

# NORTON CANES PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Council Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2011 at 7 p.m. at Norton Canes Community Centre

**Present:** Cllrs:A.Gilbert P.Gilbert  
J.Bernard A.Bernard  
J.Preece M.Hopley  
J.Hampshire J.Beddows  
Mrs.L.Florence (Clerk)

**182/2011 Apologies:** Cllrs.S.Harding J.Bridgen  
Z.Stretton R.Bishop  
J.Davies

**Visitors:** Mr.P.Campbell, Director Richborough Estates  
Mr.S.Archer, Staffs County Council Community Volunteers  
Project

Mr.R.Davies, Staffs County Council Ranger Service  
PC Lucy Spicer  
PSCO Andy Turnock

7 members of the Public were present.

### 183/2011 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

#### **Presentation re Proposed Development Brownhills Road/Red Lion Lane**

Mr.Paul Campbell, Director Richborough Estates attend the meeting to give an overview with regard to the current status of the planning application for the proposed development on the old dog track site situated on Brownhills Road/Red Lion Lane. Mr.Campbell informed the meeting that they had previously withdrawn their original planning application due to the petition that was lodged. They do wish to proceed in the future with the development but wanted to engage with the community and positively change the planning application before re- submission and to take this forward in co-operation and negotiation with stakeholders and the residents of the village.

Discussion ensued and questions were raised which Mr.Campbell was able to answer relating to the area still being designated as green belt and some concern that this type of land was still being considered for development when there were other areas in the District with brown belt status. Concerns were also raised about the infrastructure

particularly in light of the agreed development in Norton Hall Lane. Mr.Campbell stated that the relevant consultations had taken place with the agencies involved and it was reported that there were issues with regard to school places and medical provision. A suggestion that the plans be redrawn to enable the green belt area to be left to which Mr.Campbell replied that the plans had previously been altered and there was already a third of land being left for a conservation area. Richborough Estates were also proposing to open up access to Chasewater through the development which would connect the area in a much better way. Suggestions of allotments being included in the development as this is something that people are now requesting. The site would also promote a playground for the young people to access but the Police were a little concerned as this would be close to the housing development and may cause problems with the residents. Mr.Campbell highlighted that a lot of care has gone into the planning of this development and circulated a plan of the area. Issue raised about the horses that use the land in question and perhaps a way forward would be if Richborough Estates could identify other suitable land where the horses could go to. There is a concern that the development will contribute to the loss of a village atmosphere.

Mr.Campbell was asked about the legal status of the land to which he replied that they have a contractual agreement to purchase the dog track and nursery site but the District Council will have to put the question to Cabinet about the sale of the land where the horses are located.

Mr.Campbell agreed to address some of the issues raised and where possible incorporate them in the proposed planning application and will feedback to the Parish Council but emphasised that the Company genuinely want to get the development agreed.

### **Presentation re Norton Bog**

Mr.Steve Archer the Community Volunteers Project Officer and Mr.Rob Davies, Staffordshire County Council Ranger Service attended the meeting to give an overview of the work they are undertaking at Norton Bog. The meeting was informed that the site has being designated as part of a large SSSI by Natural England. The Rangers cannot undertake all of the work needed for this site and the aim of the presentation was to make people aware and identify volunteers who would be willing to help with some of the practical conservation works. The tasks to be undertaken were outlined some of which required supervision due to health and safety issues and would take place on a frequent basis normally once a month but other tasks are such that a group of people could be told what needs to be actioned and this could be done in their own time..

It was agreed that this is something that the Parish would wish to support and suggested a working group be arranged to promote public awareness and volunteers. A leaflet entitled the Friends of Norton Bog was available giving details of the project. Cllr.J.Hampshire expressed an interest in being involved in the Project as a Parish representative.

**Action: Clerk to arrange a working group with Volunteers Project Officer and Ranger Service**

**Ivy Gardens** - residents from Ivy Gardens attended the meeting and highlighted the problems that they were experiencing relating to the private road on which their properties are located. There are issues with regard to parking of cars at the back of the shops which prevents them from leaving their homes. One of their major concerns relates to the heavy goods vehicles that deliver to the shops and use the private road as access also with the Biffa Waste lorries that use the road to empty the large waste containers at the rear of the shops. This is causing major problems for them in terms of disturbance, access to their properties and also the damage to the private road itself for which they as residents are responsible for. The residents feel that this has been a longstanding problem which has never been resolved.

Cllr A.Gilbert informed the residents that she understood their concerns and offered to meet them at the Parish Office to discuss this further and look at how the Parish Council can help.

**Mobility Scooters** – following the last Council meeting when the issue was raised relating to the use of mobility scooters on the road, a letter had been received from a disabled resident in the village which was read out giving an account of what this person experiences when she is using her scooter in the village and felt that there should be some recognition of what the users have to endure.

The meeting was informed that this matter had not previously been raised to cause anyone concern it was felt that some users of the scooters on the road spoil it for others. The person raising the issue stated that this had been done for reasons of legality not as an issue against disabled people. The Police gave information to the meeting stating that the scooters do not need tax discs to enable them to drive on the road and that if they were involved in an accident then the matter would have to be pursued by suing the the owner of the scooter.

