

Shimpling Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting of the Council
Monday 20th May 2019, 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Councillors: Liz Brunwin (Chair), Katie Haselhurst, Mike Atkins, Gerry Shrimpton, Colin Johnston, Dan Sharpstone

County Councillor: **District Councillor:**

Clerk: Stuart Palmer

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Ken Rush apologised with work commitment and accepted. Councillors Kemp, Holt and Plumb apologised as they had attended last week to give updates and accepted.
2. **Declarations of Members Interest(s):**
 - a. **To receive disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest(s) including gifts of hospitality in excess of £25:** Nothing raised
 - b. **To consider requests for dispensation for the agenda item(s) under discussion:** None disclosed

Public Participation session

Two members of the public (MOP) attended. No questions or issues raised.

3. **Approval of minutes of the previous meeting:** Members agreed that minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2019 (AGM) were a true and accurate record. The minutes were duly signed by Chair of the meeting.
4. **Chair's report:** The Chair of the Parish Council (PC) gave the following report:
 - The Chair reported that blue discs had appeared on the road in Halifax place and she had reported to SCC and asked for an explanation of their purpose. Awaits a response.
 - She attended the launch to Parish and Town councils of SCC Highways, self-help scheme. Parishes can volunteer to take over tasks that will no longer be funded by SCC such as cleaning of road signs. Equipment and training would be available for some tasks although no funding was available. This was discussed by the council. Many tasks are already completed by volunteers in the village. The PC agreed that there was little that was attractive about the scheme and would consider it if a major issue or project was proposed. Otherwise the PC was content to continue as it is.
 - She had been contacted about grass cutting by two sources, Firstly the cut to the playing field was thought to be ineffective so the contractor was asked to repeat. The second issue is on the agenda.
5. **District Councillors report:** Cllrs Holt and Plumb sent apologies
6. **County Councillors report:** Cllr Richard Kemp sent apologies.
7. **Police report;** No report received. The only newsletter available was dated April 2019 and a summary was given by the clerk. Newsletters can be found at:
<https://www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/sudbury>
The council expressed their disappointment and concern that the Community Engagement Officer failed to attend the Annual Parish Assembly despite initially accepting the invite 6 months prior to the meeting. The Clerk was actioned to write to the police.
Action: Clerk to write to the police to express concern and invite the CEO again.
8. **Public Transport:** Cllr Shrimpton reported he continued to work on the inconsistencies in the provision of public transport to the village. He had received two replies from contacts in local villages and insisted he would keep going. He has sent three emails to Cllr Evans but had received no response. He asked the clerk to chase up the villages that had not responded to the consultation

Action: Clerk to chase up neighbouring villages that had not responded on a proposed new route to gauge level of support

9. Village Hall

- **Village Hall Committee** – Cllr Johnston reported that he had attended the AGM. He noted that they were looking for a new treasurer. He reported that the VHC continued to make good efforts to increase use of the hall and bring the community together.

10. Responsible Finance Officer's Finance Report:

10a The Clerk and RFO gave the following update to the meeting: At the start of the new financial year, the only payments made are on the agenda for this meeting. He confirmed that the PC had received the first precept payment of £4759.50.

1. 10b): Total Income for last financial year was £17,142.14 including the precept, £5,799.74 Community Infrastructure Levy (ringfenced funds) and interest. The Parish Council made payments to a total of £14,097.23. Funds of £8,592.90 were carried forward this year as follows:

Treasurers Account: **£797.42**

Business Account: **£7795.48**

Total Reserves: **£8592.90**

Of course, that includes £3256.29 of ringfenced CIL money leaving the PC actual operational reserves of **£5336.61**, slightly lower than the £5547.99 at the start of the year. This is a considerably better position than was budgeted for. The budget would have taken a further £1200 from reserves however the recycling costs recovered and use of CIL money to refurbish the hall budgeted at £1000 has managed to protect the reserves almost completely.

There was no borrowing last year. No tenancies entered into. The lease on the Village Hall runs to 2024. There was £5799.74 CIL money made to the council.

Budget for this year: A Budget was approved in November 2018 of £9519.00. The precept was set to raise an income of £9519.00. Total income for year estimated at £9519.00 meaning there should be no need to further draw from reserves.

10c) The Clerk circulated the Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR) prior to the meeting and presented it to the PC. He noted that the £5501 figure carried forward on last years AGAR was an error that was taken from the previous accounts. The actual figure was £5547 as it included a £46 uncleared cheque. The correct figure of £5547 will be used this year and an explanation given to the auditors.

