

Little Horkesley Parish Council

meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 9 May 2018

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

Apologies were received from Cllr Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North) and Chris Jacobs (Royal Wedding Sub-committee)

Steve Clarke declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Item 3c – his wife being a member of the Village Hall Committee.

Maria Oats declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Item 3c – her husband being a Trustee of the Village hall.

Maria Oats had been appointed as a Governor of Littlegarth School and noted this in her Registerable Interests.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 April were agreed as an accurate record.

2. Royal wedding 19 May

It was noted that the event would start at 1130 **not** 1230 and the Council were asked to advise people of the change.

Steve Clarke had organised a Risk Assessment to be carried out and arranged for a qualified First Aider to be on site.

Approximately 40 people had signed up with a number apologising for being unable to attend.

3. Clerk's Report

a. Dog Fouling

No report had been received from the CBC Dog Fouling Unit but generally the situation had improved considerably.

b. Playing Field

The Clerk reported that the "rebarking" of the playground had not been carried out by CBC but the Clerk had chased Casey Harrison, CBC Zone 3, who had previously committed to completing this in April.

All other aspects of the playing field – Scattered Orchard, Pollinator Patch and Wild Flower Meadow all look OK although the grass needed cutting after recent vigorous growth.

The War Memorial was discussed and Bill Watson agreed to weed out various aggressive weeds and adjust the Cross. Steve Clarke reported that, as the War Memorial was a listed structure, the only action that could be taken was to scrub it with soapy water.

c. Roads and Verges

During recent investigations into the flooding issue at the Village hall/School House, an under road drain a short distance to the north of the Village hall leading from a soak away to the Rew's pond, was found to be blocked and had disintegrated over the years – a number of clay agricultural drains were found which may indicate that the drain was laid before the road was metalled.

The only way to replace the drain is to break up the road, lay drain and repair the road's surface.

The Clerk was approached by the Village Hall Committee on how to proceed to gain permission from Highways to undertake the work. He contacted Highways through Cllr Anne Brown laying out the problem and proposed solution. A Highways Inspector visited the site on 3 May but did not speak to either the Clerk or any member of the Village hall Committee but subsequently Christopher Orme, acting on behalf of the Village Hall Committee, spoke to Highways and was advised that the contractor who was going to carry out the work must apply for a permit to close the road to complete the works.

The Village Hall Committee believed that the contractor they had in mind to do the work would not be regarded as an "authorised" contractor and they would be forced to use an "authorised" contractor which would inflate the cost considerably.

After discussions with one of the Trustees of the Village Hall, it has been decided to go ahead with the work, to close the road without authority and then to request Highways to effect the necessary repairs afterwards.

The Parish Council have a number of concerns:

- On a technical level will the angle of the proposed drain be sufficient to prevent back flow when the pond is at its highest level and whether a soak away built immediately behind the Village Hall would be more effective.
- It was strongly recommended that CBC Building Control be consulted for advice on the best approach.
- Secondly in deciding to proceed without a Highways permit had advice been taken on the financial penalties Highways could enforce or charges made to restore the road.
- It was noted that the two holes already dug constituted a hazard to the General Public and suitable warning signs ought to be displayed.

The Parish Council have only been assisting in the issue by seeking guidance from Highways on the correct way to proceed and the interests of the community.

d. Data Protection

The amended legislation to remove the need for Parish/town Councils to have a nominated Data Protection Officer was welcomed.

It was noted that Chris Exley had down loaded the parish council records and would retain them in his fire proof safe – this exercise will be repeated monthly.

Maria Oats tabled the attached list of actions required and it was agreed that:

- The Policies would be tabled for agreement at the June meeting;
- The Clerk would forward the Schedule of Insurance for her review;
- Those named in any capacity in the Emergency Plan should be approached to confirm that they did not object to being named and then the Emergency Plan should be incorporated in the Parish Council website.

e. Affordable Housing

The deadline for responses had passed, no doubt RCCE were processing the results and would advise the Council in due course of their preliminary findings.

It was noted that there were concerns in the community that any development could lead to further exploitation but the Clerk observed that the Colchester Plan offered considerable protection to Dedham AONB villages

f. Superfast Essex

Various emails from Superfast Essex and members of the community indicated that County Broadband were offering up to 15mbs service to the centre of the village.

The Clerk was requested to take up the coverage to be offered with County Broadband and seek to understand the meaning of “descoped” used in one of their emails.

4. Planning

There were no current planning issues in the village although the lack of progress in the enforcement action at Thrift Farm was commented upon.

5. Finance

a. The following 2017/2018 Audit papers were approved and signed by the Chair and Clerk:

- Section 1 Annual Governance Statement,
- Section 2 Accounting Statements.

b. The following expenditure was approved:

- Came & Co. £432.43 – Parish Council Insurance and it was agreed to lock into a 3 year agreement,
- J R Drury £76.96 – stationery (cartridges/paper),
- CACL £35.00 – Annual Affiliation Fee.

6. Annual Parish Meeting – Election of Officers for 2018/19

The following Officers were elected for 2018/19:

Chair	Steve Clarke	Proposed	Roger Drury	Seconded	Maria Oats
Vice Chair	Maria Oats	Proposed	Steve Clarke	Seconded	Hannah Taylor
RFO	Roger Drury	Proposed	Maris Oats	Seconded	Chris Exley

It was noted that Parish Council elections were scheduled for May 2019.

7. Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted:

- DV&SV April AONB Update,
- Essex Warbler.

8. Items for the Next Agenda

Steve Clarke – Chair)

Date)

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held at 1930 on Wednesday 20 June.