

North Lopham Parish Council

Draft minutes of meeting held Wednesday 14th November 2007 in the Methodist Schoolroom, North Lopham

1. **Attendance and Apologies:** Present were Brian Frith (Chair), Jan Tate (Vice- Chair), Mick McManus, Robert Carley, Valerie Garnham, John Barwick and Mike Cox (Clerk). Also in attendance Granville Horan (SLPC) and three members of the public. Apologies received from Revd. Rob Mellowship and Breckland Councillor William Nunn.
2. **Declaration of Interests:** None.
3. **Minutes of last meeting held 12th September 2007:** Minutes of meeting had been circulated. Proposed by Mick McManus, seconded Valerie Garnham, that they be approved. All agreed.
4. **Matters arising:**
 - Audit Commission have been in contact and needed a simplistic explanation of differences between Income & Expenditure for period 2005/2006 and 2006/2007. This has been sent off and we are awaiting confirmation that all is OK and the account for the audit fee.
 - Snetterton licence application – Brian Frith attended the hearing. This was approved but conditions imposed regarding additional noise etc.
 - Bottle Bank – Postponed as pub freehold for sale: Owen and Sarah will be leaving premises in the New Year.
 - Early morning Bus Service to Norwich - established that no one uses the service at present so it now begins at South Lopham. If future need identified we will need to contact NCC Transport.
5. **Co-option of new Councillor:** Graham West had resigned after an industrious two years on the Parish Council, including a contribution to work on the Letchmere. There have been two applications for the co-opted position, there being no request for an election. Both Heather Potter and Lindsey Westbrook-Lay were proposed. Valerie Garnham and Mick McManus made a request for a paper vote. Heather Potter emerged as the successful candidate by 4 votes to 2, although it was noted that both had plenty to offer. Clerk to contact Heather Potter with Acceptance of Office form for signature and to make arrangements for her to complete the Register of Financial Interests.
6. **Finance Report and Accounts for Payment:**

Balance of Accounts prior to payments below – Current A/c £1272.03; Deposit A/c £2422.55

 - Hire of Methodist Schoolroom - £15.00
 - RGM cutting of burial ground – (Sept £94.00 paid) Oct. £94.00. Clerk to write to RGM and thank them for their service and make arrangements for next year.
 - Lopham News contribution - £132.21. Clerk to write to Steve Milbourne thanking him for excellent service.
 - Royal British Legion wreath - £25.00

All accounts proposed for payment by John Barwick, seconded Robert Carley. All in agreement.
7. **Planning Applications:**
 - Caravan on site of W. Emms house – Clerk has contacted planning enforcement at Breckland; they see no problem unless building work commences elsewhere on the site.
 - Plot in Tanns Lane – approved.
 - Beech House and Plot to the rear of 29/31 Kings Head Lane – refused.
 - Red House, The Green – not yet heard
 - Meadow Farm, revised application for one plot – circulating. Breckland has been notified of disappearance of trees, despite recent plan showing them to remain. Enforcers to investigate.
 - Brian Frith reported on Local Development Framework meeting held at East Harling recently. Overview of development plan for 20 years. During next year we will be asked about possible development sites in the village. Need for agenda item early next year.
8. **Footways, Roads and Footpaths:**
 - 7.5 tonne weight restriction – Possible variations of original scheme being considered – John Baskerville aware of situation and to be involved in discussions.
 - Footway and drain clearance – work had been completed. Problem reported with the gully part way down Tanns Lane. Jan Tate to pursue with Highways.
 - Primrose Lane clearance – Jan Tate had been told that Primrose Lane was due to be inspected by NCC but this will not be for 2 years. Hedge clearance responsibility of landowners. Richard

Nunn to be approached to identify areas causing problems with cutting in Primrose Lane, and then further investigations will be made to find possible solutions.

- Contact with Zoe Woodhouse – Visited North Lopham a few weeks ago and is following up areas where footpaths have been disturbed.
- Any other comments/problems – Church Road footpath on target for February 2008. Clerk to write to Mr. Brown, Trennell House, thanking him for cutting grass on 'Back Lane' and to Mr. Bush for his continued maintenance of the War Memorial.

9. **'Community' (inc. Village Hall Committee) replacement:** The Chair identified that, following Graham West's resignation there is now a vacancy for our link on Village Hall committee. There were no volunteers. Suggested that our new Councillor be asked.

10. **Precept for year 2008/2009:** Latest estimates had been circulated. If precept increased to £2500. should be enough to keep reserves at about £3000, as discussed at length at the last meeting. Proposed Jan Tate, seconded Mick McManus. All agreed.

11. **Post Office Restructuring:** To develop a Parish Council response to circulars from Norfolk Rural Community Council and Breckland Council regarding Post Office Ltd plans to close 2500 out of the 14300 Post Offices. Robert Carley wished to declare a prejudicial interest at this point, but Mr. Baskerville had reminded the Chair that it would be in order for Mr. Carley to remain and contribute 'as a member of the public' in any public session (although he would not be allowed to participate in any official council business on this subject)
We will not know until the New Year whether North Lopham is on the list, but Breckland response required by 30th November. Brian Frith outlined situation and correspondence. The meeting was adjourned for public discussion. All present felt that we should do everything possible to retain the Post Office in the village. A letter of support had been received from South Lopham P.C., where the post office was closed many years ago. The draft of a survey (to be distributed to each house in the village) was examined and all thought it to be a worthwhile project to gather firm evidence of opinions.

When the formal meeting was resumed the draft of survey was approved, and arrangements were made for distribution. Responses (required by 25th November) would be placed in the box at Letchmere and the Clerk agreed to empty box regularly. Mike Cox agreed to assist Brian Frith with the analysis, so that the summary of responses could be passed to Breckland by the closing date of 30th November.

12. **Correspondence:**

- Brian Frith reported on members' recent attendance at CPRE awards ceremony. Certificate and plaque awarded to pond renovation project. Congratulations received from South Lopham PC. Diss Express had taken photos for publication on Friday.
- Information on playgrounds, holiday activities, light pollution, Breckland Community News, NCAPTC newsletter, Homecoming parade for Light Dragoons in Dereham (19th Nov).
- Chair had spoken with Anglia Water re Mains drainage scheme – on target for mid 2008 start.
- Mick McManus raised question regarding proposed footpath between North & South Lopham and village hall. Brian Frith responded that this had not been forgotten, no positive decision yet, but he hoped to raise the issue again when the Church Road footpath had been completed.
- A member of the public pointed out that parked vehicles were a problem in the mouth of Tanns Lane causing obstruction to large vehicles. Brian Frith had placed a courtesy 'no parking' sign on the edge of the pond area to deter people from parking on the grass.

13. **Report received on business of South Lopham Parish Council.** Their precept increased by £500 to £2500. They have arranged a joint training session between themselves, North Lopham and Garboldisham at Lophams Village Hall Tuesday 29th January 2008. All North Lopham Councillors and Clerk hoped to attend.

14. **To receive suggestions for items to be placed on the next agenda (or other late items for information only):**

- Jan Tate pointed out that Diss Mere had been fenced off as a precautionary measure in the recent Avian flu outbreak. How does that affect Letchmere ducks? Brian Frith has made contact with DEFRA and had posted a notice at Letchmere, reprinted from the DEFRA web-site, giving instructions in the event of dead birds being found.
- Valerie Garnham mentioned another film show with Geoff Ward as a possible fundraiser for the Parish Council.

15. **Date and time of next meeting – Wednesday 9th January 2008 at 7.30pm**