

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Footpaths Committee** held on 25th January 2016 at the Parish Centre, Warboys.

PRESENT

Councillors Mrs M P Bucknell, Mrs J Cole, J A Parker, P S Potts, Mrs J A Tavener, G C M Willis and Dr S C Withams.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Ms L A Gifford and Mrs A R Wyatt.

01/15 CO-OPTED MEMBER

The Committee was reminded that the Council had co-opted Mr J Edwards to the Committee, as he was a member of the Warboys Walking Group. However the Clerk reported that, upon being notified of the meeting of the Committee, Mr Edwards had submitted his resignation as a co-opted Member.

02/15 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Dr Withams, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor P S Potts be elected Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

Councillor Potts, Chairman, in the Chair

03/15 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Willis and seconded by Councillor Dr Withams, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor Parker be appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

04/15 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23rd February 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

05/15 MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillor Mrs Cole declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of footpath 4 as this crossed land in her ownership.

06/15 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee considered the following matters arising from the Minutes of its meeting held on 23rd February 2015:-

(a) Use of Footpaths by Dog Walkers

Further to Minute No. 06/14(a), the Clerk reported that he had searched for humorous 'poop scoop' dog signs on the internet but that most appeared to be on American websites. However the Keep Britain Tidy group had a suitable notice available at a cost of £5 for 10 copies. Councillor Mrs Tavener advised that she might be able to obtain suitable notices locally and she offered to e-mail a copy to the Clerk.

In view of the proliferation of dog excrement on public footpaths and the growing problem on footways in the village in recent months, the Committee requested that suitable notices be displayed in the worst affected areas.

(b) Use of Bridleways by Horseriders

Arising from Minute No. 06/14(b), the Committee noted that there had been no further complaints in the past year from horse riders who used the bridleways off Fenside Road with regard to their condition.

(c) Creation of a Bridleway off Fenside Road

Further to Minute No. 06/14(c), the Clerk reported that he had been informed by one of the County Council's Rights of Way officers that they were intending to progress with the registration as a public bridleway of footpath 8 from Fenside Road to the top of the hill and then following a private track around Woolvey Farm to Heath Road (A141).

07/15 ANNUAL PATHFINDER MARCH

Members were informed that notification had been received that the annual Pathfinder March would take place on 18th June 2016. The 46 mile route linking the four historic Pathfinder airfields of Wyton, Graveley, Oakington and Warboys was expected to attract up to 400 participants, with two checkpoints located in Warboys at the Royal Oak and the airfield. While the Joint Forces Command who were organising the event would ensure that the event was suitably waymarked, the Clerk reported that the Walking Group usually also checked the route and the Handymen would clear any overhanging vegetation on the footpaths used by the March through the Parish.

Councillor Mrs Bucknell enquired when the walk had originated and whether this was approaching a notable anniversary in which case the Parish Council might wish to consider supporting the event in some way. In response, the Clerk undertook to obtain the information and report back.

08/15 DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN STATION ROAD AND OLD MILL AVENUE

(Councillor Mrs Cole left the meeting for the consideration of this matter as she had declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the item.)

The Clerk circulated a map showing an extract from the Section 106 Agreement for the proposed development of 120 dwellings between Station Road and Old Mill Avenue. The Agreement required the developer to create a public right of way on land in the ownership of the applicant linking footpaths 2 and 3. The developers were also required to pay a transport contribution to the County Council to enable footpath 4 to have an upgraded surface to connect the development to the primary school.

The Clerk also referred to the meeting with representatives of David Wilson Homes on 20th January at which the diversion of footpath 3 had been raised. Advice from the County Council had drawn attention to DEFRA's guidance on Rights of Way which stated that any alternative alignment required to accommodate development should avoid the use of estate roads for the purpose wherever possible and preference given to the use of made up estate paths through landscaped or open space areas away from vehicular traffic.

