

MINUTES OF WERRINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL MEETING Monday 29th November 2021

PRESENT: Charles Coxon, Pauline Fury, Martin Greaves, Ivan Hammond, Vince Moon, Bill Mercer, Roger Sale, Geoff Smith, Sally Weald,

WARD COUNCILLORS: Cllr Sandra Bond, Cllr Judy Fox, Cllr John Fox, Cllr Bryan Tyler

APOLOGIES: Cllr Steve Lane, Roger Proudfoot, Jan Forster, Tony Forster

PRESENTATION OF COMMUNITY AWARD

Vince Moon invited Lise Alexander Smith to make the presentation to John Lawrence of Bluebell Inn. John was unable to make the presentation at the Annual General Meeting. Lise explained how John has been involved in and supported so many community events and organisations: Werrington Show, Carnival. Scarecrow trail and installed the Community Exchange during the lock down. This year, he initiated the Christmas Lights Switch On which has already proved a great success with music and community stalls. She was pleased to present the award to John.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS AND APOLOGIES:** Vince Moon welcomed everyone to the meeting. Roger has had to go north to deal with a family issue. Best wishes were sent to him. The apologies were received as above.
2. **POST AGM MEETING:**
 - 2.1 **Discussion of Membership:** Sally highlighted the following:
 - i) **Planning Lead** has been vacant for three years despite being advertised constantly (including this month's Spotlight). This role involves the constant review of the Planning Applications coming in, to decide what action to take, downloading details and sharing with other planning members and/or full Council, attending consultations and meetings, taking relevant next steps including submission to Planning Dept, sharing on social media and submissions to Planning Committee. There is also a need to re-establish the Planning Committee.
Publicity role has been vacant for at least 5 years. This requires website updates, social media interactions, writing Spotlight report, updating library notice board, distributing other posters and publicity requirements
Treasurer's role: With Geoff's announcement of his retirement, this role will become vacant next year but needs someone to adopt as soon as possible to shadow Geoff especially with the submission and inspection of accounts. An expression of interest has recently been made.
 - ii) Sally has been undertaking the first two roles alongside the Secretary's role. But it is increasingly impossible to maintain the expectations of these roles alongside her other commitments and this is no longer sustainable. Unless a Planning lead can be appointed, WNC will have to consider withdrawing from reviewing planning applications.
 - iii) **Progress:** Someone, having discussed the Planning Role with Sally, has kindly offered to undertake the monitoring, reporting and admin work in conjunction with a Committee. BUT they cannot attend meetings on a Monday. Also, she has found someone to cover the treasurer's role on a stop gap basis but a further promising contact has been made which will be followed up.
 - iv) **Solution:** Sally made the following points:
 - The Constitution says:
Attendance: *The Council shall meet not less than three times a year. In the event of a Council member (being a duly elected representative) being absent, without reasonable cause, for a total of three meetings of the full Council in any one year of office, then that member shall be de-selected and a replacement sought in an approved manner.*
Co-option: *The Chair of any WNC committee may, subject to ratifications by the WNC Chair and Secretary, appoint any resident as a co-opted member of that committee.*
 - WNC must adapt and work within the resources available to them. The informality of the WNC setup has its attractions but it would be very regrettable if personal and political prejudices damage the effective running of the organisation. It is right that people should leave aside personal and political differences for the good of the community and this applies to WNC as well as Parish Councils.

- Any Planning Lead must be supported by a Planning Committee with their role and expectations clearly defined especially in conjunction with community developments with strong political implications.
- If a resident cannot attend meetings then they cannot be an elected member but co-option is a way forward. Such an appointment gives no voting rights but could a mandated exemption be made for Planning Matters decision making?
- Are Mondays a difficult evening? Going forward there are other people who would be interested in being members, but cannot attend on a Monday. Mondays should be reviewed in the future as it excludes more people?
- The person expressing an interest in the Planning Role is Tony Forster and Sally asked that he is co-opted and given voting rights so that he can undertake this role.
- She said she will no longer would be doing the planning then Tony will be the only option taking it forward.

