

Meeting of Shimpling Parish Council

Monday 10th October 2016

Shimpling Village Hall, 7.30pm

MINUTES

Present:

Chair: John Pawsey

Councillors: Sue Salmon, Katie Haselhurst, Gerry Shrimpton

County Councillor: Richard Kemp

District Councillor: -

Clerk: Jenny O'Reilly-Turner

1. **Apologies for absence:** The following apologies for absence were received in advance of the meeting: Dan Sharpstone, Ken Rush and James Long (District Cllr) and these were accepted by the Council.

2. **Disclosure of Members' Interest(s):**

a. **To receive disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests including gifts of hospitality in excess of £25:**

It was noted that the interests which John Pawsey and Ken Rush had in the planning application regarding Gents Lane were no longer relevant for the purposes of the current meeting, as the application had already been granted and whilst the matter was on the present agenda, it was an 'information only' point. Nevertheless, John Pawsey stated that he would be happy to answer any questions of the public relating to the granting of the application if they were raised in the Public Participation session.

b. **To consider requests for dispensation for the agenda item(s) under discussion:**

There were no requests for dispensation for any of the agenda items under discussion.

3. **Approval of minutes of previous meeting:** The amended minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11th July were accepted by the Council and signed by the Chair. A full copy of the hand-written amendments to the Minutes is available for inspection and will also be scanned and placed on the PC website.

Public Participation Session

There were no questions or issues raised by members of the public present.

4. Chair's Report:

- a. **Village Hall lease renewal – information only – to provide an update on the lease renewal process** - John Pawsey explained that although he had been chasing the matter of renewal for approximately 12 months now and that the lease had expired on 31st August, the Richards had confirmed via Ashtons Solicitors that it was not an issue to renew it. The matter has now been passed to another fee earner at Ashtons who is in the process of drawing up the paperwork.
- b. **Village Hall rear door** - John Pawsey explained that Suffolk Fire Service had confirmed to the Village Hall Committee that it would be acceptable to have an inwards-opening fire door. The VHC stated that they were still sourcing a top screw lock and a more substantial handle but the door is in the meantime secure. It was queried whether if there was a top lock on the door whether it would still be an effective fire door as it could not then be opened in an emergency. Council agreed that John Pawsey would discuss this further with the VHC and report back at the next meeting.

Weeds in the VH car park: In addition, John Pawsey reported that the VHC had asked for clarification of the arrangements by which weeds in the VH car park are removed as there had been an agreement in the past that the PC would be responsible for this. Council agreed that it was the case that the VHC had relinquished the recycling receipts to the PC in exchange for the PC paying for the car park to be maintained and therefore John would contact Chris Cooke of Lark Valley Landscapes to discuss this.

- c. **To receive and note the Village Hall Committee Minutes** – John Pawsey had previously circulated the VHC Minutes and the Council noted its gratitude to the VHC for providing these.
5. **District Councillor's Report** – Cllr Long was absent from the meeting but will be providing information in due course on the matters of proposed changes to the electoral boundaries of Babergh and the not unanimous (despite local media reports) decision to move Babergh and Mid Suffolk administration to Endeavour House in Ipswich.
 6. **County Councillor's Report** – Cllr Kemp had made his monthly reports available and these will be posted on the PC website. Matters under consideration this month in the report and discussed at the meeting are:
 - a. Abellio Greater Anglia rail transport contract has been renewed
 - b. Trading Standards warnings about rogue fish sellers
 - c. Suffolk devolution plans following the Norfolk decision not to proceed

- d. Ofsted ratings of Suffolk schools
- e. Gents Lane junction – Cllr Kemp and others met with a County Council surveyor who has requested that the matters be boiled down to the ‘5 most important issues’, so Cllr Kemp has suggested that the various Gents Lane and Rectory Lane highway problems be included in those.
- f. Hedgerows – Cllr Kemp noted that as they cannot be cut until October so as to protect wildlife, no action had been taken yet but that they would be done in the winter months.
- g. Felix bus service – this has now resumed and details and timetables will be circulated in due course. Cllr Kemp also noted that the Community Transport organisations also offer a ‘travel club’ service and he will provide details on this too. Gerry Shrimpton queried whether there would be any other bus services which looped through the village in the future in both the Sudbury and Bury St Edmunds directions so as to boost transport provision. No clear answer was available but it was felt appropriate to investigate further.
- h. Proposed relocation of Sudbury Bus Station to Girling Street – Cllr Kemp reminded all present that there is a public consultation on this to which all individuals are invited to contribute with their views on the proposed move.

