

MINUTES OF SIBLE HEDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, PARKFIELDS, SIBLE HEDINGHAM ON MONDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2011 AT 7.30PM.

In the chair: Mrs. G. Massey

Present: Cllrs. C. Cannell, R. Green, D. Holmes, B. Howlett, E. Jones, A. Law, S. Partridge, J. Skittrall, F. Swallow and L. Waller
Mr. A. Corder-Birch (Clerk)
Mr. D. Finch (County Councillor)
Together with 6 (six) 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) Miss. J. Cole, as a member of Hed Fest thanked Dr. R. Green for hosting the majority of meetings this year. Publicity for Hed Fest will soon be available for distribution.
- (b) Mr. J. Nicholson reported that he was unable to see the minutes of Committee Meetings on the new website. Ms. S. Glen reported that she was having the same problem. Mrs. G. Massey advised that a password is not necessary and the website is still under construction. Mrs. L. Waller agreed to investigate to try and resolve the problems.

222. **Apologies for absence**

Mrs. J. Beavis (attending BDC meeting), Mr. A. Prill (family commitment) Mr. H. Johnson and Mrs. W. Scattergood.

223. **Declarations of interest**

Mr. J. Skittrall declared a personal interest in connection with agenda item 15 relating to Sible Hedingham Village Hall as a member of the Village Hall Committee.

Dr. R. Green and Mr. S. Partridge declared personal interests in connection with agenda item 20 relating to the proposed allotments as members of SHALGA. There were no other declarations of interest.

224. **To confirm minutes of previous meeting held 14th November 2011**

The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 14th November 2011, having been circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed subject to amendments to paragraphs 182, 188, 189, 199, 201, 204 and 210(c). (Please see revised minutes, circulated 13th December 2011, which have been signed by the Chairman as a correct record).

It was resolved that in future all Councillors should declare interests individually and not collectively and state the relevant agenda number, which will also be recorded in the minutes.

225. **Matters arising from those minutes**

(a) **The former Swan PH**

An email from Mr. A. Prill was read on his behalf in which he stated that when Mr. Buckingham was speaking under public comment he expressed concern that the council had not spoken to him about items 25 and 30 on the agenda and they could lead to his son and daughter in law becoming homeless. Mr. Prill requested that it be noted that in Mr. Buckingham's recently withdrawn planning application for the development of the Swan Inn he stated that the premises were empty, which contradicts what Mr. Buckingham said at the meeting.

(b) **To consider the future of the Village Hall**

Mrs. G. Massey reported that she had not had a meeting with Mr. O. Hawkes, which he had postponed and it will be rearranged.

(c) Site Allocations

Mrs. L. Waller enquired about communications with BDC upon site allocations. The Clerk confirmed that representations had been made to BDC on 18th November, to which BDC had responded and claimed that its Conservation map was correct. The Clerk agreed to forward the exchange of emails to Councillors. Miss. C. Cannell reported that she had attended the BDC LDF Meeting with Mrs. Waller on 7th December. Cllr. Lager had asked for the village envelope at the rear of the former Swan PH to be extended but this was eventually rejected and the village envelope will remain unaltered. Further public consultations remain to be carried out. The Chairman thanked Miss. Cannell and Mrs. Waller for attending this meeting.

(d) Forecourt in front of former Swan PH

The Clerk confirmed that he had asked ECC Highways if the highway rights could be transferred to SHPC and a reply is awaited.

There were no other matters arising.

226. Minutes of extraordinary meeting held 6th December 2011

The Chairman reported that following a discussion with the Clerk it was agreed to ask the Relief Clerk to prepare the minutes of the extraordinary meeting on 6th December 2011, with the benefit of her shorthand.

227. Chairman's report

The Chairman had nothing to report except that as this was the last meeting of the year she wished everyone the Compliments of the Season.

228. Youth Council Report

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

229. County Councillor's Report

Mr. D. Finch reported upon the following items:

- a) The Chancellor's autumn statement, challenges for the nations finances and hard times ahead for Local Government but ECC is in a better position than most Councils.
- b) Council Tax freeze.
- c) Budget review.
- d) Major restructuring of the highways service, including the new centralized process, which will deal with all aspects of highways. This should result in expected savings of over £5 million a year with no reduction in highway works.
- e) Investment in IT.
- f) The development of airports in the Thames Estuary and Stansted being considered but no decision taken by ECC to date.
- g) Braintree, Colchester and Chelmsford are the only three District Councils in Essex, which has a LDF, which is credit to BDC.
- h) Community Infrastructure Levy – will apply to all new builds and need to ensure that SH will benefit from the levy.
- i) A limit of 3½% by which Council Tax can increase without a referendum.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Finch for his report.

