

Minutes of Sible Hedingham Parish Council Meeting Held at the Village Hall, Parkfields, Sible Hedingham on Monday 9th January 2017 at 7.30pm

In the chair: Cllr R Volkwyn

Present: Cllrs G Jefferson, P Sarel, S Metson, P Gammon, L Heywood, J Skittrall, B Newman, D Holmes, D Finch (County Cllr), H Johnson (District Cllr), Mrs G McCoyd (clerk) and 3 members of the public.

Public Comment

The following statements were made:

An email had been received regarding the proposed increase in the precept. A copy is on file in the Office.

The amount of reserves was questioned.

158. Apologies for Absence

Cllr L Parkin (hospital) Cllr K Greeno (sick)

159. Co-option of two new Councillors to fill the casual vacancies

There were no candidates

160. Declaration of Acceptance of Office of new Councillors

There were no candidates

161. Members declarations

None

162. To confirm the minutes of meeting held on 12th December 2016

The minutes of 12th December having been circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

163. Matters arising from those minutes

There were no matters arising.

164. Chairman's Report

Cllr R Volkwyn wished everyone a Happy New Year. He said the Christmas tree had been a success and thanked Cllr S Metson for supplying the electricity.

165. Youth Council Report

There was no report as there is not a representative from the Parish Council.

166. County Councillor's Report

Cllr D Finch wished everyone a Happy, prosperous and pleasant year.

He spoke on the following topics:

a. Social Care

Cllr D Finch explained that the government had given ECC the ability to raise a Social Care precept but Essex have an older population that is growing, 22% of the population is over 65. This puts pressure on the budget in terms of social care. He feels this precept is unfair on home owners/occupiers as it is essentially another tax and taxing locally is wrong. ECC have had to save 106 million pounds and have looked at ways to re-shape services rather than cut any.

b. Education

Cllr D Finch said ECC were investing 70 million pounds in school building plans, it is a 10 year plan.

c. Highway Maintenance

ECC will pay 65 million pounds each year for the next 3 years on Highway maintenance and road resurfacing.

d. Digital Age

ECC was looking at ways and means to move the Council into the digital age.

e. Devolution

Information on devolution was quiet at the moment but Cllr D Finch was expecting the Government to raise the subject again and when it does ECC will be ready.

Cllr D Finch praised Sible Parish Council, he said it is well run, good humoured and gets the business done.

Cllr R Volkwyn then asked Cllr H Johnson to speak.

Cllr H Johnson reported that there were a number of scams around involving computers and phones. He warned residents to be vigilant regarding access being gained via windows. He questioned the purpose of the camera that is on a pole near the football ground. The clerk will ask Highways.

167. To receive minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held 9th December 2016

The minutes having been circulated were accepted in lieu of a report

168. To receive the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held 9th December 2016

The minutes having been circulated were accepted in lieu of a report.

169. To consider the budget and precept for 2017-2018

The clerk explained the ring fenced reserves which are ear marked for projects.

Cllr H Johnson said that a diligent Council should be commended and not criticised.

The clerk explained that the Localism Fund Entitlement had decreased over the years from £18,712 in 2013/14 to £7,649 for 2017/18 in this time the precept had only been increased once, for 2018/19 it would be £3,825 and after that it would be nil.

Cllr P Gammon said a gradual rise in the precept rather than a large increase was sensible.

The Finance Committee recommended the budget which has been circulated to all Cllrs. It was proposed by Cllr J Skittrall, seconded by Cllr P Gammon and carried unanimously that the budget is approved and that SHPC precepts for £97386.00 for 2017-2018. The precept form was duly completed, signed by the Chairman and countersigned by the RFO

170. To receive the Accounts for payment. Appendix 1

Cllr G Jefferson proposed the accounts be approved and paid, Cllr D Holmes seconded, the motion was carried

171. Any other business

Cllr P Sarel asked if any more could be done to support the Post Office, the family own the building, the Post Office is planned to move into the Londis garage and be staffed through the Londis staff. He felt it is a very unfair situation for the Postmaster and his family. Cllr R Volkwyn explained the consultation period had now closed; the Parish Council had responded to the consultation and received communication back.

The meeting closed at 8pm