

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall annexe at 7.45pm on Monday 5 December 2011.

PRESENT: Councillors Mr D C B Webb (Chairman), Mr A Hunt, (Vice-Chairman), Mr B Tibbles, Mrs R Woodcraft, Mr K Webb, District Councillor M Gower and Mrs J Gomm (Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Woodcraft and seconded by Cllr Tibbles. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by Cllr K Webb and seconded by Cllr Hunt.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Prejudicial interests: Cllrs D Webb and K Webb declared a prejudicial interest in item 6.b) on the agenda (planning application reference C/11/2506).

Personal interests: Cllr Woodcraft declared a personal interest in item 6.b) on the agenda (planning application reference C/11/2518). The Clerk declared a personal interest in item 6.b) on the agenda (planning application reference C/11/2506).

4. REPORTS FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND THE POLICE

District Councillor Gower reported that the District Council was still looking for ways of dealing with a £660,000 gap in its budget. Suffolk Coastal District Council's (SCDC) part of the council tax would remain the same as last year. On 15.12.11 SCDC was due to consider the next stage towards adoption of its Local Development Framework. The Clerk read the report from the Police. There had been four recorded crimes in Walberswick since 7.11.11.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Halesworth Campus: Eric Wilcock had agreed to come to speak at the meeting on 2 April to talk about the project.

b) Local Foods, Suffolk Acre: Mik Bedson had agreed to come to speak at the meeting on 2 April to talk about the project.

In both cases it was **agreed** that the Clerk would prepare additional notices apart from the agenda to invite the public and that questions from the public would be invited after the presentations.

6. PLANNING

a) Planning Notifications:

The Stables, The Street, C/11/2424 and C/11/2425: planning permission and listed building consent had been granted for the retention of boiler flue to barn.

Little Meadow, The Street, C/11/2239: planning permission had been granted for the erection of extensions and alterations.

Sea House, 2 The Terrace, The Street, C11/1824: planning permission had been granted for insertion of dormer window.

Saltlick, Leveretts Lane, C/11/00117/TCA: approval had been given for the reduction of height and spread by approx. 5 metres of T1 Sycamore.

b) Planning Applications:

Holly Cottage, The Street, C/11/2486: Erection of two storey extension. **Agreed** to raise no objections to the planning application.

Cllr Woodcraft declared a personal interest in this item.

South Close, Leveretts Lane, C11/2518, Erection of two storey, single storey and first floor extensions to the front and side including balcony area and single storey extension to rear of property, extension to garage. **Agreed** to raise no objections to the planning application.

Cllrs D Webb and K Webb had declared a prejudicial interest and the Clerk had declared a personal interest in this item and all left the room whilst it was discussed.

3 Millstones, Millfield Road, C11/2506, Erection of ground floor rear extension and ground floor rear side extension. **Agreed** to object to the grant of planning permission for the following reasons:

- The proposed development would lead to the loss of a smaller home in Walberswick, of which there is a shortage.
- The proposal would lead to over development of the site.
- The proposed development is of poor design and layout.

Cllrs D Webb and K Webb and the Clerk returned to the meeting and Cllr D Webb resumed the chair.

c) Planning Appeal: Plot 1, land North of Alexandra Cottage, The Street, C11/1420, appeal against refusal of permission to vary condition 11 of C11/0679 to allow permitted development rights for extensions, alterations and outbuildings. **Agreed** that the Clerk should write to the Planning Inspectorate setting out its view that the development permitted by C/11/0679 is only acceptable with the condition relating to permitted development rights. If that condition were to be removed, it would allow even further “suburban development creep” in what is a rural village.

7. PLAY AREA SAFETY

The Chairman reported that at the sports field he had renewed the “no dogs” notice, removed the broken gate spring and built up the ground near the gate and had obtained the materials to create a second gate all as required by the safety inspection. His view was that on the Village Green the bark chippings and rubber tiles could not be replaced piecemeal, but he would clean out and stick down the tiles where necessary. In view of that it was **agreed** the draft budget did not have to be changed to include further expenditure on play equipment either in the current or next financial year.

8. ACCOUNTS

a) Salary and payroll service provision by SALC:

Agreed to use the service provided by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) at the rate of £7 per month.

b) Receipts:

Allotment rents - £217.

