

**DRAFT MINUTES OF SIBLE HEDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, PARKFIELDS, SIBLE HEDINGHAM ON
MONDAY 9th DECEMBER 2013 AT 7.30PM.**

In the chair: Mrs. G. Massey
Present: Cllrs. J. Fennelly, S. Glen, D. Holmes, D. Horn, A. Prill, J. Skittrall and L. Waller.
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)
Mr. H. Johnson (District Councillor)
Together with 1 (one) member of the public

Public comment

Mr. N. Ellis, the Volunteer Archivist and Small Collections Manager of the Colne Valley Railway Preservation Society of Castle Hedingham requested SHPC to support an application of CVRPS for a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. He briefly outlined the history of the site, which was purchased by an Australian property developer in 2006, who has now decided to sell and has given CVRPS until 2015 to purchase the site and company. HLF will accept volunteer labour towards match funding and if a grant is awarded some employment will be created. There are good links with local schools and there are about 40,000 visitors a year some of whom support local businesses and the community to the extent of £250,000 a year. Visitors can also attend other local amenities such as Alderford Mill. Good support has already been received from ECC, Essex Rural Partnership and Brooks Newmark M.P. Discussions are also taking place with BDC and Braintree District Museum. A letter of support from SHPC was requested.

Mr. A. Prill enquired the asking price and Mr. Ellis advised that this is confidential but confirmed that the site has been valued.

Mr. J. Fennelly asked the figure being requested from HLF and Mr. Ellis stated that it is between 1.6 and 2 million pounds.

Mr. J. Skittrall asked if the railway will run to Halstead. Mr. Ellis stated that this was an aspiration but much depends upon local landowners and that cost is a major factor. He confirmed that CVRPS already owned the former track-bed between HRW and Alderford Street bridge.

Mr. D. Holmes asked about a proposed link to Hedingham Castle. Mr. Ellis referred to the proposed Hedingham to Long Melford Light Railway, which had been planned in the 1890s and of a more recent link, which had been considered but is unlikely to proceed.

There was no other public comment.

172. **Apologies for absence**

Cllrs. J. Beavis (BDC Cabinet meeting), E. Jones (Union Casework), S. Partridge (Youth Club Meeting), R. Volkwyn (Holiday), D. Finch and W. Scattergood

173. **Absent**

Cllr. A. Law

174. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

175. **To confirm minutes of meeting held 11th November 2013**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2013, having been circulated, were taken as read, were confirmed and subject to amendments to minute 163 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

176. **Matters arising from those minutes**

a) **Proposed allotments**

The Chairman reported that Mr. D. Horn had introduced SHPC to the owner of property who had some surplus land available, which had previously been used for growing potatoes. The owner was considering whether to sell or lease the land and SHPC is waiting to hear from him.

Mrs. L. Waller referred to the recent reply from BDC, to the request for covenants on Grays Hall Meadow being released to allow allotments. BDC would require consultation with and an indemnity against any claims from owners of neighbouring residential properties. The Chairman preferred to await the outcome

of the first land before considering Grays Hall Meadow. It was agreed to place allotments on the agenda for the next meeting so that all possible sites can be reviewed.
There were no other matters arising.

177. **Chairman's report**

The Chairman reported upon the following:

- a) That Mrs. J. Beavis, Mr. A. Corder-Birch, Mr. H. Johnson, Mrs. W. Scattergood and herself had attended the opening of the new GCH properties at Parkfields and the new residents seem very happy. The tree had been planted in memory of the late Christine Darkins and Bob Darkins had spoken very well.
- b) REKK had completed the improvements and repairs to the Youth Shelter.
- c) It was understood that the sale of the Village Club was progressing but apparently there was some uncertainty about future bookings.
- d) As this was the last meeting of the year the Chairman wished everyone the Compliments of the Season.

178. **Youth Council Report**

Mrs. L. Waller reported on behalf of Mr. S. Partridge that there was a lack of adult volunteers since ECC had reduced the funding and therefore Mr. Partridge had stayed at the Youth Club to help out. It was emphasized that if anyone is able to help with supervision it would be very welcome.

179. **County Councillor's Report**

In the absence of Mr. D. Finch no report was given. The November update from ECC had previously been circulated to all Councillors and the contents noted.

