

MINUTES OF SIBLE HEDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, PARKFIELDS, SIBLE HEDINGHAM ON MONDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2011 AT 6.30PM.

In the chair: Mrs. G. Massey

Present: Cllrs. J. Beavis, C. Cannell, R. Green, D. Holmes, B. Howlett, E. Jones, A. Law, S. Partridge, A. Prill, J. Skittrall, F. Swallow and L. Waller
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)
Mr. H. Johnson and Mrs. W. Scattergood (District Councillors)
Together with 16 (sixteen) 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 the following items were raised:

- (a) A presentation was made by Rachael Price, Senior Accessibility Planning Officer, ECC about local bus services, changes in the bus industry and bus services available in SH. ECC subsidizes 15% of the bus network, which costs ECC £8 million a year. The three types of community transport services were outlined. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.
- (b) Rev. L. Bond reported that the SH Queen's Diamond Jubilee oak tree will be planted in the Churchyard on Saturday, 26th November at 12 noon by Mr. Malcolm Firman.
- (c) Mr. A. Buckingham, the owner of the Swan, spoke about items 25 and 30 on the agenda and expressed concern that Councillors had not spoken to him about them, because they may lead to his son and daughter in law becoming homeless. With regard to the forecourt of the former Swan PH he explained that ECC Highways do not own it and only have highway rights over it. He recognized that four new Councillors have prejudicial interests in the Swan and was concerned (i) that Mrs. Waller had spoken to oppose the two planning applications, albeit as a member of the public, at the SHPC Planning Committee meeting on 5th November and (ii) that Mr. S. Partridge had spoken about the proposal to purchase the Swan for community use and also the proposed SH Building Preservation Trust in connection with the Swan at the earlier site meeting. Mr. Prill clarified the agenda items, which did not include a proposal to purchase the Swan.
- (d) Mr. J. Nicholson stated that Mr. Prill should not be allowed to comment upon the Swan as he has prejudicial interests and that Mr. Buckingham was correct that Mr. Partridge had suggested the purchase of the building for community use, as evidenced by the minutes of the SHPC Planning Committee meeting held 4th November 2011. Mr. Prill stated that he was talking about agenda items and not the Swan.

181. **Apologies for absence**

Mr. D. Finch.

182. **Declarations of interest**

Mr. J. Skittrall declared a personal interest in connection with agenda item 23 relating to Sible Hedingham Village Hall as a member of the Village Hall Committee.

Mr. A. Law declared a personal interest in connection with agenda items 25 and 30 relating to the Swan as he lives in the same Conservation Area. He also declared a personal interest in connection with agenda item 27 regarding the pump at Alderford Street, which is situated close to his home.

Mr. A. Prill, Mr. S. Partridge and Mr. B. Howlett declared personal and prejudicial interests in connection with agenda item 30(c) relating to the future of the Swan and personal interests as they live within the same Conservation Area.

Mr. A. Prill, Mr. S. Partridge, Mr. B. Howlett and Mrs. L. Waller declared personal interests in connection with agenda item 25 relating to the Swan forecourt.

Mrs. L. Waller declared personal and prejudicial interests in connection with agenda item 30(c) relating to the future of the Swan.

Mr. S. Partridge declared a personal interest in connection with agenda items 30(a) and (b) relating to the proposed SH Buildings Preservation Trust. There were no other declarations of interest.

183. **To confirm minutes of previous meeting held 10th October 2011**

The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 10th October 2011, having been circulated, were taken as read were confirmed and duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Under public comment (a) 80% being amended to 85% and (b) the following addition, "Mr. Putnam reminded SHPC that it had unanimously voted against these two proposed site allocations last year and informed BDC of this in forceful terms"

It was resolved that in future the names of all residents raising issues in public comment be recorded in the minutes.

184. **Matters arising from those minutes**

(a) **Public Rights of Way**

The Clerk reported that Mr. Adam Jenkins, ECC PROW Officer will attend the PC Meeting on 9th January 2012 at 6.30pm to speak on the work of P3 and funding for FP maintenance.

(b) **Presentation by BDVSA**

Mr. S. Partridge confirmed that he will ask a representative of BDVSA to attend a workshop in SH for SHPC and other organizations.

(c) **Grant applications**

Mr. Partridge reported that the grant application to ECC Big Society Fund is for new skate board ramps and he confirmed that quotes will be placed before SHPC for consideration.

(d) **Potholes in Church Street**

Mr. D. Holmes reported that the potholes in Church Street had been filled in and the work complete. The Clerk had thanked Cllr. Finch for arranging for ECC Highways to carry out this work.

There were no other matters arising.

