

GEDDINGTON, NEWTON AND LITTLE OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9th OCTOBER 2023 at 7.30pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Cllrs C Buckseall, T Bailey, B McCreery, D Lomasney, M Rowley, J Padwick (Chair). N Richardson

APOLOGIES

C Wrighting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr Rowley – for Planning applications NK/2023/0556 – close proximity of the application, and NK/2023/0563 – concerns a relative:

Car Park Extension - related to Cobley Lodge management.

057/24: PUBLIC SESSION.

Five members of the public were present, including Boughton Estates' Estate Manager and . Renewables Development Manager.

a) Questions sent in by the public

None/ taken under correspondence received.

Former Post Office. The Boughton Estates Manager observed that any considerations for the former post office would be discussed at 060/24.

Wayleave agreement. The Estates Manager had spoken to Cllr Bailey and the Parish Clerk concerning the wayleave agreement for the Stone Pit land. National Grid had been contacted. Confirmed that the Stonepit land rental of land for pole was not on Boughton Estates' Wayleave agreement. Payments will now come to the Parish Council, backdated for six years.

Solar Farm. The Boughton Estates Renewables Development Manager was also present. The Estate is in the process of putting forward a large scale solar scheme for a land north of Newton. Information is currently being gathered and subject to favourable conditions, a planning application would be submitted in March/April. Initial feedback on the scheme is being sought from the parish council, local residents and businesses.

Boughton Estates wish to build it and operate it themselves. Two power connections are planned – one to the Grid, one for local businesses who would be metered. Technical assessments indicate that the proposed site is in a good location and the land form is ideal for this kind of development, being dual-purpose land (agricultural land at the present time). Enhancements could include flood defence and improved pathways. A battery store and sub station would form part of the development, but would be placed as far away as possible from properties. It was noted that permission for a large solar farm at Acreland was being sought, another large one at Brigstock, and a linked battery storage area (38 double stacked containers the size of shipping containers).

The Parish Council would be consulted on footpaths going through the area. The Landscape Visual team would be responsible for screening. Commercial traffic to use A6003 towards Newton but would not go past the Newton turn. Land would go back to arable land if the solar farm ceased.

The Boughton Estates officer was thanked for dealing promptly with the wasps on the recreation field.

b) Reports from North Northants Councillors.

Community Payback Teams have been used previously for cutting back of footpaths. Three of these teams will shortly be created, to include one team used by Highways for cleaning road signs and cutting back vegetation. Cllr Rowley suggested making contact with the officer that runs all three teams with cutting back of footpaths to be a first priority for all three villages.

ACTION 1: Cllr Rowley to make contact with the relevant NNC officer.

058/24: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

a) Approval of draft minutes for the monthly Meeting held 11th September 2023.

Proposed by Cllr Lomasney that these be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Bailey. Approved by all councillors present.

b) Matters arising; progress on outstanding actions.

11.9.23 – action1: (cut grass dumped around the edges of the recreation field). Cllr Rowley to liaise with Cllr Richardson.

Cllr Richardson to pursue.

11.9.23 – action 2: (Permission requested to park six self-contained motorhomes in the Village Hall car park from Friday 15th to Sunday 17th September). After a short discussion councillors denied the request. The clerk to respond as above.

This decision was conveyed to the requestee by the clerk.

10.6.23: action 3: (Eleanor Cross lights not working) Cllrs Richardson and McCreery to check the padlocked door again. P James Electrician attended the Cross and agreed with Cllr McCreery and Richardson as to the work required. Estimate not received. An alternative electrician be contacted.

Cllr McCreery reported that he had contacted an alternative electrician.

11.9.23: action 4: (Removal of cut tree trunk). Cllr Rowley will ask the resident if he can use his tractor to move the cut tree trunk in the meadows. He has not managed to see him and ask him yet.

Cllr Rowley has not managed to speak to the resident yet. To be carried forward to November meeting.to speak to the resident.

ACTION 2: Cllr Rowley will contact the resident.

15.5.23: action 5: The clerk to contact NNC to order a new bench. (Bench in dog walking area). Bench ordered by clerk via NNC Customer Services but no reply received. 10.6.23 - chased via the NNC reference number: NNC do not purchase or fit new benches. The clerk has contacted Wyburn to ask for the relevant information to inform councillors of the prices. See agenda item 061/24: "Finance" for costs.

12.6.23: Action 12: Clerk to convey to NNC the concerns of the Parish Council in relation to the difficulties contacting NNC officers directly and receiving a timely response, and to request a list of the relevant officers, their email addresses and phone numbers.

The clerk updated that this has been done.

