

MINUTES OF SIBLE HEDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, PARKFIELDS, SIBLE HEDINGHAM ON MONDAY 11th NOVEMBER 2013 AT 7.30PM.

In the chair: Mrs. G. Massey

Present: Cllrs. J. Beavis (from item 157 onwards), J. Fennelly, S. Glen, D. Holmes, D. Horn, E. Jones, A. Law, S. Partridge, A. Prill, J. Skittrall, R. Volkwyn and L. Waller.
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)
Together with 1 (one) member of the public

Public comment

There was no public comment.

152. **Apologies for absence**

Cllrs. D. Finch, H. Johnson and W. Scattergood

153. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

154. **To confirm minutes of meeting held 14th October 2013**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2013, having been circulated, were taken as read, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

155. **Matters arising from those minutes**

a) **Oxford Lane**

Ms. S. Glen reported that the owners of land adjacent to Oxford Lane appear to have abandoned their former idea for use of their land but had erected a fence and dug over the land between it and the lane, causing the expected land slippage. Ms. Glen will continue to monitor the land and lane. Mr. S. Partridge suggested asking ECC Highways to make an assessment of the land when taking measurements. This was agreed and the Clerk will ask ECC to assess the land.

There were no other matters arising.

156. **Chairman's report**

The Chairman reported upon the following:

- a) That Miss. J. Laken and Mr. D. Neal had helped elderly in the village during the power cuts.
- b) That Ms. M. Hine had asked if SHPC will sponsor a tree for the Christmas Tree Festival at St. Peter's Church for £8.00. This was approved and the Chairman offered to loan a tree.
(Mrs. J. Beavis arrived at the meeting)

157. **Youth Council Report**

Mr. S. Partridge had nothing to report.

158. **County Councillor's Report**

In the absence of Mr. D. Finch no report was given.

159. **District Councillor's Report**

Mrs. J. Beavis reported on the following:

- a) That the new BDC Chief Executive, Mrs. Nicola Beach is in post and changes are already being noticed.
- b) BDC needs to save £1.5 million during the next two years.
- c) Mrs. Beavis and the Clerk will attend the BALC meeting on 14th November.
- d) The new footbridge at Alderford Street is expected during Spring 2014.
- e) BDC is considering a request from Braintree and Bocking Civic Society for a heritage list to particularly include the 'Courtauld' buildings in the District.

- f) Mrs. Beavis will attend the opening of the new dwellings and the tree planting ceremony at Park Court later this month.
- g) Mark Garnham of GCH has been chased again about footpath between Station Road and Christmas Field, the play area at Parkfields and other outstanding issues.

160. **Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 25th October 2013, having been circulated were accepted in lieu of a report.

161. **Recreation and Amenities Committee**

The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 18th October 2013, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

162. **Public Transport, Highways and Speedwatch Committee**

The minutes of the Public Transport, Highways and Speedwatch Committee Meeting held on 16th October 2013, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

163. **Footpaths and PROW Advisory Group**

The minutes of the Footpaths and PROW Advisory Group Meeting held on 29th October 2013, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report. Arising from these minutes Mrs. L. Waller expressed concern that nothing had been heard from Mr. R. Venables, regarding risk assessments, health and safety requirements and regulations for voluntary maintenance work. Mr. D. Horn explained the intention that voluntary work would continue within the regulations. This issue was referred to the Footpaths and PROW Advisory Group to review at its next meeting.

164. **To consider letter from SHALGA requesting the provision of allotments in SH**

The Chairman reported upon receipt of a letter requesting the provision of allotments signed by six electors in compliance with the Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908. Mr. S. Partridge read out the relevant legislation and regulations. Mrs. E. Jones, had no objection to allotments, but queried the legislation. The Clerk explained that whilst some sections of the 1908 Act had been repealed, the provisions relating to a request by six electors remained. It was therefore agreed that SHPC is under a statutory duty to provide allotments if land can be obtained. Enquiries had been made by BDC, SHPC and SHALGA during the last couple of years but to date no available land had been identified.

The Chairman reported that Jan Cole and a Trustee of RCCE, who is also a member of the NFU, is helping SHPC to try and secure land for allotments by making a personal approach to local farmers and landowners. In addition consideration was given to the possibility of compulsory purchase or to renting land for allotments, in which case the lease must be for a minimum of 14 (fourteen) years.