09/15 COUNTY COUNCIL RIGHTS OF WAY TEAM

The Clerk reported on further reductions in the County Council's rights of way team as a result of which there was no longer a dedicated Rights of Way officer for each District and all issues relating to maintenance of the footpath network would now be dealt with by the local Highways Supervisor.

10/15 MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS

The Committee proceeded to review maintenance requirements to the footpaths network in the Parish in the ensuing year.

Footpath No. 1

Other than litter picking and strimming, the Committee was informed that no work was required to this metalled footpath which now followed the line of Humberdale Way.

Footpath No. 2

The route followed George Lane, crossing Humberdale Way and then open countryside to join Station Road near Humbrills Farm. However the Chairman pointed out that few people crossed diagonally over the field adjoining Humbrills Farm, preferring instead to

follow footpath 12 at the rear of the farm or alternatively to follow the field edge to Coronation Avenue which was not a public footpath.

Footpath No. 3

The Clerk reported that the line of the footpath had been fenced off by the developer. A complaint had been received from a member of the public that the footpath had been blocked by the fencing but this had been investigated by a County Council officer who had confirmed that this was not the case. As the site of the development was frequently used by dog owners with their pets, the Clerk suggested that the complaint referred to an unofficial route that was not a public right of way.

Footpath No. 4

Councillor Mrs Cole reported that most people were now tending to follow the official route of footpath 4 where it crossed land in her ownership between Flaxen Walk and Coronation Avenue.

The Committee noted that no maintenance was required.

Footpath No. 5

The Clerk pointed out that the official line of the public footpath predated the development of the land as an airfield in the Second World War and bore little resemblance to the existing land use. As a result, walkers tended to follow the hard surfaced tracks remaining from the airfield rather than the official path.

The need for ongoing cutting back of vegetation near the bridge over Broughton Brook was noted.

Footpath No. 6

The Clerk reported upon a complaint in the previous summer that the footpath could not be walked because the person farming the field had not left a strip of sufficient width in the land that had been cultivated. As this was the route of the Pathfinder March, the Clerk reported that the route of the footpath would be monitored to ensure that a similar problem did not recur in the current year.

Footpath No. 7

The Clerk reported that the Handymen would continue to monitor the condition of the steps and would carry out any necessary repairs. The Committee was informed that the footpath was well used following its diversion around Pingle Wood.

Footpath No. 8

The Committee was informed that the route of the footpath was maintained by the Handymen and the Walking Group.

Footpath No. 9

It was noted that this footpath was little used and no work was required by the Parish Council.

Footpath No. 10

No action required as the footpath had a metalled surface.

Footpath No. 11

No action was required.

Footpath No. 12

The Chairman pointed out that the line of footpath 12 crossed the paddocks that had been erected at the rear of Humbrills Farm and that walkers now used a permissive path that had been signposted by the Walking Group around the perimeter of the paddock fencing.

Footpath No. 13

No action required.

Bridleways

No action required.

Councillor Mrs Tavener reported that she had noticed a growing number of dog walkers using Wood Land off Ramsey Road to walk towards Wistow Wood and asked whether this could be registered as a public footpath. The Clerk reminded Members that the County Council's Rights of Way team had investigated a suggestion that this route had formerly been a public right way that had been omitted from the Definitive Map as part of their 'Lost Footpaths' programme under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. However the team had found no evidence that the land had ever been a public right of way and the Clerk pointed out that the only way that the land could now be claimed by the public as a right of way was if there was evidence that it had been used continuously for 12 years without objection by the landowner.

11/15 WALKERS PROGRAMME

(The Clerk pointed out that he was the co-ordinator of the Warboys Walking Group.)

A copy of the programme prepared by the Warboys Walking Group for 2016/17 was circulated for Members' information, containing over 40 walks on Saturdays and Sundays and on Friday evenings in the summer months.

Having regard to the efforts of the Walking Group in helping to maintain and waymark the footpaths in the Parish and in organising the programme of walks, it was

RESOLVED

that the Council be recommended to make a grant of £150 to the Warboys Walking Group in 2016/17.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

Chairman.