

Croughton Parish Council

Minutes of Croughton Parish Council Meeting
Held on Monday 12th April 2010 at 7.00 p.m.
in Croughton Village Hall

Present

Councillor Pamela Gelder (Chairman)
Councillor Jean Coles
Councillor Trevor Davies
Councillor Ann Perkins
Councillor Lesley Ramsay
Councillor Rob Robbins
Councillor Brian Tomlin

In attendance - Mrs Ann Le Druillenec (Clerk)

1 Guest Speaker: Cllr Eric Franklin, Northants CALC: Quality Council Scheme:

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Franklin of Thrapston Town Council and Northants CALC and Mrs Kate Houlihan, Training Officer, Northants CALC to the Meeting.

Cllr Franklin, former Quality Champion, Northants CALC was pleased to recommend the Quality Status scheme to Croughton Parish Council and to provide guidance and assistance to the Parish Council should it decide to submit an application.

a) Benefits of the Quality Status Scheme:

Cllr Franklin advised that it provided an opportunity for Councils to carry out a Health Check in accordance with nationally approved standards and criteria of local governance. Quality Councils should find that their heightened status affords them greater credibility and influence in their working relationship with Principal Councils.

b) Criteria:

Cllr Franklin provided Members with copies of the Guide (Second edition 2008) and referred to the list of criteria contained within.

i) Electoral Mandate: At accreditation two thirds of the Council's members must have been elected.

ii) A qualified Clerk: The Clerk must hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) or equivalent qualification.

iii) Council Meetings: A Council must meet at least six times per year, allocate time in meetings for Public Participation, properly publish notices of meetings and publish draft minutes within 2 months.

iv) Communication and Community Engagement - Mandatory and Discretionary items of evidence were required:

Mandatory: website, email address, regular newsletter, contact details of Members and the Clerk, provide an access information point, such as the Parish Office.

Discretionary: 9 out of 17 must be met e.g. Annual Report, Voluntary and Community links, Councillor surgeries, that principal authorities are informed of the Parish Council's activities (minutes sent to District and County Councillors, Ward meetings, Parish Council news in District Council newsletters), consultations, questionnaires on local issues, Parish Council leaflets or brochures.

v) Annual Report

vi) Accountability: An unqualified Audit opinion

vii) Code of Conduct

viii) Promoting Local Democracy and Citizenship - election candidates, working in local school, youth work, Speedwatch, Pocket Park, Website group, Emergency Planning Group

ix) Employment Terms and Conditions - contract

x) Training Statement of Intent for staff and Councillors

c) Time commitment: This would normally be that of the Chairman and the Clerk.

d) Process: A Portfolio of Evidence covering a 12 month time scale (retrospectively or prospectively) is compiled. The Local Accreditation Panel will interview the Chairman and the Clerk and assess the application before making a recommendation. Fee: £59.00 (subject to confirmation)

The Chairman thanked Cllr Franklin and Mrs Houlihan for their presentation.

2 To Receive Apologies and Approve the Reasons for Absence:

Cllr Murdoch: Jetlag

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Tomlin and seconded by Cllr Ramsay to approve the Reason for Absence submitted by Cllr Murdoch.

Cllr Relf: Personal Commitment

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Tomlin to approve the Reason for Absence submitted by Cllr Relf.

3 To invite Declarations of Interest:

None.

4 Public Participation:

None.

5 To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held 8th March 2010:

Cllr Gelder thanked Cllr Tomlin for chairing the previous Meeting and thanked Cllr Tomlin and the Clerk for their support during her absence.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Coles and seconded by Cllr Perkins to approve the Minutes of the Meeting held 8th March 2010.

6 Matters Arising from item 5 not on the Agenda: For Information

6.1 Clerk's Report: (previously circulated)

Minute No. 5.2.1. Gates at Gateridge Farm: Mr Patrick Burke, Enforcement Officer and Trees Team Leader, SNC has advised that the gates do not require planning permission being too far back from the highway rather than adjacent to it. The Highway Authority has no problems with the gates in terms of either being a potential hazard to road users or with highway visibility at the access.

Agreed: To make further enquiries about planning permission for the creation of the access.

