

SHIMPLING PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 26TH NOVEMBER 2007.

Six Councillors were present with Ken Durant in the Chair. Apologies for absence were received from both the County and District Councillors and from Joe Massey, who was still recovering from his sudden illness.

The minutes of the September meeting were approved and signed with no matters arising.

There was no Police representative present nor had a crime report for the last month been received. However Robert Rush reported that there had been an attempted break-in to the workshop at Hall Farm the previous week.

The Clerk gave details of the income and expenditure for the period since the last meeting and confirmed that it was in line with the budget. The Council approved the draft budget for 2008/9 and also resolved to make a donation towards the cost of the alterations to the War Memorial in the St George's Church.

It was confirmed that planning approval for the minor modification to an outbuilding at Malting Farm had been granted, but the proposal for a change of use for an outbuilding at Giffords Hall had again been refused. A decision on the proposed extensions to Cromwell House and Walnut Cottage were still awaited.

Certain items of correspondence, which had previously circulated, were discussed and the Council decided to decline the invitation to make a donation to the Victim Support Charity as the budget allowance for such items had been fully allocated for this year.

The Council was interested in the new Countryside Access Community Scheme and requested further details.

Following clearance of the rash of young sycamore trees and brambles on the boundary between the Old School and the Village Hall the Council considered that the existing hedge should be extended for the complete length by planting a new beech hedge or similar on the rest of this boundary, subject to getting approval from the Richards family and quotations for the supply of plants and guards. The preparation and planting would be undertaken by a volunteer work party, as had been the case for the clearance of the trees and bushes.

The Council again reviewed the matter of further works at the Bottle & Paper banks as, having had no success from grant applications, the proposed hardstanding/layby improvement would require the current precept to be more than doubled, equal to an increase of £20 - £30 in community tax per household. It was considered, therefore, that the expenditure was unsustainable as the only direct benefit was about £230 per year to the Village hall from the proceeds of the banks. However the Council was trying to get the Highways to make good the present potholed approaches to the banks.

The Chairman reported that the Shimpling web site was up and running and work was in hand to post a lot of information and village news. Go to www.onesuffolk.co.uk/shimplingpc

Members of the Council were unable to offer any help in filling the vacancy for a School Governor at Lawshall.

The Chairman read out a brief report received from County Councillor Richard Kemp in which he advised that the second stage of the Suffolk's Review of school's organisation had started in the Lowestoft and Haverhill areas. The Audit Commission carried out its 'Corporate Assessment' of the County Council in June when it recognised areas of strength, and also highlighted issues of concern, but assessed overall that the Council was performing well. The County Council is still awaiting the announcement from central government of the local authority's finance settlement but believes that it will have to make £16 million savings this coming year. It has also voted in favour of proceeding with plans to tender for a new method of dealing with waste in the future, by 'Energy from Waste', also known as Incineration.

The Council's attention was drawn to the plethora of Estate Agent's boards on the verge outside Barn Meadow. The Chairman agreed to speak to the Agents requesting that in future the boards be erected on the property concerned, as the law requires.

It was reported that from personal experience the Hanover Athome service for minor repair/works in your home was very satisfactory and well worth the £8 per hour labour charge.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm. The next meeting will be on 14th January 2008 at 7.30pm.