

SWANTON MORLEY PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Swanton Morley Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 8th June 2009. The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Present: Mr R. Atterwill, Mr C. Perry, Mr A. Fleming, Mr G Northall, Mr S. Westbury, Mr B. Marsham, Mrs M Thomas, District Councillor Mrs K. Millbank and five members of the public. Also in attendance Mrs F. LeBon (clerk)

The evening began with a minutes silence in memory of Lance Corporal Nigel Moffett of the Light Dragoons who was killed in action in Afghanistan.

Matters Raised Under Time Allocated to the Public

- Mr Atterwill reported that he had written to the commanding officer at Robertson Barracks regarding the death of Lance Corporal Moffett, to express the condolences of the village and to offer assistance in any way possible.
- Mrs Northall congratulated Mr Atterwill on a commendable election result in the County Council elections. She also thanked Mr Fleming for his attendance at the Patients' Participation Group. She continued with clarification of the Community Car expenses claim procedure, advising that no individual driver has placed a small claim. All balancing payments due to the driver are calculated by the organiser. Finally Mrs Northall expressed her disappointment, especially in light of the proposed improvements to the hall, at the lack of organisation at the Village Hall AGM. Whilst it was advertised that a meeting was to be held, there were no agendas, no minutes and the accounts could not be agreed due to numerous discrepancies. Mr Atterwill replied that he shared her concerns and that some trustees were embarrassed about the way the meeting went. He had spoken to Jackie Broughton and advised her of the best way to rectify the account discrepancies. He reassured Mrs Northall that the new chairman and trustees were anxious to take the new committee forward and suggested that there could be an EGM to agree the accounts.

The Meeting Went Into Session.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr Borrett.

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr Atterwill declared a personal interest in the District Councillors report.

Mr Marsham declared a prejudicial interest in item 5a (finance).

Mr Northall declared a prejudicial interest in item 6a (planning application for Mr Green).

3. Minutes from Parish Council Meeting of 11th May 2009 to be accepted, initialled and signed.

Mrs Thomas proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, seconded by Mr Marsham. Carried. Mr Perry abstained due to non attendance at this meeting.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes of 11th May 2009.

Mr Northall reported that he had attended the NRCC training course on writing funding applications. The course was interesting but advised that funding was going to be reduced in the current economic climate but was still available.

The clerk apologised for not contacting Carolyn Heydon about the position of parish tree warden and would do so prior to the next meeting. She also advised that MHB Services had yet to be paid because the electrical safety certificates had not been received for the new columns. She also reported that a Chairmanship Course was being run by Norfolk ALC in September and urged councillors to consider attending.

Mr Marsham Left The Room

5. Finance

a) Accounts to approve for payment:

The clerk reported that there had been an additional invoice for the Norfolk Wildlife Trust for £45.00 that needed to be taken into account. She also reported that an invoice had not been received from Swanton Morley Village Hall therefore the amount of £25.50 needed to be discounted. The clerk also advised that

the amount being claimed by Estrellita Kids of £301.07 was in excess of the £292.00 granted because of an increase in the price of the stereo since the grant was agreed. Mr Northall proposed that the grant to Estrellita Kids be increased to £301.07, seconded by Mrs Thomas and carried.

Mrs Thomas raised concerns about the quality of grass cutting. It was agreed that the payment should be authorised at this meeting but withheld until after Mr Atterwill has spoken with Mr Piller.

Mrs Thomas proposed that the following be authorised, seconded by Mr Perry. Carried.

Payee	Detail	Amount
Faye LeBon	Clerk's Salary	£353.64
Faye LeBon	Clerk's Expenses	£28.59
Norfolk Pensions	Local Government Pension Scheme	£108.69
HMRC	Clerk's PAYE	£88.20
EON	Street Lighting Electricity (backdated increase from start of new contract and missed direct debit)	£261.51
EON	Street Lighting (May)	£158.24
Norfolk Wildlife Trust	Annual membership (s137)	£45.00
Eastern Office Equipment	Paper (£7.98) Black Ink (£29.99)	£37.97
Mr B Marsham	Use of machinery on Mill Common	£150.00
Zurich	Insurance Policy 09/10	£2152.08
Mrs S Rutter	Internal Audit	£30.00
Mr J Piller	Grass Cutting May	£437.00
Estrellita Kids	Granting Funding (Costumes/Scenery, stereo and backing tracks)	£301.07
TOTAL		£4151.99

Mr Marsham Re-Entered The Room

b) Income

Was reported from the following

Received From	Detail	Amount
Swanton Morley Village Hall	Loan Repayment	£106.74
Breckland District Council	Recycling Payment	£250.82
TOTAL		£357.56

c) To agree the 2008/2009 Accounts and Annual Statement of Governance

Mrs Thomas proposed that the accounts for 2008/2009 be accepted, seconded by Mr Fleming and carried.

