

**BURWELL PARISH MEETING**  
**NOTES OF THE FORMAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2018 AT**  
**MANDEVILLE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Liz Swift, Chairman of the Parish Council welcomed all present and gave thanks to the staff and Councillors for their hard work during the year. She reminded all that Parish Councillors are volunteers and that they receive no income for the work that they carry out. She continued to report that the Council had learnt at the end of last week, that their application for grant funding to the Football Association for extending and improving the Pavilion at Weirs Drove Recreation Ground had been successful. She thanked Paul Webb, Gus Jones and Michael Swift for all of their hard work and commitment in order to submit the successful application.

Liz Swift continued to report that the Council has had a very good, eventful year. A Strategy Day was held in July and from these discussions four clear working groups emerged. Each Group has developed short, medium and long term objectives. Hopefully, this new way of working will improve the efficiency of how the Parish Council meets the needs of the Community as a whole.

An unexpected visit by a group of Travellers came at the end of September. The cost to the Council in securing a successful eviction amounted to around £6,000. The Council has invested in equipment to protect public spaces if similar threats occur in the future.

Extra funding has been secured for a new Skateboard Park. A tendering process for both this and the work to the Pavilion has been started and hopefully, work will be completed during the coming year.

With the help of James Moss, Warden of the Kingfisher Bridge Nature Reserve at Wicken Fen, further improvements have been carried out at the Pauline's Swamp Site. A successful Open Day that attracted over 300 visitors' took place there in September. A further Open Day has been organised for 2018 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday September.

The Council has carried out a parish wide traffic survey, the results of which are on display. Consultations are taking place with the County Council regarding a safe crossing scheme for Ness Road. Hopefully, progress on this development will happen over the next few months.

A new village sign has been commissioned and should be erected on Pound Hill in the next week or so. The old sign has been taken to Burwell Museum.

Other initiatives under consideration are the establishment of a Community Orchard, creation of a Community Garden, better management of the Castle and Spring Close areas, improvements to the Gardiner Memorial Hall and the creation of a cycleway/footpath and safe crossing over the bridge between Burwell and Exning.

Richard Adams, Vice Chair of the Parish Council Finance and General Purposes Working Group reported on the work of the Group:

His report started with a brief explanation that the income of the Parish Council comes from raising a precept through the Community Tax charged against all properties in the parish. Unlike the County and District Council the Parish Council receives no Rate Support Grants. Other income is received from hiring out village halls, Community Structure Levy from new houses that have been built and anything from grants that have been applied for.

In 2017-2018 the precept was £120,000 which works out at about £1.12 per week for a Band D Property. This covers staff and office costs, maintenance of recreation, sports and play areas, cemetery, allotment and grass cutting, street furniture and village halls. It also pays for capital expenditure throughout the village. Details of the Council's finances for the year can be found in the Annual Report and on the Parish Council website.

He continued to report that for the year 2018-2019 the precept has increased to £130,000, an increase of 10p per household each week for a Band D Property. This has increased largely to pay for the unexpected expenditure connected with the Travellers occupation of Margaret Field.

Although Council reserves are healthy at the moment, they will decrease considerably within the next few months because of a number of projects nearing fruition, including the pavilion on the recreation ground and more safety initiatives.

Mike Smith, Chairman of the Assets and Environment Working Group reported on the activities of the Group. He explained that the Group is responsible for play areas and equipment, trees, grass cutting, street furniture, allotments, halls, the cemetery and environmental issues such as noise, pollution and fly tipping. Over the last six months work that the Group has been responsible for includes carrying out repairs to the hearing loop system and additional external lighting at the Gardiner Memorial Hall, tree work in the village and organising for a replacement village sign. Other work has been the provision of a short cut footpath from Reach Road in to Mandeville Hall car park, topping up around 70 graves at the cemetery and the installation of a Parish Council noticeboard on Pound Hill. In the longer term, the Group intends to work towards improvements at the Gardiner Memorial Hall, updating play equipment at Westhorpe and Margaret Field and investigating recycling facilities, air conditioning and sound proofing at Mandeville Hall.

Michael Swift, Chairman of the Community, Leisure and Sports Group explained that there is often an overlap of responsibility between the groups. Furthermore three members of the Community, Leisure and Sports Group have been working with two other Council members as a group to investigate and work towards improvements for sport provision in the parish. The Community, Leisure and Sports Group has a wide brief which amongst other things includes the allotments, dog fouling, contact with the community and Pauline's Swamp. He expressed the Group's delight over the successful grant applications for the Skate Park and the improvements and extension to the pavilion, the total of which is in the region of

£250,000. Further thanks were given to Paul Webb and Gus Jones for their hard work in securing the funding which had involved 29 meetings over the last twelve months. Further funding has been applied for to improve the recreation ground car park. In the future the Group is looking to carry out further work at the recreation ground, possibly reinstating the tennis courts or having a multi-use sports area. To ascertain what the community would like to see, the Group intends to carry out another survey similar to the recent traffic survey. The survey will be carried out in conjunction with the Sports Centre, which is also in the position of having to consider essential major repairs in the near future.

Eight meetings of the Pauline's Swamp Trustees have also taken place over the year and praise was given to James Moss and his employer, Kingfisher Bridge for allowing him to work at the Swamp and using their equipment. The last working day at Pauline's Swamp attracted 20 volunteers.

Members of the group will also be looking at improving the standard of Spring Close and the castle site.

