

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th January 2009, at 7.00pm, in the Committee Room, at Terling Village Hall

Present:

Mrs. S. McNamara (Chairman)
Mr. R. Dixon
Mr. I. Smith
Mrs. A. Anderson
Mrs. P. Bird
Mr. T. Lewis
Mr. C. Cutler
Mrs. S. Alder
Mrs. M. Galione (District Councillor)
Mrs. S. Stewart (Retiring Clerk)
Mrs J. Halfhide (Clerk)
Mr T. Lynch (Community Warden)
Mr. C. Marshall (Handyman)

09.86. Meeting open to the Public:

On behalf of the Parish Council the Chairman thanked Mrs Sue Stewart for eight years' service Ann Anderson, former Chairman presented her with a small token of gratitude.

Mrs Jayne Halfhide was welcomed as the new Parish Clerk.

The Chairman reported that Mrs C Godfrey had resigned from the Parish Council but that she would be continuing her work on the Village Design Statement. The Chairman would be writing to Mrs Godfrey to thank her for her service.

SM

The Clerk would write to the Elections Officer at Braintree District Council to advise them of Mrs Godfrey's resignation.

JH

CM reported the padlock was missing from the bin at the village hall. BDC Street Scene would be contacted to try to find its whereabouts.

JH

The Community Warden reported there had been complaints about parking at Bramley Cottages. He is looking into the matter but as there are no yellow lines or street signs there is probably nothing the Police can do.

The missing name plate on the Witham Road is BDC's responsibility and they are replacing the sign. The amount of fly-tipping has greatly reduced since the summer. There had been reports of an air gun being fired in the Cemetery. PSCO Doubleday would be briefed.

Parking problems have been reported in Fuller Street. If residents are blocked in it is a Police matter and they should contact the Police immediately.

09.87 Apologies for Absence:

Mrs. C. Godfrey, PCSO Nicola Doubleday and Mr M Lager.

09.88. Minutes of the Meeting held on December 19th, 2008:

These were unanimously approved. PB proposed and IS seconded that the Chairman should sign a copy of the minutes as a true and accurate record.

09.89. Matters Arising from the Meeting:

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting's minutes.

09.90. Declarations of Interest:

None.

09.91. District Councillors' Report:

There was concern over the dumping of asbestos in Peg Millar's Lane over the Christmas period. BDC is investigating. The collection of the green bins in the winter months had not yet been decided upon. There may be money available for possible funding of the Football Club. The wooden telegraph pole on Church Green is still on BDC's agenda. The District Councillor requested a copy of the Parish Council's comments on the planning application for Rosemead, Application No. 08/02185/FUL.

JH

09.92. Chairman's Report:

The new Clerk had requested approval for the installation of a new phone line at her home for Parish work. The Chairman mentioned this had been recommended by the internal auditor. The new line and installation fee is £124, plus line rental of £4.85 per month and BT Anytime Plan at £11.50 per month, to be invoiced quarterly. Authorisation was given for this expenditure.

CC
RD

JH explained her concerns about getting the line into the necessary part of her house. This could incur further charges but the amount could not be determined until the BT engineers had done a site survey on 30th January. If further expenditure was necessary other options would be considered. It was agreed that CC would look into the viability of using BT's "Home Hub" modem for a virtual second line on JH's existing private line. Another alternative would be to use a mobile phone.

JH
CC

09.93. Sub-committee Reports:

Finance:

Copies of Receipts and Payments for this financial year as per the cash book had been e-mailed to all Councillors. All invoices had been checked against cheques by the signatories. The expenditure was approved. Proposed by AA and seconded by SA. IS distributed his Receipts and Payment, Budget and Forecast sheet and graph, which he explained.

SS explained a payment to Lappset for £21 being the difference between the returned body and new spring.

It was suggested the Parish Council should consider the maintenance contract for the street lamps when the contract is due for renewal in August 2011. The recent

invoice for £79.45 plus VAT had been correct, including a call out charge of £52. SS reported that the external auditor had signed off the accounts and that the Parish Council should advertise the fact to enable them to be inspected by the public. AA agreed to become a signatory to replace CG. It was agreed the Barclays Bank mandates would be updated accordingly.

JH

SS had arranged for a new mandate pack to be sent to the new Clerk.

SS and JH would be meeting the internal auditor on 14th January. SS had transferred all the Parish files to JH, along with equipment.

The Cricket Club had received the first part of their donation which left a remaining £230 to be given to them.

