

Meeting of Shimpling Parish Council

Monday 14th March 2016

Shimpling Village Hall, 7.30pm

MINUTES

Present:

Chair: Mike Thew

Councillors: Sue Salmon, Trisch Jackson, Gerry Shrimpton, Ken Rush, Jackie Saunders

District Councillor: James Long

County Councillor: Richard Kemp

Clerk: Jenny O'Reilly-Turner

1. **Apologies for absence** - all councillors were present.
2. **Disclosure of Members' Interests** - no interests were disclosed.
3. **Approval of minutes of previous meeting** - the draft Minutes of the two previous meetings of 11th January and 17th February were approved by councillors and signed by the Chair.
4. **Presentation by Cally Boardman, Suffolk Local Area Coordinator** - Ms Boardman gave a short presentation to the Council about her new role as LAC for the villages surrounding Sudbury, including Shimpling. The role involves a range of innovative support methods for vulnerable, isolated or older people who might otherwise struggle to help them engage more within the community with the aim to help them become more independent of public services. She can help advise individuals and their families on a personal skill level with matters such as transport, support and care for mental health and other general coping skills to help them feel more part of the community and to take an increasingly active role in their own matters. As an employee of SCC she can also provide direct feedback to at county level on services or issues which are affecting the vulnerable most and on the implementation of a number of policies at community level. Her service works through personal introductions rather than through referrals, for example she can be contacted directly if anyone had concerns about a neighbour. A copy of her leaflet describing the services of the LAC in more detail will be available on the Parish Council website and contact details will be on the Parish noticeboards.
5. **Police reports**
 - 5.1. **Village Hall incident** - Clerk described an incident reported to the Council and also to Police which took place at the Village Hall recently in which it appeared that someone had tried to gain access by levering off the rear door handle. As the Parish Council had been made aware that it was not possible to lock the rear door of the building, it was unanimously decided that the Council urgently needs to investigate obtaining a more secure fire door with a push bar handle which cannot be opened from outside.

5.2. Charlotte Blyth speaking on behalf of St George's Church, informed the Council of two recent incidents since the last PC meeting on subsequent nights when a Church store was broken into and mowing equipment stolen. After the first break-in the store was re-secured but the second break-in occurred the following night. Equipment was stolen on both nights. Mrs Blyth explained that the Church was of the view that it was not possible to keep anything of value any longer in that store.

5.3. It was noted that despite each of these incidents being reported to Police, there had been no subsequent report received from the Safer Neighbourhood Team. It was suggested that this is because of the changes to neighbourhood policing due to take effect from 4th April which reflect budgetary cuts and savings widely thought to have been made to rural enforcement.

6. **Chair's report - topics dealt with under Matters for Discussion**

7. **Playground report**

7.1. Clerk reported that fortnightly inspections had taken place since the last meeting and that no further damage or issues have been noted with the equipment, but suggested that the cable ties used around the sapling protectors be cut back so as not to pose an eye-level risk to small children, to which the Council agreed.

7.2. The Council also agreed to expenditure on a number of small items such as nut bolt covers as highlighted in the autumn inspection report.

8. **County Councillor's report - Cllr Richard Kemp spoke on a number of topics relevant to the Parish (full details available on the Shimpling Parish Council website), the most pertinent being:**

8.1. Rural transport contracts - The Go Start community transport provision covers Shimpling and the Council agreed to investigate further any changes in the service which would affect the village and communicate these on.

8.2. Litter campaign in Suffolk - Spring Clean For the Queen has been very popular and SCC can help to set up schemes in the village

9. **District Councillor's report**

9.1. SHLAA Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2016 - This is a strategy which has apparently been in place for some time to provide across Babergh and Mid Suffolk some 70,000 new homes by 2031. Various sites have been allocated in the district area already and it would seem that there is land already apportioned within Shimpling for this. Councillors had not heard anything previously about this scheme and it was resolved that more information be sought so that issues could be discussed in more detail.

9.2. Council tax bills - Babergh had approved an increase of 2.3% which meant that for a Band E property there would be a 9.6p/week increase but that for council homes, there was a 1% decrease to 93p/week.

