

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minute of the meeting of Walberswick Parish Council held in the village hall annexe on Monday 15th May 2017 at 7.15.

Present: *Councillors Richardson (in the chair), Sutton and Bassinette. Suffolk County Councillor Richard Smith. Jonathan Winyard, Co-option candidate.*

67/17 Chairman's welcome and election of chairman for the year. Councillor Sutton proposed Councillor Richardson, seconded by Councillor Bassinette. This was approved.

68/17 Apologies for absence: Jane Sutherland-Rogers and Joanna Mackay, who had applied to be co-opted to the Council sent their apologies as they were unable to attend.

69/17 Declarations of Interest: The Councillors each confirmed that there were none to report.

70/17 Consideration of the Minute of the meeting of 6th March 2017. It was resolved that the Minute should be signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

71/17 Open forum. Bill Ungless raised the matter of asking the East of England Coop Shop in the Village to include the Heritage Hut fund in the charity boxes. It was agreed that this was a very good idea to potentially raise additional funds and Councillor Sutton agreed to speak to the Coop Shop to see how this might be done.

72/17 County Council report

County Councillor Smith introduced himself as the new Councillor representing Walberswick. In addition to Walberswick PC, he has 10 other PCs and 1 PM at Dunwich. He is on the SCC cabinet and on the Sizewell group of SCC. He said that as he had only just been elected, he did not have a Report to give at this meeting, but that he looked forward to representing his many villages on the Council.

73/17 Co-option to the Council

The chairman introduced letters from Jane Sutherland-Rogers, Jonathan Winyard and Joanna Mackay expressing their interest in being co-opted on to the WPC. The Council acknowledged these applications and expressed gratitude for the willingness of these villagers to bring their experience and energy to the Council. Councillors resolved and approved that Jane Sutherland-Rogers, Joanna Mackay and Jonathan Winyard be co-opted on to the WPC. Jonathan Winyard signed his Acceptance of Office proforma at the meeting, joined the Council and participated in the remaining agenda items. Jane Sutherland-Rogers and Joanna Mackay will join once they have signed their Declarations of Office.

It was further resolved that all Councillors should attend a professional Parish Councillor's Training Course from SALC to enable them to fully understand the demands of the role. Councillor Bassinette was authorised to liaise with Councillors and SALC to find a suitable date and venue for this.

74/17 Election of Vice-Chairman and Other Councillor Responsibilities – It was resolved that the selection of Vice-Chairman and WPC representatives to the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, Police Liaison, Councillors responsible for recreation areas, footpaths and trees all be deferred until the next meeting when all of the members of the new PC would be present.

*K. Smith
Richardson*

75/17 Planning responses.

The Clerk advised that the Council should have a policy for dealing with requests from SCDC to respond to Planning Consent Applications. It was resolved that the Council accept the Clerk's recommendation that the WPC should strive to respond to every Planning Consent Application from the SCDC using the input from the Planning Advisory Group (PAG). To do so, in future, an extraordinary meeting of the Council will be called to consider the Application if the time limit makes it impossible to wait for the next scheduled regular WPC meeting. It was expected that the Extraordinary Meeting agenda would include only the Planning Consent Application and any other statutory requirements for meeting. The Clerk will liaise with the PAG to arrange for their response to the Planning Application for WPC's consideration. If necessary, the Clerk will request an extension to the Planning Consent Application time limit.

76/17 Finance

The Clerk presented a report on the Council's current finances. The end of year balance at 31st March 2017 was £10,554.67. The present balance in the PC Account is £12,486.67. A cheque to SCDC for £548.66 written in March has not been cleared and cheques from the Authorisation to Pay Sheet amount to £2544.56. Therefore the available bank balance is £9393.45. The statement confirming these figures was checked by the Chairman and signed on behalf of the Council.

BDO, the Council's external auditor, had set a date for submission of the Annual Return and Audit papers as 22nd May 2017. At the request of the Clerk, BDO has extended the date for submission to 19th June 2017. Following the Public Interest Report issued by BDO in 2016, and an Issues Arising Report in early 2017, the Clerk stated that all financial matters are in place and that it should be expected that the Audit should be conducted normally this year without the need for the large expenses occurred in the past. In her report, the Clerk also confirmed that essential documentation was in place to assure sound financial management. These included:

- Standing Orders are in place and a copy was given to each councillor
- The Council has an Asset Register and the Clerk, with at least one Councillor, plans to walk the village with Mr Philip Kett to check each item on the register is present and note its condition, reporting back to the Council on maintenance issues if necessary
- The Clerk is confident that the Council's Financial Risk Analysis safeguards the Council's financial management.
- There has been a RoSPA inspection on the playground areas
- There is adequate insurance cover in place from CAS
- WPC Financial Regulations were updated and approved by the Council on 22nd August 2016
- The Suffolk Code of Conduct has been adopted.