Action: the Clerk

Minute No. 5.2.2. Dog Fouling: The report had been logged with SNC and the Street Cleansing Team made aware of the problem.

Minute No. 8.3. Moles in the Cemetery: The owner of the adjacent field has no objection to the Parish Council taking appropriate action to address the problem in the Cemetery.

Agreed: That professional advice was required on how to deal with the moles

Action: the Clerk (make enquiries)

Minute No. 9: Affordable Housing, Brackley Road site: Miss Alice Izzett, Strategic Housing Officer, SNC has advised that the planning application should be ready for submission in early May. The creation of a footpath along Brackley Road from the High Street to the Cemetery is still considered to be financially prohibitive. Any recommendations from the Highway Authority as part of the formal consultation process would be taken into consideration at the time.

Minute No. 12. B235 Notice of proposed alteration of the Land Register in respect of the access to the Playing Field: Arising from Cllr Robbin's investigations, the Clerk had opposed the application on the grounds that this small parcel of land in question is in the ownership of the Parish Council, having been conveyed for the sum of £80.00 in 1973. The Land Registry had accordingly served Notice on SNH and, following expiry of the Notice and no response

from SNH, had altered the title plan for their properties. The title plan for the Parish Council's land has reverted back to the original and includes the access land to the Playing Field at the end of Wheelers Rise.

6.2 Other:

i) Bus Routes 499 and 508: NCC will be formally consulting on proposals to reduce the service on these bus routes, as documented in the NCC Cabinet Report dated 9th February 2010 and as referred to at the Little Brook Ward meeting held 22nd March 2010. Cllr Coles advised the Meeting of the Petition being organised by the Bus Operator, Tex Cars and Coaches (TCC) and which passengers were being asked to sign.

7 Finance Matters

7.1 Receipts & payments and cash balance of bank accounts:

Barclays Bank: £1,379.57 (05.04.10) Standard Life: £15,367.02 (05.04.10)
The Clerk advised of the planned transfer of the Standard Life Cash Savings & Mortgage business from Standard Life plc to Barclays Bank plc later this year.

7.2 To Approve Payments:

Cheque No.	Payee	Description	Total	vat
102099	A H Contracts	Inv 4651 dog waste bin service	£23.50	£3.50
102100	Texprep	Inv 17893 newsletter	£58.80	
102101	J Schofield	Inv date 14.03.10 website	£314.00	
DD	BTplc	ref VP11277470Q00401 telephony	£212.07	£31.34
102102	E.ON UK Energy Services	Inv 006844 street lighting maintenance	£241.59	£35.98
102103	A Le Druillenec	Salary Month 1	£310.35	
102104	HMRC	Tax Month 1	£77.40	
102105	A Le Druillenec	Reimbursement stationery	£23.42	£4.02

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Tomlin and seconded by Cllr Davies to approve the Payments.

7.3 To Note Receipts:

Date	Payee	Description	Amount
01.03.10	J Wintour	Allotment rent plot 26	£12.00
08.03.10	J Coles	Allotment rent plot 1	£12.00
12.03.10	Bank Interest	Standard Life	£127.82
15.03.10	Mid Counties Co-op Ltd	Burial fees plot 577	£155.00
12.03.10	NCC	Grasscutting	£534.26

It was noted that an additional £13.36 in respect of escalation was yet to be received from NCC in respect of grasscutting.

The Receipts were **Noted**.

7.4 To consider Training needs:

- i) *Managing Allotments*: Training provider -Northants CALC: Mrs Houlihan advised that this course had been rescheduled to 22nd April 2010
 - ii) *Health & Safety and Reducing Risk*: Training provider - SLCC: 13th May 2010
 - iii) *S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy*: Training provider - Northants CALC: 27th April 2010 Cllr Tomlin expressed an interest in attending this course.
 - iv) *Power of Wellbeing*: Training provider - Northants CALC: 20th April 2010. Mrs Houlihan advised that the fees for a bespoke training session for the full council would be £18.00 per person. Only Councils with 80% of Members trained in the Power of Wellbeing may use the power.
 - v) *Engaging Communities*: Training provider- Northants CALC: 11th May 2010: Cllr Gelder expressed an interest in attending.
- Agreed:** That places be reserved as indicated for Cllrs Gelder and Tomlin
Action: Cllr Tomlin (confirm availability with the Clerk); the Clerk (reserve places as required)

Cllr Franklin and Mrs Houlihan withdrew from the Meeting.

