

## EAST BRENT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of East Brent Parish Council held at the Village Hall on Monday 7th October 2013 at 7.30pm, when the following business was transacted.

**Present:** Councillors; Cllr E. Champion, Cllr J. Bowden, Cllr V. Rawles, Cllr A. Gilling, Cllr J. Webb, Cllr B. Woodward, Cllr Y. Roscorla, Cllr N. Lloyd-Jones, Cllr W. Walker, Cllr B. Bees, Cllr S. McGreavy.

The Chairman was unable to attend at the commencement of the meeting and so the Vice Chairperson, Cllr V. Rawles opened the meeting and presided over it until the Chairman arrived at 7.40pm.

### **Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.**

Apologies were received from Mr Bob Filmer.

### **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on Monday 1st July and Monday 2nd September 2013, were signed by the Vice Chairperson as being a true reflection of the business carried out by this Parish Council on those dates.

### **ONGOING ISSUES**

As representatives from the No Pilrow group were in attendance at the meeting, the Vice Chairperson agreed to bring forward Matter 14/13 on the Agenda, to enable those representatives to address the meeting, before the rest of the business was conducted. Cllr Woodward introduced Mr Martin Keegan, who was permitted to address the meeting since the Parish Council and the No Pilrow Group are at one in their aim to successfully oppose the planning application appeal by Broadview Ltd. Before any discussion commenced, Cllr Gilling declared an interest in the matter, but was permitted to remain in the meeting. Mr Keegan told the Committee that the planning appeal process will commence on the 9th January 2014 and all evidence from interested parties must be submitted to the Inspectorate by the 10th December 2013. He told the Committee that there has been a very significant change in the conduct of S.D.C. in connection with the Appeal. The District Council has withdrawn all its previous objections to the planning application, except those relating to the effect the development will have upon the visual appearance of the area. The District Council has now indicated that it feels the site is one which is suitable for wind turbines, except for the impact it will have on the immediate views. Mr Keegan read out the extensive list of aspects which S.D.C. had previously considered were sufficient to make it reject the planning application, but which it now withdrew. He said that the impact this planning application will have on the local communities has been totally ignored by S.D.C. The District Council has said that it has no issues with evidence prepared by Messrs Eversheds, Solicitors on behalf of Broadview Ltd. He added that in his opinion S.D.C. has become scared of the possibility of being held responsible for the Appellant's costs in connection with the Appeal process. These could be a massive sum. It seems to have rushed through the preparation of its evidence to the Inspectorate, in order to avoid liability for potential costs. Mr Keegan said that he felt that none of the neighbouring parishes were aware of this fundamental change of opinion by S.D.C. and he should now make sure that every parish was told of this. He cited the official Government line (from the Minister in charge, Mr Eric Pickles) that "Localism has an equal standing in such planning matters". He said that this is not the case, because of the risk of costs being awarded against protesting parties. This is why the No Pilrow group has formed itself into a private company limited by guarantee; where each of the shareholders and directors merely has a £1.00 liability, for any costs. Therefore the No Pilrow Group are not worried about the possible award of costs against them and they will continue to fight the Appeal, as stringently as it can. Mr Keegan urged individual Councillors and members of the public to support the No Pilrow Group by submitting witness statements to the Inspectorate, as quickly as possible. He offered to assist any member of the public with this task as he felt that instead of the same grounds of objection being repeated by parishioners, every aspect of the impact this wind farm will have on the community, must be put forward.

Statements submitted by Parish Councillors should carry more credence, as they will be submitted on behalf of the Councillors involvement in Parish Council matters, but also as local residents who will have to endure the problems and difficulties the wind farm will create.