The Clerk stated that all of these documents may be viewed by members of the public by arrangement. Once the Audit papers are complete, items will be placed on the website in compliance with the Transparency Regulations.

The Clerk's Report was accepted and agreed. The Council agreed to hold an Extraordinary Meeting prior to the new submission date of 19 June 2017 to accept the accounts, prepare the Annual Governance Statement and sign off the Annual Return.

The Clerk requested that the WPC approve the hiring of a financial assistant to maintain financial records up to preparation of audit papers and the Annual Return. It was expected that this expense would amount to approximately £50 a month. It was clarified that the financial assistant would

report directly to the Clerk and that the assistant would not take part directly in any WPC meetings or correspondence. The Councillors were supportive of this additional support given the workload on the Clerk and the importance of maintaining the best possible financial function for the WPC. It was agreed that the Clerk would interview eligible candidates and seek approval for the hiring at the next meeting.

For the security of the Bank statements and correspondence, a new bank mandate was signed by Councillors Richardson and Sutton to confirm the instructions to Lloyds Bank that all correspondence should be sent to the Clerk's home address rather than the Heritage Hut. To support the smoother functioning of the WPC accounts and payments, the Bank was also instructed to add Councillor Bassinette as a third signatory with limited powers on the account.

The Councillors approved the Authorisation to Pay Sheet for 15th May 2017 and the following cheques were issued:

- Clerk's expenses approved at £386.64. (This figure included the period from 5th Jan to 30th to end of March £260.00 and £126.64 for April 2017).
- Clerk's salary approved from 5th January to 30th April. Gross amount of £1,620.36 to be sent to SALC for payroll calculation deductions.
- SCDC rates for the Heritage Hut £362.85. It was noted that an appeal has been filed with SCDC to recover these rates. Results of the appeal are pending.
- WCLC £1.00 peppercorn rent.
- Membership of SALC for 2017-8 £173.71.

77/17 Heritage Hut and Scroll Committee (HHSC) (report attached).

The chairman suspended Standing Orders for Bill Ungless to report back to the Council on progress towards the restoration of the Heritage Hut and safeguarding the Walberswick Scroll. Following advice from the Templar Fund Committee at SCDC that the application for funding should be resubmitted with additional information including how the community and young people may benefit from the refurbishment of the Heritage Hut, the HHSC had updated the application and sought to resubmit with the approval of the WPC.

Given the relative importance of the HH proposals, the Clerk advised that Councillors should be included on the Committee to strengthen the links between the HHSC, the WPC and the village community at large. Councillors Bassinette and Winyard volunteered to join the HHSC on behalf of the WPC.

Bill Ungless reported that donations for the Heritage Hut renovations were being received and asked if the WPC could arrange to accept and keep these monies for the support of the HH. It was discussed whether such funds should be deposited to the WPC account with a record of donation or whether a separate account should be established. Although setting up a separate account would be more time-consuming, the Councillors agreed that it would be more transparent and easier to manage if a separate account to accept donations and other monies for the potential renovation of the HH were established.

In light of the discussion, it was resolved that the Chairman and Clerk would sign off the new application to the Templar fund, that Councillors Bassinette and Winyard would become members of the HHSC, and that the WPC would establish a separate bank account for the potential HHSC renovation, with a mandate to be presented to the next meeting.

78/17 Maintenance of Playing Field

The chairman reported that it was necessary for the fence at the playing field to be repaired and that a quote from Paul Denny who has done work in the past had been received. It was resolved that the repairs should be done and that in addition to the quote from Mr Denny, two additional quotes should be solicited with approval for the repairs to be sought from the WPC prior to the start of the school holidays. It was also proposed that financing for the fencing be sought from SCDC. It was also proposed that the Council consider whether adult exercise equipment could be added to the playground to make the area even more community friendly.

It was agreed that the Clerk would seek 1-2 additional bids for the fence repair and that she should approach SCDC's Sarah Shinnie for possible funding. The Clerk was also requested to contact Sarah Shinnie about the fitness equipment and rubber matting for the play area. Three quotes for the equipment would be sought. The Clerk was also requested to ask Suffolk Norse to inspect the play area on the Green and produce a specification for tendering any additional work.

79/17 Inflatable Flood defences.

The Clerk reported that there were a myriad of inflatable defence options for homes on the market but lacking specific knowledge, it was extraordinarily difficult to assess what might be needed or what the WPC might wish to support. After discussion of how these defence options might be used or allocated, it was agreed that the WPC was not in a position to determine individual householders needs nor to be able to determine fair and proper allocation of any publicly procured defences.

It was resolved that the Council would not take any further action on this matter. It was resolved, however, that the WPC would remind the WCC about reinstating the flood defence barrier at the top of the car park as it had been taken off its hinges for other work.

80/17 Date of next meeting: An Extraordinary Meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 5th June in the annex of Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.