

Meeting of Shimpling Parish Council
Monday 14th September 2015, 7.30pm
Shimpling Village Hall

MINUTES

Present

Chair: John Pawsey (and Mike Thew)
Councillors: Ken Rush, Trisch Jackson, Jackie Saunders, Mike Thew, Gerry Shrimpton
County Councillor: Richard Kemp
District Councillor: James Long
Clerk: Jenny O'Reilly-Turner

Also in attendance were a number of members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence:** received from Cllr Sue Salmon

2. **Approval of the minutes of previous meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13th July were approved and signed.

3. **Matters arising**
 - 1.1. **Flooding on Slough Hill** - JP reported since Anglian Water had responded to the effect that it was not an issue they would resolve, he had written to the occupants of the homes in that area. The flooding appeared to have stopped in the meantime but it was unclear whether any action had been taken as a direct result of his communication. It was resolved to keep the matter under observation, particularly in the winter months.
 - 1.2. **Neighbourhood Questionnaire** - JORT outlined the main findings from the Questionnaire, these being: the desire for a community shop, community befriending scheme or Neighbourhood Watch, oil syndicate, better communications e.g. an email newsletter and speeding concerns. In light of the low response, that there is already a shop in Lawshall and that there is an oil syndicate already in place, it was resolved to revisit the Questionnaire and other issues arising later in the year.

4. **Police reports:** no report had been received and no Police were in attendance. JP to pursue.

5. **Chair's report**

- 1.1. **Village Hall Lease:** JP hopes to instruct Ashton Graham to renew the lease. The leaseholders have not indicated any opposition to the lease renewal process and so it was agreed that JP will proceed with arrangements.
- 1.2. **Playground fencing:** JP has completed the application for S. 106 funds and enclosed two quotes. The cheapest quote is £4,588.80 + VAT.
- 1.3. **Coal House:** JP recently trimmed back the foliage around the Coal House. Councillors thanked him for these efforts and indicated that they were happy for him to continue doing so.

6. County and District Councillor Reports

- 6.1. **County** - Richard Kemp reported on a number of matters:
 - 1.1.1. The success of the **Aviva Tour of Britain** which had come through the county recently and SCC's efforts to promote cycling in the county.
 - 1.1.2. As of **October 1st all residential landlords have a legal responsibility to provide smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors** and it is to be a criminal offence if these are not provided.
 - 1.1.3. In partnership with the Mason Trust, Suffolk County Council is hosting the **Suffolk Skills Show** on 21st October at the Suffolk Show Ground.
 - 1.1.4. SCC has introduced a **Walking Strategy** which aims to encourage people to walk as many journeys under 20 minutes as possible rather than use a car. More information on www.healthysuffolk.org.uk
 - 1.1.5. **The CrackOn Foundation** is a local social enterprise youth organisation working with SCC which will take (amongst other items) unwanted electrical goods, commission others to re-condition them to sale condition and then place them for sale in their local shops. More information on their website www.crackon.org.
 - 1.1.6. SCC has introduced the **Endeavour Card** - an annual bus discount ticket for 16-19 yr olds. More information: <http://www.suffolkonboard.com/endeavour-card/16-19-card/>
 - 1.1.7. **Potholes on Old Rectory Lane** - RK was assured that they had been done and that the invoice for the works had even been shown to him, but that in light of local complaints about the quality of the work, he will ask that it be looked at again.
- 6.2. **District** - **James Long** reported on a number of issues:
 - 1.1.1. Babergh District Council has now resolved to hold all **full council meetings at 5.30pm** in the hope that more members of the public will be able to attend.
 - 1.1.2. At the last full council meeting in July the Council passed a **Charter on Public Speaking** in relation to when members of the public may speak or raise objections

to or statements in support of planning applications or at planning meetings. This is in accordance with a national guideline. It also sets out who is allowed to speak and for how long and the circumstances under which the planning committee chair may restrict the time available to members of the public to speak at such meetings. The full text of this is available at <http://tiny.cc/bdc-charter>

7. Planning

7.1. Pre-planning proposals for the development of Gents Lane: JP stood aside and Mike Thew assumed the role of Chair for the duration of these discussions. The PC has received correspondence about a proposed development of the Gents Lane site owned by Mr Roy Scott and he and his planning representatives James Hood and Sophie Doe attended the meeting to present initial ideas and to commence a dialogue in advance of submitting a formal planning application to Babergh District Council. Mr Hood explained that pre-application advice had been received from BDC to the extent that proposals should be discussed initially with the PC before a formal application made. Mr Hood made large scale colour photocopies of the plans available to Councillors. Ensuing points of discussion were as follows:

- 1.1.1. The site was previously used by Mr Scott as a chicken farm and piggery. It has fallen into a state of disrepair and is very overgrown. It cannot revert back to previous use due to its proximity to other residential properties.
- 1.1.2. Mr Scott claims that he seeks to develop the site as there have been a number of cases of vandalism. MT enquired whether these incidents had been reported to the Police, as the PC had not received notice of that area being prevalent to crime, nor of any specific incidents. Mr Scott stated that the last act of vandalism was the breaking of a car window but that this was left unreported. Mr Scott stated that as he no longer lives in the area, he is not fully up to speed with all the incidents but he did confirm that as far as he was aware, the last act of vandalism which was reported to the Police was in 2003.
- 1.1.3. MT asked for confirmation whether the affordable housing proposals would mean that local residents would have a discount. Mr Hood confirmed that if desired, the ratio of affordable housing plots could be increased. TS asked whether some of the affordable housing plots would be 2-bed and Mr Hood confirmed that they could be.
- 1.1.4. MT raised concerns about the degree of traffic and plant equipment travelling through the Gents Lane area would likely cause disruption to local residents. Mr Hood explained that it would be the size of the vehicles rather than the volume, in so far as if the area is developed for residential use, the impact after the

construction phase would be private cars, but if it were to be developed as light industrial units, then the vehicles would likely be larger, more frequent and at more unsocial times.