7. Police Report

- a. **September report** – The September report from the Sudbury Neighbourhood Team had previously been circulated and posted onto the PC website. It was noted that information in these reports relate mainly to Sudbury town centre only and there is very little information which is relevant to Shimpling or rural policing in general. An attempted theft of a lorry which had been reported had not for example been mentioned.
- b. **SALC Suffolk Police Survey consultation** – in light of the relatively thin information provided in the Neighbourhood Team monthly reports, SALC has put together a survey of parishes to ascertain views on whether this method of updating villages in particular is a helpful use of resources for Suffolk Constabulary. It was agreed that the Clerk would look at the consultation and report back on whether it was an appropriate forum in which to raise any concerns about the lack of information or support provided.

8. Clerk’s Financial Report

- a. **Receive and note Internal and External Audit reports** – The following reports were received by the Council:
 - i. **Internal Audit Report from SALC** – This had been circulated and published in July when received and therefore the various recommendations were noted. Clerk had

circulated a table showing progress towards compliance with each recommendation and Council noted work which had already taken place and that which was still outstanding. Full details of each recommendation can be found in the published Internal Audit report on the PC website.

- ii. **External Audit Report from BDO** – This had been circulated and published at the end of September when received and therefore the various recommendations were noted. Clerk had circulated a table showing progress towards compliance with each recommendation and Council noted work which had already taken place and that which was still outstanding.

Clerk also reported that whilst the public period of inspection of the PC accounts had been from 1st July to 11th August, no request had been made to view the hard documents or reports but also noted that all the relevant documentation and reports had in any event been made freely available on the PC website so it was quite possible that members of the public wishing to view the documents had downloaded them instead. Full details of each recommendation can be found in the published External Audit report on the PC website.

- iii. **Internal Control Report** – Clerk had circulated a report on compliance with the system of internal control as adopted in May 2016, showing which matters had been achieved and which were still outstanding. This was accepted and it was noted by the Council that this itself was compliance with one of the most significant recommendations of both audits.

- iv. **Financial Risk Management Reports: Annual and Quarterly** – Clerk had circulated a quarterly and annual report on compliance with the system of financial risk management as adopted in May 2016, showing which matters had been achieved and which were still outstanding for the current quarter and also for the whole financial year to date. These were accepted and it was noted by the Council that this itself was compliance with one of the most significant recommendations of both audits.

- b. **Receive monthly and quarterly Financial Report and Cashbook statements** – Council noted that given the new and extensive responsibilities under the Internal Control and Financial Risk Management procedures, these documents had not been provided to Councillors in enough time for them to be considered properly as the documentation had only been received 24 hours prior to the meeting. It was agreed that in the future, Clerk would provide these to Councillors at least one whole calendar week in advance, together with other meeting notes and documents, so that Councillors would have sufficient time to exercise their powers of detailed consideration and examination before formal discussion and confirmation at subsequent meetings. It was agreed that consideration of the documentation presented under this agenda point would therefore be adjourned until the

next meeting in November to allow Councillors sufficient time to examine the matter in more detail.

Katie Haselhurst – not a signatory to the PC bank account mandate - was elected by members present as an independent member of the Council to countercheck and sign to accept monthly financial reports and documentation in the future.

