P35)

The Clerk voiced her intentions to appeal against the P35 late submission charge on the grounds that there was software failure. The Clerk completed the forms electronically well before the due date but did not receive a submission confirmation. This did not come to light until real time submission was attempted on or around 13th June. She immediately contacted HM Revenue & Customs who spent some considerable time having to give instructions for the Clerk to cut and paste the data file into another folder for it to be submitted successfully. This will be the grounds of appeal.

Despite the fact that the Clerk had spoken to Inland Revenue Collections Department, who had stated that the penalty of £100 should be paid and then an Appeal submitted afterwards, Councillor Watson proposed that the Parish Council should appeal first and not pay the demand until this has been responded to. This was seconded by Councillor Padwick. All in favour. Cheque number 1559 will therefore not be signed until a response has been received from the letter of appeal.

Approval of Annual Return

The Annual Return was approved by the Parish Council and the Parish Councillors' attention was drawn to the comment by the external auditor that the new Recreation Field play equipment should be included in Box 9 of the Annual Return as an asset.

Quote for provision of a Parish Profile from Northants ACRE

Councillor Padwick stated that the Profile would cost in the order of £65-£100 and requested the Parish Council's approval of this expenditure. Councillor Hopkins proposed and Councillor Watson seconded that this should be acceptable. All in favour.

Repairs to the paving stones outside the Village Hall

There were complaints that the work carried out to even the surface of the paving stones at the side of the Village Hall was of poor quality and that the foundation of the corner stone is already breaking away. It was proposed by Councillor Hopkins and seconded by Councillor Watson that the Contractor should be contacted asking for the work to be inspected and be put right so that it is made to last.

This raised the question that if any work is carried out in the future, the quality of the work should be checked before the invoice is paid. It was agreed that it would be in the Parish Council's interests to compile a list of recommended trades people, from both within and outside the village, who could be called upon to carry out work from time to time.