

Folkingham Parish Council
MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held on Thursday 19th January 2017

Item

1. Welcome & Chairman's Remarks

The meeting commenced at 19:30. The Chairman – Cllr Ray Wright, FPC Cllrs Phara Hansen, Hannah Weston Smith (vice-chair), Stuart Cameron-Clark and Richard Clark were present, along with Emma Walken (Clerk), SKDC Cllr King, LCC Cllr Hill, PCSO Jason Posnett and 18 members of the public.

2. Apologies – Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lucy Robb.

3. Declarations – No declarations of interest were offered. The Clerk handed out and requested that all members of the Council completed updated DPI forms and returned them as soon as possible for retention by SKDC and FPC records.

4. Public Questions

The Chairman – Cllr Ray Wright, welcomed those present and opened this section of the agenda with the following statement:

“Welcome, I am pleased to see so many people here taking an interest in your Parish Council. Firstly I would like to point out that we have a newer, younger elected council than in the past (apart from Victoria & myself) and this has led to a more dynamic approach and a keenness to listen and get things done. Taking quick action on the wishes of some, has inevitably caused upset to others.

However, our Clerk has no say in any Council decisions, she has been appointed and is employed by the Council on a part time basis to fulfil her duties as laid down by Local Government procedure. We all feel fortunate and extremely happy to have Emma, who is doing an excellent job. So we were all upset and concerned when her integrity was recently questioned [by a resident complainant] and she thought of reconsidering her position. Please in future address any concerns or disagreements with Council decisions to myself or any other councillor, whose details are all on the Parish noticeboard outside the shop, [also on the noticeboard on the side of the pavilion on the playing field and on the Parish website.]

In public questions, everyone has an opportunity to air their view, we are aware that some residents have an issue with the 30 mph passive speed sign outside The Greyhound - if you have already sent an email they have all been circulated to the councillors so please don't feel the need to repeat them again now. Cllr Weston Smith has prepared a statement where she has addressed the observations expressed in all the emails, which she will read out during item 7 on the agenda. If you wish to leave before then we will be pleased to send you a copy – please give your details to Emma.”

4.1. In addition to the emails and comments received in advance regarding the speed sign issue, FPC also received a complaint regarding parking in and around Wilkie Drive and Walcot Lane during football matches. The resident concerned was in attendance at the meeting and provided the council with photographic evidence to highlight the problem. PCSO Posnett suggested requesting the support of the FA and RFFC to request that those attending car share to minimise traffic. It was also suggested that cones could be used to prevent dangerous parking on match days – though it was highlighted that this could merely move the issue to a different area of the village. A request was made regarding improving the current playing field parking – which becomes mud and water logged in bad weather and therefore unusable. The Chairman agreed that this could be an option and offered to contact the Chairman of RFFC to discuss options.

No other public questions were raised.

4.2. PCSO Posnett took the opportunity to congratulate the village on our low crime rates. The biggest issue in Folkingham as far as the Police are concerned is related to parking – with complaints received regarding the east end of West Street near the shop and a van consistently parking on the pavement and opposite a junction in Churchfields Road. PCSO

Posnett pointed out that in both cases the parking cannot be necessarily classed as illegal, but is causing issues and concerns – for example a lorry was recently stuck on West Street as a result of the chicane caused by parking. A member of the public asked PCSO Posnett to clarify the legality of the parking. PCSO Posnett replied that it is rather a complex issue and that the police were working on communicating with the drivers/owners of the vehicles and requesting that drivers use common sense when parking. He added that in terms of pavements – vehicles MUST NOT completely block a footpath but that partial blockage is inconvenient but not necessarily illegal. Cllr Cameron-Clark pointed out that the vehicle parked on the pavement was forcing a local wheelchair onto the road as they are unable to pass the vehicle. PCSO Posnett added that photographic evidence is useful for the police when dealing with these issues – as is reporting the incident at the time in the hope that a member of the police may be able to attend immediately (emergencies allowing!).

PCSO Posnett left the meeting at 1945.