- 7.5 To approve the purchase of a desk chair in the sum of £113.00 incl. vat:
The Clerk advised that the chair price £113.00 had been sold. Equivalent models price £97.32 incl vat were available.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Ramsay and seconded by Cllr Perkins to authorise the Clerk to purchase one desk chair in the sum of £97.32 incl. vat

Action: the Clerk

- 7.6 To approve an insurance premium of £157.50 for the shed at the Portway Pocket Park:
The premium reflected the replacement value of the shed (£1,080.00) and its wooden construction.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Robbins not to approve the insurance premium of £157.50 for the shed at the Portway Pocket Park.

The Clerk advised that Allianz Insurance plc had transferred the administration of its Local Council insurance to the Local Government Team within Aon. It was noted that a £5.00 administration charge for each amendment requested by policy holders applies.

Agreed: To seek quotes on a like for like basis of the full policy from other insurance providers.

Action: the Clerk

8 **Assets Register:**

- 8.1 To adopt the Assets Register: (previously circulated)

Recommendation to adopt the Assets Register, proposed by Cllr Tomlin and seconded by Cllr Perkins, was subsequently **WITHDRAWN** pending clarification of the value to be entered into the Register.

Action: the Clerk

- 8.2 To review the status of the Parish Pound:

The status of the Parish Pound which was enclosed on the land belonging to Croughton Mill was unclear.

Agreed: To make enquiries to clarify the situation.

Action: the Clerk (check Croughton Parish Council Minutes 2003-2005; apply to the Land Registry for information on the title)

9 **Action Plan:**

- 9.1 To approve the outcomes of the Action Plan 2009-2010: (previously circulated)

It was noted that Cllrs Robbins and Tomlin would imminently be carrying out planting at the Cemetery.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Tomlin and seconded by Cllr Coles to approve the outcomes of the Action Plan 2009-2010.

- 9.2 To approve the Action Plan Objectives 2010-2011: (previously circulated)

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Coles and seconded by Cllr Tomlin to approve the Action Plan Objectives 2010-2011 on the proviso that decisions taken at Agenda item 10 in respect of Quality Status may give rise to modifications.

10 **Quality Status:**

- 10.1 To consider becoming a Quality Council:

Members discussed the useful presentation given by Cllr Franklin. The Council was already working towards several of the standards expected of Quality Councils. Issues of time and cost needed to be taken into consideration.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Perkins to agree in principle to work towards becoming a Quality Council.

Agreed: To consider the manageability and timescale of an application at the Annual Parish Council Meeting to be held on 10th May 2010.

Action: Chairman and the Clerk (time and cost issues); the Clerk (Agenda item)

11 Planning:

11.1 Applications:

a) Ref: S/2010/0257/FUL

Proposal: Change of use from agricultural to maintenance business use, improvements to access and hard landscaping

Location: The Old Pump House, Blenheim, Croughton

<http://snc.planning-register.co.uk/PlanAppDisp.asp?RecNum=61770>

The Parish Council considered that it was unable to support the proposal due to a lack of detail about the scope of the enterprise and any plans associated with the business, in particular in relation to issues concerning the use of Building A (water storage) and Building D (recycling).

Issues arising from the lack of information included:

i) the collection and storage of wet waste, including foul water and that produced or used in connection with both agricultural and business use, and compliance with statutory regulations, including health and safety

ii) the disposal of foul sewage

iii) the extent of the recycling operation and its certification and whether volumes would be restricted to the capacity of the building

iv) the associated maintenance or clearance contracts

v) compliance with ventilation, extraction and noise regulations at Building B

vi) the storage, type, scope and volumes of flammable materials at Building C

vii) the quantities of animal feed to be stored at Buildings H & J

viii) expected traffic movements in and out of the site

ix) operating hours

The Parish Council noted that the development is outside the village envelope.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Tomlin and seconded by Cllr Coles to OBJECT to the proposal and to authorise the Clerk to respond in accordance with the Parish Council's concerns.

