Rocklands Parish Council (RPC)

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held in Rocklands Village Hall

7.00pm on Monday 11 February 2019

Present: David Howie Chair

Shirley Colenutt

Richard Harrison

Cath Jones Acting Vice Chair

Ian Scholes

David Witt

 Kim Austin Clerk

Also present: 31 members of the public.

The meeting opened at 19:00.

1. **To consider accepting apologies for absence**

It was agreed to accept apologies from Cllr. Nickie Southgate who was away. Apologies were also accepted from District and County Councillors, Bill Smith and Ed Connolly.

1. **To record declarations of interest from members in any items on the agenda**

Cllrs. Colenutt, Jones and Scholes all expressed an interest in Item 7.1 the Parish Council annual donations to be made to local churches and other organisations. Cllr. Jones is involved with the Church, Cllr. Colenutt is involved with both the Church and the Village Hall and Cllr. Scholes is involved with the Playing Fields.

1. **To approve the minutes of the last council meeting on Monday 7 January 2019**

The minutes that had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting were duly signed by the Chair, Cllr. David Howie.

1. **To discuss any matters arising from the minutes (7 January 2019) not on the agenda.**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

1. **To adjourn the meeting for public participation**

The meeting adjourned at 19.03. There were no comments from the public and the meeting re-opened at 19:04.

1. **To receive reports**
	1. **Village Shop and Post Office (Dave Seaton DS)**

DS was new to the village but was attracted by a village with shop/post office run by volunteers, the pub and the community spirit. He was invited and joined the shop committee 2 years ago now. DS offered a debt of gratitude to Roger Steel who was instrumental in setting up the shop and whose hard work and commitment had contributed to its success. There was a stream of staff and volunteers. The shop had a 250,000 turnover. The grant money was diminishing, so moving towards self-sufficiency. Some changes in staff. Looking to over-recruit to cover training. Michelle involved in training project and covering staff absences. New EPOS system so looking at how to extract the most useful data, looking at what people are buying etc. Selling fresh local produce where possible. The shop is also a meeting place for groups such as the photography group. Fund raisers include cake sales and wine tasting etc. The shop needs the support of the village and for more people to get involved. The shop’s prices are very competitive. There will be a full report at the forthcoming Annual meeting.

* 1. **Village Hall (Sarah Good SG)**

The management committee would like to improve the facilities. They would like to resurface the car park but funding for this is a challenge as the village hall just about breaks even. Would need to be grant funded. Maybe use heavy duty interlocking grids that create a permeable surface. Not thinking about putting a pipe in the village hall ditch. There is a pipe in the next house but cannot join to it as it is not sustainable. Installation of a hearing loop would benefit the line dancing group and the Lions Club. Paving around the village hall and the doors. Baby changing facilities. A picket fence to prevent small children going near the ditches. There is a notice in the shop advertising the Village Hall AGM to be held on 24 April 2019. Rocklands Parish Council is a trustee of the Village Hall and agreed that Village Hall grants/funding could go through the Parish Council accounts if necessary, in order to claim back the VAT on their purchases.

**6.3 Rocklands Primary School (David Jones DJ)**

DJ thanked SG for doing a fantastic job as secretary and administrator. DJ stressed how important the school was to the village, especially since Little Ellingham had lost its school and Scoulton doesn’t have a school. Losing a school has a huge impact on a community. Less families, therefore, a less balanced community. Rockland’s school is federated with Great Ellingham (GE) and shares a headteacher, governing body and admin staff. This hopefully gives them strength and helps to secure their future. The number of schoolchildren is currently above the designated number the school should have, which demonstrates the need for a school in this area. The head teacher lives in the village and attended the school herself.

GE school will have more children in September and may double in size in 4/5 years. High volume of development in GE and more families, GE won’t have room to take Rocklands children so no chance they would be transferred to GE school. There is a new school in Attleborough.

