

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday 3rd February 2014 at Bishopstone Village Hall

Those Present: Simon Jenkins (Chair), Ian Thompson (Vice Chair), Lesley Drewett (Clerk), Andy Greenhalgh, Nigel Crisp, Stuart McGuigan, Ian Thomas, Julian Cooke, Cllr Andrew Bennett.

1. Approved Apologies

Douglas Stevens, Kate Griffiths.

The Chair welcomed Councillors and the members of the public in attendance to the meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest. The Chair then closed the meeting in order that Public Question Time could be brought forward.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Chair asked for a proposition that the minutes of the January meeting be accepted as a true record. The proposition was put forward by Cllr Crisp, and unanimously agreed. The minutes were then signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

All actions from the previous meeting had been completed except for the following:

Missing Signs

Cllr Greenhalgh had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda and he explained that he had emailed the Clerk with the details of a missing sign at the closed church yard, Hinton Parva and also Russley Park. The Clerk had emailed Annie Ellis of SBC who was dealing with the problem.

[Post meeting note: Ms Ellis has since contacted the Clerk to confirm that the works have been carried out.]

Reports from Ward Councillor – Septic tank, Hinton Parva

There had been no recent reports of progress; this item was on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting, in the Ward Councillor's report.

Permissive footpath

The Clerk had contacted Stratton St Margaret Parish Council with regard to the installation of a dog bin close to the permissive footpath; the Clerk is no longer in the post and she is waiting for a response from the grounds man. The Parish Council will contact the landowner for his views once costs have been discussed.

Action: The Clerk is to seek information from Stratton St Margaret Parish Council.

Action: The Clerk is to send the cost of installation for a dog bin to Councillors.

Action: The Clerk is to add this item to the next agenda. (Complete)

The 90 bus

Cllr Greenhalgh is still waiting for the owner of the bus company to send the notes of the Steering Group meeting held before Christmas.

Action: Cllr Greenhalgh is to circulate the documentation from the meeting once it is available.

Cllr Griffiths had sent an email to the Clerk before the meeting; she had contacted Thames Travel and informed them that there are no signs for the X47 and she was informed that they would increase publicity.

Signed:

Date:

Sparsity Factor

Cllr Bennett stated that following the discussion at the last meeting, he had sent some information to the Chair, which he had forwarded to Councillors and to the Head Teacher at Bishopstone School. This element of schools funding is held by SBC and not Central Government; the principle of the sparsity factor did not exist unless SBC chose to put it in place, which they had not. The school had stood to lose money, but as a result of what had been decided by SBC Cabinet, and notified to the Schools Forum on 21st January 2014, it will not. It appears to have been a successful outcome. The Chair stated that he had not received any further communication on this subject from the Head Teacher.

Sewage in Bishopstone

The Chair had contacted the parishioner concerned and she confirmed that none of the actions on the list had been completed. Cllr Bennett is to follow up on the commitments that have not been fulfilled by Thames Water. He confirmed that the Royal Oak was not the source of one of the recent blockages.

Action: Cllr Bennett is to contact Thames Water (Huw Thomas).

The Chair stated that the rest of the items in matters arising were to be covered later in the meeting.

Flooding

The Chair explained that the draft Local Flood Risk Management strategy was to be on the agenda for the March meeting, as responses are required by 10th March 2014. Cllr Bennett advised Cllrs that the team would be attending the Localities Meeting on 11 February 2014 in Liddington Village Hall. An exhibition had already taken place.

Action: The Chair is to draft and circulate a response in time for the March meeting.

5. Public Question Time

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting, but has been left in this part of the minutes for continuity.

The licensee of the Royal Oak (Mr. Tim Finney) and his son were in attendance to explain a proposed development, prior to submitting a pre planning application to SBC on the following day. Their proposal is to demolish the existing 2 bed and breakfast rooms (which were badly in need of refurbishment) and to install c6 modular, environmentally friendly, accommodation units in the upper part of the garden; the units would be made from sustainable timber resources, and he hoped that they would be installed before the end of the summer. The car parking space would be improved by the development, which would also allow for 2½ full time jobs.

Mr Finney showed Councillors the proposed application drawings and took questions. The Chair asked Councillors to be mindful of the sewage problems recently encountered when the application is presented for comments, to seek confirmation that the local system will be adequate for the additional load.

The Chair then informed the meeting, with Mr Finney present, that a meeting had recently taken place at the True Heart between himself, Cllr Bennett, Cllr Thomas, the owner and his architect. A public meeting has been scheduled to take place before the Parish Assembly on the 3rd March 2014 in Bishopstone Village Hall at 7:00 pm, to gauge parishioners' reaction to their proposals. In outline, these are to demolish the old village hall at the back of the pub, and refurbish the pub, with manager's accommodation upstairs, which would be paid for by an enabling development of 2 houses on the car park. A flyer with text from the Parish Council is to be delivered by the owner to all residents. Mr Finney thanked Councillors for their time and left the meeting.

