**LHPC07b Little Horkesley Parish Council**

**meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 31 July 2019**

**Present:** Maria Oats (Chair)

Chris Jacobs

Susie Goldring

Hannah Taylor

Roger Drury (Clerk)

**Apologies** were received from Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North) and Chris Exley.

Susie Goldring declared a Pecuniary Interest in relation to Item 6a. of the agenda.

**1.Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June were agreed as an accurate record.

**2. Clerk’s Resignation**

The Clerk’s resignation letter was noted and a number of alternative replacements were discussed. Chris Jacobs’ daughter had expressed an interest and the following steps were agreed:

* Guidance from EALC would be sought on the number of hours/salary appropriate to a Parish with approximately 160 on the Electoral Role;
* Further guidance would be sought on the training for the Clerk’s Certificate and the costs involved to the Parish to guide future budgeting;
* Maria Oats, as Chair, should meet her and discuss the role and her suitability to fulfil it.

The Clerk would work with whoever is appointed until 31 December and offer guidance through the budgeting process towards the 2019/20 Year End.

**3. Affordable Housing**

Chris Exley had reported by email that no further news had been received from Hastoe HA as they are probably in the process of talking to potential landowners and were unlikely to brief the Parish Council until a deal had been agreed in principle.

The Clerk reported that on a recent vacation in the Scottish Isles he had seen many affordable homes even in the most sensitive areas which integrated well into the villages and were doing much to reduce the depopulation of the isles.

**4. Emergency Assistance Plan**

The note by the Clerk on the Clerk’s forum which had discussed the CBC Emergency Plan was noted. The Council appeared to be well ahead in their plan to revise the existing plan – some Councils had not updated plans, and this had caused problems. It was recommended that plans should be updated annually particularly where personnel involved had changed.

It was agreed that the proforma promulgated by CBC should be used, where possible, to assist its integration into Borough overall plan. It was agreed that the Village Profile would be a valuable addition to the Plan and provide guidance to external emergency bodies operating in the area in an emergency.

Hannah Taylor reported that the Environment Agency had reported a flood risk to lower Water Lane in view of actions taken by Rix Farms on the reservoir above the village and it was agreed that this should be incorporated in the Plan

It was agreed that the CBC guidance, issued by Lauren Warsap CBC Resilience Officer, on “Unauthorised encampments of Gypsies/Travellers” should be included with the overall document.

It was agreed the yellow weather warnings being issued by Lauren Warsap required no action except in the most extreme situations e.g. a Red warning specifically targeting our area.

Chris Jacobs would present a final draft for consideration at the September meeting.

**5. Clerk’s Report**

a. Data Protection

The Chair presented a paper on the implementation of the GDPR which shows progress made in implementing the legislation.

It would be reconsidered at the September meeting but generally the process was in good shape.

b. Playing Field

Hannah Taylor and the Clerk reported that the Playing Field was in good shape and:

* The grass mowing with the mulching device was highly effective and there was no growing pile of cuttings – the frequency of cuts would be reduced to reflect the less intense growth from mid-summer;
* The Scattered orchard and pollinator patch were doing well;
* Hannah Taylor had been cutting back the entrance hedge but the Clerk would remind Colchester Homes of their responsibilities.

It was noted that Stuart Mosley had received the RoSPA Inspection and would meet the Clerk at 5.30pm on Friday 2 August to discuss what action was necessary and the costs involved.

c. Roads & Verges

The verges had been sensitively cut by Highways this year resulting in excellent growth in the verge side wildflowers – the Clerk had reported such to Cllr Anne Brown.

Maria Oats expressed a concern on the road safety issues of visibility on Holt/Crabtree Road.

d. Little Horkesley PC Website

Maria Oats produced a list of photographs which could be removed to improve accessibility – doubts were expressed on whether access by iphone was the primary way the population accessed such village information.

(Post Meeting Note: It may be worth looking at other websites e.g. Mount Bures on how other parishes meet the requirements of the Transparency Code)

e. DV & SV Forum 21 June

Chris Jacobs reported that she had found the Forum particularly interesting, highlighting presentations on:

* Archaeological Heritage;
* Natural Beauty and Special Qualities of the AONB;
* Farming policies going forward;
* Save Our Swifts.

f. Internet Services

Susie Goldring reported that she had been looking into the activities of Gigaclear and County Broadband in relation to provision of fibre to the village. Gigaclear initially were looking at Autumn 2019 to provide a service but delays in access issues/planning had pushed this back to 2020/21.

It was agreed to nominate Susie as the Village Broadband Champion contact to Superfast Essex and thus become the prime contact point.

g. Online Banking

The Clerk had been communicating with EALC on their email address [parish.support@ealc.gov.uk](mailto:parish.support@ealc.gov.uk) on moving to online banking and new councillor training packs but had learnt that this email address had been replaced by [info@ealc.gov.uk](mailto:info@ealc.gov.uk) However, the first email address was still accepting emails but nobody was monitoring it.

This had now been corrected and contact made!

**6. Planning**

a. Application No: 191547 Heygreen Farmhouse, Workhouse Road, Little Horkesley

No objections were raised to this application.

b. Application No: 191864 Park Farm, Park Farm Road, Little Horkesley

No objections were raised to this amended application.

c. St Peter & St Paul Graveyard

In 1940 the Church bought 0.5 acre of land to the west of Water Lane virtually opposite Joscelyns with a view to using it as an overflow graveyard – the time has now come to plan for its potential use. The Clerk has been assisting the Church Warden, Christopher Orme, in discussions with CBC Planners on the process to gain permission for its intended use given its location outside the Village Envelope, adjacent to a listed building and in the Dedham Vale AONB.

The recommendation from CBC is that the Church apply for a pre-application consultation and that is now being progressed.

The Clerk asked that this information remain Confidential for the moment.

**7. Finance**

a. The Quarterly Report to 30 June 2019 was regarded as satisfactory – the position is broadly the same as in the previous year.

b. The following expenditure was approved:

* CALC £35.00 – annual affiliation fee;
* RCCE £52.80 – annual affiliation fee;
* CBC 390 – Playing Field Rent;
* DAP Landscapes £360.00 – grass cutting.

c. It was also agreed that a donation of £25 to the Revd John Chandler’s Leaving Gift as he had been an outstanding Parish Priest.

His last service would be at 1600 on Sunday 20 October with the Bishop of Colchester.

**8. Correspondence**

The following correspondence was noted:

* DV & SV Update June;
* Essex Warbler;
* EALC Legal Update July – Maria Oats reported a long article on the protection/preservation of trees.
* RCCE Annual Review.

**9. Items for the Next Agenda**

**…………………………………………………………………………. (Maria Oats – Chair)**

**…………………………………………………………………………. (Date)**

**The next Parish Council meeting will be on Wednesday 18 September.**