Mr Atterwill read each of the statements of governance. Mrs Thomas proposed that the council had abided by each of the statements except for the role as a trustee as this was not applicable, Seconded by Mr Northall and carried.

d) To agree response to Mrs J Walden re: accounts 2008/2009

Following three pages of queries from Mrs Walden, the clerk had circulated a draft response to councillors. Mr Perry and Mr Westbury raised concerns about the implications made by Mrs Walden in her letters, particularly about the clerk.

The clerk recommended that answers to Mrs Walden's questions be given as soon as possible but the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act be delayed until it is established as to whether the information is deemed as commercially sensitive.

A persistent complainer policy was discussed as the requests logged from Mrs Walden are becoming excessive.

Mr Westbury proposed that the letter as drafted be sent to Mrs Walden but the requests for specific documentation be withheld until the clerk can establish if they are commercially sensitive, but still keeping within the timeframe as specified by the Freedom of Information Act. Seconded by Mr Northall and carried.

The clerk is to circulate a draft persistent complainer policy.

Mr Northall Left The Room

6. Planning

a) To consider responses for the following planning applications

i) 3PL/2009/0457/F – S Green, 9 Loombe Close – Rear Conservatory

Mr Fleming proposed that there be no objections to this application, seconded by Mr Marsham and carried.

Mr Northall Re-Entered The Room

b) To receive report of planning decisions by Breckland District Council

The clerk reported that Breckland District Council had agreed planning permission for a new Grain Storage Unit for Mr J Keith (re: application 3PL/2009/0226/F).

c) To receive update on LDF issues affecting Swanton Morley

Mr Atterwill reported that he had attended a pre-hearing meeting on 19th May regarding the independent inspection of the LDF Core Strategy and raised concerns about the fact that Breckland District Council may not be adequately represented during the hearing because most staff will have had their contracts transferred to Capita. The inspector acknowledged that this could be a problem and advised Breckland District Council to think carefully about how this could be addressed. The inspection will begin on 30th June and continue until 17th July. The Parish Council is scheduled to be heard in three sessions regarding its concerns about the way housing has been allocated in Swanton Morley and how information about other developments was not forthcoming.

Mr Atterwill also reported that the Parish Council had been contacted by Breckland District Council regarding the concept of 'grouping' parishes for the purpose of distributing money received from development companies to improve open space provision. Breckland District Council has suggested that Swanton Morley should be grouped with Lyng, Elsing, Hoe and Bylaugh. It was agreed that this could not be of any conceivable benefit to the parishioners of Swanton Morley and is in clear contradiction to prior assurances from Breckland District Council that contributions resulting from development with Swanton Morley will be spent in Swanton Morley.

Mr Atterwill proposed that the Parish Council should object to the concept of grouping as all money from development in Swanton Morley should stay within the village, seconded by Mr Fleming and carried.

d) To receive update on correspondence from Breckland District in relation to land at Middleton Avenue

There was no update

7. Grant Funding

a) To consider grant application from Estrellita Kids

Mr Atterwill proposed that the grant application for £310.02 for fund raising equipment as 100% of the project total should be agreed, seconded by Mr Perry and carried.

To consider any applications for small grant funding

There were no other applications received.

Mr Atterwill advised that progress on the plans for the village hall has been made and that the architect is close to submitting a planning application. A grant application should be submitted shortly after.

8. Allotments

a) To receive a report on allotment project and agree further actions

Mr Northall reported that advice had been received from Norfolk ALC regarding compulsory purchase of land for allotments. The compulsory purchase must be done through the District Council with the likelihood of associated charges. It was recommended that when the LDF is finalised in the spring there will be no need for a compulsory purchase as landowners may be more forthcoming.