Rocklands School really appreciates the support of RPC and its Chair. The political support has been phenomenal from GE/LE and RPC with Cllr. Bill Smith choreographing. MP George Freeman visited Rocklands and its school a few months ago. Another MP visit is planned for 15 March 2019.

* 1. **Rocklands Playing Fields (SG)**

The playing fields are holding their AGM on Thursday 28 February 2019 and will report to the Parish Council after.

* 1. **White Hart Public House (Dave Thomas DT)**

In March the pub will have been in business for 2 years. It will continue to develop until it can sustain itself. Visitors to the pub are from the village but also now from further afield. The windows have recently been changed, making the porch warmer and more inviting. The play area has been made safe and secure. Does not compete with the new play park in the village as it is just for children, whose parents are using the pub. A fund raiser in the pub, supported by a number of businesses has raised £600 for the Fire Fighters charity. DT thanked everybody for their support.

The first carvery will start on Sunday 3 March and every other week thereafter to coincide with Mothers’ Day. Not able to staff it every weekend. There will be two sittings. 12.30-1.30, 1.30-3.00pm. All fresh food. ~£10 per person and half price for children. DT would prefer if people booked in advance. The carvery will be replaced with a BBQ in the summer. Friday fish and chip night is doing well. There will be a new spring/week day menu. Six nations rugby will be televised with food at half time. Darts on Wednesdays. Pool every other Thursday. Other charitable events and quiz nights will be advertised on social media. The pub is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays but will open for special events. Closing at 8pm on a Sunday (was 10pm) to keep heating costs down.

The pub is in the regional finals for the Countryside Alliance awards 2019. There are 3 other pubs, but they are much larger. Paul and Karen are helping with the questionnaire that must be returned and DH offered to help too. Fingers crossed !

**6.6. To update on Chapel Green Meadow (Carolyn Emblem CE)**

It’s a quiet time of year on Chapel Green Meadow although a few ‘rogue’ daffodils have been spotted and they will be removed.

The committee are planning a meadow map for the village. So far, apart from Chapel Green meadow and the area of meadow at All Saints Church we have had one other reply. If anyone else has an area of meadow that could be included on the map, they should contact Clare at Walnut tree Nursery. CE has her email address so if anyone has an interest, please speak to CE. CE assured everybody that anyone willing to have their meadow put on the map is not agreeing to have people visiting it.

The Committee are looking at a proposal from Natural England about registering Chapel Green Meadow as a Local Nature Reserve. Nature reserves don’t have to be big. The criteria that the meadow meets are that it is and important place for wild life, education and enjoyment. This will also protect the meadow for a minimum of 21 years and allow the Parish Council to set bylaws to further protect it.

By the time of the next meeting the meadow flowers will be beginning to show and there will be flowers throughout the summer.

**6.7 Rocklands Play Park (Kirsty Daynes KD)**

A grant that was applied for over a year ago has just realised £2000 ! Could spend on adult outdoor equipment or perhaps a sheltered area. Have looked at sails but there are problems with these. Still have some space that could be utilised. Any ideas can be sent to Kirsty or Laura via their Facebook page. Everyone is very happy with the Play Park. DH gave his personal opinion that he was not keen on adult equipment. He didn’t think adults would use it and the money should be used for the children. It was explained that the adult equipment could be used by the older/bigger children who currently only had the zip wire that was suitable for them.

**6.8 District councillor Report (to include Broadband.) (DH)**

 In Bill Smith’s absence, DH summarised the update given by bill in an email of 9/2/19.

Superfast coverage across Rocklands Parish is generally good. Breckland does not get detailed reporting of Superfast coverage down to parish level but can say that: Superfast coverage across Breckland is currently 89.2% and on target to get to 94% by 2020.

Across All Saints & Wayland: there were 5 new fibre cabinets installed between 2013 and 2015 (currently 79% take up) and a further 11 fibre cabinets installed between 2016 and present day (currently 46% take up). There are some further cabinets planned for All Saints & Wayland to install before the end of the current Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) contract in 2020. District Councillors get advance notice by email of intention by BT to install a new fibre cabinet in their ward.