v) Discussion and Decision:

- There was a long discussion about the situation.
- There is interest from other people to join Neighbourhood Council and there are aspects of the Secretary's role that they might be interested in.
- It was asked why the decision about changing to a Monday couldn't be made at this meeting. There was a show of hands but one person couldn't make Tuesday. After further debate it was agreed to try Tuesdays on an alternate basis to see if more people are able to attend with Tuesday 18th January 2022 being the first one.
- Members raised no objection to the planning being undertaken by Tony especially as no other options were offered. But it was felt that whilst co-option is the way forward then it shouldn't be made until Tony attends a meeting so that other members can meet him.

2.2 OFFICER AND RESPONSIBILITY APPOINTMENTS

OFFICERS

Chair: Vince agreed to take the role.

Vice-Chair: Bill agreed to take the role but said that he would soon be moving from Werrington and therefore illegible for WNC membership. Sally said that this is another reason why a decision is needed about co-opted members.

Secretary: Sally has offered to undertake some of this role but NOT at the current work loads. A way must be found to spread the workload.

Treasurer: Geoff confirmed his intention to continue as treasurer until June but he was willing to continue as a co-opted member.

Press & P R: Vacant but there could be options with new members

Planning Lead: See above

Environment: Roger Proudfoot

REPRESENTATIVES

PCC Parish Liaison Meetings: Vince Moon, Martin Greaves. Martin expressed concern about these meetings still being held by Zoom which precludes him from taking place especially given that City Council meetings are now held in person.

Werrington Community Association: Geoff said that he had already been elected by WCA. Sally said the WCA appoints the representatives from the member organisations. Pauline also expressed an interest.

Community Policing and Neighbourhood Watch Liaison: Geoff Smith, Pauline Fury, Ivan Hammond

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Planning: Vince Moon, Sally Weald, Martin Greaves, Charles Coxon, Tony Forster.

Environment: Roger Proudfoot, Ivan Hammond, Bill Mercer.

CO-OPTION: Pauline Fury, Ethan Lutterer with Tony Forster's appointment to be confirmed.

3. GENERAL MEETING

3.1 OPEN PUBLIC MEETING: There were no issues raised.

3.2 SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes of 11th October 2021: These were approved as a true record. Under matters arising Sally said that Werrington Parish Village Centre currently had Monday evenings free and it was also reviewing offering the Lighthouse Centre as a meeting space for hire so there may be options going forward.

Annual General Meeting 2021: Thank you to everyone who helped with the AGM. The speaker seemed to go down well and gave useful information. The reports were well received and it was great to see David Gwyer's videos on the 'big' screen.

Everyone agreed that it went well. The lack of attendance was concerning but it was understood that people are still cautious with Covid. It was agreed that Nigel Sutton gave an interesting presentation and it was a shame that it only had a short time space.

Annual General Meeting 2022: At the last meeting Sally was asked to book the Police and Crime Commissioner Darryl Preston to speak. She asks for further guidance about how this will work as it is unreasonable to curtail such a meeting after say 45 mins so that the AGM can progress. Also she still considers that the Small Hall is not an appropriate venue for a potential larger meeting like this. After discussion it was agreed that this is not an appropriate Forum for the Police and Crime Commissioner and a separate meeting is needed. Bryan Tyler said that with John Peach now having the role of Deputy Police Commissioner then WNC could invite him to a meeting. There was a discussion about who to approach including Steve Lane about his mayoral year. It was even suggested to invite local vets etc and Geoff agreed that such presentations had been made in the past. Bryan Tyler suggested Matt Gladstone the new Chief Executive of Peterborough City Council and this was thought to be a good idea especially as Gillian Beasley had been a speaker in the past.