The Chair re-opened the meeting.

6. Planning

No planning applications had been received.

Late Receipt of Planning Notifications

No late planning applications had been received.

GRANTED

No granted schedules had been received.

REFUSAL

No refusal schedules had been received.

7. Reports from Ward Councillor

Cllr Bennett briefed the council on the latest position re the Police and Fire Service precepts in the context of evolving national government guidance.

The Chair stated that the Parish Council had not been invited to provide feedback on the PCC's consultation to increase Council Tax to make up for other cuts by Central Government, but he and other Councillors had responded as parishioners. Cllr Bennett advised that the consultation process had been on the wrong figure of £3.00; it should have been £3.15. There was to be a PCC panel meeting later in the week and he was not sure what the final response will be. He advised that many police authorities across the country are looking at increases of 5% and more. The PCC's intentions are to have fewer PCSOs, but to recruit 300 Special Constables; there is agreement that a significant number of these should be local to areas that they will be patrolling.

Septic Tank in Hinton Parva

The Chair informed Cllrs that he had sent several emails to SBC (Brian Skeffington) to ask when he was going to receive a report, or if he would attend the Parish Council meeting. He had not received any response.

Cllr Bennett advised that Paul Hewer is the contact for the contractual side of the project. He had received an email that day stating that a site meeting had taken place and the contract was due to start on 3rd February 2014 subject to the provision of power to the new plant on 17th February 2014. The email stated that letters were to be delivered to residents and Environmental Services (the contractors) would be pleased to answer any questions about the work (contact details were supplied in the letter). The replacement tank is due to take four weeks from the start of the work, weather permitting. A Councillor reported that he had received a letter with this information.

Cllr Cooke had spoken with Mr Richard Cooke, who had not received any information to date. The Chair asked whether the works include the removal of the contaminated soil; Cllr Bennett presumed that this will be removed and disposed of.

Action: The Chair is to provide an update for Mrs Marie-Noëlle Witty. (Complete)

Car Parking at the Wyncies

The Chair explained that he was unable to visit the people concerned as he was still awaiting details of resident's addresses. However, there is a small front garden that is full of rubbish. Cllr Bennett explained that there are rules that state that properties cannot lower the standards of adjacent properties.

Action: The Clerk is to provide the Chair with the contact details of those concerned.

Cllr Bennett advised that when parking in the Wyncies had been reviewed, it had been decided that there should be no designated spaces for individual properties; this was not likely to change. There is currently no review process for tenants of council houses. A Councillor asked whether the regulations with regard to parking could be made available.

Action: Cllr Bennett is to provide a copy of the parking regulations.

Signed:

Date:

8. Reports from Sub Committees

There were no reports from sub committees.

9. Precept

Cllr Crisp explained that a precept of £11,852 had been requested from SBC with two caveats; firstly that this figure was dependent on the refund of 100% of the Council Tax Support (CTS) grant being approved at the SBC Cabinet meeting on 5th February 2014 and also ratification at the Parish Council meeting on 3rd February 2014. He went on to explain that after agreeing the figure at the last meeting the CTS grant had been doubled to £818, and SBC had approved a special dispensation to reduce the precept as long as it was agreed at this meeting. The money received this year and next year will be the same. However, as it was not certain that the 100% refund would be approved by SBC a backup proposal was needed.

Cllr Crisp asked what the outcome of the CTS discussions had been; he had requested confirmation from SBC but had not received a response. Cllr Bennett advised that the decisions regarding the precept would be coming through on 6th February 2014.

Cllr Crisp put forward a proposition to accept a precept of £11,852, or, alternatively, last year's spend of £12,670, minus the CTS grant that appears on 6th February 2014. This was seconded by Cllr Greenhalgh and unanimously agreed.

Action: The Clerk is to send a confirmation email to SBC on 6th February 2014.

[Post meeting note: Cllr Crisp has spoken with SBC (Freida Savage)]

10. Flood Plan

This item was covered in item 4.

11. Main Points

Septic Tank

This item was covered in item 7.

Football Pitch Revival

Cllr Thomas advised that the parishioner who had offered to help was no longer contactable. He and Cllr Greenhalgh now hoped to identify someone else to carry out the maintenance. Additionally, the Head Teacher of Bishopstone School had notified the Chair that grants of £20K-£30K may be available for rural schools without sports facilities; these are dependent on land being available with sufficient lease of tenure of the holding of the land for the Government to plough the money in. She wished to manage this project on behalf of the School. A Cllr suggested that this could be linked to the play area project. Cllr Thomas advised that the Church Commissioners would have to get involved as it would be a change of use.

Action: Cllrs Thomas and Greenhalgh are to try to progress this in time for the next meeting.

