

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting (Annual Assembly of Electors) held on Tuesday, 22nd May 2012 at 7.00pm in Terling Village Hall

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Present Mrs S McNamara
Mrs A Anderson
Mr R Dixon
Mr I Smith
Mr T Lewis
Mrs P Bird
Mrs S Alder
Mrs L Sime
Mr D White
Mr R Hunt
Cllr M Lager
Cllr T Cunningham

Mrs J Halfhide, Clerk
11 members of the public

Minutes of the meetings held on 17th May 2011:

These were unanimously approved (proposed by TL, seconded by PB).

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report:

The Chairman gave her Annual Report summarizing the work and achievements of the Parish Council during the past twelve months. This would be published on the Parish Council Website, in the Parish Magazine and on the notice boards.

Open Forum:

Essex County Council

Cllr Lager reported that Essex County Council had held the precept (Braintree District Council likewise). Finances at ECC are in good shape. No libraries were threatened with closure, although there may be some change in opening hours to be more in line with modern family requirements. No Children's Centres would be closing. Witham's Bramston Sports Centre's development (costing approximately £10 million) would be a welcome addition to the County's facilities, and Terling and Fairstead would directly benefit, it being so close. Social care had been rated "very good" recently. Academy Schools were being created. Essex Highways' new website was making administration easier to handle, but Cllr Lager admitted it was not always possible for quick repairs to be effected.

Members of the public expressed concerns about potholes (whilst observing they did at least act as an effective traffic calming measure). The removal of the old cast iron directional sign at the entrance to The Dismals and its replacement with a modern, new plastic one, had greatly annoyed residents, especially as it was done without any consultation. The Parish Council had

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

already complained to Essex Highways about this.

Terling Ford

The continuing damage to Terling Ford being caused by 4x4 vehicles was discussed. The grassy banks were being ripped apart by joy-riders. Drivers had been seen driving along the river bed itself as well as repeatedly back and forth through the Ford. It attracted drivers from as far afield as Holland. Cllr Lager was aware of these issues, having been kept informed of concerns by the Parish Council. He suggested that evidence of public support needs to be obtained and then Essex Highways may be able to consider solutions. The Parish Council agreed to invite a representative from Highways to a Council meeting.

Football Field Project

A resident of Fairstead Road, Terling, expressed the opinion that he believed the Parish Council had not handled the management of the Football Field project well, that it was in the interests of residents to be kept informed of proposals, with those most directly concerned being approached directly by the Parish Council. It was not always practical to check the minutes of Council meetings. He accused the Parish Council of not having got its house in order and that this should be a wake up call to the Council.

Concerns were raised by those living opposite the Football field about the location and design of the proposed changing facilities, the ongoing future running costs, health and safety issues, and the management and prevention of anti-social behaviour. Doubt was expressed whether residents of Terling would benefit from having a team at all, it consisting not entirely of Terling residents and the question was asked when was the plan was first conceived to have the team play in Terling.

Another Fairstead Road resident welcomed the retention of the field as a recreational space, but they were generally anxious to avoid a repeat of the problems which had been experienced with the previous Football Club. Residents wished to know how the Council came to the decision to proceed with the project when it had been believed that the wish to bring football back to Terling was unrealizable. Some present called for the project to be put on hold. Others expressed concerns about the design of the changing facilities complaining it would be out of keeping in the village, and unattractive.

Another Fairstead Road resident expressed sincere thanks to Lord Rayleigh for allowing the field to be used for football in the first instance and suggested that as it was hoped it would be used for a variety of recreational purposes a better name for the area would be the "Recreation Ground". They also expressed concerns about the siting of the new changing cabin on the same base as the previous unit, suggesting this location attracted undesirable behaviour. The Council was asked whether locating it at the other end of the pitch had been considered.

The Parish Council was asked for an assurance that the field would be properly managed and maintained to avoid a repeat of the problems experienced previously.

It was noted that Terling School is very strong in Football, and there is genuinely an interest in the Sport within the Parish. Informal rounders matches take place on the field and it was suggested this should be encouraged.

Another Fairstead Road resident asked whether a letter of intent had been received from

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

the Football Club.

It was pointed out by a member of the public that Lord Rayleigh permits the use of the field for the express benefit of the community. In the case of the Cricket Club, and all the other village organizations and Clubs, membership does not solely consist of Terling residents, but the thriving nature of the Clubs does allow many villagers to partake and enjoy the facilities which simply not be possible if there was an “all Terling residents” policy. Wouldn’t the same true of Football Team? Whilst it would not be solely made up of residents of the Parish, it would, by having outside members, effectively allow the seeds of a Club to grow, and hopefully to flourish. It was Lord Rayleigh’s very great hope that the space could be used for community benefit, but it was generally understood that Lord Rayleigh would close the field and consider an alternative use for it if it was seen that it was not benefitting the community.

It was also pointed out that the present Terling Cricket Club manages to curb anti-social behaviour and whilst this side of managing a community facility is not always easy, with the correct management is it indeed possible. It was suggested that whilst it is all too easy to dwell on the past, the community should look to the future – the previous licence was granted to the old Football Club itself whereas the new licence has been issued to Terling and Fairstead Parish Council.

Parish Councillors listened to residents’ comments and concerns and the Chairman invited members of the public to stay for the next meeting, the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, at which the Parish Council would debate the Football field project. The Chairman hoped this would address the questions and concerns raised by residents,

The meeting closed at 7:55pm