The Chairman reminded those present that once public questions have closed, the formal commencement of the meeting of Folkingham Parish Council would begin and no further comments could be accepted from the public unless invited to do so.

5. Notes of the meeting held on 17th November 2016

The notes of the meeting held on 17th November 2016 were approved, signed by the Chairman as a true record of proceedings and accepted as the minutes.

6. Matters Arising – to include updates from previous meetings unless covered by a separate agenda item.

No matters arising

7. Traffic Calming/Safety (see also item 4)

At 19:47: Cllr Weston Smith read the following statement:

“I was elected onto the council in May 2015. In my first 2 Parish Council meetings, there were several concerns raised from members of the community regarding the condition of the roads and the safety of villagers due to the speed at which cars appeared to be travelling. I put myself forward to consider these point and see if anything could be done to answer the questions and quell the concerns. There are a number of reasons I put myself forward to lead the safety campaign. At the time, I lived on West Street and understood the issues surrounding the road. I now live on Sleaford Road. I also have my workshop just off the Market Place and so spend much of my time in the village. In addition to this I have a MA degree in Conservation which helps when considering the historical and listed parts of the village.

I set up a public ‘Road Safety’ meeting to discuss the topic. The meeting was held on 1st October 2015. There were 25 attendees and 16 apologies. The attendees included our district Cllr Martin Hill and Craig Harrison a representative from the Highways Department.

Mr Harrison explained that a survey done on the A15 in October 2014 showed that the road saw 453 vehicle/day with an average speed of 30.4mph with 3.3% travelling over 40mph (approx. 15 cars a day). At the time, there had been only one reported accident within the last 5 years. Since then there have been 3 more.

The Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP)

As the title suggest this is a county wide scheme that we were advised to join in order for to look into what options were available to us as a Parish Council to maintain the road safety in our village. I have chosen the word ‘maintain’ because evidence tells us that we are a safe village.

The unavoidable fact is that the village has grown because of, and not in spite of, the main trunk road that runs through it. The old part of the village has a wealth of architecture and historical value because of the trade the road has brought over hundreds of years.

So, we are left with the dichotomy of having a beautiful listed backdrop which belies the nature of the road which passes through it. We cannot change the facades of these buildings. We cannot control the amount and type of traffic that flows through it.

The Areas of Concern

The A15 – The roads both northbound and southbound have the benefit of sharp bends on entering the village which help to slow the traffic. Unfortunately, the road is wide and the incline makes it easy for vehicles to increase their speed and overtake in the centre of the village. The road surface is also uneven which exacerbates the noise of the vehicles.

West Street – The road here is narrow at the junction with the Market place so the size and speed of traffic passing close to houses is a concern to West Street residents, particularly, agricultural vehicles. The far end then becomes wide and more open offering drivers space to speed up too quickly. Unfortunately, this means that cars speed up in the most populated part of the village.

Our Aim

1. We want those who commute through the village on the A15 to see that we are part of the safety scheme and so adhere to the speed limits.
2. We want those driving along West Street to be aware of their speed and that children might be playing on the Green.

What is the Community Speed Watch? Information taken from the LRSP website.

This has been designed to empower local communities to tackle non-safety critical speeding issues. The intention of the scheme is that communities will be able to purchase signs and move them about within their community at agreed locations, typically lamp posts or a dedicated post. The primary benefit is that communities have overall control of them, as they remain their property. In order to ensure the signs have an impact it is proposed they will not remain in any one place for more than a six-week period.

The Signs

1. Are temporary
2. Are A2 in size and made from plastic.
3. Are **not** enforcement signs
4. And, they are **not** warning signs

They are passive advisory signs telling visitors and commuters that the village has a 30mph speed limit and asking people to check their speed.

Rules regarding their location

The Parish Council paid for a survey which authorised which lamp posts the signs could be tied to. Basically, the signs must be set 2.5 metres above ground level over pathways and roads. They can be lowered to 1.5m if they are over wider verges.

