

MINUTES OF SIBLE HEDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, PARKFIELDS, SIBLE HEDINGHAM ON MONDAY 9TH JANUARY 2012 AT 6.30PM.

In the chair: Mrs. G. Massey
Present: Cllrs. J. Beavis, C. Cannell, R. Green, B. Howlett, E. Jones, A. Law, S. Partridge, A. Prill, J. Skittrall, F. Swallow and L. Waller
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)
Mr. A. Jenkins, ECC PROW Officer
Mr. B. Stacey, ECC Woodland Officer
Together with 9 (nine) members of the public

Fire regulations

Details were given of the fire regulations relating to the Hall and in particular the whereabouts of the fire exits, the assembly point in Parkfields and vehicles must not be removed from the Hall Car Park.

Public comment

Prior to commencement of the meeting, Mr. A. Jenkins, ECC PROW Officer made a presentation about the responsibilities of ECC and landowners in connection with PROWs. He outlined details of the 5 year programme and the P3 scheme, which includes SH. He congratulated SHPC for obtaining a grant from the CIF to replace stiles with gates and for the voluntary work carried out. Specific footpath issues relating to SH were discussed including: (a) collapsed footpath near Burnt House Farm, (b) printing of Phyllis Cox walk leaflet, (c) Gates at Crows Cross (new owner also has horses so new gates to be delivered and installed), (d) Gates at Baykers Farm (now installed) and (e) footpath maintenance costs but ECC cannot pay more than is paid to its own contractors and ECC cannot cut footpaths as often as SHPC. The main ethos of P3 is voluntary work, including maintenance and he recommended that SH has one co-ordinator who is not necessarily the Clerk or a Councillor. In connection with (a) it was agreed that this footpath must be repaired and as the cost is beyond the maintenance budget Mr. Jenkins will put in a special bid. The printing of leaflet to be deferred until footpath repaired. The service of a defect notice is not necessarily helpful but Mr. Jenkins will consider how best ECC and SHPC can work together to ensure this footpath is repaired. Mrs. J. Beavis will arrange a Footpath and PROW Advisory Group meeting. The Chairman thanked Mr. Jenkins for attending the meeting and for his presentation. There was no other public comment.

247. **Apologies for absence**

Mr. D. Holmes (illness), Mr. D. Finch, Mr. H. Johnson and Mrs. W. Scattergood

248. **Declarations of interest**

Dr. R. Green and Mr. S. Partridge declared personal interests as members of SHALGA in connection with agenda item 18 relating to the proposed use of PC meeting room free of charge by SHALGA. There were no other declarations of interest.

249. **To confirm minutes of extraordinary meeting held 6th December 2011**

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 6th December 2011, having been circulated, were taken as read, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

250. **Matters arising from those minutes**

Mrs. E. Jones queried the last paragraph, which she felt was contradictory. The Chairman agreed but confirmed that the minutes were correct and had recorded the different views, which were discussed. The Chairman wished it to be placed on record, in the interests of accuracy, that the notice of motion of no confidence in the Chairman, which was purported to have been signed by six Councillors was signed by two on the day, two Councillors signed the following day and two did not sign. Mrs. G. Massey, Mr. B. Howlett, Mr. S. Partridge, Mr. A. Prill and Mrs. L. Waller reported that BDC had sent them letters stating that there has been no finding against them by the Allegations Panel in respect of the Code of Conduct.

Mrs. L. Waller reported that she had written to the Chief Executive of BDC and to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government about the process.

251. **To confirm minutes of previous meeting held 12th December 2011**

The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 12th December 2011, having been circulated, were taken as read and subject to amendments to paragraphs 225(b), 242 and 244(c) were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

252. **Matters arising from those minutes**

Mr. A. Prill again raised the issue of the presence of County and District Councillors at Parish Council meetings and that their arrival and departure should be recorded in the minutes. The Clerk explained that County and District Councillors were not part of the Parish Council decision making process and therefore it was only the arrival and departure of Parish Councillors which must be recorded. Following some discussion it was agreed to place this item on the agenda for the next meeting. There were no other matters arising.

253. **Chairman's report**

The Chairman reported that she had attended a recent JAG meeting and that a few anti theft kits are now available from Braintree Police Station. It was agreed that Mr. A. Law writes the PC report for the next Parish Magazine.

254. **Youth Council Report**

In the absence of a Youth Council representative no report was given.

255. **County Councillor's Report**

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

256. **District Councillor's Reports**

Mrs. J. Beavis reported that BDC is in the process of setting its Council Tax for 2012/13 with a zero increase. BDC had received 66 applications for the Mi Community Fund amounting to one and a half million pounds and Mrs. Beavis will support the SH applications. BDVSA will take over responsibility for the Wellbeing walks from BDC wef 1st April 2012.

Mrs. Beavis was thanked for her report.

257 **Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 6th January 2012 was deferred to the next meeting.

258 **To consider Learning and Development Policy**

The Learning and Development Policy proposed by the Personnel Committee was circulated to Councillors for consideration. Mrs. E. Jones asked about the hierarchy of line managers. The Chairman advised that the Clerk is the Relief Clerk's line manager and the Chairman is the Clerk's line manager. It was proposed by Mr. F. Swallow, seconded by Mr. B. Howlett and carried that the Learning and Development Policy is adopted.

259. **To settle budget and precept for 2012-2013**

The Chairman reported that the Clerk had forwarded the tax base for 2012-13, which had showed a minor decrease but not sufficient to justify revising the figures agreed at the previous meeting. It was proposed by Mr. J. Skittrall, seconded by Mr. F. Swallow and carried that the Parish Council precepts for £90,132 for 2012-2013. The precept form was then completed and signed by the Chairman and countersigned by the Clerk and RFO.