180. **District Councillor's Report**

Mr. H. Johnson reported on the following:

- a) That demolition of the Premdor site was progressing but there was uncertainty about future school numbers.
- b) The new social housing at Parkfields has under-floor heating, which is now more economical to run.
- c) The high speed Broadband campaign is continuing and BDC is now waiting to hear from BT.
- d) Concern about the increase of RTAs at Braintree Corner and whether a roundabout had been considered but this was not recalled.
- e) The Parish Magazine was progressing well but more contributions would be welcome.
- f) Future funding for parishes following Government cuts to larger authorities.
- g) The lack of employment, which Parish Councillors considered was caused by the lack of investment in industry and the lack of vision by BDC Planners.
- h) Several footpaths had been affected by tree damage and many of the smaller trees had been cleared by Mr. Johnson but some large trees must be removed by landowners.
- i) The continuance of thefts from sheds and cars will be considered at the next JAG meeting.
- j) Mr. Johnson had visited 49 Swan Street where the owner has some good ideas for renovation.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for his report and for removing small fallen trees from footpaths.

(For report from Mrs. J. Beavis please see minute 187)

181. **Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 15th November 2013, having been circulated were accepted in lieu of a report.

182. **Recreation and Amenities Committee**

The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 22nd November 2013, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

183. **Personnel Committee**

The minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 19th November 2013, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

184. **Finance and Funding Committee**

The minutes of the Finance and Funding Committee Meeting held on 29th November 2013, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

185. **To consider proposed license of play park at Parkfields from GCH to SHPC**

An email from Mr. M. Garnham of GCH offering a license of the play area at Parkfields to SHPC was considered. GCH required conditions that the license includes a 30 day notice period and that SHPC are responsible for the play equipment. It was agreed that a license is not acceptable and that SHPC is only interested in acquiring the freehold. It was feared that the play area may be lost unless SHPC takes it over. It appeared that the residents of Parkfields may be divided because some required retention of the play area and some requested more parking and it was therefore agreed to consult the residents further. As GCH had fenced off the play area and had threatened in writing to remove the play equipment it was agreed that SHPC makes an immediate application to BDC for the area to be placed on the asset register to try and preserve this facility for the benefit of the community. Thereafter a reply would be sent to GCH making it clear that SHPC is not interested in a license and only in the freehold.

186. **To consider request from GCH for proposed relocation of springers at Oxford Meadow**

An email from Mr. M. Garnham of GCH, alleging that two springers had arrived at Oxford Meadow without notice, which he requested to be moved, was considered. The springers had been located in the exact positions identified by Mr. Alvin Mann of BDC to Mr. S. Partridge of SHPC. The springers had been installed by SHPC at some cost, with the full approval of BDC as landowner and in the circumstances the request by GCH to move the springers was refused.

187. **Report of BALC meeting**

The Clerk reported on behalf of Mrs. J. Beavis that BDC should learn its finance settlement from Central Government by 20th December. At the BALC meeting Mrs. Beavis reported that a Parish Summit should be arranged in the New Year to update parishes on information from BDC and as a networking event. In addition the Clerk reported that at the BALC AGM Mrs. Nicola Beach, the new Chief Executive of BDC had given a presentation, which had included the following:

- a. Major long term goal for A120 to be improved at Galley Corner and through the Braintree, Colchester and Tendring Districts.
- b. BDC Corporate Strategy.
- c. Budget - £1½ million to be saved over 2 years.
- d. Localism Fund – although discretionary will remain but will go down by about 13 to 15%.
- e. Community Rights to Bid – Eleven properties in the District registered including the SH Club.
- f. The continuation of the Broadband campaign.
- g. LGBCE – final recommendations due in July 2014 ready for the May 2015 election.
- h. Use of New Homes Bonus for investment. The Clerk had asked if villages where developments take place can benefit from the New Homes Bonus, which BDC had agreed to look into.

A report was also given on behalf of EALC who had moved to new larger premises in Dunmow, which includes more facilities and can cater for training courses to save hiring halls.

188. **To consider support for CVRPS for HLF bid**

Following the presentation under public comment, it was unanimously agreed to support CVRPS in its bid to HLF on the basis that CVR is a valuable community asset it is used by schools and has good potential.

189. **Correspondence**

The correspondence received and listed in appendix 1 was referred to relevant Councillors for information and action. A letter from Dr. I. Bainbridge regarding the proposed closure of the Halstead Contraception and Sexual Health Clinic was considered. Although it was understood that the clinic would now remain it was agreed to write and support the case to oppose the possible closure.

190. **Accounts for payment**

The accounts listed in appendix 2 were presented for payment. It was proposed by Mr. D. Holmes, seconded by Mr. D. Horn and carried that the accounts are paid.

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

Mr. A. Prill enquired about the new Doctor's Surgery and Health Centre. The Clerk reported that Ashley Hall had been in contact with the three practices in the Heddinghams and obtained information about the requirements to enable plans/business case to be prepared. SHPC had offered the practices help and support when required.

Mr. D. Holmes reported that ECC Highways had salted roads unnecessarily, which it was agreed was a gross waste of money.

Ms. S. Glen reported that the gate into the GOR had been improved and thanks were recorded to Mr. B. Hoadley for making these improvements.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

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(Date)

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(Chairman)