PLANNING:

- Nothing more has been heard about the Ken Stimpson fence.
- Amongst a host of planning applications are:
 1. Of interest will be a resurrected application at 1302 Lincoln Road (Just opposite The Cock Inn) which was approved in 2014 despite strong WNC objection. The previous applicants have submitted evidence that they have 'started' work as a trench has been dug to ensure the original application still stands.
 2. Another Lincoln Road Development is at no 1357: a small extension replacing a garage therefore not affecting Lincoln Road green and spacious character. No action needed
- A question was asked about the change of Werrington's Fish and Chips shop to a Turkish barber. Sally said that there hadn't been a planning application as the change of use didn't warrant it.

50th Anniversary: Geoff and Martin will look at the plinth but there are concerns that this isn't a suitable place.

UNDERPASSES: Nathan hopes to tackle the Cuckoos Hollow damage very shortly. Davids Lane and Paston Parkway are all booked in for Early Feb. Village Centre has been booked for the workshop 12th February. After a long struggle City Council has finally responded with permissions. Loan Shark Mural design has to be approved by PCC and Illegal Money Lending Team. Sally is keen for other involvement especially to drop by when painting to make sure things are OK and to help with the workshop on Saturday 12th Feb especially on the early afternoon session. In response to question she clarified why the mural has to be on a loan shark theme. Davids Lane underpass can be on any theme and suggestions have been put forward via facebook such as woodland, history and a Lowry style mural.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- i) **LED sign:** A resident has emailed WNC and Councillors that support is given for an electronic sign to be installed in Werrington Centre giving details of local events and public information similar to those seen on Oundle.
Sally has said that Werrington Centre is privately owned so that this is not something that can happen. In any case, in location doesn't have a high enough footfall and has the anti-social problems. The resident has come back saying that this is a lost opportunity and a few shouldn't spoil it for the rest. Sally has said that this a matter for the private Landlord and doesn't intend to do anything to do anything else. John Fox agreed that he had replied in a similar vein.
- ii) **Tesco Trolleys:** A resident raised the issue of trolley being abandoned in Werrington and asked what had been done in the past and what support WNC could give if she approached Tescos.
Our initial response said
Vince remembers that it used to be a problem when it was a Rainbow. He pursued it through his Co-op connections but was told it too expensive to install preventive measures. It was also felt success would be limited even if they were installed. When Tesco took over they installed a trolley coin system as well as a wheel locking system if trolleys were taken off site, and this did improve things, although it was not fool proof. The Neighbourhood Council talked about this when the Tesco system wore out, but again think Tesco felt it was not worth the expense of installing a new system.

A question was raised about the City Council charging Tesco for any recovered trolleys? Other members recall that John Fox has recovered trollies for Tesco's. There were also some youngsters who gathered some in and were rewarded but then it was thought that some of them were taking the trollies and then bringing them back creating a nice little earner. It is also vaguely recalled that there been a community recovery initiative considered but not progressed. Generally it is felt that there hasn't and probably isn't an easy solution to this but Tesco's should not be immune to being responsible to finding one.

John Fox confirmed that he has spoken so many times to Tesco. One manager agreed that refundable coins would be introduced but it never happened and he left. Andy Symonds at the Ploughman has had a lot of involvement and is always talking to them about the trollies just being abandoned in the car park and blowing into cars.

It was agreed that we haven't the resources to do a campaign given the unsuccessful attempts undertaken in the past but we are happy to do or would support a formal letter to Tesco Head Office copying in Paul Bristow.

iii) Use of Glyphosate in Werrington: Members considered an email from a resident which gave details of hazards relating to the use of glyphosate. In Peterborough Aragon is licensed by PCC to use glyphosate to control weeds around trees and lamp-posts and at path edges. It is typically sprayed from quad-bikes. Councillor Heather Skibsted had a motion agreed at council – with cross-party support – to try out other forms of weed control given the doubts about the safety and effects of glyphosate. Peakirk Parish Council has volunteered to be one such trial area: Given the much greater use in Werrington, with its large green areas, Werrington Neighbourhood Council is asked to volunteer Werrington to be another test site.