260. **Report of Alderford Street Flood Prevention Meeting**

Mr. A. Law reported upon a meeting with representatives of EA and ECC when an excellent scheme had been promoted, which will not proceed, because the property owner will not allow excavations across his land and there are also issues about responsibilities for maintenance and liability for costs.

Mrs. J. Beavis gave further details of the proposed scheme, which was very similar to one proposed during 2004 but opposed on grounds of cost. The schemes were designed to attempt to solve the flooding issues along Alderford Street and involve the construction of a ditch/pipe south east of Alderford Street into the River Colne downstream of Alderford Mill. The landowner will not consent to the scheme unless EA, ECC or BDC accepts responsibility for construction costs and thereafter maintaining it. However EA and ECC had made it clear that they will not fund the scheme save for some free excavation work and that the cost should fall upon the community. Curiously, the ECC Officers were not aware of the proposed flood lagoon at Cobbs Fenn about which they will make enquiries. It was agreed to invite EA and ECC to make a presentation of their proposals to a future SHPC meeting at 6.30pm when all residents of Alderford Street are to be invited.

261. **To consider consultation by ECC of Essex Wooded Estate Management Plan**

An email, letter, management strategy for willow plantations and map from Mr. B. Stacey, Woodland Officer, ECC, was included in the correspondence file and considered by Councillors. The Chairman adjourned the meeting for Mr. Stacey to give further information.

Mr. Stacey explained that ECC owns some land, used as a cricket bat willow plantation, on the south west side of the River Colne downstream of Alderford Mill. The willows have about a 20 year rotation and it will be another 15 to 20 years before the present willows can be used. ECC will look favourably upon SHPC taking over ownership of the land, which will provide some income in future years. There is also potential for expanding the area further along the river.

The meeting then resumed. Following a brief discussion it was proposed by Mrs. G. Massey, seconded by Miss. C. Cannell and carried that the Clerk approaches ECC to enquire if it is willing to transfer ownership of the freehold to SHPC on the basis that it is non key land. (If requested to do so SHPC is willing to pay ECC legal costs).

262. **To fill vacancy on Planning Committee**

The Chairman reported that Mrs. J. Beavis had resigned from the Planning Committee. Mr. F. Swallow offered his services and was duly elected onto the Committee.

263. **Report on Business Breakfast Club Meetings**

It was reported that a Business Breakfast Club Meeting will take place on 25th January 2012 at 7am at The White Hart, Great Yeldham. It was agreed to promote this in the proposed SHPC newsletter (see minute 266 below)

264. **To consider allowing SHALGA use of PC Meeting Room free of charge**

It was reported that SHALGA needs to hold meetings but have little funds. Mrs. G. Massey proposed that they hold their meetings in the PC Meeting Room free of charge, which was seconded by Mr. F. Swallow and carried.

265. **To consider support for Hedingham Jubilee Festival 2012**

The Chairman reported that SHPC was committed to supporting Hedfest, such as through the use of Grays Hall Meadow, although there was nothing in the budget. Dr. R. Green reported that Hedfest had recently obtained a grant so funding was no longer an issue. It was resolved that SHPC is happy to help and support the event but not to lead the initiative. Arising from this item it was reported that a proposed Farmer's Market may be held in SH Baptist Church. Mr. S. Partridge asked about another Legacy weekend, which it was agreed should take place on a different occasion to Hedfest so that they do not detract from each other. A Legacy Weekend Working Party was set up comprising of Mrs. G. Massey, Mr. S. Partridge, Mr. J. Skittrall, Mr. F. Swallow and Mrs. L. Waller. In addition Mrs. J. Beavis offered help with an event on the day.

266. **To consider funding and production of PC newsletter to promote new initiatives**

The Chairman reported that Councillors intend to issue newsletters periodically to promote new initiatives. Hedingham School had previously quoted £52.00 for an A4 sheet folded into A5. The next newsletter can promote forthcoming events such as the Business Breakfast Meetings, Hedingham Jubilee Festival, the

Legacy Weekend, etc. (but not the water management presentation in respect of Alderford Street to which only Alderford Street residents should be invited). It was proposed by Mr. S. Partridge, seconded by Dr. R. Green and carried that another newsletter is prepared, which is to be the last newsletter before the Annual Report. The Chairman will contact and inform relevant groups about the newsletter for which all contributions are to be sent to Mr. Partridge to edit.

267. **Correspondence**

The correspondence received and listed in appendix 1 was referred to relevant Councillors for information and action. Arising from the correspondence the following items were discussed:

- (a) The letter from Hedingham Flower Club regarding (a) planting daffodils at Braintre Corner (b) proposed new planter on junction of Recreation Road and Alexandra Road and (c) new salt bin opposite to be referred to the next meeting of the Recreation and Amenities Committee for consideration.

268. **Accounts for payment**

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

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

- (a) Mrs. J. Beavis reported that the two new crescent shaped shrub beds at Oxford Meadow had been prepared and planted, which look very good and suggested that SHPC seek some good publicity, which was agreed. Mr. J. Skittrall reported that GCH had been asked to inspect and approve the work carried out.
- (b) Dr. R. Green reported that the trees in memory of Malcolm Jones will be planted in Grays Hall Meadow on 21st January 2012 at 10am.
- (c) Mr. A. Law offered to inform Dr. D and Dr. I. Bainbridge about the proposed forthcoming water management presentation in Alderford Street, which was approved.
- (d) Mr. F. Swallow reported that he had attended the recent National Grid meeting at Twinstead but the proposals do not affect SH but may affect other parishes in the area.

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

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(Date)

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(Chairman)