

Deeping Gate Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting Thursday 23rd January 2020
The Cromwell Suite, Northborough and Deeping Gate Village Hall

Present:

Chairing the Meeting: Phillip Thompson Vice Chairman of Deeping Gate Parish Council

Cllr John Holdich OBE - Leader of the Council and Ward Councillor

Cllr Peter Hiller – Ward Councillor

Clair George - Head of Prevention and Enforcement Service, Communities & Safety
Prevention and Enforcement Service

Rob Hill - Assistant Director, Public Protection

Andy Tatt - Head of Peterborough Highway Services

Fifteen residents of Lincoln Road

Members of Deeping Gate Parish Council

Phillip Thompson opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Following the recent unauthorised encampment in Lincoln Road, the purpose of this meeting was to understand the constraints under which the Peterborough City Council (PCC) has to operate in removing such encampments; to hear the concerns of residents and to explore options to prevent a recurrence.

Clair George explained the process from when the Travellers arrived at Lincoln Road on 4th January 2020.

- The enforcement team made an initial assessment of the site (Jan 6th)
- A legal service section 77 was issued requesting Travellers to move on by Jan 8th
- The Travellers failed to comply by the deadline
- PCC requested a court date
- Peterborough magistrates issue a section 78 to force eviction
- The Travellers move on 17th January

Rob Hill explained that the police can implement a section 61 (which gives them powers to remove the encampment immediately) but these powers have to be justified on the basis of one of the following:

- The encampment is on private land and the Landowner has not given permission
- There are more than 6 or more vehicles on the land.
- Local residents have been subjected to threatening behaviour
- The land or property has been damaged

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n.b. If an eviction is made the Travellers can return after 3 months.

Rob Hill went on to explain that PCC are working with the Government to tighten up the law to make trespassing a criminal offence so that the Police can take act quickly to move Travellers on.

Cllrs John Holdich and Peter Hiller cited the recent problems with Travellers at Glington and Maxey House and explained how difficult it can be to remove the Travellers. They stressed the difference between Public Land where due process has to be followed and Private Land where the Police can evict within 48 hours.

Local residents were asked to say how they had been affected by the arrival of the Travellers:

- There was frustration over the reporting the arrival of the Travellers to the 101 non-emergency number. One resident rang twice and was told there was no record of her previous report. Clair George said she would take these comments back to Peterborough Police.
- One residents drive was blocked by caravans
- Because the refuse service could not access the area, one resident had to walk his bins to the end of Lincoln road.
- The Travellers dogs were running free and snapping at residents' dogs
- A Travellers horse was fouling the area
- The Travellers were Fly Tipping
- Residents felt intimidated and isolated in their homes.

Discussion took place on suggestions to prevent a recurrence, these included:

- Height restriction barriers
- Gates at Northborough end of Lincoln Road
- Electronic 'Sleeping Policemen'
- Changing the highway to a single-track road so that any future parking of vehicles on the road would constitute an obstruction and the Police could act to move the vehicles on.

Andy Tatt spoke of the Highways Act 1980 which allows the free flow of traffic and pedestrians and said gates and barriers could hinder residents as gates would need locking/unlocking and emergency services and refuse collections access.

Action Points

1. Clair George would alert Police to issues with call recording
2. A site visit involving Andy Tatt, Lincs and Cambs Police, councillors and Parish council to be arranged. PCC will advise Parish Councillors when this will take place.