

EAST BRENT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the East Brent Parish Council held at the Village Hall on 2nd July 2012 and commenced at 7.30pm, when the following business was transacted.

Present: Councillor Cllr E. Champion, (Chairman) Cllr J. Bowden, Cllr W. Walker, Cllr A. Gilling, Cllr J. Webb, Cllr B. Woodward, Cllr V. Clapp, Cllr Y. Roscorla, Cllr S. McGreavy and the Clerk to the Council, Mr Martin Shobbrook; in the public area, Mr. Peter Briggs.

“Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability) Crime disorder and Human Rights”

There were no representations made from the Public at this meeting.

01/12: TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Mr R. Filmer.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

04/12: The minutes of the meetings held at the Village Hall on 11th June 2012 were signed as a true reflection of the meeting held by this Parish Council, after several corrections were suggested by Cllr. Y. Roscorla (for which the Clerk is grateful, in the interests of accurate recording of the minutes)

ONGOING ISSUES

07/12: Village Sign:

Cllr V. Clapp reported that she was having ongoing discussions with Somerset County Council regarding the new sign, but that these talks were making slow progress. She hoped to be able to bring to the next committee meeting, details of the proposed designs for approval by the Committee members. The matter was therefore deferred until then.

16/12: Play Area next to the village Green:

It is proposed that the existing play equipment is replaced on the existing play area site.

As this land appears to be owned by Sedgemoor District Council, the necessary application for a grant of funds to proceed will be drawn up by Mr Harley Cook.

Cllr A. Gilling suggested that the Clerk conveys this information to Mr Cook and at the same time, he asks Mr Cook if there will be any funding available under Policy RLJT3. A further report will be given at the next committee meeting.

17/12: Pond Adjacent to Rossholme: The Chairman said the Committee wished to find out exactly who owned the land around the pond, as it was the owner's responsibility to ensure the safety of the Village from flooding. He believed that it was Glebe land. Proposals for an Alleviation Scheme, whereby flood waters were to be taken away from the village, were under consideration. The Chairman will consult with Cllr J. Webb and Cllr A. Gilling in order to set up a site meeting. A further report will be presented to the committee at the next meeting.

21/12: An Issue on the green regarding wires at the Village Green.

The status of the Village Green, to find out to whom it belongs is essential, said the Chairman. He asked the Clerk to contact S.D.C. to ascertain this information and also to find out if the T.P.O. on one of the trees on this land could be removed. Cllr A. Gilling said that the person the Clerk should contact about this is Jeanette Burton at S.D.C.

A further report will be given at the next Committee meeting.

23/12 Bus Stop Location issues

The Chairman will address the Committee with an up date at the next meeting.

24/12: Defibrillator idea for telephone Kiosk

Cllr J. Webb reported to the meeting that she has obtained more details of the proposed scheme. It is set up by the Community Heart Trust and the cost of installing the equipment and wall signs and other equipment is £1750.00 under a "Telephone Adoption Kit".

B.T. has agreed to pay for all the electricity used in each phone box. No VAT is payable as the payment is made to a non-profit making charity. A presentation by the CHT is available and the installation time period is approximately 4-6 weeks. The scheme is run by Martin Fagan from the C.H.T. and he has advised Cllr Webb that, following soccer player Anthony Van Loo's collapse on the football field recently, the number of contacts made to his Trust for information is over 80 per week.

Cllr S. McGreavy gave the Committee a demonstration of the G3 Defibrillator he had brought to the meeting. He showed that it was capable of being operated by any sensible person even without medical training. The equipment, when used correctly, was foolproof. The batteries within the equipment were replaceable, not rechargeable and the overall cost of maintaining the equipment was approximately £100.00 over seven years.

The general consensus of the Committee members was that it was an excellent scheme to adopt, in that if it saved only one life, it would be well worth it.

Cllr Webb said that the next step was to approach local businesses in East Brent and Rooksbridge in order to try to raise funding for the purchase of the equipment.

Cllr McGreavy offered to compile a list of all potential businesses that could be approached. It was suggested that the Village Hall should be hired in order to arrange a Public Meeting to demonstrate the equipment and provide information and training to the Public. Cllr V. Clapp recommended that the matter should be formally adopted and taken forward by the Committee generally.

The matter will be discussed further at the next committee meeting.

22/25 Strimmer Project:

Cllr Webb gave the committee an update on the scheme and said that Mr Gerry Webb had volunteered to attend the course run by Blake Training Limited, under the S.C.C.'s scheme. He had attended the course being run earlier that day and was now a qualified "Volunteer Strimmer Operative". Mr Roger Collins, the second volunteer had been unable to attend the training course which took place today.

Cllr Webb will now contact S.C.C. to find out how the scheme will fund the purchase of strimmers. Another report will be presented to the next committee meeting.