Choice of sign location - First Round

1. Lamp post outside the Manor at the bottom of the Market Place facing southbound traffic. The sign was requested here by residents who are fed up with traffic which caused disturbance to their property due to the noise caused.
2. Lamp Post at the North Corner of the Market Place/Sleaford Road. This sign was requested by residents concerned at the speed of vehicles entering the village from Sleaford around the sharp bend. The height of the sign is specifically for lorry cabs so they will see the sign and so take a wider berth around the bend. The newly laid kerb stones here are loose as lorries drive over the corner. The mounting of the kerb causes reverberation in the house.
3. Lamp post in the Market Place in front of the Greyhound Apartments. This position was chosen as it was felt it would serve multiple purposes:

- i. Its position at the junction of West Street advises drivers of the continued speed limit. There are no alternative positions along the first half of West Street.
 - ii. It advises drivers coming northward through the Market Place that the speed is 30mph in all directions.
 - iii. Its central location allows it to clearly and visibly highlight that the village is part of the community scheme as it is there for all to see including the many people who stop in the Market Place to go to use local amenities and walk the many pathways around the village.
4. Two signs were situated on West Street facing eastbound traffic. Residents were concerned that cars entering the village from Pickworth were not slowing enough before the houses, and a lot of children play on the green so it was felt 2 signs would have greater impact.
 5. Walcot Lane prior to The Churchfields Road turning facing northbound traffic. We saw this as a suitable place to remind those coming off West Street that this was still a 30mph limit and Churchfields is where the majority of children live and play.

Comments from the public – First Round

During the first 6-week period, we received 3 comments

1. Could there be a sign on Churchfields Road?
2. Could the sign outside the Greyhound be lowered as it was blocking light to the ground floor apartment?
3. To say there had been noticeable improvement in the speed of vehicles but would we consider other of possible places at the bottom of the village.

All these points were discussed at the following PCM and action was taken accordingly

Choice of sign location - Second round

The sign on Walcot Lane was moved onto Churchfields Road

The sign outside the Greyhound Apartments was lowered to 1.5m

Comments from the public – Second Round

We received a positive response to the signs being back up via the Folkingham Friends & Family Facebook Page.

We were sent a comment via the LCC site which had initially been sent in September. We received it, along with further correspondence on the 22nd of December.

The points were

- That the sign obstructed the residents view from their window
- That it was in front of a listed building and in a conservation area
- That it was incorrectly placed as cars will not be travelling at 30mph at this point.

Unfortunately, before we had chance to respond to this the Greyhound sign was stolen! The matter has been reported to the Police. The sign has not been recovered and so will have to be replaced.

It was decided that one of the two signs from West Street should replace it and at its original high position until more suitable attachments could be sought.

On the 9th of January I spoke to Ian Swallow at the LRSP and sent him some images of the sign in situ to confirm that its siting is acceptable. This was confirmed by Samantha Wood via email on the 11th of January

'The sign in question was approved to be facing the north bound traffic on the A15'

I also spoke to Ian Wright who is the conservation officer for SKDC. He informed me that the conservation status did not extend to signs or in fact the lampposts! Their concern is with the listed buildings and so saw no issue with the placement of this sign.

We have received further comments regarding the siting of this sign and suggestions it be moved to another lamp posts in the Market Place. In response to this I say that it is not just the Greyhound which is listed. Much of the Market Place is listed and so a sign placed anywhere would likely be in front of a listed building.

If people stop to look at the Market Place, it is for the attraction of the facades as a whole and not just the Greyhound. If that were the case the others wouldn't be listed.

If these residents feel so strongly about the villages status as a conservation area WHY have they not questioned the clutter of signs outside the shop or the chip shop sign, or even, the sign I sometimes place outside my own workshop.

You cannot suggest in one sentence that a sign which serves a clear purpose for the community ruins the look of the Market Place when in the next sentence, you say it can go on any other lamppost but not this one.

Not only have I been given suggestions where poles could or should be erected, it has also been said that an interactive sign like the ones in Osbournby would be acceptable on the Green in the Market Place. This, as an alternative to replace these TEMPORARY signs?