185. **Chairman's report**

The Chairman reported that she had attended a recent JAG meeting but was unable to report on it owing to confidentiality. Dr. R. Green had written a report for the December Parish Magazine and Mrs. J. Beavis will write a report for the first issue in the New Year. It was agreed that Mrs. Beavis will look after the notice board at Oxford Meadow and Mr. D. Holmes will look after those at the Co-op and outside the Library. The Chairman reported that the SHPC website had not been updated recently and a new website is being set up at: essexinfo.net/Sible Hedingham Mr. B. Taplin, BDC Planning Enforcement Officer had investigated signage at the Total Garage and had reported that the number of signs will be reduced.

The Vice Chairman reported that the Remembrance Service at SH had been very well attended but apart from himself only two other representatives of SHPC were in attendance. He urged more Councillors to attend Remembrance Services in future years.

186. **Youth Council Report**

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

187. **County Councillor's Report**

A written report from Cllr. D. Finch is attached to these minutes.

188. **District Councillor's Reports**

Mrs. J. Beavis reported that BDC had commenced its budget process and there will be no change in PSG in 2012-2013. BDC had made a Community Budget application based on the deprivation in Witham.

189 **Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 7th October 2011, having been circulated were accepted in lieu of a report. The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 4th and 5th November 2011 were deferred to the Planning Committee Meeting on 2nd December 2011.

190. **Recreation and Amenities Committee**

The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 21st October 2011, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

191. **Personnel Committee**

The minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 11th October 2011, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

192. **Terms of Reference for Personnel Committee**

It was proposed by Mr. A. Prill, seconded by Mr. B. Howlett and carried that the draft terms of reference for the Personnel Committee, which had been circulated to Councillors on 17th October 2011 be ratified.

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

The minutes of the Public Transport, Highways and Speedwatch Committee meeting held on 9th November 2011 were deferred.

194. **Footpaths**

Mrs. J. Beavis reported that Mr. Adam Jenkins, PROW Officer with ECC will attend the PC Meeting on 9th January 2012 at 6.30pm to explain funding and voluntary help with work on footpaths. A meeting of the SH Footpaths Advisory Group will also be arranged.

195. **Hedingham Riverside Walk Report**

Dr. R. Green reported that S106 funding had been secured for the footbridge and path but no work had been carried out to date, which was very frustrating. It was agreed to arrange a meeting with the Chief Executive of BDC to pursue the construction of the footbridge and path. Mrs. J. Beavis is happy to support an application to BDC Mi Community fund for a grant for HRW.

196. **The River Colne Countryside Trust**

Dr. R. Green reported that there was no further news regarding The River Colne Countryside Trust.

197. **The Sible Hedingham Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Association**

Dr. R. Green reported that since the inaugural meeting more Officers had been appointed including an Events Secretary. He paid tribute to Mrs. Karen Hamilton-Viall, the Secretary who is very active and a great asset to SHALGA. The proposed site for allotments off Church Street will provide about 12 plots. The possibility of a bore hole to provide water is being investigated and also a large shed for allotment holders to use. Dr. Green was thanked for his report.

198. **Weight restriction meeting**

The Clerk reported upon a weight restriction meeting held on 17th October with County Councilor David Finch and representatives of Castle Hedingham and Great Maplestead Parish Councils. The ECC Highways Liaison Officer had arranged for the proposed 7.5 ton weight restriction along the A1058 from Sible Hedingham, through Castle Hedingham to Bulmer to be placed on the agenda for the next Localism Panel Meeting. Mr. S. Partridge asked (a) why no Councillor from SHPC attended the meeting and (b) if it would increase heavy traffic along the A1017. The Clerk advised that (a) Mrs. G. Massey had been invited to attend the meeting and (b) the increase in heavy traffic had been discussed at an earlier meeting when alternative routes had been considered to avoid the A1058.

199. **Report of Community Budget Working Party Meetings**

Mr. J. Skittrall asked why the Community Budget proposals had been sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government before being placed before SHPC for approval, especially because some of the items included were controversial. Mr. S. Partridge explained that the document had been sent off because the deadline for expressions of interest was 10th November and he accepted that all of the items discussed were in the public domain. He stated that the intention was for assets to be transferred to and not purchased by SHPC. Mrs. G. Massey stated that the document was only an expression of interest and not a commitment. Mrs. J. Beavis reported that BDC had also been working on a Community Budget application, extra meetings had been held and all District Councillors had been consulted before sending to

the Secretary of State. In her view SHPC Working Party should have consulted all Councillors or an extraordinary meeting called. The Director of Sustainable Development at BDC had raised questions following enquiries from Mrs. Massey about Enterprise House, which had caused embarrassment because the Working Party had not liaised with BDC, which had made the application for the Braintree District based upon deprivation in Witham. Mr. F. Swallow explained that Enterprise House was only one of many items which the Working Party had considered. It was proposed by Mr. Swallow and seconded by Mr. Prill that the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, should be accepted as it stands. Upon being put to the vote 7 voted in favour, 4 against and 2 abstained.