The new animal rocker had been installed in the playground and has been insured. The parishioner who had hit the bench on School Green had sent his donation to the Parish Council and he was arranging for the new bench to be collected.

Allianz Insurance Company had not yet replied to SS's letter confirming that the Parish Council agreed to the conditions it imposed and the Parish Council's request for a Fidelity Guarantee Indemnity limit of £30,000.

It had come to light that in the last few months SS's Clerk's earnings have taken her over the threshold for National Insurance Contributions and the Parish Council is therefore liable for Employers' National Insurance Contributions. It was decided that JH would look at SS's salary over the last few quarters and calculate Employer's NIC due.

JH

The money is still to be refunded from the Risk Assessment course SS attended on 10th December.

It was agreed that the new Clerk's salary should be paid monthly, in arrears. The services of Acumen Wages Services should be considered to run the payroll. They were recommended by EALC. IS agreed to look into the service Acumen can provide.

IS

It was agreed to appoint Maurice Howard as Internal Auditor for 2009. Proposed by SA and seconded by IS.

Environmental:

DW gave general review on the status of footpaths, stiles and gates in Fuller Street and Fairstead. A blackthorn tree needs to be removed as it is preventing tractor access. CC and DW to investigate further.

CC, DW

PB reported that the cross-field paths have been restored. With CG's resignation there is a vacancy on the Environmental sub-committee.

SS reported that a recycling company called The European Shoe Bank would like to site a shoe bank outside the Village Hall. This is a commercial business, but it does support The Variety Club. BDC are in favour. AA agreed to discuss with the Village Hall committee. DW and TL agreed to do some further research into the matter and would report back.

AA
DW, TL

SS had received a "Minerals and Waste Development Framework" document which was available for Councillors to read. The Chairman agreed to review it.

SM

Estate Liaison:

PB reported that after discussion with Alex Dyke of Lord Rayleigh's Farms the pot holes in The Dismals would be filled in. He had also offered to trim the branches around the street lamp for a fee. It was decided, however, that the Handyman would be able to do this work.

CM

PB agreed to look into acquiring additional land for use for play equipment for older children. It was also suggested that Anglian Water be approached to see if they could spare any land adjacent to the pump house. RD offered to draft a letter.

PB

RD

Health and Welfare:

The Handyman had installed the new Danbury Fencing gate. To comply with ROSPA guidelines he would fine tune the gap.

The new cradle swing had been erected.

The ongoing problem of moles in the area was discussed, especially in the childrens' playground. The Handyman had tried various methods to eradicate them. It was agreed that Eastern Counties Pest Control experts would be called in.

JH

SS reported that ROSPA had offered to check the playground and the expenditure for this was agreed. This would be carried out in May and a booking would be made.

JH

IT and Public Relations:

CC reported that the website had become a site for tracing friends and family. The Freedom of Information document had been placed on all the information boards.

The computer course is now full and nine attendees have paid, leaving one still to pay. The tutor, Frank, does not charge a fee so it was agreed to give him a voucher, as before, in lieu of payment as a token of gratitude. JH to ascertain what was given last time.

JH

Planning and Highways:

The Planning and Highways sub-committee had discussed planning application 08/02185/FUL. Rosemead, Fairstead Road. Erection of two storey extension. Their response had been sent to BDC. A copy is attached to these minutes. In requesting the Parish Council's comments to be returned by Boxing Day BDC had contravened the statutory time allowed for reply. MG requested a copy of the Parish Council's response.

JH

08/02173/FUL. Blixes Farmhouse, Ranks Green. Erection of two storey extension. No comments.

08/01966/FUL. Clinton, Fairstead Road. Erection of part single, part two storey Rear extension. Referring to this application, which has been granted, CC has written to Mrs Scattergood, BDC, regarding their rules for the public at planning Meetings, but has received no reply. CC agreed to give RD a copy of this letter.

CC

There will be a meeting on 19th March for Parish Council representatives where MG would discuss the issue of BDC case officers pre-judging planning applications without the Parish Council's comments and the issue of whether comments can be made individually just before each plan's discussion, rather than altogether at the beginning of the meeting. CC agreed to liaise with MG. RD had previously agreed to draft a letter of complaint to the South of England Government Office.

CC
RD

SS had written to ECC about the problem at the Ford but had not received a reply, and also to the Environment Agency. David Nutting would like a copy of the replies when they are received. Another vehicle had recently got stuck in the Ford. The Chairman agreed to contact Brooks Newmark MP in this regard.