Sally suggested that:

- Werrington Neighbourhood Council is in a different position to Parish Councils as it does not itself have any responsibility for the maintenance of any green spaces.
 - Roger has said the following: It would be worth finding out how often they spray in Werrington as it is his understanding is that they use it very sparingly and not very often (once per annum) so the "threat" is extremely small. It is really not the big issue people perceive it is in Peterborough. The Wildlife Trust even advocated its use for clearing areas for wildflowers not so long ago.
- John Fox added that this had been widely debated by the Council and he had heard how mild the solution was but that doesn't tie up with some of the scientific evidence presented. The widest concern is its entry into water courses. It was agreed that the Neighbourhood council will ask about where it is used, how often and what the alternatives are. John said that James Collinridge would be the contact for this.

iv) Correspondence about ARMED FORCES COVENANT

- a) We had an approach from Thomas Kelly the Armed Forces Covenant Officer, wanting the Neighbourhood Council to sign the Armed Forces Covenant designed for Town and Parish Councils. Whilst there is a wide remit, WNC have been specifically asked to sign a pledge to:
- Appoint an Armed Forces Champion to engage with the Covenant Officer and support the Armed Forces Community
 - Promote to members and wider public and encourage positive interaction between communities
 - Support Veterans and recognise they are a valued part of the community. Facilitate and encourage their participation in civic and community events and provide links to support organisations on websites and social media channels
 - Promote Armed Forces events such Breakfast Clubs, Coffee Mornings, Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day and Remembrance activities
 - Review policies to mitigate disadvantage experienced by members of the Armed Forces Community
- b) Officers felt that the WNC's purpose and activities did not lend themselves to signing this pledge and put this back to Thomas. The rationale for this:
- We are a Neighbourhood Council, not a Parish Council, and our activities do not align with the covenant pledges. A Parish Council has a greater range of community responsibilities and undertakings which are more appropriate to these commitments.
 - Parish Councils are also larger, have more resources and paid staff. The Neighbourhood Council does not have enough volunteers to even cover our current activities and there is a need to rationalise what we already do. Adding extra responsibilities ie 'appointing a Armed Forces Champion ... encouraging integration ... promoting activities and events etc', which have no relevance to our aims and purpose will create an extra burden for an already overstretched group. Whilst we recognise the importance and 'value' of the group, pledging ourselves to the stated

covenant requires time and commitment which we do not have and when we struggle to do our own publicity.

- We foresee problems in 'reviewing policies so as not to give disadvantage' to this group - when this could apply equally to other diverse groups. Similarly the 'promotion and encouragement of positive interaction within the community ... and ... the promotion of events etc' could equally apply to other local groups who would want us to do the same.
- Reading the covenant undertaking, this feels more appropriate to Werrington Community Association who may be in a better position to respond.
- c) John Fox then wrote to say that
 - Several nearby parish councils are signing up to the Armed Forces Covenant and even Henry Clark (chair of CAPLC and Peakirk) is doing an article promoting this.
 - Can this be considered by all members to see if WNC can benefit the armed forces community by showing its support.
- d) During the meeting this was discussed and the same conclusion reached about the WNC's remit. John however wanted Thomas to come to a meeting to speak even though he appreciates that there is little that the Neighbourhood Council can support here. Sally pointed out that there are more relevant organisations such as the Community Association and Spotlight. It was agreed to invite Thomas to a meeting and we would invite other Werrington organisations for a short presentation.

3.3 HONORARY TREASURER

Geoff gave a quick update of balances and said that there had been little activity with the accounts. Werrington Community Association had given money to pay for the insurance premium and their help is gratefully acknowledged. He advised that the current bank balance is £9,471.20 with Roger's expenses of £494.17 having recently been cleared. Our cash-in-hand is currently being reconciled further to AGM costs being paid. The Good Citizenship for Youth Award shield has been engraved at a cost of £5 and has now been delivered.

