

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF HOLYWELL-CUM-NEEDINGWORTH PARISH
COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 18th SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 7.30PM IN MILLFIELDS PAVILION**

PRESENT:

Cllr C Pearce (Chairman)
Cllr A Holloway
Cllr L Macrae
Cllr E MacPherson
Cllr S Martin
Cllr S Mortlock
Cllr J Neish
Cllr C O'Reilly
Cllr A Whyte
Cllr M Williamson
Miss J Bowd (Parish Clerk)
Mrs A Jackson (Assistant to the Parish Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE:

There were 33 members of the public present.

68.Apologies.

To receive and accept Apologies for Absence.

Cllr R Fountain -personal
Cllr G Norman-personal
Cllr C Norman-personal
District Councillor Besley

69.Declarations of Interest.

To receive Declarations of Disclosable and/or Non-Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and the nature of those interests relating to any Agenda item.

None

70. Public forum

To allow any member of the public to address the council. Time Allowed 10 minutes

A member of the CIL Action Group addressed the Council. Attached as Appendix 1.

A resident commented that the Parish Plan 2004 contained a number of actions following consultation with the parishioners and suggested that the Council could produce a new Parish Plan. The resident further commented that the amount of CIL would be increased if the Parish Council had an active Parish Plan. The resident was unable to locate a copy of the Parish Plan 2004 on the website.

District Councillor Neish read a personal statement expressing his concerns over the conduct of a small number of members of the public at the meeting held on 4th September 2018. He reminded those present that the elected Councillors are volunteers who work tirelessly to upkeep the high standards residents expect. District Cllr Neish agreed that communication between the Council and residents could always be better but that the Council did not deserve the lambasting it received at the September meeting. He congratulated the members and staff on keeping their composure and dignity at what was a very intimidating meeting.

Two residents commented that that despite not having attended the meeting on 4th September they felt insulted following District Councillor Neish's statement.

Cllr Whyte confirmed with District Councillor Neish that this was his personal view and not necessarily that of the Parish Council.

Public forum closed at 7.44pm.

71. To review correspondence received relating to CIL and agree Parish Council reply and associated actions.

Cllr MacPherson commented that it is unreasonable to expect the Chairman to personally reply to the number of emails received. He has a full-time job and as a Parish Councillor is a volunteer.

Cllr Pearce advised that the Parish Council has a Communications Policy, this means that all emails are directed through the office and then included on an agenda for the full Parish Council to address and answer.

Cllr Whyte asked if the response was to be sent to all those who had emailed the office irrespective of content.

Cllr MacPherson felt that individual responses would be difficult due to staff workload but perhaps this should be explaining within the reply.

Cllr Holloway felt individuals could always approach a member of the Council to discuss any concerns on any matter.

Cllr Williamson considered that this would be an opportunity for more information to go out via the Villager or The Herald. He outlined at some length the many challenges currently faced by the parish. Cllr Williamson stated that the Council are not sitting back and are actively engaging with the local authorities to work on behalf of the community. He suggested that a statement be put out covering all of these facts and asked the Council to take time on deciding what good purpose the CIL money could be used for.

Cllr O'Reilly felt that all forms of media to disseminate the information should be used.

Cllr Holloway asked residents to allow the Council time to deal with this matter within a suitable timescale.

Cllr Pearce reiterated that the office project has been ongoing since 2010 and it was never intended to allocate the full £103k to this project.

Resolved: That the email (attached as Appendix 2) be sent to all who contact the office regarding the use of CIL money on the office project. That a letter explaining some of the issues currently being faced by the Parish Council be put out with the Parish Council questionnaire. All in favour. (Prop Cllr Neish, Cllr Holloway)

72. To approve consultation document on the use of CIL monies received.

Cllr Whyte requested a link to HDC for residents to find information relating to CIL money and suitable uses.

Cllr O'Reilly requested the amount of CIL be included on the questionnaire.

Cllr MacPherson commented that a suggestion box could be available at the Christmas Bazaar.

Cllr Pearce suggested that residents should have the option to email a request to the office for an electronic copy of the questionnaire.

Cllr O'Reilly commented that not all of the suggestions from the emails received are included on the questionnaire, there are only 13.

Cllr Pearce advised there is a comments box for further suggestions with the ability to continue overleaf if necessary.

Resolved: That the consultation document on the use of CIL monies received be approved with the following additions: CIL amount to be added and a link to HDC. All in favour (Prop Cllr MacPherson, 2nd Cllr Holloway)

Cllr Pearce advised Council that a letter with a plan has been received from the architect.