10.7.23, action 8: Attenuation Pond/ ornamental pond - contact Stamford Road resident - Cllr Padwick to liaise with the owner of the relevant property. Cllr Padwick to check the facts relating to this issue first.

ACTION 3: Carried forward to November.

11.9.23: action 11: Defibrillators for Little Oakley and Newton: clerk to apply for grant to British Heart Foundation when the grant programme commences in October.

The clerk is set up to receive notification of when the grant programme commences – this should be on 18th October.

11.9.23: action 12: Emails received by the Newton councillor and the Parish Council from a Newton resident, complaining about the manner of the Parish Council's contact with Dovecote Farm. No response received from Dovecote Farm. Clerk to thank the resident for the correspondence.

The clerk conveyed that this had been done.

11.9.23: action 13: Cllr McCreery reported that a tree has fallen over the fencing into the berm (from the recreation field side). Cllr Lomasney to view the fallen tree. Weldon Landscapes will remove the tree shortly.

11.9.23: action 15: Car park extension. Cllr Lomasney to contact Cobley Lodge.

This will be discussed under agenda item "Car Park extension".

11.9.23: action 16: (The temporary fencing on the car park extension has been opened – clarification to be sought whether it was agreed that the Cricket Club will open and close it). Cllr Padwick to contact Village Hall Committee via Cllr Richardson.

This has been done. Cllr Richardson explained that the wooden gate to the car park extension cannot be used at present and has been moved to one side. Some more metal (temporary) fencing has been obtained so that the area can be completely closed off, with a padlocked gate.

11.9.23: action 17: Return of old goal posts to NNC.

These are too rusty to be collected and reused by another organisation. Cllr Richardson offered to get somebody to cut up the old goal posts so that they can be disposed of.

11.9.23: action 18: Completion of the NCC Active Communities Framework survey.

Cllr Padwick obtained an extension for the submission closing date so that this can be completed.

11.9.23: action 19: (Future of the Parish Council Facebook Group).

This was discussed at Agenda item 059/24.

11.9.23: action 20: (Email from resident concerning state of the ground by the Village Hall, and the entrance to the car park). Ivy is creeping up the small wall by the now demolished play shed and is growing up to their house. The grass is cut around the Village Hall but not the area that the resident has highlighted. Historically it is not the Village Hall's responsibility, and it is uncertain whether it is Boughton Estates land. Cllr McCreery will check the plans in the Village Hall filing cabinet to ascertain the boundary of the Village Hall land.

Cllr McCreery will carry this action out later this week and bring the results to the November meeting.

11.9.23: action 21: Email from resident suggesting closure of the bridge to traffic.

It was reported that the highway is the ford, not the bridge, but because the bridge has been used for a long period of time as a road, permission would have to be given by Highways.

The clerk to reply to the resident - further contact to be made when an exploratory contact with Highways has been made, and gauge their views.

The clerk updated that the resident had been updated, and Highways has been contacted. They have advised that NNC must be contacted as they are responsible.

ACTION 4: The clerk to contact NNC.

*11.9.23: action 23: Email from resident - Parking concerns - Skeffington Close/Grange Road.
The clerk to reply to the resident.
The clerk confirmed that she had sent a reply to the resident.*

*11.9.23: action 24: (Parish Council records - discussion & decision on involving a trainee archivist). Cllr Lomasney to contact the resident.
Cllr Lomasney has contacted her.*

11.9.23: action 25: (Trees and hedging on the Parish Council boundary of the Stone pit land - should they be added to the report that Weldon Landscapes have carried out). Cllr Lomasney to contact Weldon Landscapes.

Cllr Lomasney reported that Weldon Landscapes will look at this area when work in the recreation field is carried out.

059/24: PARISH COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA - for discussion and decision.

This agenda item was discussed within the public session.

The current editor of Geddington.net pointed out that the Facebook page was more a village community page. The suggestion was that Geddington.net take over the Facebook page. The Parish Council could have a page of its own on Facebook.

At the same the Parish Council could have a page that it can have control of on Geddington.net, which could only be edited by the Parish Council. This would then meet statutory requirements.

Noted that the Parish Council website is not working at the present time.

It was proposed by Cllr Rowley that the administration of the current Facebook page be passed to Geddington.net. A Facebook page to be set up in the Parish Council's name, and the Parish Council to use the web page on Geddington.net to be administered by the Parish Clerk/ other councillor. Seconded by Cllr Buckseall, all councillors present were in favour of the motion.

060/24: FUTURE OF THE OLD POST OFFICE - for discussion.

This agenda item was discussed within the public session.