Action: the Clerk

b) Ref: S/2010/0302/FUL

Proposal: Extend vehicular access to serve agricultural land to rear

Location: Land adjacent to The Old Pump House, Blenheim, Croughton

<http://snc.planning-register.co.uk/PlanAppDisp.asp?RecNum=61810>

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Tomlin and seconded by Cllr Coles to make no objections.

c) Ref: S/2010/0295/FUL

Proposal: Two storey extension

Location: 16A Mill Lane, Croughton

<http://snc.planning-register.co.uk/PlanAppDisp.asp?RecNum=61808>

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Coles and seconded by Cllr Ramsay to make no comments.

11.2 Notices of Decision:

a) Ref: S/2010/1030/FUL

Proposal: Replace flat roof with pitched roof, new entrance porch, replacement windows and doors

Location: Building 67 RAF Croughton

PERMITTED

b) Ref: S/2010/0113/FUL

Proposal: Increase the width and tiling of the roof on garage. Alterations to S/2009/0506/P (Retrospective)

Location: 12 Mill Lane, Croughton

PERMITTED

c) Ref: S/2010/0033/MAF

Proposal: Replacement of 16 no.bungalows with 16 no.two storey dwellings

Location: Land off Barksdale Street, RAF Croughton **REFUSED**

11.2.1 Ref: S/2010/1084/FUL

Proposal: Five stables, tackroom, separate field/bedding store and parking facilities

Location: Land to the north of the B4031 Croughton

The Development Control Committee, SNC will consider this application on 22nd April 2010.

Agreed in Principle: That a member of the Parish Council attends the Meeting.

Action: Cllr Gelder (attend); the Clerk (inform SNC if Cllr Gelder wishes to speak)

11.3 Brackley Master Plan: To note update:

WYC Planning & Design is to address issues raised by the preferred High Speed 2 rail route which will skirt the north-eastern edge of Brackley and impact on the town and current proposals included in the Brackley Masterplan. Dates for approval of the draft document by the Cabinet of SNC and the subsequent public consultation will now take place much later than originally anticipated. **Noted.**

12 Parish Council Meetings:

12.1 To agree the opening times for Meetings addressed by a Guest Speaker:

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Ramsay and seconded by Cllr Davies to introduce, as required, a separate Guest Speaker 30 minute slot commencing at 7 p.m. prior to Ordinary Parish Council Meetings held on the second Monday of the month.

13 Statutory Matters:

13.1 To delegate the Review of Standing Orders to the Chairman, Internal Control Councillor and the Clerk:

(New model Standing Orders published by NALC and current Standing Orders adopted by Croughton Parish Council had been previously circulated)

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Tomlin to delegate the Review of Standing Orders to the Chairman, Internal Control Councillor and the Clerk.

Action: Cllrs Gelder and Perkins and the Clerk (to bring a recommendation to the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 10th May 2010); the Clerk (Agenda item)

13.2 External Audit for YE 31st March 2010: To note correspondence from BDO LLP:

The date of the External Audit is 18th June 2010.

The Internal Auditor will carry out the second audit with the purpose of signing off Section 4 of the Annual Return on 13th May 2010.

14 Highway Matters (Action Plan Objective)

14.1 VAS device:

14.1.1 To note correspondence from Cllr Ron Sawbridge in respect of grant:

Cllr Sawbridge had confirmed by email of 29th March 2010 that he will submit an application in the sum of £2,250 to the NCC Empowering Councillors and Communities Scheme for the acquisition of a VAS device. Cllr Sawbridge would require copies of information on costs from potential suppliers.

Agreed: To accept Cllr Sawbridge's offer and to provide information as requested.

Action: the Clerk

14.1.2 To consider information from suppliers:

Information from 4 suppliers had been acquired and made available to Members. The comparable merits of portable and static devices, LED displays and costs were discussed but no conclusive judgement reached.