JH
SM

Concerning the parking on School Green, Lord Rayleigh did not want to erect signs but was willing to allow large stones or small blocks to be put in place to prevent parking on the grass. The Handyman agreed to have a look at the site, and to make recommendations.

CM

The bushes at Owls Hall are encroaching the track from School Green. It was agreed a letter should be sent to the occupier of Owls Hall requesting he cut back his hedge.

JH

09.94. Councillors' Reports:

TL expressed concern over the water leaks at Ranks Green. It was suggested that a letter be sent to Anglian Water to find out the situation.

JH

RD had noticed that the gritting of roads in the recent cold spell had initially been very good, but it then seemed to slacken off. It would be useful to know the exact routes the gritting lorries follow and how often they are supposed to come out. The Clerk is to seek clarification.

JH

SA had recently attended an EALC finance course where it was mentioned that it is generally not considered good practice to hold meetings in private houses. Whilst this is understandable the point was raised that we are a small village and to spend public money on room hire seemed excessive. SA agreed to circulate the relevant document to Councillors.

SA

JC expressed concern about the erosion of verges in Fuller Street. ECC Highways had inspected and ascertained nothing could be done. It was agreed to keep a watch and call them back if the situation worsens.

AA is to hold a Health and Welfare Sub-Committee Meeting at her house at 2pm on 28th January which needs to be advertised.

JH

The Post Office and Stores survey was discussed. It was thought that the new owners of the Post Office and Stores might find some of the suggestions useful and DW, CC and TL agreed to look into collating the feedback.

DW,
CC,
TL

09.95. Clerk's Report:

SS had worked 75¾ hours since the last meeting. There had been a 10 day handover period with the new Clerk.

TL took the circulation envelope.

The Youth Club bus would be starting again on 19th January and would come fortnightly after that.

Thank you to the anonymous donor of a rubbish bin which has appeared outside the Village Hall next the bottle bank which will be a useful bin for plastic bags brought to the site. Derek Rogers had kindly agreed to empty it. The Parish Magazine report will be sent to the Rector in the next couple of days.

JH

The Clerk's change of address notification had been sent out and the handover was almost complete. TL agreed to conduct a Risk Assessment for the new Clerk's home office.

TL

09.96. Village Design Statement:

Nothing to report. It was expected the draft would be ready by the end of February.

09.97. Parish Council's Risk Assessments:

IS to revert to TL before the next meeting, this to be discussed and approved at the next meeting.

09.98. Bus Shelter:

SA and SM had met with residents at the proposed site. They were generally happy with the proposals and would like it situated near to where the rubbish bins used to be. That area will need to have the brambles cut back and a general tidy up to make the whole area more pleasant. The Handyman would attend to this. The bus shelter can now be ordered.

CM
JH

09.99. Telephone Kiosks:

The Parish Council has now adopted three old BT telephone boxes and will be the legal owners from 18th January. A decision is still pending on the Fuller Street box. The maintenance manual was given to TL to consider from a health and safety aspect. A poster needs to be put up in each of the three boxes explaining that BT no longer owns them and giving a contact number in case of any problems. The boxes need to be included on the Assets Register. The Parish Council's Public Liability Insurance will cover them. The estimated cost of the electricity in each box is £17 per annum. Douglas Crawford has kindly offered to paint the Hull Lane box and Sharon Kent will look after the Fuller Street one.

TL
JH
JH

09.100. Football Field:

This is still being looked into.

IS

09.101. Correspondence:

BDC had written to invite the Parish to take part in the Activity Days during the school summer holiday 2009. A date would be confirmed once the availability of the Village Hall was established.

JH

The Clerk had written to the residents at Braybrooke and they had moved

their bins.

ECC had sent an email suggesting how they could help residents during the recession. AA took the information.

09.102 Any Other Business / Items for Next Agenda:

No further business.

Next Agenda: Risk Assessments

The meeting closed at 9:35pm.

Next Meeting Date:

24th February, Terling Village Hall, 7:00pm.

21st April, The Committee Room, The Square and Compasses, Fuller Street

19th May, AGM, Terling Village Hall, 7pm

Post Meeting Note:

Subsequent to this meeting, the date for the Health and Welfare Sub-Committee Meeting was changed to: 29th January 2009 and it was advertised in the Parish Magazine and The Braintree and Witham Times.