An option of working in conjunction with the University of East Anglia to perverse old English fruits by planting a community orchard possibly in Priory Meadow is also being considered. A community garden somewhere in the centre of the village is another option that the group is looking at.

Brenda Wilson, Chairman of the Safety Group informed the meeting of the successful bid in 2017 for funding from the Local Highways Improvement Initiative to help improve the verge along the Causeway, which had worn away and become dangerous due to the continuous parking of vehicles on the grass. The total project cost to install grasscrete was in the region of £17,000 and 50% of this was funded through the grant, with the remaining sum being paid by the Parish Council. Funding through the scheme has also been approved this year to provide a safer crossing place for pedestrians on Ness Road. Over a number of years the Parish Council has tried to get a pedestrian crossing on Ness Road at the roundabout, but have always been told that this is not possible for safety reasons. Therefore the Highways Department looked at other measures to create gaps in the flow of traffic, such as the unpopular pinch points. Highways has also looked at siting a Zebra Crossing nearer to Old School Close and this option looks to meet Highways safety requirements, but will financially cost considerably more than the Parish Council had initially budgeted for. The maximum grant of

£10,000.00 will be paid by Highways with the balance of £31,000 being funded by the Parish Council. Robin Dyos, Vice Chair of the Parish Council and of the Safety Working Group expressed the importance of providing the crossing before anyone, but particularly a child is seriously injured crossing the road. He explained that a day-long survey had been carried out by Highways to assess the need of the crossing. The targets needed to meet the criteria for a zebra crossing had been met within 20 minutes. Brenda Wilson said that it was of high importance to find a safe crossing place, but wherever it was sited, it would cause some inconvenience to neighbouring residents.

Brenda Wilson continued to report that the Safety Group were involved in two other projects. Firstly, the Group is working closely with Exning Parish Council, local landowners and principal authorities to provide a cycle way/footpath between Burwell and Exning. Funding for the project will be through Section 106 agreements for new housing developments in both villages. Secondly, the Group is looking to address safety concerns for vehicles exiting from the Gardiner Memorial Hall car park on to the road.

The Group has also recently been responsible for carrying out the village wide Traffic Survey. Paul Webb, Parish Councillor thanked all for completing the survey with the initial results being displayed at the meeting tonight. Over 550 responses had been received with an approximate split of 50/50 between online and paper returns.

Speeding through the village is the main issue along with traffic volume. Speed watch during some of their sessions have recorded up to 1000 vehicles per hour at some points during the day. According to Highways past records, traffic flow was approximately 250-300 vehicles per hour. Other concerns noted from the survey are issues with the Newmarket Road Bridge, junction issues at Pound Hill and the Causeway and problems for cyclists.

The Safety Group will discuss all the results and make recommendations to Full Council. The results will be published on the Parish Council website and Facebook. The results from the survey will be used to support concerns raised to Highways. Many residents would be in favour of a bypass, but this would be very long term, but if the population of the village as suggested by East Cambs District Council is likely to double or triple by 2030, it may be realistic to start looking at the possibility of a bypass sooner than later.

Brenda Wilson reported that the Group is also in the process of purchasing a moveable interactive speed sign for the village and if proved successful, submitting a further application for grant funding through the County Council Local Highways Improvement for another two signs.

Helen McMenamin-Smith reported that since starting the regular monthly litter picking sessions the amount of litter in the village has decreased. An acknowledgement of thanks was given by the audience. David Morley, one of the volunteer litter pickers has started to collect litter on a more regular basis. Donations from residents have paid for a bicycle trailer to help assist his work. The Parish Council is also in the process of purchasing a street orderly to help with the group's work. The group has also recently cleared and re seeded the grass area along the Causeway, tidied the area surrounding Judy's Hole and is hoping to tidy and clear the ditch at the layby on Ness Road with the aid of a digger which has been donated by a local business for clearing the ditch. Helen continued by informing those present that she had recently written to businesses in Burwell for donations and had set up a 'just giving page' to help support the work of the group.

District Councillor Michael Allen informed the meeting that the waste services for the district had now been taken back 'in house'. There had been a few initial changeover problems and if any were ongoing, residents should contact him. Now that the service is

back 'in house' a greater emphasis will be placed on fly tipping. Fly tipping at the top of the Avenue has recently been removed.

The following matters were raised by parishioners present:

1. That it will be necessary to consult with archaeologists prior to developing a community orchard on Priory Meadow.
2. It would be good if Burwell could have a swimming pool. This was acknowledged and it was pointed out that generally villages only have a swimming pool if there is a secondary school in the village.
3. When and where would a bypass go? – This would be a major project which would need to be provided for through the Highways Agency. The Parish Council would not be able to make a suggestion of a suitable route.
4. Crossing Swaffham Road is dangerous, is anything going to be done? The Parish Council accepts that it is difficult to cross Swaffham Road and that some form of crossing needs to be provided.
5. Who is responsible for the Burwell to Swaffham Prior cycleway/footpath and is there any possibilities for improvement? The route is the responsibility of the County Council and the Parish Council is not aware of any improvements at this point in time.
6. Thanks was given for the Parish Council's hard work
7. A bypass is not needed. The A142 junction should be improved to encourage people to use the A14 to Cambridge.

Brenda Wilson informed the meeting that during the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May there will be free entry to the Museum and Mill in support of the National Mill Week. The museum is hoping to get 500 plus visitors over the weekend to meet grant funding criteria.

The meeting ended at 8.18 pm