

Minutes of the Little Horkesley Parish Council

meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 18 October 2017

Present: Steve Clarke
Maria Oats
Chris Exley
Hannah Taylor
Roger Drury (Clerk)

With Cllr Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North)

No pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests were declared.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September were approved as an accurate record.

2. Clerk's Report

a. War Memorial

It was agreed that the request from the Little Horkesley PCC to hang boards advertising forthcoming events in the church calendar was wholly inappropriate with the War Memorial's aim of providing a focus for remembrance of the dead of two World Wars.

Additionally, as the War Memorial is a listed building, it was unlikely that an application for such use would be granted.

The proposal should be rejected.

b. Superfast Essex

The Superfast Essex email of 13/10 permitting communities to use any supplier to provide a Community Wi-Fi hub was not relevant to the village as we are not seeking to set up such a hub.

The Clerk reported that he had received no feedback on the discussions between County Broadband and Duncan Brown.

The continued implementation of superfast broadband in West Bergholt was noted.

c. Playing Field

It was noted that, in view of the failure of other wood surgeons to provide quotations, Paul Cutler had been informed that his quote for £1,250 had been accepted – the work would be done over winter.

It was agreed that the trees to the west of the playing field, backing onto the former council houses, should be cut back to 50% of their current height.

d. Roads/Verges

The Highways Briefing Meeting to be held in Great Dunmow on 3 November was noted but it was felt that the briefing would be unlikely to address immediate local issues.

Otherwise there were no current concerns on Highway issues.

e. Defibrillators

There was a lengthy discussion on the feasibility study provided by Chris Exley, the main issues being:

- The extremely low probability that a person in a lowly populated rural area would suffer a heart attack in the centre of the village;
- Whether anyone with the skills to use the defibrillator would be on hand;
- Whether a First Responder from either Nayland or West Bergholt called in response to a 999 Ambulance call would provide an adequate service.

It was generally agreed that a defibrillator in areas where people gather together e.g. West Bergholt Co-op/Nayland Post office was an excellent idea.

It was agreed to discuss the issue with the village and return to it at the next meeting.

f. Mobile Library

The Clerk's letter to ECC on the issue had been acknowledged by Cllr Susan Barker, EEC Cabinet Member, and discussion with Cllr Anne Brown (ECC Constable), had indicated that the total withdrawal of the rural services was unlikely.

g. Data Protection

The report by Maria Oats was discussed.

The main concern was the list of vulnerable people held in the Emergency Plan and the fact that those appearing on such a list were required to give their consent and how that consent could be gained,

There were also issues on emails and the retention of records which Maria Oats would progress with the Clerk.

Cllr Nigel Chapman reported that the new Data Protection Legislation was not a live issue **in relation to their Emergency Plan** with other local councils.

h. Community Special Constables

The proposal from Great Horkesley PC was discussed but it was felt that, given the low level of rural crime and the time available to patrol such a large area, the required investment from the Parish would not be worthwhile.

i. Little Horkesley PC Website

The following policy on what planning applications are loaded on the website was agreed:

- Only those applications on which the Parish Council comment should be uploaded – this would include applications outside the parish if judged to be of concern – the website is linked to the CBC website where comments made by the Council are available;
- Applications should be removed 3 months after a CBC decision is made unless the potential for further action, e.g. an appeal, suggests subsequent action may arise.

3. Planning

a. Application No: B/17701128 (Babergh) Harpers Hill, Nayland

No decision on this or parallel applications has been posted.

b. Application No: 170419 South Lodge, Nayland Road, Great Horkesley

No decision has been rendered.

c. Low cost/Affordable Housing

The Council failed to establish common ground on this issue. Whether there was a genuine need from families in the village for housing in the village was questioned as was the availability of land that could be purchased at an agricultural land price.

Given the total lack of facilities in the village for those with young children, the suitability of the village for low cost housing was raised.

It was agreed that Ruth Newcombe be invited to the next meeting.

d. CBC Enforcement Action at Thrift Farm Barns and Thrift Farm

There appeared to be no action in hand at Thrift Farm as yet.

Further action at Thrift Farm Barns (Motts) would await construction of the workshop which already has planning permission.

There was considerable anger of the issue of application of planning law and the whole enforcement field:

- Since 2010 the Government, particularly with the NPPF, had stripped away the opportunities to object to planning applications on a local basis;
- The Government's emphasis on using planning as a tool of economic growth had undermined the **basis** on which planning applications are assessed;
- The government's bias to economic growth has undermined the Appeals system;
- The under resourcing of Local Government has resulted in there being insufficient planners to carry out proper enforcement procedures;
- Through the above under resourcing at the local level, the system of Local Plans had become an open door to developers and the destruction of the countryside.

e. Josselyns, Water Lane, Little Horkesley

CBC are unable to take any action on the colour of a property – this policy seemed to be at odds with at least two cases in the village when the choice of colour had been an issue to CBC Planners.

f. Horkesley Park

Delays had been caused by the failure of CBC to consult on the Section 106 agreement and affordable housing– it is anticipated that clearance work will start by Christmas.

g. Local Plan

Cllr Nigel Chapman reported that the housing allocation to Colchester had been increased by 300 units/year and CBC were striving to get the Local Plan approved for 2017-32 to provide some basis of stability.

4. Finance

a. The satisfactory surplus of £8,017.43 as of 30 September was noted although several major items of expenditure, e.g. £1,250 cutting back trees, later in the year was noted.

b. Approval the following expenditure J R Drury £33.98 – ink cartridges.

5. Correspondence

The following correspondence from Rural England and the EALC Training Programme for 2018 were noted and it was generally agreed that the Clerk was correct in limiting the flow of such generally non-relevant to Councillors.

6. Items for the Next agenda

..... (Steve Clarke – Chair)

..... (Date)

The next Little Horkesley Parish Council Meeting will be held at 1930 on Wednesday 15 November.