

Minutes of the Little Horkesley Parish Council

meeting Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 20 December 2017

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

Apologies were received from Cllr. Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North)

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November were approved as an accurate record.

2. Clerk's Report

a. Superfast Essex

Noted the Clerk's email of 21/11 to Superfast Essex on the information on their website on the availability of internet services in Little Horkesley and their reply which did not promise any specific action on the provision of a service to the community.

It was agreed that continued pressure was needed to keep the problems of rural communities in their longterm planning.

There was then a discussion on the Government's pledge to make a minimum of 10 mbs available to all homes in UK by 2020 – the Minister had said will would be as easy as acquiring a landline.

b. Playing Field

Nothing to report except that Paul Cutler had been reminded of his commitment to cut back the hedge/trees to the north of the field.

As could be expected at this time of year, the play area was wet and greasy and needing a weeding but still in use.

The Chair proposed shredding past checklists on the state of play equipment but was asked to delay until a final decision was made, under the review of Data Protection, on what should be retained long term.

c. Roads/Verges

The Clerk reported that Highways had responded to the query on safety issues on London Road by reporting various surveys had been completed and the matter was under consideration by the local Highways Panel. Christopher Arnold was pursuing this on behalf of Great Horkesley PC.

Hedingham Buses denied any responsibility for the damage being done to the verge at the Beehive Xroads blaming other road users. However, the driver had been informed of the complaint and may in future exercise more care.

The Clerk had complained to Highways and Cllr Anne Brown on the excessive verge cutting this autumn which had certainly had an environmental impact. The only priority for Highways is road safety and no consideration appears to be given to environmental concerns.

d. Data Protection

Maria Oats stated that her review of what parish information was held long term could not take place until January given the current difficulties of the Clerk.

It was agreed to purchase the Local Council Public Advisory Service booklet on The New General Data Regulations Regime.

e. Affordable Housing

Chris Exley was thanked for his excellent report and it was agreed to contact RCCE to begin the process of preparing for a questionnaire to the village on the Affordable Housing needs.

It was agreed that the statement "Affordable Homes for Little Horkesley's Current and Future Generations" should be included in the March Parish Magazine with the amendment:

"Then, using their expertise from many other surveys, RCCE will interpret the survey responses and advise the PC *if there was a need* and the number of affordable homes (for rent or shared ownership) that the parish appears to need."

It was expected that there would be a measure of opposition from within the village but the defensive points are:

- This is targeted only at those who have a real connection to the village;
- The number of homes would be small 2 -3 houses;
- Planning permission would be on an exceptional basis purely for affordable homes and not open the flood gates to a major development.

f. 11 November 1918

It was noted that there would be a number of events to celebrate the end of WWI on 11 November 1918 but it was felt any act of remembrance in the village should be integrated into the annual Service of Remembrance.

3. Planning

a. Application No: B/1770118 (Babergh) Harpers Hill, Nayland

Chris Exley reported that the application behind Travis Perkins had been approved but this was an exception as a previous application for an office building on the site had not been carried out.

b. Firth Farm/Motts Nayland Hill, Great Horkesley

There was nothing to report on CBC action at these two sites within the Dedham Vale AONB. Certainly no action had been taken to remove unauthorised structures in the field to the north of Firth Farm.

4. Finance

a. 2018/19 Budget

The projected budget was agreed. However, this represented an increase of 7.9% on 2017/18 and would thus increase the subsequent precept up by 7.7%.

The Government had set a limit of 6% for local councils before triggering a referendum and the Clerk had sought guidance from EALC on whether:

- The concept of referendum applies to Parish Councils this year;
- The 6% limited applied to Parish Councils.

It was agreed to go ahead with the projected 18/19 budget unless the Referendum was to be introduced in which case the Clerk was given the authority to adjust the Budget/Precept to under whatever limit was set.

b. 2018/19 Precept

See 4 a. above.

c. The following expenditure was approved:

- J R Drury £40 – repairs to the Parish Council computer;
- Suffolk CC £175 – annual donation to DV & SV Project.

5. Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted:

- Rural Services Network, 20 November;
- DV & SV AONB November Update;
- RCCE Essex Warbler;
- Essex Energy Switch;
- CPRE Countryside Voice and Field Work.

6. Items for the Next Agenda

..... (Steve Clarke – Chair)

..... (Date)

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 17 January 2018