Members were also made aware of evidence contained in Traffic Advisory leaflet No. 1/03 published by the Department for Transport (dft) and the summary of Report No. 508 published by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) that demonstrated the effectiveness of VAS devices.

14.1.3 To consider the purchase of a VAS device:

Agreed:

- i) To establish a Working Group to investigate suitable sites within the village for a VAS device and associated electricity costs
 - ii) That the Working Group brings a recommendation to the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 10th May 2010
 - iii) That Cllrs Davies, Robbins and Tomlin be appointed members of the VAS Working Group
- Action:** VAS Working Group; Cllr Ramsay (contact Crick village where both portable and static VAS devices are installed); the Clerk (Agenda item)

14.2 Rightracks: To receive a report: Cllr Ramsay referred to the previously circulated Minutes of the Rightracks Board Meeting held 3rd March 2010 which was the last operational Meeting of the Rightracks Board, the project having finished on 31st March 2010. A final Meeting of the Forum will take place later in the year to discuss the evaluation of the Rightracks project. Members considered that there had been little in the way of enhancements carried out in Croughton under the Rightracks project. This was in marked contrast to the new road layout in Aynho.

There had been much promotional work, with one third of the budget having been allocated to communications and signage, with no analysis of the effectiveness of the project in terms of crime reduction figures.

From a Croughton perspective the project had been disappointing in many respects.

Agreed:

- i) To formally request the final spend figure and the evaluation report and to be advised of the basis on which the report is to be compiled.
- ii) To ask for explanations in respect of the decision not to create a hardstanding area near the telephone exchange on the B4031 when funds were in place
- iii) To challenge aspects of the project e.g. signage, website, overseas travel, questionnaire, improvements to village gateways

Action: Cllr Gelder & the Clerk (letter to John Spencer, Casualty Reduction Manager, NCC)

14.3 Resurfacing of Carriageways/Street Doctor Reports: To receive an update:

14.3.1. Resurfacing of Carriageways: Correspondence dated 7th April 2010 from Ms Debbie Strong, Deputy Head of Transport and Highways, NCC in response to the Parish Council's letter of 24th March 2010 was brought to the attention of the Meeting.

In summary, due to unknown levels of funding for road maintenance in 2011/12, only a provisional date of the financial year 2011/2012 has been set for resurfacing works to the three priority sites in Croughton - the B4031, Charlton Road and Wheelers Rise.

During April 2010 NCC Cabinet approval will be sought for its new highways maintenance initiative in order to carry out more preventative maintenance schemes and move towards semi-permanent patching and greater efficiency. This is an attempt to eradicate the current practice of repeated re-patching of 'made safe' patched defects. Current repairs cost £40 - £50 per pothole in comparison to a semi permanent repair of £130 - £150. Planing and resurfacing of a 200m length of carriageway would cost £24 per square metre (excluding white lining and drainage works).

Ms Strong also explained that vehicle speed is not taken into account when prioritising the general maintenance resurfacing programme and that generally it is believed that the potential for speeding increased on newly surfaced roads. Reported safety defects are dealt with quickly to make the road safe and usable until more permanent repairs can be implemented.

Noted.

Cllr Ron Sawbridge had taken up the Parish Council's concerns in respect of carriageway resurfacing and speeding with Mr David Farquhar, Head of Transport and Highways, NCC and asked for the timescale to be reconsidered. Cllr Sawbridge was mindful of the financial constraints being placed on the County Council.

Noted.

Cllr Heather Smith, Cabinet Member for Environment, Growth and Transport had also responded sympathetically to the Parish Council's concerns but stressed the difficult financial situation facing the County Council and its attempt to address investment in the roads and reduce the backlog of extensive reconstruction work through the new highway initiative referred to by Ms Strong.

Noted.

14.3.2 Street Doctor reports: The Chairman thanked Cllr Tomlin for meeting with Mr Trevor Gray, Community Steward, MGWSP to identify carriageway defects and for submitting a total of 35 Street Doctor reports after the site meeting.

