

## **KINGS CLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Annual Public meeting of Kings Cliffe Parish Council held at the Memorial Hall on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

**07/201 Present :** Chairman A. Howard, County Councillor H. Smith, Councillors M Day, , C Williams, , K. Howard, J. Dixon and five Parishioners

**07/202 Apologies :** Councillors B. Wyles, P. Lang Norris, N. Ford B. Howard and L. Crane

**07/203 Minutes of the Public Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2007 : Approved**

Proposed : Councillor M. Day

Seconded : Councillor K. Howard

**07/204 Any Matters Arising :** None

**07/205 Chairman's Annual Report**

Chairman A. Howard opened the Public meeting by expressing his apologies for the absence of five councillors and thanked the five parishioners present for taking the time to attend the meeting.

He began his report by explaining that the Parish Council worked very hard to meet the needs of the community but it must be remembered that the role is that of facilitators; requesting other bodies to co-operate in making things happen. Members of the public are here to ask questions and hopefully receive answers from us.

There is presently a vacancy for a Parish Councillor and anyone who is interested should contact the Clerk.

What have we achieved in the last year? The provision of a Play Area for children has been discussed at great length with the developers who will be undertaking the construction of the KC1 site i.e. a new estate on the land to the West of Willow Lane to behind the Club . They have agreed in principle to an area beside the Club. There is no set date for this development to begin, but this is likely to happen within the next 5 – 10 years. The field below the Millennium Wood will also be included for Cricket pitches and a kickabout area for older children.

Sports Project : The land has been purchased by the Parish Council for this and a 50 lease has been agreed to develop this. David Hellard and Andrew Pick have worked hard to raise the money for this project. Bowman's have been nominated as the contractors for the initial works. It must be remembered this project is for the whole district, not just for Kings Cliffe. Councillor K. Howard is the PC representative and is working with them. This is a facility long overdue for the area.

Apethorpe Footpath : After years of hard work, mainly by Pat Howells, Apethorpe Chair secretary, work is being carried out. Although the initial request was for a 'proper' metalled footpath, the cost was prohibitive as it would have to include provision for wheelchairs etc. A compromise was reached and with a further £10K grant to Kings Cliffe, the area from Kirks Lodge to the second drift will be tarmaced in the fullness of time; the remainder from there to Apethorpe has been furnished with drains and will be rolled and seeded to make a walkable grass path for the many pedestrians who enjoy this walk.

Cemetery Extension : Although land was purchased within the village some years ago, due to the very high cost to make this accessible, it was decided to purchase land adjacent to the existing cemetery with an interest-free loan from ENC as this is economically more simple and sensible. Once the purchase is complete, the land will be fenced and landscaped to blend with the existing cemetery.

Rural Pathfinder Project : This was a Government based consultation exercise. Everyone has had

an opportunity to have their say on all aspects of village life and the resulting report is very interesting. However there is scepticism as to where this is going. Many action points are highlighted raising expectations but it is now all back to the Parish Council. Many of the points raised are wishful thinking, an example being the use of the old railway line as a cycle track. Because the various tracts of this belong to so many different owners, it is not a practical proposition.

Rural & East Northants Plan : An impressive document has been produced but has missed many points and road issues.

Neighbourhood Watch : Councillor P.Lang Norris as the village co-ordinators is working hard to improve communications and is in regular contact with the Police. It is pleasing to see foot patrols in the village which have been lacking for many years.

Augean : Mr. Roger Coulthard is working with us as WasteWatchers and regular liaison meetings are held. However, thankfully there seem to be no problems at present.

Highways : County Councillor H. Smith and NCC Cabinet member, Mr. Bob Seery together with me have pinpointed 10 key issues, examples as summarised below, which will hopefully be dealt with, to avoid writing the NCC monthly raising the same issues time and again.

1. Bungalows in Station Road : tree roots are making the footpaths very dangerous for the elderly. It is hoped the offending trees will be removed.
2. Parking problems at the Primary School : There are safety issues here and a 20 mph speed limit has been requested, but it must be emphasised that parents parking cars outside the school exacerbate this issue.
3. Bomb Dump corner : We are very concerned about the number of potential serious accident on this stretch of road. There have been promises from NCC but no action. The 'Casualty Officer' has admitted that few of these accidents are officially reported and as there have been no fatalities, it is not given high priority. P C Howard has erected signs at their own expense and these appear to have slowed the traffic as there have been no incidents since they were erected.

Precept : The PC have raised their precept from £14,000 to £15,000 for the coming year, but the Council Tax for Kings Cliffe is still very low compared to many other villages.

### **07/206 County Councillor Heather Smith : Annual Report**

Following the resignation of Priscilla Padley as your County Councillor a by-election was held in May 2007, I was elected as your representative.

