

Little Horkesley Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 12 September 2017

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

Apologies were received from Cllr Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North) – the Council passed on their best wishes to his wife for a rapid recovery.

No Pecuniary or Non-pecuniary interests were declared.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 August were approved as an accurate record.

2. Clerk's Report

a. Superfast Essex

It was noted that County Broadband should be contacting Duncan Brown to discuss the use of Maltings Farm Barn to relay broadband into the village – the Clerk would follow up.

b. Playing Field

The Clerk reported that CBC had not responded to his request for clarification on the boundary of the land leased from CBC. However, it was thought the line of the boundary was the ditch which placed the trees requiring attention on land leased by the Council.

Therefore, the Council was minded to accept Paul Cutler's estimate of £1,250 for the necessary works but in order to apply with their legal obligations agreed to obtain a competitive quote for the work from Pete Clarke, the other major tree surgeon in the area.

It was noted that the Wild Flower Meadow had received its autumn cut.

CBC, in spite of being chased twice, had not responded on the cost and delivery of bark.

Generally the area looked good with the orchard and pollinator patch flourishing.

c. Roads/Verges

It was agreed that the Clerk should respond to the Essex Highways Delivery Survey being fairly critical on aspects of continuous maintenance.

d. Defibrillators

It was noted that many such defibrillators were available in the local area and, given the number of people recreating within the parish, the Council should investigate further.

Chris Exley agreed to lead on this.

e. Little Horkesley PC Website

The number of "unique" hits on the site showed a satisfactory level of interest although whether these involved the local community seeking information on the activities of their Council was questionable.

FY 16/17 financial information would be uploaded in the forthcoming week.

f. Mobile Library

It was agreed that the loss of the library service would be yet another blow to a rural community with very limited facilities for its people.

It was agreed that setting up a library within the village was probably impractical giving the limited number and range of books that could be included but alternative methods of delivering library books, including ebooks and audio books, on request should be investigated.

The Clerk would respond to the Essex County Council Mobile Library service.

g. Data Protection Act

Maria Oats reported on the EALC Data Protection Course which she had found very valuable and required action by the Council.

New legislation would be effective from May 2018 which would replace the existing Data Protection Act and, although the Council held very little information on individuals, there would be a need to implement the legislation to ensure privacy and security.

She agreed to set out the steps required to meet the legislation including:

- Details of information to be held;
- Data Protection Policy;
- Complaints procedure;
- Appointment of a Data Protection Officer etc.

(Post Meeting Note: should a statement be added to the existing Privacy Policy on the website to indicate what actions the Council are taking to comply.)

3. Planning

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

No information was available on this application but it was noted that there were a further two applications for land adjacent to Harpers Hill with a total of 14 dwellings.

It was noted that the Suffolk Preservation Society (CPRE) had written to local MPs complaining of a "broken planning" system in Babergh – DVS had followed up with a factual description of the problems of protecting the AONB.

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

It was noted that this was a retrospective application for commercial activities already being conducted on the site and, as no complaints had been received about those activities, there was no reason to object.

However, activity at the site would be monitored.

c. Affordable Housing

It was agreed that the apparent demand for affordable homes in Little Horkesley probably arose from the high demand for the old people's bungalows in School Road, which are highly valued, rather than local demand.

It was questioned whether with the huge expansion of Colchester projected in the Local Plan 2017-2032 sufficient low cost/affordable homes were not already planned within the Borough.

Additionally it was questioned whether it was appropriate to build low cost/affordable homes in a village with no school, no bus service, no shop, no medical services, poor broadband services and likely no library services and where access to car was essential.

However, it was agreed that an initial investigation into a Housing Survey was worthwhile and the Clerk would pursue this.

d. CBC Enforcement action at Motts and Thrift Farm

Cllr Nigel Chapman reported that:

- Thrift Farm – CBC are enforcing the condition regarding the removal of all unauthorised structures from the site;
- Thrift Farm Barn (Motts) – the owners were given until 18 September to provide a “viable scheme of works for the workshop” to prevent CBC serving an enforcements notice to restore the site to its former state.

e. Colchester Local Plan 2017-2032

No developments were reported.

f. Park Farm Drive

It was noted that approval for the second drive was agreed in April 2014 and current works appeared to be in line with the application. However, the whole enterprise was not particularly attractive for a country lane.

g. Listed buildings

The adverse comment in the village on the extension to Dairy Farm Cottage (Chris Topple) were noted.

The fact that Joscelyns had been painted Primrose yellow – a totally inappropriate colour was noted and the Clerk requested to discuss with the CBC planners.

4. Finance

a. Approval of the FY16/17 audit and the posting of the Notice of Completion of the Audit on the Noticeboard was noted.

b. Receipt of the CBC Precept + Grant of £1,888.50 was noted.

c. The following expenditure was approved:

- Jerry’ Garden Services £660 – grass cutting;
- J R Drury £63.26 – stationery/postage/PC computer software repair;
- Essex Air Ambulance £50 – donation;
- Maria Oats £66 – Fasthosts Little Horkesley PC Website

5. Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted:

- DV&SV Monthly Updates July/August;
- RCCE Essex Warbler;
- Rural England – Rural Broadband August 2017;
- Essex Air Ambulance – request for support.

6. Items for the Next Agenda

..... (S C Clarke – Chair)

..... (Date)

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held at 1930 in the Village Hall on Wednesday 18 October.