The Boughton Estates Manager present explained that Boughton Estates wish to sell the property with a covenant on it as it was recognised that it was a community asset.

Cllr Rowley had had an initial conversation with the Boughton Estates Office concerning the future of the former Post Office. An option could be that the Parish Council buys the old Post Office.

A full-time Post Office function would be very hard to obtain as the Post Office rules for such a site have changed.

It was thought that a shop in the village would need to be completely subsidised for it to be viable. It was queried as to why was it assumed that such a shop would make a loss, but it was pointed out that the shop has been closed for two to three years and buying patterns will have changed.

It was suggested that a community shop could be subsidised if the first floor was converted to offices, with a commercial rent being charged.

Considerable renovation of the premises would be needed.

It was agreed to send a questionnaire to all households of the three villages, with a minimum response required, to seek the initial views of residents as to whether they want a shop in Geddington and whether they would agree to the parish council buying it and for it to be funded through precept.

If purchase and renovation of the shop was to be carried out through precept, a decision would be needed by early January 2024. A precept increase for two years could provide the funding for the renovation as well, or a low interest loan from Ncalc could be applied for and repaid in the second year. Alternative timescales for funding by precept could also be explored.

Cllr Padwick suggested that the wording of the questionnaire should be presented to the November Parish Council meeting, that an extra Parish Council meeting devoted to the issue be held in November, with precept decisions then to be made in the December/January meetings. However, following discussion and due to the very short timescale, it was proposed by Cllr Padwick was that he and Cllr Rowley finish the questionnaire, with any additions or changes requested by councillors to be emailed to them as soon as possible. They would also agree explanatory wording to be added to the questionnaire. Due to the precept applying to all households across the three villages, a threshold return of 50% of households [and not 50% of returned questionnaires] would be necessary for the purchase by the parish council of the shop by the precept to be progressed. It was agreed that the questionnaires be printed and distributed. Seconded by Cllr Richardson, agreed by all councillors present.

Parish councillors would be asked to assist with the distribution of questionnaires.

It was agreed that a working group should be formed by Cllrs Rowley, McCreery, Wrighting and Richardson to discuss the results of the questionnaire and for a visit to the shop to be arranged, with their proposals to be brought to the extra November meeting, with hall availability to be sought as soon as possible.

Cllr Bailey thanked Cllrs Rowley and Padwick for all the initial work that they have carried out.

LITTLE OAKLEY

New Flood Warden for Little Oakley is needed.

Cllr Bailey has now spoken to both the owners of the two properties that are affected by flooding, neither of whom believe there is a need for a flood warden for Little Oakley, as they are on site and will immediately know if there are likely to be difficulties.

Defibrillator.

This was discussed at agenda item 058/24b).

NEWTON

Two street lights were reported as not working some months ago but they have still not been repaired. Cllr Rowley is speaking to the relevant Portfolio holder later this week so he will raise this matter.

ACTION 5: Cllr Lomasney to forward the numbers of the two street lights or their location.

061/24: FINANCE

a) Bank statements. –

Community account statement	18 Aug - 15 Sep 23	£68,005.73
Business Saver account	18 Aug - 15 Sep 23	£10,856.36

b) Accounts received
None

18 Aug - 15 Sep 23

c) Accounts for payment : -

Boughton Estates Ltd	Playing field rent - half yr to end Sept 2023	570.00
CommuniCorp	Local Councils Update - year's subscription to November 2024	80.00

Proposed by Cllr Rowley that the listed invoices be approved. Seconded by Cllr Buckseall.
Approved by all those present.

Invoice received from T James Electrical) Ltd.

T James were contacted last year to mend the Queen Eleanor Cross lights. They have twice attended to assess the work needed but it has not been carried out. Cllr McCreery wished to give them one last chance, arranged a meeting but there was no attendance. He has telephoned T James and informed them that due to the delays, the Parish Council would now search for an alternative electrician.

T James have invoiced the Parish Council for £201.00 for attending the Eleanor Cross to assess the lights tripping out, and four hours labour. Repeated requests have been made for a quotation, but none has not been provided, despite several contacts to chase action. Cllr McCreery proposed that the invoice is disputed and returned. Seconded by Cllr Rowley. Agreed by all those present.

Wording as follows:-

"We dispute the invoice because we do not believe that you have provided us with a solution to fix the problem with the lights which is why you attended the Eleanor Cross. You have been asked several times if you can provide a quote for the job but you have failed to provide one. In previous years attendance to provide a quotation has been carried out by you free of charge and you did not advise us that you would charge on this occasion for just attending the Cross."