9.3. Solar panels on social housing - There is a push for this from Babergh and can be beneficial by as much to up to 20% off utility bills for social housing customers.

10. **Financial Report**

10.1.Precept - meeting 17th Feb It was explained that the amount that the Parish Council had set for the precept from Babergh for 2016/17 remained the same as 2015/16 at £6,762.60.

10.2.Budget 2016/17 - The draft budget was presented for consideration.

10.3.Refunds for recycling - Clerk confirmed receipt of £176.55 for glass and £64.96 for paper recycling.

10.4.Smaller Authority Audit Appointment arrangements - Clerk confirmed that there are a number of new audit requirements for smaller authorities and that guidance from a number of sources had been received so as to ensure compliance.

10.5.Donations for 2016/17 - Cllr Jackie Saunders queried whether there was an obligation on the Council to make charitable donations each financial year and councillors agreed that this was an issue which needed further investigation before a discussion could take place on whether to make donations this financial year.

11. Planning

11.1. Approval of application - The Doveshed, Dales Meadow - The Council received confirmation that permission for this had been granted.

12. Correspondence received

12.1.Closure of Aveley Lane - Council reminded parishioners of the road closures due for late March, early April and that any issues should be directed to the Highways Department of Suffolk County Council.

12.2.Commemorative Medals for Queen's 90th Birthday - After brief consideration, Council decided not to proceed with a purchase of commemorative medals.

12.3.Petition on PC's Right to Appeal Planning Decision - Clerk informed Council and all those present of a national online petition to the Government asking for Parish Councils to have the right to appeal against planning decisions and that any member of the Council would have to sign in their personal individual capacity if they so wished.

12.4.Sharing best practice - Council decided that it was neither practical nor very relevant to Shimpling to take part in a local best practice sharing session on Neighbourhood Plans to be held later in the month in East Bergholt.

13. Matters for discussion

13.1.Spring Clean - Council agreed that a date later in April after the grass cutting but before the next meeting in May needs to be arranged and that equipment etc needs to be borrowed from SCC.

13.2.Village Hall Lease - Clerk confirmed that renewal of the lease is in hand and that on legal advice it is scheduled to take place shortly before the end of the current lease in September.

13.3.Village Hall Committee - Council decided that it was necessary to take steps as so as to formalise the current relationship between the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee to ensure that all current audit and financial reporting requirements, amongst other issues, would be compliant.

13.4.Parking on the Playground - Council had received complaints about a villager regularly parking on the playground grass area and a camper van parked fairly permanently on the pavement outside their home, with concerns being raised that these actions were not only potentially unsafe but also blocked the pavement. Council agreed that a letter would be

sent to the villager in question to ask that the car is no longer parked on the grass and that the camper van is moved elsewhere.

13.5.Telegraph poles on Gents Lane - Mr Johnston of the Gents Lane Preservation Group was in attendance and reported to the Council that despite contacting a number of departments at BT, he had not yet received a response to his complaint. After discussion, Council agreed to write to BT in support of Mr Johnston to help find out why the poles had been erected and to ascertain why, as a matter of principle, there had been no prior notification.

14. Public Participation - no members of the public raised any additional matters.

15. AOB

15.1.Newsletter - Council had been informed of the continuing costs over and above that covered by the Parish Council to producing the village newsletter and decided that (a) in order to ease the burden on the production of the newsletter, it would be reasonable to ask any advertiser, whether based in the village or not, to pay the annual fee of £12 to have an advert included in the newsletter and (b) other than the front cover, it would also be reasonable to print the newsletter entirely in black and white, where this would also reduce costs. Council thanked Sarah Smith for all her considerable efforts and time spent in producing the letter each quarter and hoped that these changes would make her job easier.

15.2.Dog fouling - Council received an email from a villager asking for dog fouling rules to be reiterated as they were having problems with dogs entering their private garden to foul and owners not clearing it up. Unfortunately the dog fouling fines do not apply to private land. Council agreed to ensure that a reminder was posted on the website, noticeboards and also in the email newsletter reminding people to clear up after their dogs and of the criminal consequences of failing to do so.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.21pm.

Date of next meeting: Monday 9th May 2016