- 1.1.5. Mr Scott stated that Gents Lane is an adopted road but this was queried by the PC. Mr Hood and Ms Doe have not yet approached the Gents Lane residents.
- 1.1.6. JP (in capacity of observer) stated that boundary lines on Mr Scott's plan appear to encroach onto his own neighbouring land to the west.
- 1.1.7. KR noted that it was for the whole village to contribute to the discussions and to consider BDC's involvement and long-term plans. He noted that there were two other possible derelict sites in the village and what precedent would be set if the Gents Lane were to be granted permission for development on such a scale for those other sites. TS noted that there should be a proven need for the development and more affordable housing but that a major concern would be the effect of any traffic.
- 1.1.8. GS referred to the CS11 legislation from BDC about development in villages but noted that Gents Lane is currently an unmade road, the development would set a precedent for other sites and that Shimpling currently has no shop or effective bus service so questioned how a development of a number of houses could reasonably be sustained. GS also asked Mr Hood if there were plans for development of light industrial units on the site and Mr Hood confirmed that there were alternative plans but they had not yet been finalised or displayed yet.
- 1.1.9. JS noted that the design of homes on the site would have to be sympathetic to fit in with the local environment. Mr Hood explained that the site boasts beautiful views over the fields and that the homes on the plans take that into account. The properties are also designed as open plan living areas for families. Mr Hood added that the grooves would be made from slate and the properties would have wood cladding and brick work to give it a 'country feel'. The homes would have highest eco credentials with thermal high performance as a result of air circulation systems which would run on air source heat pumps from a unit on the side of each property which houses a chemical reaction which then feeds the hot water supply.
- 1.1.10. MT asked whether light industrial use would not effectively restore the site to its previous use and therefore bringing with it greater traffic with vans, employees etc. Mr Hood stated that even if a light industrial site were to be developed there is no guarantee that any business would take up the units and it could be left empty and not turn over any income. Mr Hood is keen to support the needs of the village in this respect. MT stated that the the PC was keen to avoid a NIMBY stance but that the needs of the village should properly be taken into account and noted that

perhaps any such residential development could assist in the regeneration of the village.

- 1.1.11. In response to a question from the public about the timescale of the proposed planning application, Mr Hood stated that they would ideally like to submit the application in 2015 and would like to present the plans to the villagers in advance in any event. He also noted that they would be prepared to delay the application in order to secure further support from local residents.
- 1.1.12. MT noted that it might be helpful to arrange a meeting before the next PC meeting of 9th November to discuss the proposals for presenting the plans to the local public.
- 1.1.13. In response to a question from RK, Mr Hood confirmed that despite planning affordable housing, they had not yet established contact with any local housing associations. TS asked whether houses would go to a housing association and Mr Hood said that they would not. RK noted that local authorities can demand up to 35% of a site for local homes.
- 1.1.14. Mr Chris Schulter - a member of the public who had come in support of Mr Scott who claimed that he was on the Parish Council of Nazeby in Essex - stated that in his parish there had been a lot of applications like this and that they had always sought to support different applications where the village gets the benefit of the market value of affordable housing.
- 1.1.15. JP asked whether Ms Doe and Mr Hood had been involved in earlier project applications with Mr Scott and they said that they had not.

7.2. Financial Report

1.1.1. Income and Expenditure - These had been circulated prior to the meeting to all Councillors and no feedback or comments had been received.

1.1.2. Audit Review - Following correspondence from external auditors, and display of the return and notice of conclusion of audit being displayed on the village notice board by the bus shelter, the PC approved and accepted the Annual Return for year ending 31st March 2015, noting in addition the recommendation in the auditor's review that the Annual Return adds up correctly to £1 as there was a discrepancy to the value of less than £1 in the audit documentation received.

8. Correspondence received: There were no issues arising from correspondence received and circulated to Councillors.

9. Matters for discussion

- 1.1. **Maintenance of playground equipment:** It was agreed that this should be explored in conjunction with insurance and regular checks on the equipment and that Babergh would be contacted to find out the extent of PC responsibility towards maintenance, insurance and upkeep of play equipment.

10. AOB

- 1.1. **Dementia Friendly village:** TS sent a message to the WI asking for an update and a response is awaited.
- 1.2. **Village Hall decoration:** Councillors thanked the Village Hall redecoration team for their efforts and time in completing the redecoration and all work done to date and noted in particular the generosity of the volunteers who had provided their time and equipment for free.
- 1.3. **Lawshall school bus:** JOT reported that SCC was due to complete a traffic survey of the route after which the safety or otherwise would be reconsidered. A temporary travel permit had been issued in the meantime.
- 1.4. **Potholes:** see point 6.1.7 above
- 1.5. **Hedge cutting on Slough Hill:** Councillors thanked KB for his efforts in cutting the hedge back.
- 1.6. **Utility vehicles on Halifax Place:** No further information has been forthcoming about the issue and JS has spoken to the resident who raised the initial contact and has encouraged them to be in touch with more information should the concerns arise again.
- 1.7. **Community Action Survey:** JOT to complete survey about community provision.
- 1.8. **Community Tree Planting Scheme:** JP is to liaise with Mr Shayer about the project and to chase involvement from BDC Arboricultural Team.
- 1.9. **War Memorial:** Following correspondence with the PCC, the agreed donation of £200 was brought forward so as to coincide with the November Remembrance Day arrangements.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Date of the next meeting: 7.30pm, Monday 9th November 2015.