During my first year I have concentrated on getting to know the Prebendal Division which covers 24 villages in the North-Eastern corner of the County. I have been involved in numerous issues many of which centred on Highways, Footways and Rights of Way with many of the parishes within my area. A number of parishes highlighted issues they needed help with and I was able to allocate funds from my Empowering Councillor budget and assist with applications for additional funding for schemes through the East Northants Community Safety Budget. In Kings Cliffe funding is in place to tarmac the first section of the footpath between Kings Cliffe and Apethorpe. The creation of a walkable off road route has been started and the drainage works are all complete. Part of the area still needs to be finished off apart from the tarmac area and I hope this will be done over the next few weeks. I will continue to monitor progress and an inspection is scheduled to take place in a couple of weeks time when a decision will be made over exactly what still needs to be done.

Another issue of particular concern to me is the destruction of County Byways by 4 wheel drive vehicles continuing to use the routes illegally when they have been closed by the County Council. I

am working with County officers to try to achieve a solution to the problem so that the routes remain accessible to both walkers and horse-riders. I intend to continue with this issue during 2008.

The past year has been a turbulent one for the County Council with a major re-organisation taking place following the appointment of our new Chief Executive Katherine Kerswell.

Huge savings have to be achieved to enable the Council to live within its means as Government Funding has again been insufficient particularly as we are one of the fastest growing Counties. A pledge had been made in 2005 to the electorate that Council Tax increases would be kept to below the rate of inflation and this pledge stands in spite of a huge challenge to reduce our overhead costs.

One of the major concerns has been the Highways Maintenance Contract with Atkins and most Councillors experienced difficulties in this area – myself included. A new contract has been awarded starting from the end of March 2008 to the May Gurney and the WSG group for the management and maintenance of the County road network. I feel confident that service to parishes and members of the public will improve under the new contract and following a change in emphasis in Highways and Transport towards “customer service”. I will continue to press for clear guidance to parishes on whom to contact when they have an issue needing attention.

Trials have been carried out by the Road Safety team in a number of local villages including Kings Cliffe using portable interactive signs. The data collected will be analysed and those areas with the worst speeding figures will be given priority when it comes to installing a permanent sign.

I have been pressing to have Kings Cliffe selected as one of the County’s villages to benefit from the “whole village scheme”. This means a gang would come and deal with all the minor works needing doing as one job. Kings Cliffe has been short listed so I am hopeful that this will happen in 08/09. If selected then the Parish Council will be consulted beforehand on highways works to be done.

The Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework, Preferred Options document was circulated in 2007. A number of representations were made and we now await the next stage in the process. The implication for Kings Cliffe is the proposed western Extension to the Augean site.

Road Safety in rural areas is a priority for the Council and the new years' budget provides for £1 million of additional funding for road winter gritting of all the county’s villages.

### **07/207 Open Forum**

The Chairman thanked Councillor Smith and opened the meeting for questions:

Councillor K. Howard raised the question of water leaking onto the footpath between Station Road and Park Close. This matter has been reported many times to Anglian Water but little action has taken place. There is obviously a massive underground leak in the vicinity. The Clerk will once again follow this up, to ascertain whether it is an AWA problem or a Housing Association issue.

Mr. Wilfred Court has a list of various highways issues, which have hopefully been addressed in the Chairman’s statement.

Mr. Caddick said he hoped the extra money for gritting mentioned in Councillor Smiths statement would at last include Wansford Road. It was pointed out that the Parish Boundary still renders this a contentious matter. Mr. Coulthard complained about the quantity of salt and grit thrown onto parked cars in the narrow parts of the village and it was unanimously agreed that this was not acceptable.

Mr. Coulthard also raised the issue of a hit and run accident which wrote off his sons’ parked car recently in the village. The Police showed a decided lack of interest in this, despite the fact that the offending driver did not stop, which would indicate lack of legality in one form or another.

Chairman A. Howard stated that a change of priorities at the junction of Station Road/Park Street had been suggested to NCC Highways. It was agreed this was a logical proposition as many drivers ignore the 'Give Way' sign at Station Road. If this were to be the main route throughout the village, it would solve many problems; at the Blatherwycke Road junction, Wood Road is the main thoroughfare and the same would seem sensible at Station Road and slow traffic down in Park Street. He promised to pursue this issue.

PCSO Paul Webster entered the room.

Mr. Court suggested that the Rural & East Northants Plan had been badly prepared and held very few firm proposals. He suggested that the good and bad points should be extracted and commented upon by the PC. The green areas in the village must be defended ahead of any development. The maps in the report were erroneous, the pressing matter of surface water and risk of flooding had not been addressed.

The Chairman explained that the PC had responded to this at length; it was felt the report looked very grand but lack substance.

Mr. Caddick supported Mr. Court on this. Details must be discussed and he felt it was a great pity that District Councillor R. Glithero was not at this meeting to address salient points.