Resolved: That the Parish Office project is put on hold until results of consultation are known. All in favour. (Prop Cllr Pearce, 2nd Cllr Williamson)

73. To note Freedom of Information request received 31st August 2018 (our ref 2018/3)

Noted

74. To note Freedom of Information request received 12th September 2018 (our ref 2018/4)

Noted

75. To consider email dated 10th September 2018 from CIL Action Group requesting a Meeting with the Parish Council.

Cllr Pearce commented that the email requested a meeting within 2 weeks however suggested that this should wait until the consultation results have been received and collated before setting a meeting date.

Resolved: That the Parish Council will accept the request for a meeting with the CIL Action Group following the consultation at an agreed time. All in favour (Prop Cllr Pearce, Cllr Holloway).

76. To consider resident request for a meeting to discuss how information is disseminated via Parish Council Agenda and Minutes.

Cllr MacPherson queried why this is in question now.

Cllr Pearce advised that advice is sought from organisations eg. CAPALC. The Council are internally and externally audited and work to standing orders.

Resolved: To thank the resident and decline the offer for a meeting to discuss how information is disseminated via Parish Council Agenda and Minutes. 8 in favour, 1 abstention, 1 against (Prop Cllr MacPherson, 2nd Cllr Holloway)

Being no further business the meeting closed at 8.32pm

Chairman

Date

Good evening Chairman and Members,

We are extraordinarily delighted that within 24 hours of the Parish Council meeting you announced the CIL money on the Parish Council website.

As the council is aware a new parish office is not an appropriate use of the CIL money as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy regulations.

The Government website says *"The levy is intended to focus on the provision of new infrastructure and should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies"* HDC say *"This means it should not be used for projects that are already in place and have shortfalls"*.

The Parish Council have received more than 80 emails and letters of complaint, this is a significant number. I would like to ask. Have all the councillors had the opportunity to read all the emails and letters relating to the New Parish Office?

I have had many emails from residents saying they have not yet received a response to their emails - Can I ask, When are the residents going to receive a proper response to the emails and letters directed to the Chairman, since most of them have said, We look forward to hearing from you.

Will you please confirm the clerk has not and will not be involved in any decision making regarding the Parish Office including drafting the questionnaire due to obvious conflicts of interest?

Please confirm whether any councillors have declared their interests in the building of a new Parish Office?

Can you for all the residents here confirm the decision to build a new Parish Office has been ratified. There appears to be some confusion amongst the councillors whether or not you have taken a vote.

I would like to bring to your attention the following document - it's called **Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement** it was written in 2009 by the Parish council and published on the Parish Council website. In the first section it talks about AIMS

- work more closely with residents and community groups;
- engage with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision making.
- ensure we actively encourage the involvement of residents, to capture their views and learn their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of the decision-making process;
- ensure that residents have the opportunities to be heard at every stage.

If you council believe that you are a quality council then you believe in this document and should follow the spirit of its intention to involve residents in decisions of this magnitude.

Finally, if all you're proposing to do is to send out a questionnaire whilst at the same time proceeding with your plans to build a new office you should make that clear now rather than merely paying lip service to our concerns.

Thank you.

CIL Action Group



Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council

Needlingworth Village Hall,
Overcote Lane
Needlingworth
St Ives
Cambs
PE27 4TU
Tel/Fax: 01480 468451
Email: needlingworthpc@btconnect.com

Dear Resident,

Thank you for contacting the Parish Council regarding your concerns over the recent communication from HcN CILAction Group.

The Parish Council have for many years been concerned about providing a work place suitable for its staff and members of the public who visit the office. Having revisited the need to relocate the office in 2010 the Parish Council started making provision in allocated reserves for this purpose in the financial year 2012/13.

The award of CIL money from the Morrison development was seen as an opportunity to investigate if this objective could be achieved.

To this end the possible solutions and associated resolutions passed in period October 2017 to March 2018 to take the project forward to tender stage were undertaken, as without costings it was not possible to know if the proposal was viable.

The subcommittee meeting held on 20th October 2017 was held in closed session in order to safeguard the tendering process. However, as the Parish Council Office project has been discussed at several Parish Council meetings it should never be perceived as the intention to keep the project undercover. It was necessary to have these financial facts available before going to the wider community.

Please be assured that the CIL money of £103,771.83 remains untouched in the Parish Council accounts.

A resolution was passed at the Extra-ordinary meeting held on 18/9/18 to put the office project on hold until the consultation process is complete.

A questionnaire will be delivered to each household with the October edition of the Herald along with a more detailed explanation of the current situation and some of the many issues the Parish Council are currently facing. The Parish Council would encourage everyone to complete and return a copy of the consultation document for consideration. If you have already made a suggestion this will be taken into consideration along with those received via the questionnaire.

If anyone would like to visit the existing parish office to assess the current working conditions prior to making your comments please contact the office to arrange a visit. Tel: 01480 468481.

Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council