9. Street Lighting

a) To receive fault reports / matters for attention

Street light 72 is inoperative and is to be reported to the contractor.

b) To receive an update on street light replacement project

The clerk advised that EDF Energy is to commence work on the last light of phase 2 of the project on 9th June. TT Jones are to be chased again regarding the final light as part of phase 1.

10. Highways

a) To receive reports of highways faults / matters for attention

The clerk reported that Highways had done another temporary repair on the manhole cover on Gray Drive, but the ultimate responsibility lay with Breckland District Council as this was their land. This was raised to the District Councillor. Mrs Thomas reported a problem with an iron cover on Ainsworth Close. She is to take a picture and send to the clerk to report.

Mr Atterwill reported problems with the Highways Department cutting the hedges of the residents of Ainsworth Close which were overhanging the public highway and thus hindering the work of the contractors repairing the footpath. Letters of complaint are to be forwarded with a covering letter to Mr Borrett.

Mr Marsham reported that Highways had done some drainage work outside the Burial Ground, but raised concerns that this was not sufficient and there needs to be some low kerbing near the entrance. The clerk is to contact Jason Glasspoole to meet with Mr Atterwill and Mr Marsham onsite to further discuss.

11. Churchyard & Burial Ground

a) To receive an update report from Mrs M. Thomas on progress of the Sub Committee

The clerk is to speak with May Gurney and arrange an appointment with Mr Marsham to discuss aligning the kerbing on the new path in the Burial Ground.

Mrs Thomas reported that two new roses had been planted in the Burial Ground and this was proving to be a very popular feature.

Mr Marsham is investigating rabbit control in the churchyard.

12. Youth & Playground Equipment

a) To receive an update report from Mr R. Atterwill on progress of the Sub Committee

The clerk is obtaining prices for Safagrass around the swings on the village green and Gooseberry Hill and the slide on Gooseberry Hill.

Mr Atterwill reported that Mr Woolnough had commenced work on maintaining the village seating but great concerns have been raised about maintaining the village sign and how much further repair work it will take. It was agreed that investigations should take place as to replacing the sign and displaying the old sign in the village hall. The clerk is to write to the WI advising them of the Parish Council's intentions as this group originally donated the sign to the village. An article is to be placed in The Mardler asking for the village's ideas in the design and a working party was set up.

13. Commons, Open Spaces & Environmental

a) To receive an update report on the progress of the Working Group

The clerk reported that Dr Dryden of the Environment Agency had suggested that there would be a 'strong possibility' that the planning application for Burgh Common be submitted to Breckland District Council. The clerk is to follow up.

14. To Agree June Edition of The Mardler

It was agreed that this edition of The Mardler should be delayed until the conclusion of the meetings with the independent inspector of the LDF.

15. To Receive a Report on Parish Council Surgery

It was agreed that due to low turnouts, the Parish Council Saturday surgery project would be suspended. Surgeries would continue on an ad-hoc basis when contentious issues arise in the village.

16. Correspondence

Mr Atterwill reported the dog warden has been given reports of two uncontrolled Jack Russells on the village green that are fouling the area and being aggressive towards pedestrians. He also reported that the judges for the Pride in Norfolk Awards are visiting the village on 16th July.

The Meeting was Suspended

District and County Councillors Report

There was no report from the County Councillor.

Mrs Millbank reported the following:

- She congratulated Mr Borrett on his election success and commiserated with Mr Atterwill.
- That Breckland District Council were saddened by the loss of Lance Corporal Nigel Moffett.
- That money owed to Breckland District Council by Icelandic banks was due to be repaid by 2011.
- A photography competition has been launched for photographers to capture the essence of Breckland.
- That a saving of £250,000 per annum is possible through the contract with Capita.
- That only 500 poop scoop bags are being made available to the village and not until August.

The following items were raised by the public:

- That the grass on the football pitch is being cut too short

The Meeting Resumed

21. Any item to be reported for the next agenda

- To consider replacement of the village sign
- To next edition of The Mardler
- To consider the adoption of a Persistent Complainer Policy.

22. To confirm the date & time of next meeting to be held on Monday 13th July 2009 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

Carried

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

_____ (Chairman) _____ Date