In conservation, you are taught to use minimal intervention and that any action you take should be able to be reversed. The 'check your speed' signs are not only small but removable. I repeat myself when I say these are temporary sign. The complainants' suggestion that permanent sign would be better is nonsensical!

As a teacher, you spend a lot your time managing the loudest pupils but are trained to recognise the needs of a whole class. This method is transferable and I use the same method as part of my role on the Parish Council.

We do not want a feeling of resentment in the village but we are also here for the entire community and those who pass through it.

The Parish Council has spent a huge amount of time discussing the placement of the signs. I along with Cllr Clark and Cllr Cameron-Clark have spent hours walking and driving around the village measuring lamp posts and discussing their suitability.

Regarding the Greyhound sign

We have one group who would like the sign gone never to return, and another wanting it to be placed as allowed by the scheme.

The key word here is compromise. We need to find a middle ground.

My suggestion is this:

We are allowed to have the signs up for 6 week and then down for 2. The purpose of this break is to ensure the impact of the signs. It is my feeling that this break could be longer as it was before Christmas.

The signs in their current position went up 21st of December and are due to come down on 1st of February.

Vote 1

Having explained earlier in this statement the reasons for the current positons I would like the Parish Council to take a vote on whether the signs should remain in their current positions until the 6-week period is over.

Understanding that this vote would allow for the signs to be located in the same positions at some time in the future.

Vote 2

We have ordered 3 more signs to take us up to 8. After listening to residents' comments and having walked again around the village with Cllr Clark I would like us to vote on the following locations:

1. Lamp post on the right hand side of the A15 on entering the village from Bourne. (number 11)
2. Lamp post outside the Manor at the bottom of the Market Place facing southbound traffic
3. Lamp post on the left-hand side of the A15 in front of Hansen's Chocolate Shop
4. Lamp Post at the North Corner of the Market Place/Sleaford Road facing southbound traffic.
5. Lamp post on the north side of West Street after the New Inn at the walk through to the Churchfields facing westbound traffic.
6. Lamp post on the Green, West Street Facing eastbound traffic (traffic entering from Pickworth)
7. Lamp post Walcot Lane prior to The Churchfields Road turning facing northbound traffic.
8. Lamp post part way down Churchfields Road

I think we should leave a month before the signs are put up again so these would go up on the 1st of March which then takes us over the Schools Easter Break.

I think it best we then evaluate the positions at the next meeting and vote again on their placement. Spring will bring additional foliage which may mean that certain positions serve no purpose.

Over the coming months the Parish Council will speak to the LRSP about our options until then we will continue to use the signs where it is felt they are most prominent and where we feel they will serve their purpose.

If you would like to offer your support to our Campaign in raising the funds, then please do. If you would like to see the mobile Police Camera Van in the village more often then please contact the Police and make the request. Perhaps if more people do so it will happen!

I would like to finish by saying that the Parish Councillors are elected representatives who volunteer our time, and live within this community. Not one of us is using this as a rung on the ladder to higher levels of politics. We are doing this as we want to support our Village. Those who chose aggressive and acerbic tones within their correspondence should remember this, and know that it will not be tolerated and will not aid their cause."

2 resolutions were proposed:

- 1) Should the signs remain in their current positions until the 6-week period is over. Understanding that this vote would allow for the signs to be located in the same positions at some time in the future.

Before the vote Cllr Strauss noted that the sign had been recently adjusted to a new height and angle and commented that this presumably addressed many of the concerns raised regarding light blocking and also made the sign more effective.

The councillors present voted as follows:

In favour: 5; Against: 0

The Chairman abstained as only a minimum quorum of 5 is required and the vote was unanimous. Therefore the motion was accepted.

- 2) Should the new and revised locations be introduced? This means the purchase of additional signs at a cost of £10 each and an additional survey fee of £40 for the new locations.

The councillors present voted as follows:

In favour: 5; Against: 0

The Chairman abstained as only a minimum quorum of 5 is required and the vote was unanimous. Therefore the motion was accepted.