All Breckland properties with reported low broadband speeds were mailshotted in October last year to let them know they may be eligible to apply for a subsidised broadband installation as part of the Government’s national scheme, if they currently cannot access a broadband service with a speed of at least 2Mbps (Mbps – a measure of internet speed). The Government scheme offers support towards the cost of equipment and installation of a broadband connection so that a basic broadband service can be accessed.

Individual properties can check their current speed, status and any planned upgrades at

<https://www.homeandbusiness.openreach.co.uk/fibre-broadband/superfast-broadband>.

Screenshot below is of a sample Rocklands postcode entered into the speed checker. It is important to encourage residents and businesses to use the checker if they are concerned about slow broadband speeds, to ensure that take up of improved services is maximised. Individual enquiries about broadband speeds can be addressed to BBfN at <https://www.betterbroadbandnorfolk.co.uk/contact-form/>



**6.9 County Councillor report (EC)**

Ed Connolly was not able to attend the meeting as he had been delayed as a result of the disruptions caused by protesters at the Council offices earlier in the day.

**7. To report on finance**

**7.1 Annual donations to churches etc.** Annual donations were discussed, and it was decided to give the same amounts as last year to the same organisations, totaling £480. The Clerk wrote the cheques for the agreed amounts and they were duly signed by the Chair and Cllr. Colenutt. See item 7.4.2. It was agreed that the amounts would be reviewed in September/October. The Parish Council may advertise that these grants are available and ask village organisations to apply.

**7.2 Financial position**

**The bank account balances as at Monday 11 February 2019**

Barclays Community Account £ 2012.21

Barclays Saver (Reserve) Account £ 2331.29

**TOTAL as per bank** **£ 4243.50**

 **Summary**

 RPC Rocklands Parish Council £ 2265.90

 RNP Rocklands Neighbourhood Plan (RG) £ 200.60

 Rocklands Play Park (KR) £ 1777.00

 **TOTAL as per bank** **£ 4243.50**

**7.3 Money in since last meeting (7 January 2019)**

No money in since last meeting £ 0.00

**TOTAL IN £ 0.00**

**7.4 Money out since last meeting (7 January 2019)**

**7.4.1 Standing Orders/Direct Debits**

16/1/2019 Eon -Electricity (DD) £ 28.84

 1/2/2019 Clerk’s wages (SO) £ 235.54

 **TOTAL OUT £ 264.38**

**7.4.2 Cheques out (to sign)**

 CHQ 648 K&M Lighting 1 month maintenance (Feb 2019) £ 13.78

 CHQ 649 D. Howie – Chair reimbursements, ink, paper, flyers £ 80.46

 CHQ 650 Clerk’s reimbursements (3 months) Stat, post etc. £ 43.36 £137.60

 CHQ 651 All Saints PCC £ 85.00

 CHQ 652 St. Peters PCC £ 85.00

 CHQ 653 Rockland Village Hall £ 120.00

 CHQ 654 Rockland Playing Field £ 120.00

 CHQ 655 Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit £ 70.00 £480.00

 **TOTAL OUT £ 617.60**

**Subscription to Norfolk Parish Training Services 2019-20 (April renewal)**

The Clerk asked if the PC would consider renewal of the annual subscription to NPTS which becomes due in April 2019. Their fee structure remains at 1% of precept, with a minimum fee of £35. Last year we paid £55 (10% of £5500 precept) and this year, not confirmed, but should be £62 (10% of new higher precept of £6200). The Clerk has found NPTS to be extremely helpful with any queries and they also provide excellent training courses at a reduced price for members. The Parish Council agreed to renew.