200. **Report of Site Allocations meeting**

Mrs. L. Waller reported that representatives of SHPC had attended the Site Allocations Meeting with BDC on 13th October when the views of the public had been put forward particularly that the village envelope should not be extended. Meeting notes and map had since been received from BDC upon which Councillors had some issues. It was agreed that Councillors let the Clerk have comments by 18th November when he will revert to BDC.

201. **To consider proposed Traveller/Gypsy sites in Sible Hedingham**

Mrs. G. Massey reported that at the Site Allocations Meeting on 13th October, BDC had asked SHPC to consider a site in SH for two caravans on the outskirts of the village. Mrs. L. Waller stated that there were no proposed traveller/gypsy sites. It was reported that travellers do not wish to be in the centre of the community but on the outskirts but as SH does not wish to extend the village envelope it would be difficult to find suitable sites. Mrs. E. Jones reported that a site at Foxborough Hills had been previously considered and approved and Mr. J. Skittrall reported that there had been a site at Delvin End. Dr. R. Green reported that at the meeting on 13th October a site at the top of Hulls Mill Lane had been suggested. He reported that he does not object to it but having consulted his neighbours they do object to it. It was proposed by Mrs. G. Massey, seconded by Mr. A. Prill and carried that SHPC is not against traveller sites in principle and is willing to investigate possible sites in the village but do not wish the village envelope to be extended. It was agreed that this issue should proceed to public consultation.

202. **To consider quotes for street lights in Crosspath**

The Clerk reported that he had asked for four quotes and had received two of which he gave details. It was proposed by Mr. F. Swallow, seconded by Miss. C. Cannell and carried that the quote from Cartledge/May Gurney for three mains power street lights to include connection to electricity supply of £6,036.27 be accepted and authority delegated to the Finance and Funding Committee to decide when the order should be place and the work carried out.

203. **To consider future of Sible Hedingham Village Hall**

Mrs. G. Massey reported that she had not yet met Mr. O. Hawkes and it was therefore agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

204. **To consider adoption of revised Standing Orders**

Mrs. J. Beavis expressed concern about the proposed addition to 3(b)xii and explained that the Clerk's Office must remain secure in the interests of confidentiality. She asked if the Clerk could advise upon this and the other proposed revisions. The Chairman refused this request, which was supported by Mr. Partridge. Mrs. L. Waller reported that the Chairman had received advice from NALC. The Clerk stated that this advice had not been disclosed to SHPC and should have been simultaneously exchanged with the letter from the Society of Local Council Clerks, which had already been disclosed. Following further discussion the Clerk commenced giving advice upon the NALC model and the proposed revisions, some of which were ultra vires and conflicted with each other. It was proposed by Mrs. Waller, seconded by Mrs. Beavis and carried that this item is deferred, when more time is available, for the Proper Officer to give detailed advice. It was proposed by Mrs. Massey, seconded and carried that an extraordinary meeting of SHPC is arranged to consider Standing Orders.

205. **Forecourt of the former Swan Public House**

Mr. A. Prill reported that following a recent Recreation and Amenities Meeting Councillors requested that SHPC should consider making a request to ECC Highways for possible acquisition by SHPC of the

forecourt in front of the former Swan Public House for a village amenity to preserve the area and to facilitate access to Swan Chase. Mrs. J. Beavis asked if the Councillors who requested this agenda item could prepare a paper to be tabled for consideration. The Clerk was asked to advise and he understood that the forecourt was actually owned by the owner of the former Swan PH and that ECC only had highway rights over it but did not own it. He also reminded Councillors that SHPC is not a highway authority and therefore it is unlikely that ECC will agree to transfer such rights to SHPC. It was proposed by Mr. S. Partridge, seconded and carried that the Clerk enquires with ECC Highways if SHPC can take over highway rights or not, before Councillors prepare a paper.

206. **To consider proposed Neighbourhood Wardens**

Mr. S. Partridge reported upon his proposals for Neighbourhood Wardens, perhaps in consultation with other PCs in the vicinity. Miss. C. Cannell pointed out that most of the items detailed by Mr. Partridge were already carried out by other agencies such as Street Wardens, Dog Wardens, Village Agents, Parking Enforcement Team, Police, PCSOs, etc. Mr. F. Swallow expressed concern about parking issues in the village. Mr. J. Skittrall suggested that SHPC join with nearby parishes to jointly fund a PCSO. As this proposal is included in the Community Budget application it was proposed by Mr. Swallow, seconded by Mr. Skittrall and carried that this item is deferred until the result of the Community Budget proposal is known.