230. District Councillor's Reports

Mrs. J. Beavis sent a written report which the Clerk read on her behalf as follows:

- a) BDC has been working on its budget for three months and proposes a zero increase in the Council Tax for 2012/2013. There will be no change in PSG.
- b) Mrs. Beavis will meet the Wellbeing Walkers on 15th December to celebrate BDCs success in transferring the walking programme to the BDVSA from 1st April 2012.
- c) Mrs. Beavis will shortly meet volunteer drivers, many from SH. There has been a 10% increase in the take up of residents in the rural areas using this service. This year Mrs. Beavis has continued to give Community Transport her full backing as a service with no decrease in its revenue figure and during the year a new bus was purchased.
- d) BDC is starting to sift through the 66 applications for the Mi Community Fund and successful applicants will be notified in the New Year ready for the project plan stage.

- e) Mrs. Beavis had agreed and signed off, the Older Persons advice book, which is being sent to elders in the district as a useful guide to services in the Braintree District.

231 **Planning Committee**

The minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings held on 4th & 5th November and 2nd December 2011, having been circulated were accepted in lieu of a report. Mrs. E. Jones expressed concern about Mr. Ladkin's request contained in the minutes of 4th November 2011. Councillors confirmed that the minutes were correct and SHPC had not agreed to Mr. Ladkin's request and had referred him to BDC.

232. **Recreation and Amenities Committee**

The minutes of the Recreation and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 18th November 2011, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

233. **Personnel Committee**

The minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 22nd November 2011, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report.

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

The minutes of the Public Transport, Highways and Speedwatch Committee Meeting held on 9th November 2011, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report. Mr. S. Partridge requested one amendment to para. 5 namely that Beestons had quoted £300 a day for three times a day for five times a week.

235. **Finance and Funding Committee**

The minutes of the Finance and Funding Committee Meetings held 11th and 25th November 2011, having been circulated, were accepted in lieu of a report. Mrs. G. Massey reported that the proposed Precept is £90,132, with a possible Band D equivalent of £60.57 but the final Band D figure is awaited from BDC so the figures may change slightly. The Finance Committee made the following proposals:

- a) That a grant to SH Village Hall is reinstated in the sum of £500.
- b) That training is important and the training budget is increased to £2,000.

Mrs. L. Waller proposed improvements to the budget document, including sub headings and net figures, which the Finance Committee will consider w.e.f. 1st April 2012. In the meantime Mrs. Waller will convey her ideas for improvements to Mr. B. Howlett.

Mrs. Waller raised a number of questions about various items and amounts in the budget, which were answered by Miss. Cannell, Mrs. Massey and Mr. Swallow.

Mrs. Waller requested that the Precept is not increased and Mr. F. Swallow explained why a small increase in the Precept was recommended by the Finance Committee. Mrs. E. Jones added that the Finance Committee had worked very hard to keep the proposed increase under 2%, which had been achieved. Mr. J. Skittrall agreed that the proposed increase was not unreasonable. It was proposed by Mrs. Jones, seconded by Mr. Skittrall and carried that the budget is accepted and the net Precept is £90,132. In view of this decision it was resolved that the Finance Committee meeting fixed for 16th December 2011 is cancelled.

236. **To consider funding to commemorate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee**

Miss. C. Cannell requested that funding is considered to commemorate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012. Mrs. Massey reported that the contingency figure of £2,000 included provision for the Jubilee. SHPC may join with neighbouring Councils to bulk buy to reduce costs, which Mrs. Massey will discuss with PC Chairmen.

237. **Report on Hedingham Festival 2012**

Dr. R. Green stated that the written report prepared by Mrs. A. Weatherley will be included in the January 2012 correspondence file and in the meantime he reported upon the following arrangements in Castle and Sible Hedingham:

- a) The Hedingham Festival is planned for 16th to 24th June 2012, with an opening ceremony at Castle Hedingham to include Open Gardens on 16th and 17th June.
- b) The Gardening Club will have a plant stall and the Women's Group will provide refreshments on 16th June.

- c) An Open Air Church Service will take place on 17th June 2012.
- d) Hedingham Singers will give a Concert.
- e) Hedingham Heritage Society will arrange a heritage and natural history exhibition.
- f) A flower festival will be held in St. Peter's Church, Sible Hedingham, when the Church Tower will be open.
- g) On 23rd June 2012 there will be a Fair at Grays Hall Meadow to include a hog roast, pony rides, traditional games and treasure hunt.
- h) SHALGA is arranging a "Dig for Victory" event, in period costume, to include the youth.
- i) Hedingham Twinning Association and Hedingham Football Club are arranging petanque and football events respectively.
- j) HRW hopes to stage a grand opening of HRW to include the new path and footbridge.
- k) FOAM will hold an open day at Alderford Mill on 24th June 2012.
- l) The Heart and Sole Walkers will arrange walks during the whole week in both Castle and Sible Hedingham.
- m) Dr. Green paid tribute to the Steering Committee under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Weatherley and asked that offers of help or proposals for organizing events are made to her or other members.

Mr. D. Holmes asked about sponsorship. Dr. Green reported that there was no sponsorship at present but sponsors and donations will be very welcome. Mr. S. Partridge reported that he had given Mrs. Weatherley details of possible grant funding. Dr. Green was thanked for his report.

238. **Standing Order 61**

Mr. D. Holmes referred to public comment during the November PC Meeting and asked that the provisions of Standing Order 61 be observed namely that the Chairman may adjourn the meeting to allow members of the public to address the meeting, which was noted.