3.4 ENVIRONMENT

- i) Sally said that the Loxley Co Op project has been extended until end of January to allow Roger to spend the balance.
- ii) Vince had attended the Co Op presentation of the cheques to last year's recipients and WNC was introduced as next year's participants. Off the back of this, a further promotion has been put on facebook for residents to select WNC as their chosen good cause.
- iii) Sally attended a meeting in October at The Brook with Tony Cook of PECT, Cllr John and Judy Fox and Cllr Bryan Tyler. PECT has some money to establish 'bees lines' funded by National Lottery. This involves a community project ... digging turf which is put to one side to create bee banks, then sowing wildflowers. Tony has some plans but wants us to identify suitable areas. Some areas may require a licence to cultivate', others require a 'blanket licence to cultivate', some will be notified retrospectively to PCC. Tony wants to identify more areas. They have two months to seed this year and then they are looking again from the Spring. They will be identified with the City Council to prevent mowing and will have a metal bee tag.

Sally emphasised the Werrington Brook Management Plan which already identifies areas requiring wildflowers and will preclude any planting elsewhere in that area. She also mentioned the importance of working with all the partners with an interest in Gunthorpe and Werrington and highlighted Roger was more available on Fridays given his important interest in this. She also asked about the work that had been already been agreed with Cllr Sandra Bond at Campbell Drive. Apparently the processes of getting all the permissions, agreements have taken a lot of time but it is still progressing.

After the meeting WNC officers agreed that it is difficult to seed areas in the centre of Werrington because of the unattractiveness of long unmown grass as so often highlighted on social media, so it was agreed to initially submit the areas identified on the Plan which are below. Roger has noted that they use a different turfing technique and it will be interesting to see which has the best outcomes.

In response, Tony thanked us for our input and will keep us in touch with the project.

Compartment 2 Werrington Paddocks and Hastings Road Recreation Ground. 4 specific areas identified to establish meadow (action point 1) *But is this fully covered by Environment Groups project?*

Compartment 3 Rockingham Grove Creation of meadow areas through wildflower seeding

Compartment 6 Recreation Ground and green space from Hallfields Lane to Gunthorpe Road. 3 areas highlighted, wildflower meadows either side of the Brook

Compartment 8 Werrington Meadows. 3 areas of wildflower seeding

Compartment 9 Werrington Meadows Playing Field (Campbell Drive). One area of seeding (action point 1) *But is this already covered by the pending works agreed with Sandra Bond*

Compartment 10 Cuckoos Hollow. Plug planting of wildflowers on lake banks in 4 identified areas (Action point 8). Seeding of open grassland

John Fox advised that he and Judy hadn't made any other suggestions and agreed about the difficulties of leaving areas unmown. Judy described the problems of the fruit trees in Carron Drive where the area now has to be strum.

- iv) Sandra Bond advised that she was pleased after all the delay with Covid etc that the work is going on in Campbell Drive which includes wildflower sowing and the planting of trees alongside the tree belt alongside the playing fields. Work had just started involving Ken Stimpson and Gunthorpe Schools.

3.5 WARD COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

Sandra Bond advised:

- a licence for the length of Fulbridge Road including the 40 mph zone has been given to the Gunthorpe SpeedWatch.
- The storm drains going to the brook have insufficient covers which children can access. Anglian Water agreed they are unsafe and will be replacing.

John Fox advised:

- He has been speaking on the radio with Andy Symonds speaking about the new Police and Crime Plan covering drugs, anti social behaviour, road safety and speeding.
- The gym equipment has been delayed
- The CLF spend on speed signage has been delayed so this year's allocation will be spent on bins and a bench.
- At the Leaders Questions the following day, he will be asking about safer cycle routes as the development of Manor Drive and Leeds Farm estate present an ideal opportunity for new networks especially via Car Dyke.

3.6 ANY OTHER MATTERS

Bill referred to the article in Spotlight which was the report that he had given to WNC meeting in October. He referred to the trains which were going to use the new line shortly. There will be 471 houses suffering from three times the noise

3.7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday 18th January 2022 (changed from Monday)

Monday 28th February 2022 when the Armed Forces Covenant will hopefully be discussed with other groups