[N.B A map showing the locations of all the speed signs will be placed on noticeboards and the Parish Council website. The Clerk will also add a new page to the website specifically related to traffic calming issues]

8. Reports from SKDC/LCC

8.1. Cllr Mike King from SKDC provided the following updates:

- a) At a Council meeting held today it was advised that a site on the edge of Grantham has been chosen by the Government as one of its garden villages and is due to receive a slice of a £6 million fund. The Government has announced plans for 14 garden villages around the country with the aim of building 48,000 new homes. This will be the only one in Lincolnshire and is likely to include up to 3,700 new houses around the new relief road. Plans for the Spitalgate Heath development also include schools, shops and community facilities.
[Read more at: <http://www.granthamjournal.co.uk/news/welcome-news-as-grantham-site-is-chosen-for-garden-village-of-4-000-homes-1-7755571/>]
- b) The government's Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP) remains highly controversial, especially locally in relation to Grantham A&E department. A full public consultation will be held in May,
- c) There has been no update regarding the **Toll House (Mill Cottage)** issue. A full application to de-list the building has now been submitted (with a supporting statement from FPC's Chairman) but to date no response has been received from Historic England. Cllr King added that it may have been somewhat detrimental to the application that items of interest had been discovered during the survey conducted as part of the application.
- d) Changes to the Lincolnshire street lighting programme have now begun. Cllr King pointed out that street lights in and around Churchfields Road fall under the jurisdiction of Lincolnshire County Council and are therefore now subject to the LCC new plans which mean the lights are turned off at midnight. Street lights in most of the rest of the village remain the responsibility of SKDC and are not subject to the same regulations.
- e) Cllr King advised the council that SKDC are currently setting it's budgets for the 2017/18 financial year and are considering increasing their element of council tax by £5 per year (on a band D property) As over 66% of SKDC residents live in lower banded properties, the approximate increase would only be 7p per week. Increasing their element of council tax by £5 per year on a Band D property would enable them to maximise the amount of revenue they receive, generating around £231,000 of additional income. A survey has been created so that you can offer your views on this proposal. The survey is open until Sunday 19 February 2017. Please go to www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/counciltax2017-18 or ask the Clerk to send you the link.
- f) A draft of the Local Plan – which outlines village status on things such as new housing is likely to be published in Spring.

8.2. Cllr Martin Hill from Lincolnshire County Council provided the following updates:

- a) Lincolnshire County Council are also looking at increasing Council Tax by 2%
- b) There is currently a funding crisis in Adult Care in Lincolnshire – the 2% increase received won't even cover the cost of an increased wage bill to minimum wage levels. This coupled with the NHS funding and recruitment crisis is putting particular pressure on Lincolnshire due to our rural environment and ageing population. The STP is re-engineering the way care is delivered and considering changes such as those seen in Stamford where all Gps work together to provide care 24/7. Controversary over Grantham A&E closure and Boston maternity unit increases this pressure further though ULHT are aiming to increase the current opening at Grantham by introducing an Urgent Care Centre next month. The Chairman asked what the difference is between that and A&E and Cllr Hill explained that Urgent Care Centres are designed to provide 24 hour cover but not at the same level as an A&E department can, so emergency cases or those requiring surgery or further treatment will still be directed to other hospitals.
- c) LCC Highways department has seen a personnel and structure change with the introduction of liaison roles combining North and South Kesteven. There will be website improvements – particularly in regard to reporting issues and also the introduction of 'one-stop fixes' for highway issues, reducing the likelihood of a highways team needing to return to a problem.
- d) A partnership between the Police & Fire Brigade is under way with the creation of a new HQ Building for both services expected. This will allow the services to better support each other when possible.