Cllr Walker said that the Parish Council has already agreed to fund the cost of providing a bus for the Inspectorate to be taken around the area, so that the impact of the wind farm will be evident to them. However, he felt that the Parish Council should do more. Regrettably, because of the potential impact of costs being awarded against any, "Rule 6" party to the appeal, the Parish Council has been forced to abandon this proposed course of action. Cllr Lloyd-Jones said that he was very disappointed to learn that S.D.C. had abandoned the other important issues of the grounds for the appeal and he agreed that the Council must continue to oppose the appeal. Cllr McGeavy asked Mr Keegan if the Parish Council had any redress, or other course of action against S.D.C., for its change of attitude over the appeal. Mr Keegan replied that it did not. The Chairman said that S.D.C. was forced to make a quick decision and this is why it has taken the action it has. Cllr Bowden raised the Huntspill wind farm application. Mr Keegan explained that the effect of that application on the landscape was not an issue. The chief planning officer at S.D.C. (Mr Chris Gomm) had supported that application. However, the Planning Committee decided to reject the application and so the official line of S.D.C. to that appeal process, was that the Council had to continue to oppose the appeal. The final decision of that appeal is still awaited and might be announced at any time. If it is refused on landscape impact grounds, then this will greatly assist the No Pilrow matter. Mr Keegan said that there are between 160-170 households within a 1km radius of the site and he urged them all to submit written statements to the Inspectorate and also to attend the Inquiry at the Princess Hall, Burnham on Sea, on the 9th January 2014. The Chairman and Cllr Bowden both said that it would be a good thing if the Inspector was to walk around the area and see for himself the impact that the massive turbines will have on the area. The difficulty with this would be the possible bad weather conditions, as this will occur in December. A list of prominent places which the Inspector should visit, will be prepared. Finally, it was agreed that this matter would be discussed again in detail, at the next Committee meeting.

**Minute 04/13 Review of the funding of the Parish Magazine.** Cllr McGeavy apologised for the fact that he had not been able to meet with Mrs. Molly Richards to discuss the funding of the magazine. She has told him however, that she is preparing full details of costings and statistics about the magazine. Cllr Lloyd-Jones said that during an informal meeting he had recently had with Mrs. Richards, he had established that she did wish to continue with the production of the magazine. However, it would be on the basis of being a bi-monthly production. Cllr Gilling referred to an announcement in the latest edition of the magazine, which says that a decision to move to 6 editions each year has already been made even before any in depth consultations with the Parish Council. He described it as, "a done deal". Cllr Bowden said that it was most important that the Committee has all the facts before the next Committee meeting on the 4th November 2013, so that a full debate can follow. Cllr Rawles felt that it was premature to announce in the magazine itself the bi-monthly editions, before the funding costs had been considered by the Committee. The Chairman confirmed that it was imperative that the Committee had all the information it needed before the next meeting and he suggested that a Sub-committee of Councillors should meet with Mrs. Richards, as soon as possible. The Sub-committee will consist of Cllrs McGeavy, Webb, Rawles and the Chairman. The matter will be discussed further at the next meeting.

**Minute 24/12: Defibrillator Equipment** . Cllr Webb addressed the meeting and said that she had secured a donation of £1,500 from an award of funds from District Councillor John Denbee. This takes the total raised so far to £4,384 Cllr Lloyd-Jones said that this exceeded the purchase costs of £3,550 and meant that there was now surplus funds of £834 which could go towards the setting up costs. It was also suggested that the surplus could go towards the cost of a third defibrillator to be sited in Edingworth. Cllr Rawles was asked to contact the owner of Rookery Manor, to ask if he would support this third defibrillator, with a donation. If a third defibrillator was purchased, it would mean that the three most populated areas of the Parish, would be covered in terms of 'first aid'. Cllr Webb also announced that she had been able to secure the supply of the paint for the restoration of the telephone kiosk, free from Dulux.

The local Dulux representative Mr. David Dover, has confirmed this position. The company will wish to publicise its' involvement in the restoration process, in exchange for its' support. Work on restoring the telephone kiosk, to house one of the Defibrillators, will start very soon. The Chairman once again thanked Cllr Webb for the hard work and effort she has put into this project, which is now nearing its conclusion.