The AGAR for 2018/19 financial year was approved by the PC and signed off by the Clerk and Chair of the Council.

10d) The following accounts were approved for payment:

Payments made outside meeting:

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|--------------------------------------|---------|
| • Babergh Dc re Dog waste collection | £37.06 |
| • Babergh DC re Village Hall rates | £54.18 |
| • SALC annual subscription | £179.76 |
| • SALC re planning workshop | £31.20 |

10e) To consider the following items awaiting authorisation:

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|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| • Clerk's Pay | £366.13 |
| • Admin and Clerk's expenses | £18.90 |
| • HRMC re Tax | £91.40 |

10f) The grass cutting contract for 2019/20 had been held at the previous price of £1609 per year and this was placed in the budget. However, complaints had been received about an area of Halifax Place that was not being cut. Enquiries by the Chair revealed that this had never been part of the contract but was previously cut by a volunteer neighbour. Subsequent enquiries led this to be discovered as Kris Notley. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to thank Mr Notley for his previous hard work.

The PC resolved to accept a quote from our contractor to take this into the contact for an additional £135 + VAT per year. There would also be a charge of £45 plus VAT for tidying up the area in the first instance. This unbudgeted item to be found from any underspends or the money allocated for Village Hall maintenance.

Action: Clerk to write and thank Kris Notley. Chair to commission the area to be cut by contractor.

11. **Clerks Report:** Full copy of the clerk's report was circulated to members prior to the meeting. The following matters were considered for resolution:

a) **Summary of Progress:** During this period (March - May) I have worked beyond the given time frame of 3/4hrs per week (8 hours over). This is mainly as a result of having 3 meetings in this period and increased 'end of year' workload. The Clerk's time sheet was authorised.

b) **Speed Indicator Device (SID)**

The Clerk gave an update on the SID for the village:

- Device is working well but only has a 2-week battery life rather than the 4-weeks that was advertised.
- The clerk wrote to the company and they responded immediately stating it was a known issue and offered us an extended warranty on the device.
- After consulting with the Chair, the Clerk wrote again and stated that this was not good enough, insisting that they supply batteries that last 4 weeks.
- They returned to say that there were two options, both involved returning the unit.
- Option 1- replace the LEDs for white lights. The battery will last longer but the sign will be monochrome
- Option 2 – explore a solar panel run device. The PC felt this a good idea but the placement would be difficult because of trees in the main venue and winter would see a drop in performance.
- The council instructed the clerk to explore Option 1.

Action: Clerk to arrange to return the SID to the company and have it re-fitted.

Other updates covered elsewhere in the meeting.

12. **Playground:**

- **Playground Inspection:** Following an earlier annual inspection, the company that the PC had used for some years declared that they were unable to inspect the Aerial Runway play equipment. A further inspection with another company which included the Aerial Runway play equipment was authorised by the PC. Earlier conversations with the new company and Cllr Haselhurst led the PC to believe that a company called FTP would attend, inspect and fix on site, so they were commissioned.
- The new inspection raises issues with the Runway but no fixes or adjustments were carried out as expected.

Action: Cllr Haselhurst to email clerk with the contents of the agreement with FTP and Clerk to write to FTP to get a quote for remedial work.

13. Training

The Clerk had sent round options to train the full council. Three councillors had preferred option 1 of 3 hours over one evening. This was discussed by the council and agreed that this was the best option. Preference was given for a Monday or Wednesday.

Action: Clerk to arrange PC training.

14. **Correspondence Received:** Two letters were received and an email about grass cutting. The grass cutting is covered above. The letter was speculating that officers from Babergh District Council were seen in the area of Halifax Place regarding future planning developments. The Clerk had responded that no such applications had been seen by the PC but that any would be consulted on and brought to the PC meetings in the normal way so that parishioners could share their views.

15. Planning :

- a) No new applications received.
- b) The Clerk gave updates on the following planning applications:
 - Court Cottage, The Street, Shimpling – Application for new thatched roof – Granted by BDC.
- c) The Clerk and Chair updated the PC on correspondence received and a request in relation to the development that has been granted South of the Street and affecting the Village Green and Village Sign. Several villagers had taken legal advice about the development and the status of the village green. They approached the council for information about the green including correspondence about the siting of the village sign and minutes of meetings. As these are public records and accord with a previous PC decision to object to the development, these documents had been supplied to the applicant.

16. Urgent Matters to be brought to the attention of the council

No matters for the PC.

The Public Participation session was re-opened and any member invited to question or comment. No further comments were received.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9 00 pm.