**Rear of Co-op** – complaint received about the state of the building since the last incidents when a fire had damaged the shutters. There

was also an issue of leaking pipe which drips on people when walking across the car park. It was agreed to ask the Co-op to look at the repairs in question.

**Action: Clerk to contact the Co-op re repairs.**

**Public Participation closed at 8.10 p.m.**

#### **184/2011 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr.J.Bernard District Planning Committee

#### **185/2011 Minutes of Meeting held on 17th August 2011**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011 having been circulated were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**Proposed: Cllr.P.Gilbert**

**Seconded: Cllr.J.Preece**

#### **186/2011 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Page 1 – Junction Jerome Road/Walsall Road. Cllr J.Bernard informed the meeting that he had spoken to the Head of Highways and action will be taken within the next four weeks re repair of pothole.

Page 1 – Water Margin – letter had been received from Little Wyrley Estates informing the Council of the status of the building which was read out to the meeting.

Page 1 – Signs for School Road – Cllr.P.Gilbert informed the meeting that temporary signs had been arranged until such time as the County Council can provide permanent signs.

Page 2 - Maintenance of Turf Island - an email had been received from D.Wright at County Council re maintenance of highways and allocated budget which was read out to the meeting. The contents of the email was noted but agreed that we should write further to the County Council requesting that they plant wild flower seeds at the island which would make it more presentable.

**Action: Clerk to write to County Council re planting of seeds.**

Page 2 – Community Speedwatch – suggestion about sharing of the equipment required for the Speedwatch with Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Parish Council and that a contribution to the maintenance of the equipment be proposed.

**Action: Clerk to write to Heath Hayes & Wimblebury Parish Council.**

Page 3 – Fairground event – Cllr J.Beddows stated that he had personally been consulted with regard to this event.

Page 3 – Koncas – Cllr.J.Beddows gave some feedback relating to Koncas and the discussion from the previous meeting. He informed the meeting that changes were being made to some of the procedures but that he did not have any concerns about the future of Koncas. They are currently working to obtain more volunteers to help support the Project. Cllr Beddows said that he agreed it was appropriate to convene a meeting to discuss the future of the Project.

Cllr.Preece informed the meeting that he was offering support in terms of identifying other potential users for the Unit which could generate income. PC Spicer indicated that there may be a small pot of money that the Police could look into to support the Project short term.

Page 4 – Remembrance Day – there had been some discussion about changing the arrangements for the Remembrance Day event this year. Cllr.A.Gilbert informed the meeting that some thought had gone into this and due to the number of people that turn up for the event that it was not felt appropriate to change. Information had been given that if the Police were asked to support any march for the day that there would be a cost involved.

**Action: Contact Carlton Ratcliffe to ascertain if there is a cost of providing Police Officers for this type of event.**

Page 6 – Lantern Parade – letters have been sent to local schools and to the Community Partnership to suggest working together to take this event forward. It was suggested that Cllr.J.Rowley be approached to request funding from the Community Fund to support this.

**Action: Write to Cllr.J.Rowley to request funding.**

## **187/2011 Police Report**

PC Lucy Spicer gave a verbal report to the meeting. She referred to the SMART WATER initiative which relates to the marking of property. This initiative is not available to Norton Canes at present due to lack of funding but informed the meeting that there was a system called Immobilise which is a website where people can register anything that they purchase that has a serial number attached. This then allows Police to view that website when they receive stolen goods and

identify who the owners are. This is something that the Police are going to promote at their Street meetings.

PC Spicer gave information relating to the recent Speed watch operation and asked for any other areas that needed monitoring. Norton Hall Lane, Norton East Road, and Burntwood Road, Betty's Lane leading on to Walsall Road were areas mentioned. There were also reported problems outside Jerome Primary School relating to double parking. It has been noticed also that Arriva buses are speeding through the village and it was agreed that the Parish should write to Arriva directly and inform them of this.

**Action: Clerk to write to Arriva**

PC Spicer informed the meeting that the Police were implementing pro-forma system for use by Councillors and the Parish Office to enable information to be communicated to them more effectively. To enable this to happen a post box will be put in the Parish Office by the Police so that anyone visiting the office for Police business can leave the information in a secure and confidential way.

## **188/2011 Reports from Councillors**

Highways - Cllr.J.Hampshire informed the meeting that both he and Cllr.P.Gilbert had met with Mark Keeling from the County Council Highways Team and had undertaken a route of the village to highlight some of the issues. A list had been prepared with Mark Keeling and a plan of work which had reference numbers attached had been agreed.

Norton Canes Library - question raised about the procedure for access to the library. Some discussion ensued. Cllr.J.Bernard agreed to take the issues forward at his meeting with the Chief of Libraries. Cllr.

**Action: Prepare a list of issues to be discussed.**

Bridlepath in Stokes Lane – Cllr.J.Bernard informed the meeting that he was arranging to get a Gating Order put on the gate at Stokes Lane in an attempt to stop fly tipping. They are in the process of ascertaining who the land belongs to and once the matter is resolved keys will only be given to those who need access.