**Minute 08/13:Playing Field Project at Pill Road, Rooksbridge:** CllrGilling declared his interest in the land in question. Cllr Lloyd-Jones addressed the meeting and said that he had concluded the preparation of the planning application to S.D.C. re the change of land use and that he had submitted the application. Subsequently, he had received a request to modify some of the details, which he has done with the planning department.

He has updated the following people that the application is now in progress; Phil Yorke at the Housing Association, David Maund of Lights for Life and Harley Cook at S.D.C.

In addition Cllr Lloyd-Jones has been progressing the S.D.C RLT3 grant application for funds to cover the costs of the necessary ground works, equipment and other items required to complete the project. He has spoken to Harley Cook about the necessary match funding, as 20% must be obtained by the Parish Council as part of the application. The Parish Council's costs and/or the fencing to be supplied free of charge by the Housing Association could be part of the match funding.

The next Coastal Cluster meeting is the 20<sup>th</sup> of November and the RLT3 application should be with S.D.C some six weeks before the meeting which would be the 9<sup>th</sup> of October. As not all the cost information is available yet the application may not make the deadline. The next Cluster meeting is not until the new year. Cllr Lloyd-Jones will do what he can to get the application in for the November meeting. Cllr Bowden and Champion gave Cllr Lloyd-Jones some contact names of people who may be able to do the ground works.

**Minute 15/13: The Village War Memorial** Cllr Webb advised that she had asked the Clerk to prepare the submission application forms for presentation to the War Memorial Trust, for a grant to assist with the cleaning and restoration costs. The Clerk advised the Committee that he had concluded this work and that the application has been received by the Trust. He said that he had asked the Trust to consider this request as soon as possible in order to try to achieve the completion of the restoration works before the commemoration of the 100th year anniversary of the outbreak of World War1, which is next year. He will report back to the Committee when he has further news.

### **PLANNING MATTERS**

The Chairman read out the list of decided applications shown on the Agenda. He then addressed the current application (*24/13/00020 Mr Stanford, Oak Hatch, Church Road, East Brent. Application for retrospective consent for the construction of a detached garage and conversion of an existing integral garage into living accommodation*). Before any debate on this matter took place, Cllr Bees declared an interest in it, but was permitted to remain in the meeting,. Cllr McGeavy told the Committee that he and Cllrs Lloyd-Jones and Walker had recently visited the site. He explained the nature of the application and its history, as this is a retrospective consent application. He said that he and his fellow Councillors felt that the conversion of the existing integral garage into living accommodation was not an issue. However, they felt that the second part of the application was more difficult. They felt that the height of the roof of the new garage has had a negative impact upon the property next door and those owners had already lodged an objection to the development. The visual impact upon the road generally was not acceptable. He therefore recommended that the Committee rejects the application. The Chairman said that in matters such as this, the Committee needs to rely upon the Sub-committee members who have actually inspected the site. He therefore invited a proposal from the floor and Cllr McGeavy recommended its refusal. This was seconded by Cllr Walker. A unanimous vote to reject the application was then passed by the whole Committee.

The Clerk then advised the Chairman that he had received a further planning application in the previous Saturday's post. This had arrived too late to be included on the Agenda for this meeting, but in view of the minor nature of the application, he felt that it could be considered nevertheless. He referred to *application number 24/13/00022/JB relating to Mr. J. Roberts and the removal of 3 branches of a Cypress tree at Greenfields, Wickham Way, East Brent*. It was thought by the Committee that this application did not necessitate an inspection of the site and Cllr Bowden then proposed that the application should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Lloyd-Jones. A unanimous vote in favour followed from the whole Committee.

### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Approval for the payment of all of the costs listed on the Agenda was proposed by Cllr Bowden and seconded by Cllr Lloyd-Jones. A unanimous vote was carried by the whole Committee to pay these items and cheques were subsequently signed by the Chairman and Cllr Rawles.

Cllr Bowden said that as Chairman of the Cemetery Committee, he had received a quotation from Mr. Vic Phillips for the cost of cutting the far side of the hedge at the Cemetery. Mr. Phillips had carried out this work last year to a high standard and his quote for a repeat of this work again, was at the same figure. Cllr Bowden therefore proposed that Mr. Phillips should be given the contract and this was seconded by Cllr Bees. The Clerk will therefore contact Mr. Phillips to arrange this.