Cllr McCreery has contacted another contractor in relation to this. They have attended and made the same diagnosis as T James (corroded connections). The quote for the work is £2,590.00 plus VAT. A further two quotes will need to be obtained. Cllr Rowley proposed that the Parish Council approve the lights being repaired on three quotes as long as the quotes are no higher than £2600.00, plus VAT. If the total spend is more than this it must come back to the November meeting. Seconded by Cllr Richardson, and agreed by all councillors present.

Replacement bench in the Meadows - costs.

The cost of a new bench (same as those previously ordered) is £455.00 excluding installation. A concrete plinth could be obtained from another source, or extended legs purchased for £30 if installation is straight on to grass. If installed on to concrete, extended brackets are needed (cost is £20 for 4) plus delivery cost of £75.00. Total is therefore £550.00 plus VAT, excluding installation. A concrete plinth would also need to be sourced.

The family requesting the bench have agreed to make a contribution for a new bench. The bench should be installed in a different area to the existing very old bench that will be removed by the family. Proposed by Cllr Buckseall that the bench is ordered with the brackets, for no more than £600.00 plus VAT. Seconded by Cllr Rowley. Approved by all councillors present.

ACTION 6: Cllr Rowley to arrange for the concrete plinth to be prepared and for the installation of the bench to be completed.

ACTION 7: The clerk to determine the dimensions of the bench and size of the concrete plinth that would be needed, and to order the bench and the brackets for the installation.

ACTION 8: The Parish Council to pay for the costs of making the concrete plinth and installing of the bench.

ACTION 9: Cllr Rowley will contact the family to arrange for the old bench to be taken away from them. The family agreed to pay a donation towards the cost of a new bench.

c) Budgetary process for 2024/25 – potential projects/other spend discussion to commence.

Potential spend on projects are the shop, the car park extension, the outdoor gym and scheduled category C tree maintenance work.

Cllr Rowley reminded councillors that the financial rules state that projects need to be agreed at the November meeting.

ACTION 10: The clerk will circulate a draft budget for 2024-5 to councillors before the 13th November meeting.

062/24: STONEPIT LAND.

a) Update from the Working Group.

The lease paper that had been circulated by Cllr Bailey will now go out to three companies for quotations for the next stage of the work. Tollers Solicitors, the Legal department at NNC and one other will be contacted.

ACTION 11: Cllr Bailey will contact three firms to request quotations.

b) Wayleave update.

This has now been dealt with and finalised.

PLANNING.

a) KBC Decision notices

NK/2023/0340: Mr A Foulke, St Peters Church, Corby Road, Little Oakley.

Conversion from church to dwelling to include erection of stud walls, changes to window openings, repairs to external doors, install 3 no. external lanterns, 2 no. slate plaques, iron gate to south porch, raised timber floating floor to ensuite, installation of staircases to tower and nave with erection of raised platform and internal balcony to west of nave, remove concrete plinths and ramp, reopen staircases, install wall and ceiling ventilation, relocate bell from tower to nave and repair quarry tile floor

Listed Building Consent Application

Approved

NK/2023/0334

Mr A Foulke: St Peters Church, Corby Road, Little Oakley. Conversion from church to dwelling

Full Application

Approved.

b) Planning Applications for consideration.

NK/2023/0556: Mr T O'Neill, 2 Grange Road, Geddington.

Two storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extension, raise roof to rear ground and first floor, alterations to side and rear fenestration. Full Application.

Proposed by Cllr Buckseall that there be no objection to the application, seconded by Cllr Richardson, agreed by all councillors present but with one abstention.

NK/2023/0438

Mr G Robertson, 8 Bakehouse Hill, Geddington.

Replace 4 no. wooden single glazed windows to the front elevation with 4 no. timberlook double glazed windows

Full Application

Although it is a planning application in a conservation area, councillors could see no objection to the timberlook double glazing.

Cllr Rowley therefore proposed that the Parish Council support the application as the proposals are complementary to the building, do not affect the look of the building, and do not deter from its building status. Seconded by Cllr Lomasney, with all councillors present in favour but with one abstention.

NK/2023/0528, Mr G Robertson, 8 Bakehouse Hill, Geddington.

Replace 4 no. wooden single glazed windows to the front elevation with 4 no.

timberlook double glazed windows.

Listed Building Consent Application.

Although a planning application in a conservation area, councillors could see no objection to the timberlook double glazing.

Cllr Rowley therefore proposed that the Parish Council support the application as the proposals are complementary to the building, do not affect the look of the building, and do not deter from its building status. Seconded by Cllr Lomasney, with all councillors present in favour but with one abstention.

NK/2023/0563: Mr T Harker, Cobley Lodge Farm, Stamford Road, Little Oakley.