207. **To consider costs for transfer of Pump at Alderford Street**

The Clerk reported upon recent communications with H&H and that the cost estimate had been reduced from £650 to between £350 and £500, although every effort would be made to keep costs close to the lower figure. It was confirmed that the preservation of this and other pumps was included in the recommendations in the SH Conservation Report. It was proposed by Mrs. J. Beavis, seconded by Mrs. E. Jones and carried that the revised costs estimate from H&H for their clients costs be accepted and that the Clerk should act for SHPC.

208. **To consider costs for lease of proposed allotments off Church Street**

The Clerk reported that he had asked BL for a costs estimate for acting for SHPC in connection with the proposed lease of the allotments off Church Street. An estimate of between £1,505 and £1,720 plus various Search and Land Registry fees of up to £606.00 had been received. The Clerk advised that BL also acted for the landlord but can act for both parties in this transaction providing there was no objection from either party. Councillors accepted that SHPC has a statutory duty to provide allotments. It was therefore proposed by Miss. C. Cannell, seconded by Dr. R. Green and carried that the costs and disbursements estimate is accepted and that SHPC has no objection to BL acting for both parties.

209. **To consider grant application to BDC Mi Community Fund**

It was agreed to support a grant application by SHALGA to BDC Mi Community Fund for water supply, security fencing, shed and other items for the proposed allotments. HRW had also been advised to make a grant application, which if made, will also be supported.

210. **Proposed SH Buildings Preservation Trust**

(a) **To consider formation of Trust to help protect buildings in the Conservation Areas as community assets**
Mr. S. Partridge expressed concern about a recent article and photograph, which had appeared in the Halstead Gazette about houses in part of a SH Conservation Area. Unfortunately the houses in the newspaper were not those on the English Heritage At Risk Register. Mr. Partridge had consulted English Heritage and ECC and advised that SHPC could encourage others in the village to form a SH Buildings Preservation Trust. He suggested that it is not SHPC led but PC could facilitate it. Councillors were broadly in favour of the idea.

(b) **To explore sources of funding, undertake a feasibility study and consultation with the community**

It was reported that grants could be applied for such as from BDC Mi Community. The formation of a sub committee to the Planning Committee to leaflet all residents (not just those in the two Conservation Areas) was suggested. Mrs. L. Waller and Mr. A. Prill offered to help with preparation of a leaflet and will consult Mrs. J. Beavis to approve the leaflet and for BDC support.

(Mr. B. Howlett, Mr. S. Partridge, Mr. A. Prill & Mrs. L. Waller left the meeting prior to the following item)

(c) To consider future uses of the former Swan Public House

Councillors present at the SHPC Planning Committee Meeting on 4th November 2011 confirmed that the minutes were correct in so far as the former Swan PH is concerned although these minutes were deferred to the Planning Committee Meeting on 2nd December 2011. Apart from Councillors involved with the Community Budget, other Councillors stated that they had no prior knowledge of issues or proposals relating to the future of the former Swan PH. Mrs. G. Massey reported that the two pending planning applications in connection with the former Swan PH had not been determined and until determination SHPC should not consider this item. It was proposed by Miss. C. Cannell, seconded by Mr. D. Holmes and carried that SHPC declines to consider future uses of the former Swan PH.

(Mrs. E. Jones left the meeting and Mr. B. Howlett, Mr. S. Partridge, Mr. A. Prill and Mrs. L. Waller returned to the meeting).

211. Feedback from Broadband Survey

Mrs. L. Waller reported that response to the Broadband Survey was poor with only 35 forms returned, which was less than 1% of the electorate. Of the 35, only 18 wish to buy into a new service. However a new SHPC website had arisen from the survey, which is being set up by Mrs. Massey and Mrs. Waller. The Chairman thanked Mrs. Waller for her efforts.

212. Update on winter preparation

Mr. J. Skittrall reported that he had surveyed the village and he gave details of the priority of paths to be salted in the interests of safety. This includes the road to SH Village Hall and the SHPC Car Park. The areas and paths to be salted amounts to over 5,000 square metres. One ton of salt had been delivered to SH FOC, which should cover about 500 square metres. It was proposed by Mr. F. Swallow, seconded and carried that Mr. Skittrall obtains quotes for another 4 tons of salt from three suppliers and that he is authorized to accept the lowest quote or the best value price and place an order. He confirmed that SHPC has storage space for another 4 tons.

213. 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 ECC regarding the proposed diversion of FP18 near Blooms Farm to avoid an airstrip was considered. It was resolved that SHPC has no objections in the interests of safety.
- (b) In connection with a letter from ECC Highways, it was confirmed that the following highway schemes remain in the reserve list:
 - (i) Swan Street - controlled crossing
 - (ii) Yeldham Road - controlled crossing
 - (iii) SH to Bulmer road – weight restriction limit

214. 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.

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

- (a) Mr. F. Swallow requested that the extraordinary meeting is arranged at an early date.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.15pm.

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(Date)

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(Chairman)