Cllr Lloyd-Jones then addressed the Committee on the following 3 items :

- (1) a summary of last year's financial figures along with some narrative has been prepared and is now loaded onto the Parish Web site.
- (2) provided the members with a statement of this financial year's budget and spend and gave an explanation of each expenditure type, in conclusion the costs are at this time in line with the annual budget amount.
- (3) raised the matter of the Council will soon need to prepare its precept submission for the next financial year and asked if any member is aware of possible extra expenditure then can he be informed.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman referred to the letter received from Mendip Community Transport, dated 12th September 2013, requesting a donation towards its funding costs. It was decided that this would be considered by the Committee during its annual review of donations to Societies/ Clubs and Organisations, during the March Committee meeting, in 2014.

### **MATTERS OF REPORT**

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had spoken with Mr. Peter Spinks regarding the non completion of the housing development next to the Knoll Inn. The pavement adjoining the road is still in a dangerous state and there is a large overgrown bramble protruding into the footpath. He questioned whether any enforcement proceeding could be taken by S.D.C. for failing to complete the works. Cllr Gilling recommended that an approach should be made to Mr. Chris East at S.C.C. to find this out. Cllr Walker agreed to do this and he will report back to the next meeting.

The Chairman also raised the ongoing issue of large lorries travelling to and from, Haley Engineering Ltd. This had been discussed at the last meeting. Cllr Webb advised the Committee that there had been another incident earlier that day, when another lorry had got wedged at the same place, causing delays of many minutes to motorists. After a further period of discussion on this point, the Chairman agreed to talk with Mr. William Haley to see if the situation can be improved by putting markings on the road to show lorry drivers the exact positioning of their lorries, to successfully negotiate the bend.

Cllr Rawles reported that the new Village Road signs have finally been positioned and that the Committee should now deal with the repositioning of the flower troughs at each sign to ensure a good display of flowers, during next season.

Cllr Woodward raised several issues including the possibility of a further request for funds being received from the Village Hall Committee regarding the replacement of some rotten windows at the back of the building. Further details will follow. She advised the Committee that Community Police Officer Pauline Dixon had arranged for the traffic to be stopped during the Remembrance Day service, in November 2014. An Audi motor car was repeatedly being parked near the telephone kiosk, which does not appear to have a tax disc being prominently displayed upon it. She agreed to refer the matter once more to Pauline Dixon.

Cllr Webb suggested that a "No through Road" sign should be erected at Wickham Way to prevent vehicles from thinking they can pass right through. The problem is exasperated by the fact that Google maps does indicate that there is a route through Wickham Way. She agreed to contact the Highways Dept. at S.C.C. to see what could be done.

Cllr Walker raised the ongoing problems of blocked drainage channels at Strowlands. He said that the parish Council should ask the local Drainage Board to implement its intention to contact adjacent property owners to insist that they deal with such blockages as "riparian rights owners". He will liaise with the Clerk to approach the local Drainage Board.

Cllr Lloyd-Jones reported that some of children's play equipment in the Red House Road play area is due to be renewed during Nov/Dec. 2013 via S.D.C. and that he had asked Mrs Richards to put an update about this in to the local magazine. He also said that the football goal posts at the same location have loose footings and could become possibly dangerous, so he will contact S.D.C to try to get this problem fixed. Signs have been affixed (by Cllr Walker) to the sand containers in Church Road. Plus he mentioned that work appears to have commenced on the Burton Road diversion scheme to divert a certain amount of rain water coming off the Knoll away from coming through the village.

Cllr Gilling told the Committee that S.D.C. faces a funding gap of £800,000 in next year's budget figures and so some cuts in essential services are inevitable. Every effort will be made to minimise these.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

**The next meeting of the East Brent Parish Council will be on Monday 4th November 2013  
at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.**