Single storey front and two storey side extension with covered terrace to first floor

Full application

Comments made:-

- The is an extremely large extension which would double the size of the house, but is not intrusive within the landscape, although it would be seen from the road.
- It is separate from the nursery and the kennels.

Cllr McCreery proposed no objection to the application, seconded by Cllr Lomasney, approved by all councillors present but with one abstention.

063/24: COUNTY HIGHWAY TRAFFIC FIGURES - for information and discussion.

Noted that there has been a considerable reduction in traffic, particularly HGVs, on the main road through Geddington since the Link Road was built in 2014 [94% reduction in HGVs, 47% reduction in total traffic and 40% reduction in all vehicles].

064/24: CAR PARK EXTENSION UPDATE - response from Cobley Lodge.

Up to date quotation received - same price as their original quotation last year. Very thorough details and planning application details included in the work to be carried out. March completion date, pending no extreme weather conditions. A schedule of a small amount of interim payments is also requested if this company is used.

Proposed by Cllr McCreery that the Parish Council accepts the quotation, seconded by Cllr Lomasney, approved by all councillors present but with one abstention.

ACTION 12: The clerk to contact ESR to cancel the contract with them.

ACTION 13: The clerk to contact Cobley Lodge and offer the contract as per the quotation received.

065/24: OUTDOOR GYM - Update

Three more quotes have had to be obtained as the original quotations are 18 months old.

066/24: CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND CIRCULATED, to note, comment upon or consider.

a). Email from Geddington & Newton WI 7.9.23 - views on cleanliness of river in Geddington

This item was considered and discussed within the public session.

Two members of the Women's Institute attended the meeting and reported that WI nationally was campaigning about the cleanliness of rivers. At a local level, there was concern about sewage being released in the River Ise and children paddling in the river. Cllr Rowley advised that as the area used for paddling in the River Ise was near a listed site, permission would have to be obtained if a sign was required warning people of the issue,

The pumping station is allowed to discharge when there are floods or heavy rain. The subsequent sewage can then settle in the berm. However, the Parish Council is only aware of two instances in the past two years where the pump reservoir has overflowed and the discharge has been allowed to run into the river. The Environment agency/Anglian Water are responsible for monitoring the quality of the water. The meeting was informed that NNC recently passed a resolution supporting the Nene Valley for monitoring purposes. NNC would monitor Anglian Water and the Environment Agency to ensure that they were monitoring the Nene Valley.

National pressure is being exerted by the W.I. to the water companies, to find out if they have a long term plan to change such actions. At a local level, it is understood that Anglian Water have no plans to change the pumping station or how it works as there are no problems for most of the time, and releasing the discharge into the river is seen as better than overflowing into domestic properties. The members of the WI were thanked for their concerns.

b) Email received 13.9.23 - Safety issue raised. Camper van parked outside the Post Office.

Concerns have been raised as vehicles exiting the village hall car park due to a camper van blocking visibility.

ACTION 14: Cllr Richardson will speak to the vehicle's owner.

c) Email 27.9.23 - query concerning ownership of a wall.

The wall is in Chase View. The Parish Council has no knowledge of the ownership of the wall. It was suggested that the property owner speaks to the neighbour who submitted a planning application two or three years ago, or to contact Land Registry.

ACTION 15: The clerk to contact the property owner to convey the above information.

d) Email rec'd 28.9.23 - Wasps' nest affecting children during football matches.

e) Email rec'd 30.9.23 - Further complaint concerning wasps' nests.

The issue concerning wasps' nests has been resolved.

f) Email rec'd – Storage of traffic mirrors tried at the Newton turn.

A resident has been storing the two mirrors for the Parish Council, but needs them moved. Cllr Bailey agreed to speak to a Little Oakley resident living by a dangerous junction to see if they would be suitable for use in that location.

ACTION 16: Cllr Bailey to carry out the above action.

067/24. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES.

a) Repair to the Eleanor Cross lights - update.

This was discussed at agenda item 058/24b)

068/24: PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING - for discussion.

Noted that Cllr McCreery has recently completed the Planning "Nuts and Bolts" training.

ACTION 17: The clerk to send Cllr Richardson and Cllr Wrighting the details for "Off to a Flying Start" course, and Cllr Padwick for the Chair's training course.

Cllr Rowley added that there will be Planning Training coming soon from NNC.

069/24: REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY - 12th November.

Councillors were reminded of the Remembrance service on Sunday 12th November and that their attendance at the service would be appreciated. The clerk will notify councillors of the time of the laying of wreaths.

AOB.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.44pm.