(Also, member of LCPAS January 2018 £100, 2019/2020 £120). (No longer member of NALC, ~£160)

**8. To consider planning applications**

**8.1 Planning outcomes since last meeting**

3PL/218/1223/F IRWIN/Farm site, Mill Farm, Scoulton Road/Barn conversion to dwelling (151) PERMISSION

3PL/2018/1414/VAR UPSTONE/Foxhill/Variation of blockwork (153) PERMISSION

3PL/2018/1449/HOU SPRATT/The Cottage/First floor extension (154) REFUSED

3PL/2018/1500/HOU DOUGLAS/Magna Farm/Rear and side 2 storey extension (155) PERMISSION

3PL/2018/0038/AG HOWLETT/Kirk Hall Farm/Agri vehicle shed and store (159) NO PRIOR APPROVAL APPF2605/W/18/3206577 (3PL/2018/0088/F) HIRD/Model Farm/2 dwellings (138/152) REFUSED

**8.2 Applications pending outcome**

3PL/2018/1459/F NIXON/Land adjacent Laurel Bungalow/Single storey extn. And garage (156)

3PL/2018/1533/O CORCORAN/Land south of the street/1 dwellings, parking, turning/access (157)

3PL/2018/1567/HOU SHARPE/April Cottage/2 storey rear extension (158)

**8.3 New applications since last meeting**

3PL/2018/1366/F Southgate, 2 Poultry Sheds (160)

There were no comments from members of the public present. The site is remote from the village. New houses will be screened by new planting. The nearest dwelling is the bungalow where the site manager lives. There is little smell emanating from the site. The sheds are only cleared out once a year and any smell would depend on prevailing winds. There should be no increase in transport as the current transport already has the capacity to carry the extra loads. These lorries would not go through the village. The routes remain the same despite the maps submitted with the application being wrong and causing confusion. The Parish Council unanimously agreed they had NO OBJECTION to this application.

3PN/2019/0005/UC Douglas/Magna Farm/Change of use agri-dwelling (161)

Use would be made of a derelict barn. It was agreed there was NO OBJECTION to this change of use.

APP/F2605/18/3210970 (3PL/2017/0899/F) Cotes/green lane-mill lane/7 dwellings (162)

An APPEAL has been made. Comments need to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by 12 March 2019. Objections will be made on the same grounds as before.

3PL/2018/0203/O (APPEALED) Ridgeons/Thieves Lane/6 self builds (163)

We are aware the applicant has appealed but as yet an officer has not been allocated. The Planning Inspectorate (PI) is grossly overloaded with work. It was confirmed that all previous comments made would be taken into account by the PI. The Parish Council would object on the same grounds as before. As yet there is no deadline for comments.

**8.4 Update on surrounding villages’ planning matters (Including Great Ellingham) (DH)**

All Great Ellingham applications went before the planning committee this morning. All were approved resulting in permission for over 300 houses (153, 95 and 75 at Land behind the school, Mellor Metals, Flagship Land opposite the school etc.). There are various sweeteners. 2 new classrooms at GE school. New Shop. Over 55s centre. £55,000 for expanded healthcare – will increase size of facilities but won’t pay for an extra doctor. Flagship land will be used to build a roundabout outside the school. (Building already commenced at house footing levels.) £500,000 All Saints money up front.

RG was disappointed that the credibility of the new Local Plan was being undermined with the quota for new builds already exceeded. Would need to make the best of a bad job and get the best deals now that the applications have been approved.

RH was annoyed that there was not enough affordable housing in the mix and certainly not enough NHS to cope with the increase in residents. SC asked where all the people/children would go before any new facilities became available ? Impact on safety in Rocklands if volume of traffic increases on the Attleborough Road, Will need safe crossing. Apparently, the police have been monitoring volume of traffic. RH will see if he can get the figures from them. New flashing traffic speed units will provide data. Still waiting to hear about grant for SAM2 at the end of March 2019.