Agreed to write to Mr P Kett, thanking him for collecting the rents in this and past years. Recycling credits - £5.53

c) Payments:

A Hunt for mileage travelling to Claydon for a seminar on dealing with difficult people and to Woodbridge to present the Council’s view at a SCDC planning meeting concerning the Tows Cabin application - £49.50

J K Gomm for mileage travelling to Claydon for three courses, stamps, stationery and an external hard drive (£42.47 plus vat) - £239.50 (vat to reclaim £20.12)

Cllr Tibbles proposed and Cllr K Webb seconded that the payments be made and this was **agreed**.

d) Monitoring of expenditure against income for current financial year:

e) Draft budget for 2012-2013:

f) Set precept for 2012-2013:

g) Advance on precept:

Agreed to discuss these items together. The Clerk reported that she had made the changes to the drafts for d) and e) agreed at the meeting on 14.11.11. She had also made further changes in the light of further information such as increasing the allowance for the election (which was likely to take place on 02.02.2012) to £800 on the advice of SCDC. She had increased the sum for insurance and had changed some figures as there were now actuals rather than estimates for certain costs. She had met with the Internal Auditor to check that items paid or received at each side of the year end were being accounted for in the correct year. She reported that at the current year end it was estimated there would be reserves of £22. In practice, even if the estimates were exactly correct there would be a negative balance as the vat reclaim would not have been received and there were payments likely to be made in the current year for the next year. SCDC had said they would be able to provide an advance on next year's precept.

Cllr Hunt proposed and Cllr Tibbles seconded that the financial papers monitoring the financial position as at 01.12.11 be accepted and this was **agreed**.

Cllr Tibbles proposed and Cllr Woodcraft seconded that the budget for 2012 – 2013 showing a precept of £16,000 be accepted and this was **agreed**.

Cllr Tibbles proposed and Cllr Hunt seconded that the precept for the financial year 2012 – 2013 be set at £16,000 and this was **agreed**.

Cllr Woodcraft proposed and Cllr Hunt seconded that an advance on next year's precept of £2,000 be requested from SCDC to be paid on approximately 01.01.2012 and this was **agreed**.

Cllr K Webb proposed and Cllr Tibbles seconded that the Clerk be authorised to transfer money from the Community Benefit Fund and Clerk's Gratuity Fund to the current account as necessary and this was **agreed**.

h) New Financial Regulations:

The draft of the new financial regulations had been agreed at the meeting of 14.11.2011 and the Clerk presented a clean copy for the Council to adopt. **Agreed** to adopt the new financial regulations as from the date of the meeting.

i) Application to SCDC for assistance from s106 monies, "play pot", for rubber tiles under Village Green play equipment:

Agreed not to proceed with this at the present time in the light of the earlier discussion of item 7.

j) Donations including request from Suffolk Age Concern:

Agreed not to make a donation to Suffolk Age Concern. The Chairman **agreed** to use his Chairman's allowance to purchase vouchers as a thank you to Mrs Bloomfield for voluntarily keeping the bus shelter clean during the previous year.

k) Cancellation of routine meetings in rest of current financial year to reduce costs:

Cllr K Webb proposed and Cllr Tibbles seconded that the routine meetings in January, February and March 2012 be cancelled and this was **agreed**.

9. DELEGATION TO CLERK TO FACILITATE THE TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS BECAUSE ROUTINE MEETINGS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED

Councillors had been given a draft resolution in advance and Cllr Woodcraft proposed and Cllr Tibbles seconded that the draft be adopted and this was **agreed** as follows:

- The Council **agrees** to discharge its functions except those listed below by full delegation to the Clerk and Proper Officer pursuant to s101 Local Government Act 1972. She may, but is not obliged to consult with one or more Councillors before exercising any power or duty or implementing any decision or action.

In addition to the functions listed in the Clerk's job description and in Standing Order 3 this shall include, but not be limited to:

- Taking action on receipt of correspondence, emails, telephone and other conversations.
- Responding to consultations from other bodies.
- Making comments to the Local Planning Authority on planning applications, applications for conservation area consent, applications for tree works and other planning issues.
- If expenditure has previously been agreed and minuted or the expenditure is provided for in the agreed financial documents monitoring expenditure against income for the current financial year, authorizing the expenditure subject to a limit of £1000 and financial regulation 3.4 shall be read accordingly.
- Convening meetings of the Council where the Clerk deems it inappropriate to exercise her delegated authority or if a matter falls outside this delegation.

The functions **not** included within this delegation are:

- The setting of the precept
- The agreement of the budget
- The signing of cheques.

This delegation shall continue in force until the first meeting in April 2012 when it shall be reviewed with a view to its rescission, if possible.