Action: The Chair is to talk to Cllr Griffiths (Complete)

Action: The Clerk is to add this item to the next agenda. (Complete)

Village Information Boards

Cllrs McGuigan and Greenhalgh had brought along some samples which Councillors viewed and discussed. Cllr Greenhalgh asked that any further suggestions to those made at the meeting be forwarded to them via email. It was felt this could be on show at the public meeting.

Action: The Clerk is to add this item to the next agenda. (Complete)

Action: Cllr Greenhalgh is to draft an A0 copy in time for the March meeting.

Permissive Footpath

This item had been dealt with under item 4.

SHLAA

The Chair had forwarded a draft response to Councillors on the final draft of the SHLAA; the letter was approved.

Action: The Clerk is to send the letter to SBC (Phil Smith) that evening. (Complete)

True Heart

This item had been covered in item 5. Cllr Thomas explained that we were now in a different planning climate and Councillors should be mindful that if they were to force the owner down the marketing route the Parish Council may get nothing. Councillors felt that any firm offer should be made in writing, as it had been reported that all offers to date had been verbal.

Action: The Chair is to speak with the Royal Oak and with Arkells Brewery. (Complete)

Cllr Thomas recommended that there should be a binding legal agreement where the Parish Council insists that a detailed schedule of works should be included in the agreement, to ensure that the pub is operational before the houses were occupied. There were concerns over the number of car parking spaces.

Cllr Greenhalgh suggested that the Royal Oak may wish to present their proposals to parishioners at the public meeting on 3 March.

Action: The Chair is to circulate the flyer when it is available.

Action: The flyer should be distributed to parishioners in Bishopstone and Hinton Parva.

Pond & Island – Trees

The Clerk had circulated the 2009 tree report from SBC to Councillors before the meeting. The Chair had carried out a site visit and had circulated his comments to Councillors. Some work had been carried out since the report was produced, but coppicing of the hazels and pollarding of the willows are works that should be carried out in 2014. It was agreed that a working party could carry out the coppicing, but the pollarding of the willows should be carried out by a professional.

Action: The Clerk is to get three quotes for the pollarding of the willows.

Action: The Clerk is to contact the Arboricultural Officer for a site visit.

Action: The Chair is to advertise the need for a working party at the public meeting and a date was to be agreed. (Complete)

12. Accounts to be Paid

The Clerk explained that she had omitted to include the £6.00 expense claim for Cllr Greenhalgh's parking costs and she asked that this cheque also be approved as it had been agreed at the meeting on 2nd December 2014. Cllr Greenhalgh reported the seminar had been extremely useful. BT are now offering to meet with rural Parish Councils.

The following cheques were presented for approval:

- L D Drewett £4.99

The above expenses were proposed for payment by Cllr Cooke, seconded by Cllr McGuigan and agreed unanimously by those present.

The annual renewal invoice for the Navigus Planning journal had arrived after the agenda had been sent. Councillors felt this publication was no longer needed, but as Cllr Thomas had left, it was agreed to get his feedback before making a decision. The cheque was therefore left until the next meeting for signing.

Action: The Clerk is to email Cllr Thomas for his feedback and then forward his comments on to Councillors for their views.

13. Correspondence

The Chair asked whether anyone wished to see any items of correspondence, none did.

14. Parishioners Feedback/ComplaintsManhole Cover at Hinton Parva

A councillor advised that this is now extremely dangerous.

Action: The Clerk is to contact SBC. (Complete)

Signed:

Date:

[Post meeting note: This work has now been carried out.]

Weight Limit in Covingham

Cllr Cooke advised those present that there was now a weight limit of 7½ Tons on Merlin Way, in Covingham. A meeting is to take place at Lotmead farm on 14th February 2014, at which Robert Buckland MP will be present.

Action: The Clerk is to check the last email sent. (Complete)

Spring Clean Up

A Councillor asked whether a spring clean-up would be viable. It was agreed that it would and the date of 16th March 2014 was chosen. It was further agreed to meet at 10:00am at both village halls.

Action: The Chair is to write an article for the Parish Times. (Complete). This will also be taken to the public meeting.

Action: The Clerk is to request bags, litter pickers and yellow vests from James Garrard.

A420

The Chair had circulated updates from the Clerk of Bourton Parish Council. He advised Councillors that they should expect to receive traffic counting protocols over the next few days and it had to be decided whether to take part in this exercise.

WALC Meeting

The Chair explained that he had attended the recent WALC – SAC meeting; his view was that it was not worth attending. The Clerk advised that most of the information is provided in the minutes of the Parish Clerks' meeting. However, Councillors felt it was worth placing an annual subscription to obtain the minutes of each meeting.

Parish Assembly Meeting

The Chair advised Councillors that he would chair the public meeting in March and also the Parish Assembly, he will then stand down and hand the March meeting to the Vice Chair, who will chair the Parish Council until the May AGM when the usual business will be conducted.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 3rd March 2014, Parish Assembly, at Bishopstone Village Hall. It will start at 19:30 as the public meeting is to start at 19:00.

Action: Apologies to the Clerk before the meeting.