The following possible sites were considered:

- a) Land at Oxford Meadow. The Clerk reported that no reply had been received from BDC to the offer by SHPC to purchase this land for £1,000. It was agreed to send BDC a reminder and if necessary to consider the compulsory purchase route.
- b) Land between the Manor of Prayers and the former dairy. Councillors to make a personal approach to the owner.
- c) The former Cinema/Citroen garage site. It was understood that the owner will shortly be making a planning application for housing, but a large part of the land is contaminated.
- d) Cousins Yard – The site, which is contaminated, has been given planning permission for development.
- e) Southey Green Village Green – It was considered that this is too far out of the village and as it is registered as common land it should not be fenced off for allotments.
- f) Part of Grays Hall Meadow - Councillors had previously considered this and made a site visit but it had poor access and opposition from nearby residents was anticipated. The Clerk reminded Councillors that this land is designated public open space and is subject to restrictive covenants against development, which could include sheds, greenhouses and fencing associated with allotments. Nevertheless the Clerk was asked to approach BDC (as Vendor) to ascertain if it is willing to release SHPC from the restrictive covenants.

- g) Field on south side of Wethersfield Road and Church Street junction – This was a former allocation site, which was rejected. Councillors to make a personal approach to the owner.
- h) Field on northwest side of Wethersfield Road – BDC had already written to the owner but no reply was forthcoming.

It was agreed to continue to seek land for allotments to purchase or lease.

165. **To consider response to ECC consultation on the future of Children’s Centre Services**

Mr. S. Partridge asked SHPC to approach ECC to oppose the proposed reduction in funds for youth service provision. The funds may be reduced to £1.5 million, which is not acceptable. The Youth Bus may be in danger and it would be a ‘disaster’ if it is lost. It was agreed that Mr. Partridge and the Clerk prepare a letter to ECC to oppose the proposed reduction.

166. **Report of meeting with RCCE upon Building Communities**

The Chairman reported that Mr. S. Partridge, the Clerk and herself had met Mrs. Jan Cole and Miss. J. Laken of the RCCE on 5th November when a list of community leaders and groups had been identified for the ‘Community Builders’ health and wellbeing pilot project funding for SH (and Witham). Councillors were pleased that Mrs. Cole is taking the lead and that Miss. Laken is the local co-ordinator. An open day in SH Village Hall should be held early next year. It was agreed that SHPC should continue to be involved.

167. **To consider a welcome pack for new residents**

The Chairman recommended the preparation of a ‘Welcome Pack’ for new residents to include information about local organizations. Mrs. Waller gave details of a model based on another village where all groups had been invited to contribute details of their organization on an A4 sheet. Councillors favoured the idea and it was agreed to proceed with the preparation of welcome packs. Mrs. Waller offered help with design and layout and the Chairman agreed to consult Hedingham School Art or Graphics Department.

168. **To consider a date for 2014 Annual Parish Meeting**

The date of the Annual Parish Meeting was fixed for Wednesday 19th March 2014 at the Village Hall.

169. **Correspondence**

The correspondence received and listed in appendix 1 was referred to relevant Councillors for information and action. A letter from a resident of Crosspath was considered, which it was agreed to refer to the Property Management Company responsible for Bewick Court.

170. **Accounts for payment**

The accounts listed in appendix 2 were presented for payment. It was proposed by Mr. R. Volkwyn, seconded by Mr. A. Prill and carried that the accounts are paid.

171. **Any other business/exchange of information/agenda for next meeting**

Mr. S. Partridge referred to an email from GCH regarding the play areas at Parkfields and Oxford Meadow, which will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mrs. J. Beavis and Ms. S. Glen reported that residents desire the play area at Parkfields to remain.

Mr. A. Law reported that the premises opposite Alderford Mill had been fully let for business use and the level of the river is to be lowered to protect the site.

Mr. A. Prill reported that there is a lack of business sites in the area.

The Clerk reported that all Councillors in the Hedingham and Maplestead Ward were invited to the BDC Civic Carol Service on 12th December 2013 at Castle Hedingham Church (but all Councils outside the ward were limited to two elected members).

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9pm.

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(Date)

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(Chairman)