- c. **Quarterly report on current expenditure etc as against budget** – For the reasons set out in paragraph 8.b above, the Councillors present felt that more time was needed to consider the current quarterly report on budget progress as the documentation had only been received 24 hours prior to the meeting and therefore it was agreed that this would also be adjourned to the next meeting in November.
- d. **Authorisations – The following items of expenditure were authorised:**
- i. Lark Valley Landscapes £352.80
 - ii. Clerk wages March – October £593.28 and expenses of £33.74
 - iii. Matters arising not included in current budget:
 - 1. Repainting of telephone box – estimated £50 + VAT – it was agreed that this would be authorised from the Village Hall maintenance budget as it was considered important to weatherproof the box for the winter months
 - 2. Transfer of web hosting services from Suffolk County Council to Community Action Suffolk - £50 annual charge (no VAT) – it was agreed that transfer of the current onesuffolk.net website from SCC to Community Action Suffolk was considered the most appropriate course of action to ensure continuity of provision and therefore the annual charge of £50 was approved. It was also agreed that the PC offers to host on its website the onesuffolk general village pages provided to date by Steve Cornelius.
 - iv. No other financial authorisations were raised
- e. **To approve the renewal of the Council’s Public Liability etc insurance** cover – Clerk had previously circulated the quote for renewal of the PC’s general PL insurance cover and Councillors agreed that whilst it was appropriate to seek renewal on the same terms for the coming 12 months it would also be sensible to obtain quotes from other providers for future reference when the current policy is again up for renewal.
- f. **To appoint a new signatory to the PC bank account mandate** – It was resolved that Sue Salmon would be the third signatory to the PC bank account mandate.

9. Co-option and amendment of standing orders

- a. **Procedure to be followed – for information only** – Clerk outlined the procedure of co-option for the vacancy for a new Councillor following the resignation of Jackie Saunders. If no request for a public election is made at Babergh by 13th October, then there will be co-option at the next PC meeting on 14th November. So far two members of the public had expressed interest in standing for co-option, details of whom had already been circulated to Councillors.
- b. **Amendment of the current Standing Orders to allow for a secret ballot** – It was agreed unanimously that Standing Order 8 (Voting on Appointments) would be amended to include the following new paragraphs:
 - “b) Shimpling Parish Council will operate a secret ballot in the co-option process.
 - c) A copy of the agreed co-option procedure will be made available to interested candidates.”
- c. **Publication of a Co-Option Procedure** – It was agreed that helpsheet on the Co-Option Procedure would be prepared and Standing Order 8 was amended to include a paragraph to this effect (see above point b)

10. Correspondence received:

- a. **Parking on Hallifax Place** – It was agreed that a letter would be sent to the resident concerned confirming that as far as the PC was concerned, the matter of parking on the grass and/or pavement were indeed considered resolved.
- b. **Potholes and road surfaces in Gents Lane / Rectory Road** – It was noted that there are concerns expressed by residents in Gents Lane about compliance with current road markings, priorities and street signs shown by some drivers and that this would only worsen with the increase of traffic for the new developments on Gents Lane. It was noted that this was an issue of which Cllr Kemp and others were already aware and had already been brought to the attention of the Highways Department.
- c. **Felix bus route through village** – The restarting of the Felix bus route through the village had already been mentioned by Cllr Kemp in his report (see above point 6).
- d. **Traffic priorities on Gents Lane** – see above point 10.b.
- e. **Request from the WI to fund planting of daffodils around the village sign** – It was noted that the WI had asked whether the PC would support the planting of daffodils around the village. It was noted that general financial support and also volunteer time was agreed in

principle but it first needed to be ascertained who owned the land and therefore whether permission for this had been granted before any further action could be taken.

11. Planning

- a. **Little Chadacre Farm House – Erection of side extension and front porch** - This matter was discussed and it was agreed that the Council would not oppose the application.
- b. **5 Streetfield Close – Erection of two-storey side extension** - This matter was discussed and it was agreed that the Council would not oppose the application.
- c. **Gardener’s Cottage, Cockfield – Tree Preservation Order – reduction and removal of ash trees** - This matter was discussed and it was agreed that the Council would not oppose the application.
- d. **To note that the Gents Lane application had been granted with a number of conditions** – The Council also noted that the full permission document was available on the Babergh Planning Portal and the PC website and that details of the formal appeals procedure is set out on the Babergh District Council website.
- e. **Allocation of land by Babergh in the village for possible future development** – It was agreed that the request for more information from Babergh on this matter would be chased as the details previously circulated had been inaccurate.