

NORTH LOPHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of North Lopham Parish Council AGM meeting held at 7.30 on Wednesday
13th May 2015 at The Mess. St Andrews School, North Lopham

1. Proposals for Chairman – Councillor Manus proposed David Hammond and this was seconded by Councillor Eagle. Jan Tate was proposed as temporary Vice Chairman by Councillor McManus and this was seconded by Councillor Eagle.
2. No apologies. Attendees, Robert Carley, Jan Tate, Dawn Eagle, David Hammond (Chair) Julie Crossley (Clerk). 33 members of the public attended.
3. Agreement of the Minutes of May 2014 AGM and March 2015 meeting were given by Councillor McManus.
4. Traffic Calming

DH outlined that this was not a public meeting but a discussion forum with regard to traffic problems. He felt there were 3 issues

- i) speeding in general
- ii) Failure of many HGV and Tractor/trailer drivers ignoring 7.5 tonne restriction
- iii) perceived problem of tractor trailer vehicles supplying the bio mass.

The Parish Council have put in new “Think” signs. Shortly there will be 20mph part time signs either side of the school. Sam 2 VAS. New 30 mph signs to replace old ones at either end of the village.

Together with SLPC No Site Traffic signs have been erected and letters have gone to most courier firms. The PC has written to the Chief Constable which led to a radar camera and prosecutions and a survey carried out last year confirmed that 60% of those who completed the questionnaire felt that traffic and speeding was a major concern in the village.

What can be done. The village needs to act as a community and consider setting up a separate action group with the possibility of setting up a speed watch. A Mr Rob Gerrett has shown an interest in spear heading this and has 12 volunteers so far.

The 7.5 tonne signs appear at the entrance to Lopham off the 1066 and remain in force up to the junction at Kenninghall by the school, strictly speaking only Crown lorries, their contractors and farm vehicles needing to use the road are allowed to . Any HGV or farm vehicles with no business in the vicinity are technically breaking the law by entering into the area. But how to enforce this.

Concern about an increase when harvesting commences and fodder is being taken to the bio mass plant. The correct route is through Garboldisham where there are fewer properties.

Several members of the public asked why the VAS could not be erected at the north end of the village and DH explained that the Council will not allow it to be sited on a 30 mph sign or near a junction.

Requests were made for the 30 mph sign to be pushed back so that traffic slowed before entering the village. The PC will see if this is possible.

DH was keen to point out that there was no issue with Crown. Their drivers were courteous and abided by the speed limits but the lorries are noisy mainly due to the road surface and they do start early but this cannot be helped but it might be worth asking Crown if the drivers could reduce their speed down to 25 mph going through the village.

The Parish Council has a small precept and can do little more with regard to traffic calming as the cost of a chicane is £11,000 and even if we could get 50% of that in a partnership scheme it is beyond the reach of the PC.

Mr Garrett said that the Police had been in the village on Saturday in response to pressure from letter writing and they are logging the situation with HGV's coming into the village at different times. When the speed watch is up and running he would propose that volunteers start early to catch some of the offenders.

This should be in conjunction with Speed Watch signs which DH would propose are put up to advise drivers they are entering a speed watch area.

Mr Garrett said that North Lopham needed to be a hot spot where drivers did not speed. It was noted that in Fersfield an agreement has been reached with HGV vehicles that they pass through at 25 mph.

DH also suggested that vehicles were placed in SL and Kenninghall to see how many HGV and Tractors used the road as a cut through and had no business in the village.

This with evidence from the speed watch could be presented to the Police and Council that something needed to be done. It could also be taken to Crown to ask if they could restrict their speed and that of their contractors to 25 mph.

Councillor McManus was concerned that this might move some of the traffic toward Kenninghall School.

Kevin Edwards a member of the public advised that he worked for Marshalls and could probably get the materials to build a chicane, This would have to be approved by the Council and there is no guarantee they would allow this. It was suggested that Kevin also become part of the action group.

There was concern raised about parked vehicles which whilst slowing traffic down caused greater danger to cycling children as they had to go into the middle of the road to pass.

Local Councils have no funds to put in traffic calming measures and most villages had similar problems.

IN summary it was agreed that Rob Gerrett and Kevin Edwards head up an action group with help from the Parish Council starting with the community speed watch.

That villagers write and complain independently to the press, NCC and Police about their concerns.

That there be a public meeting if appropriate in due course.