**8.5 Planning enforcement issues**

**Peels Farm**, Whitings Lane, Pig sheds in wrong place, noise and smell issues. Planning/Environmental health dealing with. Ongoing problem. Linda Beckett said the smells are terrible. In summary: In breach of environmental permit/conditions. Also in breach of planning permission as sheds were built in the wrong place. Would appear that whilst in breach of environmental, Breckland can’t take action against planning. It had been horrific at the weekend, particularly Sunday although they were not allowed to ‘muck out’ on a Sunday. Had been very windy. It was thought that even with the houses in the correct position, as per the plans, it probably wouldn’t make any difference to the smell and impact on residents.

**9. To update on May 2019 elections – District and Parish (DH)**

Cllr. Howie announced that District Councillor Bill Smith is standing down and it will be very sad to lose him. Sarah Suggitt has been elected by the Conservative party to stand.

There will also be Parish Council elections and Cllr. Howie asked that anybody wishing to become a Parish Councillor should speak to one of the councillors or the Clerk.

**10. To update on the Rocklands Neighbourhood Plan (RNP) & Local Plan (LP) – (RG)**

RG gave an update on the Breckland Local Plan. Breckland Council have already voted to accept the draft plan but there will be a six-week public consultation period starting end of next week. RG will be preparing a response on behalf of the PC to register their objections to those modifications that they disagree with. It should be noted that we do not actually have the infrastructure in place to support the suggestions in the Local Plan. It is a shame, because they had been happy with the original text. Residents wishing to add to those comments should do so by email or letter. Cllr. Howie was contacted by Caston PC who were keen to have a joint response to the Local Plan. RNP contingent on LP, therefore still on hold.

1. **To update on Neighbourhood Watch (John Brown JB)**

Neighbourhood watch has a new co-ordinator in Trudi, who has taken over from Maria Skitmore. Maria was thanked for her energy and effort in the role. JB said it doesn’t cost anything to join so residents should do so. No real crime at the moment. JB will talk to Trudi to discuss what they can do to keep the enthusiasm going in the group.

1. **To update on Highways and 13. Flooding**

Sarah read out an email from John Cotton, Highway Engineer, NCC.

*The issues with the drainage system cannot be resolved with minor maintenance and the usual route when major works are necessary is the one I’ve already explained. The reason it takes a minimum of 18 months is the initial briefs I produce have to have a full and detailed design. So all works for 2020/21 will be designed later this year ready for construction. The CCTV survey highlighted many problems throughout the entire system from roots from privately owned hedges, collapsed and broken/cracked pipework, open joints, illegal connections from private properties. In many cases there would have been an open ditch along the edge of the road and gradually as properties were built the ditches would be piped by the builder and then filled in. Unfortunately the standards of workmanship could vary and so you end up with these type of problems. My idea would be to place the new system in the carriageway away from the properties. I did notice that very few properties had a properly constructed vehicular access, one with kerbing across the front to prevent water from entering from the highway. This alone would not have prevented the flooding but certainly in the future property owners need to think how they can help protect themselves.*

The email was not helpful and in parts badly written. We cannot reiterate enough to highways, that the flooding is NOT a result of water running off the roads, it is **overflowing storm drains**. It is the excess water from the overflowing drains that is causing the problem. If it was just water flowing on the roads there would be no issue, as the drains would be doing their job.

Cllr. Howie said the problem was first reported over a year ago and still not sorted. Cllr. Howie to contact Ed Connolly to help deal with NCC. He and Sarah will meet with Ed Connolly. RG said to use this info when responding to the Cotes Appeal. (Mill Lane/Green Lane).

Apparently, the council has CCTV footage inside the pipes. Cllr. Howie will ask for copy of CCTV.

Sarah said if their house is flooded in the future they will claim against the County Council.

1. **To discuss any correspondence.**

There was no correspondence.

**15. AOB**

Maintenance of the defibrillator should be discussed to make sure battery and pads etc. are all OK and fit for use. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

**16. Date of next Meeting**

Monday 8 April 2019, 7pm, Rocklands Village Hall

(Annual Assembly – Annual Parish followed by Parish Council Meeting)

**The meeting closed at 20:20**