PCT – Cllr.J.Bernard and Cllr.J.Beddows gave feedback on a meeting that they had attended with the PCT when the issue of the provision of a NHS dentist based at the Health Centre had been raised.

Skatepark – Cllr.P.Gilbert informed the meeting that he had been in discussion with Cannock Chase District Council relating to the

outstanding \$106 money relating the development of the recreation area on Brownhills Road to enable a bid to be submitted to Veiola for the refurbishment of the Skatepark.

## **189/2011 Committee Reports**

**Planning** - there were no planning applications to report.

The following planning permissions were reported.

- a) Erection of 4 industrial units at Maple House, Norton Green Lane, Norton Canes
- b) Unit 9, Voyager Drive, Orbital Retail Centre, Cannock -Internally illuminated logo fascia signs to front and back. Two non illuminated fascia signs to front and a vinyl graphic sign on window to front.
- c) Unit 9 Voyager Drive, Orbital Retail Centre, Cannock – new shop front and entrance doors, replacement of ram raid bollards to front, 2 new fire escape doors to rear with 1m high ram raid bollards, external alterations to rear elevation, 6 air conditioning units on rear elevation and bin store to rear enclosed within 1.8m high palisade fencing.

**It was resolved:**

**To note the Planning Permissions received.**

**Projects** – Cllr A.Bernard informed the meeting that the Projects Committee had met on the 13<sup>th</sup> September. A number of agenda items are work in progress for example the website, the development of land opposite Croft Bakery, the Queens Diamond Jubilee event.

Cllr.A.Bernard referred to the proposed suggestion for leaflets to be printed giving details relating to the village including all local information. These would be delivered to each household in the village and it is hoped that this could be achieved in the Spring of 2012. A cost for the printing of the leaflets had been received in the sum of £2,600+ for which Councillor Bernard was seeking authorisation from the Council.

It was agreed that further work needed to be completed in relation to this project and other quotations obtained. It was also agreed to look into the finances of the Council before proceeding. To be considered at a future meeting.

Amenity Signs – Cllr A.Bernard informed the meeting that the Projects Committee had considered various options for amenity signs and some

discussion ensued on the best location for the sign. Cllr.A.Bernard requested authorisation from the Council the sum of £2,000 to be ringfenced to enable this signage to be proceeded with.

The Committee has also agreed the following items:

Xmas Trees – it has been agreed that the Parish Council will fund the purchase of 3 Christmas trees to be located at the Community Centre, the Library and the Millennium Garden. A request for funding from purchase Cllr.J.Rowley's Community Fund has been put forward to support this. The Co-op had kindly agreed to allow the lights to be put in the big tree outside the store and for their electricity to be used for the lights.

**It was resolved:**

**That a letter of thanks be sent to the Co-op for their support for the Christmas Lights.**

Festive Window Competiton - it was agreed that this event would be held again this year. Letters will go out to shops and businesses at the end of October giving the details.

Winter Hanging Baskets – the Projects Committee had considered the expenditure for Winter Hanging Baskets but due to the poor winter last year the baskets were poor. It was agreed that the Parish Council would not fund winter hanging baskets but that this money could be allocated elsewhere.

Community Speedwatch – this was reported on under Matters Arising.

#### **190/2011 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk's report was circulated to the meeting.

#### **191/2011 Adoption of Policies**

The meeting was informed that the Audit and Governance Committee had reviewed the following policies and that they were now put forward for adoption.

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Business Risk Assessment

Other policies are in the process of being reviewed and will be put before a future Council meeting.



**It was proposed:**

**To adopt the 3 Policies referred to.**

**192/2011 Annual Return 2010-11**

The meeting was informed that the Annual Return for 2010-11 had been received from the Audit Commission. There was no action for Councillors to note other than to amend the figure in Box 8 in the 2011-12 return as it is overstated. The Chair informed the meeting that she had reviewed the document and the Annual Return is correct. The Statutory Notice has been placed on the Parish Council notice board.

**193/2011 Chairs Report & Correspondence**

The Chair referred to incoming and outgoing post.

**194/2011 Kingswood Lakeside**

The meeting was informed that the planning application for the proposed incinerator went before the County Council Planning Meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> September to be heard afresh. Presentations from all surrounding Parish Councils were given together with County Councillors and the outcome was that the application was refused on the basis of need with a majority vote of 10 to 2. The meeting was informed of the Appeal process should Biffa decide to follow this process and on that occasion there would be no public involvement.

It was reported at the meeting that since the Anerobic Digestion Plant has been erected there have been no smells or flies coming from the Poplars so this type of plant is working well.

**195/2011 Authorisation of Accounts**

Councillors were asked to note the additional payments to the circulated schedule. The accounts were considered and authorised for September.

**Proposed: Cllr.J.Bernard**

**Seconded: Cllr.P.Gilbert**

**196/2011 Date of Next Meeting:** 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at 7 p.m. at Norton Canes Community Centre

**SIGNED:** .....

**DATE** .....

