

PARISH OF NORTHILL

MINUTES OF NORTHILL PARISH PUBLIC MEETING HELD IN ICKWELL VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2009 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Hawkes (Chairman), County Councillor J Scott, 42 local electors and the Parish Clerk Mrs L Trevena

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors A Bird and Mr & Mrs Wells.

2. **WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF NORTHILL PARISH COUNCIL**

Councillor Hawkes welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced County Councillor Scott and the Parish Councillors who were in attendance.

3. **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Councillor Hawkes gave a brief introduction to outline the history of the track and the possibilities for its future. She explained that Council had reassessed the legal situation of the track and obtained specialised advice from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and also spoken with our insurers Zurich. The Council would like to see action on the perimeter track and are keen to act as facilitators and administrators for any possible repair project. The Clerk had obtained rough quotes for a variety of possible courses of action ranging from back filling potholes at a cost of £3,800 to a complete tarmac covering at a cost of £31,000. Councillor Hawkes then handed over the County Councillor Scott to take the public session.

4. **PUBLIC SESSION**

County Councillor Scott opened up the public session at 7.40 pm and said that he was totally independent of the Parish Council and of any matters relating to Ickwell Green in general. He said that Councillors or the Clerk would endeavour to answer questions tonight but there may well be some areas that would require further investigation or clarification and would require a written reply.

Clarification was requested regarding on which part of the track was under discussion and those present were informed that the Council were primarily looking at the track on the south side.

Mr Onion, Ickwell Cricket Club said that a meeting had been held, last week, with 90% of the residents around Ickwell Green in attendance. They had all agreed that the track has now become a matter of great urgency and had put together a suggested specification for re-instatement/rectification works to the south, north and west sides of the green. He confirmed that none the residents wanted to see a full tarmac road around the green and also that some parts of the track required greater repair than others. He then handed a copy of the report and specification to the Clerk. He concluded saying that the Parish Council has the backing of the residents and hopes it will not need to go to DEFRA, however, it may be necessary as there would be a change of surface.

A general discussion took place with residents making comments regarding a duty of care of on the Council, drainage and flooding problems, cricket club residency, the southern track being used as a link between two highways, prevention of proper use of the track due to potholes and use of easement monies. Questions were also raised as to the necessity of other parts of the track on other sides of the green requiring repair work. One resident of the green informed that he had a licence which stated that he could use the track provided that he maintained it in to a standard that it could be used.

He had maintained his part of the track and also put in a drainage pipe to clear excess water.

It was confirmed by the Council that any interest earned on the capital amenity fund goes back into the revenue fund but the actual capital amenity monies, collected from easements can only be used on capital projects.

Councillor Hawkes confirmed that the Council could undertake a major repair to the track as a capital project, however, it could not carry out ongoing repairs from the capital fund. Any further work for ongoing repairs would need to be included in the annual precept. She said that the Council does want to do something but, as guardians of the green, wants to do it right.

County Councillor Scott thanked everyone in attendance and said that he felt there had been many issues raised and it had been a good public gathering. It highlighted what the community wants to happen. Extra thanks were passed to Mr Onion for the work that had been put in already with regard to the report and specification.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.