MGWSP operated in accordance with its intervention criteria for carriageways and footpaths. Cllr Tomlin has challenged the assessment in respect of the surface opposite Blenheim Croft on grounds of safety. Resurfacing of the Blenheim footpath and the slabbing of the footpath by Blenheim Croft are subject to finance, and the carriageway opposite No. 40 High Street will be monitored. Wheelers Rise has been added to the Schemes List.

14.4 Defect caused by Interoute cable laying work at 21 High Street

Agreed: To ask Interoute to make good.

Action: the Clerk

14.5 Parish Enhancement Gang: To consider requests for work from May 2010:

It was noted that a request for siding out and edging the Bank at Blenheim, cleaning of and clearing away vegetation from the entry gate along the B4031 from Aynho, clearing adopted pavements of weeds and vegetation and refurbishment of road signs had been submitted in February 2010.

Agreed: To ask the Gang to carry out the following work at Blenheim:

i) Free the street lamp at Blenheim from overhanging trees

ii) Cut back trees overhanging the highway

Action: the Clerk

15 Annual Parish Assembly Monday 26th April 2010:

15.1 To consider arrangements: Several organisations had accepted the invitation to report to the Assembly.

Agreed:

i) Members of the Parish Council and the Clerk gather at 7 p.m.

ii) To open the Meeting at 7.30 p.m. and devote the first hour to reports

iii) To invite questions for 15 mins

iv) To serve refreshments during an informal session until 9.30 p.m.

Action: Chairman (Annual Parish Council Report); the Clerk (Agenda, Notices, Reports); Cllrs Ramsay and Murdoch (refreshments)

16 Police Matters:

16.1 Community Panel Meeting: To note the Minutes of 23rd March 2010: (previously circulated) Cllr Gelder reported that Beats 31 and 32 were to merge in order to economise on Meetings. The next Community Panel Meeting (14th June 2010) coincides with the Parish Council Meeting. The top three priorities to 14th June 2010 are: Speeding, Door Step Crime and Crime Prevention (home security)

Smartwater: An Open Drop In Meeting on 22nd May 2010 is being planned (subject to confirmation).

17 Correspondence

17.1 Items to Consider:

- 17.1.1 draft SNC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2010-2014 Consultation: (in circulation) Closing date is 29th May 2010.
Agreed: To consider a response at the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 10th May 2010.
Action: the Clerk (Agenda item)
- 17.1.2 Attendance at NCC Local Councils Conference, 16th June 2010: Further details awaited. Cllr Gelder to attend.
- 17.1.3 To consider participation in NCC 'You Choose' Campaign: Toolkit in circulation
<http://www.northamptonshire.gov/youchoose>
- 17.1.4 CPRE Northants: To consider holding a Spring Clean:
Agreed: No further action.
- 17.2 Items to Note:
17.2.1 Milton Keynes Council and NCC: Reducing Waste sent to Landfill leaflet:
Noted. Added to Correspondence Circulation List.
- 17.3 Circulation List:
i) SNC List of planning applications registered 04.03.10 - 24.03.10
ii) Rightracks newsletter Winter/Spring 2010
iii) NCC Household Waste Recycling Centre Contract - Changes to Service Bulletin No.1 11th March 2010
iv) SNH: Major Works Briefing Paper February 2010
v) snvb: Forum 29th April 2010: 'Parish Plan- a Community Project'
vi) snvb: Linkup, April/May 2010
vii) Airfields of Britain: Petition to help save Britain's Airfields
viii) Milton Keynes Council and NCC: Reducing Waste sent to Landfill leaflet
- 18 Any Other Business: For Information and at the discretion of the Chairman:**
- 18.1 Cemetery: Cllr Robbins advised that 50 trees will be delivered on 13th April 2010 and would require planting. Cllr Perkins offered to assist. 40 laurels will be planted at the gate.
- 18.2 Energy from Waste Facility, Ardley Fields: Cllr Tomlin informed the Parish Council of the request from Cllr Mark Gammond, Bucknell Parish Council for the Parish Council to provide a Statement of Objection for the attention of the Planning Enquiry on 6th July 2010. **Noted.**
- 19 To receive items for the Annual Parish Council Meeting - Monday 10th May 2010**
None.

The Meeting ended at 11p.m.

Signed: _____ Date: 10th May 2010
Chairman