It was confirmed that it was a downgraded B road and lights were not necessary on parked vehicles as the speed was 30 mph.

Ian Armes a driver from Crown was present, he passes through at 27 mph and would have no issue slowing to 25 mph but thinks the road surface is to blame for some of the noise. He suggested a notice be put in the yard at Crown asking all contractors to also abide and go through at 25 mph which DH will speak to Crown about.

Mr Gerrett also raised the issue of the plant being built at Snetterton and whether the traffic to that will affect the village.

5. Neighbourhood Plan

LFB who is not a Parish Councillor but who has agreed to look at what needs to be done advised that the Localism Act 2011 has given powers to villages to look at the area and the Parish Council can be a recognised body to do this. First step is to get the Parish boundary agreed with Breckland DC. The Neighbourhood Plan allows for the villagers to have their say about developments but these have to be in line with BDC policy and allows for more specific say into where housing should or should not go and this can be adopted. Very much locally based. In time all villagers would have to be asked and interviewed and we would need a team and also site area and part of the plan is to explain what we want to do.

DH suggested that **LFB** can take ownership of this with the backing of the Parish Council who would

oversee the plan and be involved in all steps including obtaining grants. It is possible that the initial step can be taken before the next Parish Council meeting in July. It was asked if the village boundary could be moved outwards and LFB felt it could but this would cause more work at this stage but could be considered in the future.

Marion Chapman-Allen, newly elected District Councillor said that Breckland have taken on a new officer to deal with Neighbourhood plans, Brandon Lewis and there is £22.5m to support applications for grants now open.

Tim Colyer was asked to put in Lopham News.

JT said a lot of people had no clue what a neighbourhood plan was and what it involved and it would help to have some simple information. It was also noted that some parishes are not looking to put a plan forward until Breckland have finalised the Local Plan.

6. Insurance quotes

JLC noted that Zurich insurance who the Council has been insured with had renewed the premium at £437.16. She had contacted them and been advised the PC were not tied to them and so got two further quotes from AON at £389.81 and Came & Co at £265.09. Came had seen the Zurich schedule and advised that they had covered everything on that and it was proposed by Councillor Tate and seconded by Councillor Carley that we took up the Came & Co policy.

7. Damage to War Memorial

It was noted that there was a piece of stone broken off the war memorial and to find out what stone it is so that a repair can be made.

8. Finance and Internal audit

JLC advised that Chris Stringfield had kindly carried out the internal audit, that there had been a discrepancy in the previous year as the balance in the NS&I account had been incorrect and there was £562.43 of which £520.43 was accounted for in the NS&I account but that there was a remaining discrepancy of £42,00 since reduced to £35,00 which could possibly be down to an uncleared cheque. **JLC** agreed that she would look at the figures again. The audit was agreed on this proviso.

JLC advised the expenditure for April and May as Grass cutting share of Primrose Lane £720.00, Groundscape £162.00, Clerk wages and PAYE £240.00 NALC membership £139.99 and new signs £294. Income was precept and grant at £1833.47 and £424.14 from the bottle bank plus £50 cemetery

9. Horse deposits

JT advised she had been contacted by a resident in Pound Lane about horse riders allowing the horses to foul on the footpath but after some discussion it was felt that this was a bridleway and Councillor Eagle said that she did take a bag with her when she rode there and cleared her mess other riders are not so considerate. The lady in question had not attended the meeting as suggested and there was little the PC could do.

10. Potholes

JT had contacted Highways about 2 potholes outside Conkers on The Green. These are programmed for repair but no date when.

Nothing can be done about the laying water in Tanns Lane as the ditches are higher than the road.

11. Village clean up 16th May 2015.

JLC to collect kit on Friday and to meet at pond at 09.30. **MM** cannot attend but will tidy up some of the trees adjacent to the pond.

12. **DH** had a few further comments.

i) He had received confirmation from the Village Hall Committee that the gates are to be moved to allow for parking so that the field can be accessed which he was pleased to note and Tim Colyer advised that contractors had been asked to deal shortly.

ii) He needed another person to move the VAS and asked **RC** if he could do this which he said he would.

iii) he had been walking the lanes and noted that some of the footpaths had disappeared and queried whether the farmers have a duty to keep them clear.

iv) finally it was noted that he had spoken to those concerned with regard to noise from motorbike racing on a Sunday and they have agreed this is not appropriate

Meeting finished at 2120. Next meeting on 8th July 2015

Signed.....

Dated.....