<p>9. Playing Field</p> <p>In relation to the public comment raised earlier in the meeting the Chairman agreed to discuss the possibility of improving hard standing on the playing field with the Chairman of RFFC.</p>	<p>RW</p>
<p>10. Grass Cutting</p> <p>The Clerk proposed gathering new quotations for grass cutting in the village for the upcoming financial year with a view to reducing high costs in this area. The existing schedule will also be reviewed at the next meeting to see if the number of cuts per year could also be reduced to save costs.</p>	<p>EW</p>
<p>11. Allotments</p> <p>All plots are tenanted. Most rents have now been received with 3 currently outstanding. No other updates.</p>	
<p>12. Village Green -</p> <p>It has been observed that one of the trees in the Market Place parking area is dead. Clerk has followed up with SKDC who confirmed it is not their responsibility and suggested contacting LCC. FPC suggest pruning the tree heavily to ascertain if it is completely dead.</p>	
<p>13. Folkingham Flyer</p> <p>The Autumn/Winter edition of the Flyer is complete but a decision was made to delay its publication to allow for the inclusion of a 'Special Edition' with a focus on Traffic Calming. This will allow us to communicate to all residents the work underway and to answers and common questions or concerns. Any suggestions or comments for other items to be included are gratefully received.</p>	<p>RC/ HWS</p>
<p>14. Planning</p> <p>Ann application has been received for new signage at The New Inn. Council members to review and comment via the clerk if necessary.</p> <p>[N.B After the meeting but before publication of these minutes, further applications were received in relation to the building of a new bungalow adjacent to 43 West Street, the conversion of Hansen's Chocolate House into 2 dwellings and a revised application to convert and extend the barn at the Rear of The Chocolate House (off Chapel Lane) into a 3 bedroom dwelling. Council members will review and comment if necessary. All planning applications are public and are available to view at the SKDC Planning Website]</p>	
<p>15. Finance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Clerk provided all councillors with a Financial Summary, including cheques to be presented at the meeting. All were accepted. 2. The clerk reported that a 6 monthly review with our internal auditor had gone well, but added that FPC had exceeded it's budget for 2016/17. As contingency reserve funds are in place this does not cause a problem but budgets will need to be reviewed for 2017/18 as maintenance and operational costs continue to rise and the plans for traffic calming measures are considered. 3. Applications for the 2017/18 precept must be submitted by FPC in January. The Chairman suggested considering an increase in view of the fact that the additional Grant support element from SKDC will shortly be removed, maintenance costs have increased and Traffic Calming Methods are required – all resulting in a considerable fall in FPCs budget compared to previous years. As previously minuted, an increase of £2000 was proposed, a resolution took place and was approved unanimously at the November 2016 FPC meeting. This increase has been applied for. This will have a small impact on the FPC element of the Council Tax bill. 	
<p>16. Training Update</p> <p>The Clerk reminded Councillors that training days are available from LALC by request.</p>	

17. Correspondence

No further correspondence was received

20. Future Meetings

The date of the next meeting is confirmed as **Thursday 16th March 2017 at 7.30pm** in Folkingham Village Hall.

2017 Meeting Schedule confirmed as:

18th May (AGM 7pm start); 20th July; 21st September and 16th November

22. Any Other Business

a) Cllr Weston Smith raised the issue of problems for the school buses that collect and drop off in the Market Place. Access is frequently an issue due to parking and can result in dangers for the children using the buses.

She added that a meeting has proposed between some of the local farmers and the FPC regarding agricultural traffic through the village – this is to discuss concerns raised by residents but also from the farmers themselves as a result of parked vehicles restricting access.

b) Cllr Hansen asked the Chairman if there was any updated on the hedge cutting required at the bottom of Chapel Lane. The Chairman replied that contact with the landowner had been made and he had advised it would be cut shortly.

c) The Chairman asked that the question of a suitable date for the next village skip be added to the next agenda.

23. There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.51pm**PLEASE NOTE:**

Matters requiring resolution are required to be provided to the Clerk in writing at least 14 working days before the date of the next meeting for circulation to the Council and inclusion on the Agenda.

Requests for Community Grants (funding/donations) must be submitted via a 'Grant Request Form' (available from the Clerk) and must be submitted at least 14 days before the date of the next meeting for circulation to the Council and inclusion on the Agenda.

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