

**DRAFT MINUTES OF SIBLE HEDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, PARKFIELDS, SIBLE HEDINGHAM ON
MONDAY 12th AUGUST 2013 AT 7.30PM.**

In the chair: Mrs. G. Massey

Present: Cllrs. J. Beavis, (for items 94 to 110), S. Glen, D. Holmes, D. Horn, E. Jones, A. Law, S. Partridge, J. Skittrall, R. Volkwyn and L. Waller.
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)
Together with 11 (eleven) members of the public

Public comment

Ms. Toni Kirbyshire asked how much Council Tax is going towards the cost of the footbridge across the stream at Alderford Street and was informed that the cost is being met out of S106 monies contributed by developers and not out of the Council Tax.

Mrs. Julie Wood stated that it is not necessary to fell the ash tree adjacent to Alderford Mill to enable installation of the footbridge and expressed concern that SHPC had supported BDC in its application. The Chairman explained that SHPC was a consultee and had been advised by BDC that it was necessary to fell the tree to facilitate installations of the footbridge, for which SHPC had campaigned for a long time. The application will be referred back to SHPC Planning Committee to review again and BDC Planning

d) Street light maintenance

Mrs. L. Waller enquired about the street light maintenance contract. The Clerk confirmed that quotes had been requested and received and although not quite like for like had exceeded that from A & J Lighting. The agreement with A & J Lighting had therefore been renewed for another five years.

e) Street name plates for Crosspath

The Clerk confirmed that two street name plates for Crosspath had been ordered from BDC. There were no other matters arising.

98. Chairman's report

The Chairman had nothing to report outside the agenda.

99. Youth Council Report

Mr. S. Partridge reported that the Youth Council had not met since the last PC meeting. However he reported upon a very successful Legacy Day held 20th July 2013, which had been well attended, followed by good publicity in the Halstead Gazette.

100. County Councillor's Report

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

101. District Councillor's Reports

Mrs. J. Beavis reported upon the following items:

- a) Councillors had successfully overturned the Planning Officer's recommendation for refusal and planning permission had been granted for buildings at Molly's Wood.
- b) Concern from residents regarding the proposed felling of the ash tree near Alderford Mill, which Mrs. Beavis had asked the officers to withdraw.
- c) The closure of Wethersfield Road, issues with bus services and the unsuitable diversion routes. The Clerk agreed to ask Cllr. D. Finch when Wethersfield Road will re-open.
- d) Ripper Hall is now on the BDC Community Asset Register.
- e) Consequent upon the contract between BDC and Fusion, the Bursar at Hedingham School had agreed to Fusion visiting the School when Mrs. G. Massey will be invited to attend.

Mrs. Beavis was thanked for her report.

102. Planning Committee

The minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 12th July and 2nd August 2013, having been circulated were accepted in lieu of a report.

103. Recreation and Amenities Committee

The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 19th July 2013, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

104. To consider improving the disabled access on the Recreation Ground

The Chairman reported that on Legacy Day, a wheelchair bound banded ball player had difficulty entering the MUGA. A ramp or path was suggested to obtain access for which grants may be available. A flat path alongside the MUGA was preferred. It was agreed to refer this item to the R&A Committee for further consideration. Arising from this item it was agreed to purchase a new seat for the disabled toilet.

105. To consider purchase of SH Billiards and Social Club

Consequent upon the notice which BDC had received from the owners of the property that they intend to sell it and the Interim Moratorium Period ending on 23rd August, consideration was given as to whether SHPC desires to be treated as a bidder to purchase the SH Billiards and Social Club.

Ms. S. Glen, Mrs. G. Massey and Mr. R. Volkwyn had met the proposed purchaser who appears to be experienced in running clubs and can arrange suitable publicity. Although concern had been expressed about the owner's possible interest in a neighbouring property this had been denied and as the club is now registered on the Community Asset register any planning application should be refused to protect the asset. Mrs. L. Waller referred to indications that the club/asset should be returned to SH and was concerned that not all documents had been disclosed. Mrs. Massey reported that she is now in possession of further

documentation which clarifies the background to the club and indicates that it was not an asset belonging to the village but was owned by three individuals. It was proposed by Mrs. Massey, seconded by Mr. J. Skittrall and carried that SHPC does not purchase the Club.

106. **To review ward boundaries within the Braintree District**

Mr. S. Partridge proposed that in connection with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's review of ward boundaries within the Braintree District that SHPC makes representations. Mrs. J. Beavis advised that it is recommended that each District Councillor represents about 2,500 electors. The following proposals were agreed:

- a. The proposed reduction in District Councillors from 60 to 50.
- b. That SH should remain as a single ward and not split up.
- c. That SH becomes a one or two seat ward bearing in mind its existing population plus additional population when the former Premdor and other sites are developed.

It was agreed that Mr. Partridge and the Clerk prepare SHPC response to the LGBC.

107. **To consider request from GCH to name a tree at Park Court**

It was unanimously agreed to name a tree at Park Court in memory of Mrs. Christine Darkins.

108. **Report of GCH Estates Inspection**

Mrs. J. Beavis stated that the written report from GCH following its estates inspection on 25th July 2013 was inadequate. GCH had failed to include the following items, which had been raised on the site inspection:

- a. Clearance of the bank at Brook Hill, which is very overgrown.
- b. The proposed scheme for new play equipment at Oxford Meadow.
- c. The future of the Parkfields play area – as the representations from residents differed from last year, Mrs. Beavis agreed to ask GCH to disclose its consultation returns to SHPC.