10. UPDATES

- a) **Visitor Centre** – The Clerk reported that further funding might be available through the EDF in conjunction with SCC and SCDC. The information was passed, for further action, to Cllr Tibbles as a Council representative on the Visitor Centre Working Group.
- b) **Possible solar powered vehicle activated sign** – The Clerk reported that she had a price from one supplier of £3,155 plus vat if the Council puts the pole in position. A second supplier would like a site meeting before quoting. SCC would also like a site meeting and confirmed that both suppliers' products had been trialled by SCC. She also reported that the Parish Plan was likely to be making recommendations in connection with this issue. The Council could wait until the Plan was finalised or go ahead in the next financial year provided the Trust and Cllr Leighton (from his SCC Locality budget) were able to provide the contributions requested of them by the Council. It was **agreed** to proceed with the provision of the sign in the next financial year if the other contributions were provided.
- c) **Bridge over Creek near East Point** – The Clerk reported that Southwold Town Council would like sight of any structural surveys or repair estimates that were in the possession of the Council. The Chairman reported that he and other Trustees were meeting with Mr Morton to discuss the survey he had produced for the Trust and possibly to put costings to it. **Agreed** that the Chairman would report back the meeting to the Clerk and, if appropriate, the Clerk would ask the Trust for the survey and costings to provide to Southwold Town Council.

11. PROTOCOL FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN COUNCIL MEETINGS

As part of its protocol for communication with the public the Council had stated it would consult with other local authorities with a view to revising its "Protocol at Meetings" policy. The Clerk reported that Southwold Town Council relied on its Standing Orders, but appeared only to permit residents to speak at meetings during the public participation forum. **Agreed** that the Clerk would investigate the legality of only permitting residents of the village to speak at meetings.

12. APPOINTMENTS FOLLOWING A COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION

Sizewell Parishes Liaison Group: The only Councillor nominated was Cllr Woodcraft so it was **agreed** Cllr Woodcraft be the representative.

SALC: The Chairman was the only Councillor nominated so it was **agreed** Cllr D Webb be the representative.

Councillor Financial Controller: The only Councillor nominated was Cllr Hunt so it was **agreed** Cllr Hunt become the Councillor Financial Controller.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

a) An email had been received from Mr A Walpole asking detailed questions concerning the village play equipment. He had said that the questions were not requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act and had asked that his questions be answered at the next meeting. **Agreed** to deal with his questions at the next routine meeting at which he was present.

b) SALC had produced a questionnaire investigating the impact of changes to public transport. Councillors answered the questions and **agreed** the Clerk finalise the replies and return the questionnaire.

c) There were circulars for Councillors.

14. CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk wished to ensure posters were being produced for the tree carols and mince pies on 19 December. This was in hand.

15. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

There had been a public discussion lasting approximately thirty minutes before the meeting formally opened in which this topic had been thoroughly examined. The Clerk did not therefore give her usual report on this matter.

16. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

a) Cllr Hunt said that the potholes in Palmers Lane needed attention. The Clerk **agreed** to inform the highway authority.

b) Cllr K Webb said that in the previous week when there had been flood warnings, although other people had been contacted the Environment Agency (the EA) did not contact him. As he was the key holder to the gates the Clerk **agreed** to remind the EA of the importance of contacting him.

c) Cllr Tibbles said that the Village Green Christmas tree this year was donated by a resident of Wenhaston who visits Walberswick regularly.

17. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr Smiley asked whether the forthcoming election would provide a platform for people to discuss the problems being experienced by the Council. The Chairman explained that people nominated could canvass. Mr Jeans wished to know what would happen if there was no election. The Chairman replied that if only one person or no-one was nominated then the Council was required to co-opt onto the Council. Mr Jeans asked why an election had been called, the Chairman replied that it was part of the democratic process. Mr MacCarthy asked the Clerk whether the recent newspaper report in the East Anglian Daily Times was correct, the Clerk replied that it was a fairly reasonable representation of the conversation she had with the journalist, but there were some errors. Mr Denny asked for further information on the proposed vehicle activated sign which the Chairman answered. Mrs Lancaster said she wanted to propose a vote of thanks to the Councillors and Clerk who were doing a sterling job in trying circumstances. Mrs Hunt asked whether a special meeting could be called. The Chairman replied it was something to be considered. Mr Buncombe thought having a meeting set up by the Council during an election period might be unacceptable under election laws.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Monday 2 April 2012 at 7.30 pm and the meeting closed at 9.07 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....