239. **Transfer of Pump at Alderford Street**

It was resolved that Mr. A. Law and Mr. D. Holmes be authorized to execute the Transfer of the ownership of the pump at Alderford Street on behalf of SHPC.

240. **Lease of proposed allotments off Church Street**

It was resolved that Mrs. G. Massey and Mr. J. Skittrall be authorized to execute the Lease of the allotments off Church Street.

241. **FOAM report and inspection by Environment Agency**

Mr. A. Law reported upon a recent smell in Alderford Mill, possibly caused by water being stirred up or rotting vegetation. The Environment Agency had investigated and put dye down nearby drains and had confirmed that the site opposite the mill was not at fault. Mr. Law had suggested to Mr. D. Finch that one Trust is formed in Essex to look after all water and windmills owned by ECC, which Mr. Finch had agreed to look into. FOAM had raised about £400 at the recent Christmas event. Mr. Law was thanked for his report.

242. **To fill vacancy on Recreation and Amenities Committee**

The Chairman reported that Mr. S. Partridge has resigned from the Recreation and Amenities Committee through pressure of work and expressed thanks to Mr. Partridge for the work he had carried out, which was supported by Mr. J. Skittrall. Mrs. Massey had consulted Mr. R. Volkwyn at the request of the Committee who is willing to serve on this Committee. It was therefore proposed by Mrs. Massey, seconded by Dr. Green and carried that Mr. R. Volkwyn is co-opted onto the R&A Committee.

243. **To fill vacancy on Blue Plaques Sub-Committee**

It was proposed by Mrs. E. Jones and carried that Miss. J. Cole joins the Blue Plaque Sub-Committee to help with research and publicity. Mrs. Jones gave a report on the progress for the nine blue plaques, which are required for SH for well known artists, poets, a mercenary, suffragette, suffragist, lawyer and doctor. Listed Building Consent will be required for plaques on listed buildings although a couple of plaques will be located at gateways where buildings are set back from the road. It was agreed that the history of

prominent people associated with the village should be commemorated by blue plaques. Grants are available, which will be applied for.

244. **Correspondence**

The Chairman reminded Councillors to read the correspondence file in advance of meetings. 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) Mrs. L. Waller referred to the letters from Mr. A. Bishop and Mr. & Mrs. Steward setting out their objections to a suggested caravan site at the top of Hulls Mill Lane. It was resolved that these letters should be answered stating that their fears are unfounded at present.
- (b) Mrs. Waller referred to the letter from ECC relating to the new culvert under Swan Street. Upon advise from the Environment Agency ECC had no option but to install the temporary bag work revetment at the inlet to the culvert. If not the risk of flooding lower down Alderford Street may increase.
- (c) Councillors discussed the letter from The Leo Group relating to the former Tanner's Dairy site, which had arisen from the Community Budget meetings. Although the owners are supportive in principle to any scheme which will bring about a successful regeneration of the site, they have concerns about the viability of employment use. The site had been widely marketed for employment use but there had been no interest. It was concluded by the Leo Group that the site is not a viable employment location and the owners are aware of business unit vacancies in the BDC site at Rippers Court. It was stated that the matter is null and void as SHPC was not successful with its Community Budget application. The Leo Group desires to have a meeting with SHPC to discuss proposals for the site and it was agreed to invite them to a Planning Committee meeting.
- (d) The invitation from EALC for Councillors to attend a free course about Neighbourhood Planning and Localism at Dunmow on 29th February 2012 was considered. Nine Councillors expressed an interest in attending namely Miss. C. Cannell, Mr. D. Holmes, Mrs. E. Jones, Mr. A. Law, Mrs. G. Massey, Mr. S. Partridge, Mr. J. Skittrall, Mr. F. Swallow and Mrs. L. Waller. It was agreed to ask EALC if co-opted members of Committees such as Ms. S. Glen could also attend. Mr. S. Partridge agreed to investigate the use of the Community Bus to attend this event.

245. **Accounts for payment**

The accounts listed in appendix 2 were presented for payment together with an account from Hedingham Baptist Church for £22.00 for hire of Church for meeting on 6th December 2011. It was proposed by Mr.D. Holmes, seconded by Miss. C. Cannell and carried that the accounts are paid.

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

- (a) Dr. R. Green reported that the Friends of Molly's Wood are holding a fruit tree pruning demonstration on 22nd December, to which all Friends are welcome.
- (b) Mr. D. Holmes considered that the road near the former Swan PH had been reinstated in an excellent condition. Mrs. L. Waller considered that the new railings are hideous, do not meet the old railings and the exposed concrete needs facing with bricks. It was suggested that improvements should be made, possibly funded by S106 monies.
- (c) Mr. J. Skittrall reported that the Jubilee Oak tree was planted in the Churchyard on 26th November.
- (d) Mr. Skittrall also reported that on 9th December he had helped workmen from North End Nurseries to plant trees around the village, which had kindly been donated by Mr. P. and Mrs. S. Robinson. It was agreed that the Clerk writes a letter of thanks to them.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

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(Date)

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(Chairman)