Mr. J. Skittrall disagreed with the GCH report regarding the request for a street light at Brook Meadow. He pointed out that GCH had erected a tall wooden fence, which makes the path darker and that a street light is essential in the interests of safety. It was agreed to pursue GCH to install a street light along the path at Brook Meadow.

The Clerk added that GCH had not included in the report the numerous complaints received regarding its failure to cut grass owned by it in front of Oxford Meadow/Yeldham Road. Whilst part of the grass is owned by ECC Highways, a significant area is owned by GCH. This had been proved by office copy entries and plans from the Land Registry. BDC had since asked GCH to cut the grass in its ownership and if it will also cut ECC Highway grass as a gesture of goodwill. A response from GCH was awaited. The action of the Clerk in refusing to allow SHPC contractors to cut grass owned by GCH was approved. It was agreed to agenda GCH issues again for the next meeting.

109. **To consider complaints regarding ASB at Grays Hall Meadow and the Recreation Ground**

Mrs. J. Beavis reported large quantities of litter around the new Youth Shelter and of complaints she had received from residents regarding noise. Mr. D. Holmes also reported upon complaints he had received regarding noise from footballs being kicked against the Youth Shelter during early mornings.

The Chairman reported that she had been in communication with Essex Police and the following complaints had been received from August 2012 to August 2013:

- “Nuisance vehicle x 2
- Nuisance due to noise – None
- Nuisance other (that is any other kind of nuisance) none
- Nuisance youth x 4”

Reference was made to the article in the Halstead Gazette of 9th August 2013 and residents were again urged to report all incidents to the Police. The Chairman reported that she had spoken to BH and the litter problem was no worse than previously and the R&A Committee at its meeting on 16th August will consider the provision of a litter bin at the Youth Shelter. The Chairman reported that she had checked the CCTV on the two nights/mornings complained about and there was no activity between 10pm and 2am as alleged but there was football activity in the MUGA from 5am. Mr. D. Holmes expressed thanks to BH for clearing away rubbish, some of it very unpleasant, early each morning and emphasized that the area around the Youth Shelter is particularly bad.

110. **To consider action following possible encroachment in Oxford Lane**

Ms. S. Glen reported that a concrete block wall was being built adjacent to Oxford Lane but there appears to be more blocks than required, which indicates that they may be for another building. There is no proof that the land has been purchased by the owner of 27 Abbey Meadow. Mr. R. Volkwyn was concerned about the width of Oxford Lane, which is narrow at that point. Councillors were concerned about the change of use and that the wall is changing the landscape and nature of Oxford Lane. The planning issues had been raised with Mr. B. Taplin, Planning Enforcement Officer BDC who was reluctant to take action. The highway issues had been raised with ECC Highways who had not responded. The Clerk had therefore referred the matter to Mr. D. Finch who had asked for ECC Highways to be allowed ten clear working days to respond as they were inundated with work. The following action was agreed:

- a. That the Clerk makes a Land Registry search to ascertain the owner of the land between 27 Abbey Meadow and Oxford Lane.
- b. That Mrs. J. Beavis raises the planning issues with Mr. Jon Hayden, Corporate Director of BDC in view of the reluctance of Mr. B. Taplin, Planning Enforcement Officer to take any action.
- c. That the Clerk continues to pursue ECC Highways and Mr. D. Finch about the highway issues.
- d. That this item is included on the next SHPC Planning Committee agenda.

(Mrs. J. Beavis left the meeting)

111. **To approve costs for transfer of Birds Green Village Green and land south of Station Road**

It was proposed by Mr. D. Holmes, seconded by Mr. J. Skittrall and carried that approval is given to pay ECC legal costs of £800 to £1000, surveyor's fees of £900 and consideration of £2 for the transfer of the ownership of Birds Green Village Green and land south of Station Road for HRW from ECC to SHPC.

112. **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 considered:

- a. Mrs. E. Jones was thanked for obtaining a grant from Essex Heritage Trust towards the cost of blue plaques of £1500 or £2000 depending upon the number. Mrs. Jones reported that SHPC had also received an anonymous donation of £500 towards this project.
- b. A communication from Birketts, Solicitors, regarding revisions to the footpaths around Baykers, Lamb Lane, which were approved.

113. **Accounts for payment**

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

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

Mr. R. Volkwyn asked who is responsible for speaking to newspapers on behalf of SHPC. Although SHPC has no designated Press Liaison Officer, journalists usually speak to the Chairman. Although concern was expressed regarding a newspaper article about the Recreation Ground and reporting ASB to the Police it was accepted that Councillors can give their own personal views to the press.

Mr. Volkwyn asked if BDC had released the S106 monies for the Springers, installed in Oxford Meadow. The Clerk reported that he had requested this money about a month earlier but it had not yet been received.

Mr. D. Holmes reported that many ECC street lights in SH will be switched off from midnight to 5am.

Mr. A. Law reiterated that the culvert under Alderford Street is small and therefore any diversion of water does not need to be any larger than the culvert.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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(Date)

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(Chairman)