Mr. Coulthard asked why the planners had not explained the increase of houses to be allowed on the KC1 site; initially this was 30 houses with three access points, it is now 150 houses with one access road.

The Chairman said the blame was with Mr. Prescott; Government Policy said there were not enough houses and new guidelines said the number must be increased

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Paul Webster and raised the point of the hit and run accident.

PCSO Webster explained that he was only speaking in his given capacity but as there were no injuries a Form 750 was completed and the rest is left to the insurance companies.

He continued, discussing the monthly crime figures which showed on burglary in West Street and a bump outside the Club but as there was no complaint this was disregarded. There had been a total of 12 hours of foot patrols during March.

The question of contacting the Police was raised, the feeling being that the Helpdesk at Wellingborough was indeed not helpful; the operatives had no knowledge of this area. Mr. Coulthard commented that local policing needs a more personal point of contact. PCSO Webster apologised that he could not help on this; the only point of contact is the Helpdesk, this is Police policy

The Chairman thanked all present and opened the monthly meeting

## MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**07/208 Declarations of Interest :** None

**07/209 Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2008 :** Approved

Proposed : Councillor J. Dixon

Seconded : Councillor K. Howard

**07/210 Matters Arising :** None

**07/211 Clerks Report**

The Clerk and various councillors have barraged Anglian Water to do something about the very obvious water leak in Station Road. Councillor K. Howard has been assured this morning that they are doing something about it. This problem has been ongoing for several years now, it is hoped a solution will be found.

I have been in contact with Apex Haulage regarding their vehicles short cutting and speeding from KC Industrial Estate to the A47 via the Stamford Road. Their MD has assured me he will stop this happening; KC Industrial Estate has a sign saying "Right turn only for HGV's" but they cannot physically stop drivers who ignore it.

David Hellard will to speak to ENC regarding the fencing at Kingsmead which is damming the water from the Willow Walk and looks very messy. They have promised to investigate. The PC will also write to ENC

I spoke to Cherie French at ENC regarding the trailer in the Bomb Dump entrance. They have cleared the area twice in the last month, but cannot touch the trailer as it is not their property. Cherie asked if Howard Farms could possibly put something there to block the entrance which cannot be used as a skip.

The Statutory Sign regarding a PC vacancy was displayed for two week and there was apparently no request for an election.

All allotments are let and all rents have been paid.

**07/212 Accounts Payable :** Approved

Curators Salary (current month)	£ 140.00
Clerks Salary (current month)	£ 200.00
Allianz Insurance	£ 402.92
ABB Ltd : Lighting Repairs	£ 36.74
ABB Ltd : Lighting Repairs	£ 27.58
ABB Ltd : Two new standards : Wood Road	£ 693.25

Smith Hetherington : Grass cutting	£ 205.00
NCALC Annual subscription	£ 212.00
Proposed : Councillor K. Howard	Seconded : Councillor J. Dixon

**07/213 Planning** : Noted

**Granted**

2 Park Street : Dem. of old/construct. new garage & room above: EN/08/00124/FUL  
Kingsmead, Station Road : 6 Small Business Units & associated works : EN/08/00195/FUL

**07/214 Purchase of Cemetery land**

Discussed during Annual Meeting

**07/215 KC1 Site**

Main points discussed during Annual Meeting. However, Chairman A. Howard had met with the Cricket Club who had not been officially informed about the negotiations for land with the KC1 developers. They will write to the Council expressing their interest. This will again need discussion as to how this is leased. It was felt again that the PC will be the facilitator, but the administration of pitches be with the Cricket Club

**07/216 Parish Council vacancy**

This will now be officially advertised in the Notice Boards and the Gazette allowing time for any applications to be considered at the next meeting.

**07/217 Rural Pathfinder : Draft document**

Discussed at length as above; the Chairman will contact the District Councillor and ENC. A Design Statement would be driven by the Council. How does this fit in with a clear brief.

**07/218 Highways Issues : Roadside Hedges**

Although some trimming has taken place, no more action can now be taken until the autumn.

**07/219 Request to use Malting's Green**

A request to use Malting's Green on 30<sup>th</sup> August in conjunction with a function at the Memorial Hall was approved.

**07/220 Burial Board**

There has been no meeting of the Burial Board. BB Chairman M. Day said he had had one offer to clear the spoil heap. This was agreed as reasonable and the contractor will be instructed to complete the work.

Proposed : Councillor K. Howard                      Seconded : Councillor C. Williams

**07/221 Other Correspondence Received** : Various correspondences were noted or circulated

**07/222 Any Other Business**

Councillor K. Howard reported that a resident in Hall Yard had berated a young lady for parking outside his house; as there are no parking restrictions in the village, this is not acceptable. The

Council will investigate further and depending upon the outcome may write to the resident concerned.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15.pm. The next meeting will be the AGM in the Memorial Hall Parlour at 7.30.pm. on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008

Signed.....

Date.....