22/12: Bus Stop Location issue

This item was postponed until the next committee meeting in order for the Chairman to ascertain further information and report to the Committee.

25/12: Hinkley "C" power transmission cables:-

Cllr A. Gilling declared an interest in this topic and took no part in its discussion. A copy of the Clerk's letter to the Connection Group (Statutory Consultees) Chairman, dated 26th June 2012 was circulated. This contained the Parish Council's preferred route for the transmission cables to follow and their preferred location, i.e. under the Bristol Channel or underground. A reply has been received stating that this Council (along with all other Parish Councils along the transmission route) will be notified when further information is available. The matter will therefore be deferred until then and re-scheduled for debate at the appropriate time.

26/12 The Parish Council's Website:

The meeting was addressed by Cllr W. Walker who reported that the Website was ready to be launched within the next week or so. He said that the magazine content would not be put onto the Website yet, but other information would. The magazine will still be circulated in the village as not everyone has access to the internet or the Website and some (including the elderly) will prefer to receive a "hard copy" of the news. He and Cllr Webb will meet with Molly Richards to discuss any outstanding issues. The view of the Committee was that it did not want to undermine the success of the magazine or to compete with it for

advertising etc. The Parish Council has after all, given financial support to the magazine and it would be inappropriate to deliberately injure its circulation figures. The Website will be a “dot.org” site and hence it will be a non-profit making organisation.

Cllrs Walker and Webb will report again to the committee at the next meeting.

PLANNING

Ref No. 24/12/00017/SJH

Proposal: Widening access to car park

Location: East Brent Village Hall, East Brent

Applicant: East Brent Village Hall Management Committee

25/12: The Planning Sub-Committee Members (J. Webb, W. Walker and S.McGreavy) had meet to discuss this application and they all agreed that the planning application had merits in that it would improve the access arrangements for the Village Hall car park. They also felt that as the Parish Council had already agreed to fund the cost of the Planning application, it would now be inappropriate to oppose the application.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr W. Walker that the Parish Council gives its approval to the application. This was seconded by Cllr B. Woodward. The motion was then passed unanimously by the Committee with no dissentions. The Clerk was asked to convey this information back to S.D.C.

No further applications have been received.

FINANCIAL MATTERS AND TO APPROVE PAYMENTS

26/12: The payment of the following amounts from the Councils current account was discussed:-

East Brent Village Hall Committee hire of hall fees	£34.00
Automated payment by NatWest Bank for bank charges	£35.00
Previous Clerk’s final salary fee to the date of his retirement	£308.06
Blake Training Limited, strimmer training fees	£72.00

It was unanimously agreed to make all of the above payments in full and cheques for these amounts were issued and signed by the Chairman and Councillor Val Clapp.

27/12: CORRESPONDENCE:

S.D.C. – Affordable Housing Open Day 12th July 2012: Circulated

S.C.C. – Civil Parking Enforcement in Somerset. Update from the Highways Agency June 2012-07-03

British Red Cross – Recruitment Leaflet.

Axe Brue Drainage Board – Letter advising of merger OT the two Drainage Boards.

S.C.C, – Letter re Temporary closure of Pill Road Rooksbridge.

S.D.C. – Consultation on the role of East Brent in the Sedgemoor Core Strategy, email containing information.

MATTERS OF REPORT:

The Chairman raised the following:-

1. The appointment of two new Parish Councillors. 28/12

Following the resignations of two Committee members recently, there are two vacancies on the Committee. The Chairman has received letters from three potential applicants for these positions so far and he felt that the appointment process should be regularised. He recommended that a closing date for applications should be declared and those who have already applied should be included in the process of selection. A date of 31st July 2012 was unanimously agreed as the closing date and details of this will be placed upon the two Village notice boards. In addition the Parish Council's Website will advertise these vacancies and the Clerk will find out the cost of submitting an advert in the Weston Mercury. If it can be submitted without charge, then this will be acted upon. Applications can be submitted to either the Chairman or the Clerk for consideration and the Committee as a whole will review all the applications at the next committee meeting. A short list will then be drawn up and the selection process continued.

2. The ownership of Common Open Spaces within the Parish of East Brent 29/12

The Chairman felt that many issues faced by the Parish Council during its everyday dealings, could be simplified by establishing the ownership of these areas of land. Liability for damage of all descriptions, responsibility for maintenance etc. would be much clearer if the ownership was known. This was evident in several of the matters presently under review by the Parish Council. He recommended that contact should be made with S.D.C. to establish which areas of land the District Council owns and which it believes the Parish Council owns.

Searches should be made at the Land Registry for all unknown areas in an attempt to clarify the whole matter. Cllr W. Walker volunteered to assist with this task and he will compile a list of all areas of land within the Parish which are thought to belong to either the District or Parish Councils. The Clerk will assist in this task if required, in view of his former professional qualification as a Property Lawyer. Cllr Walker will report to the next Committee meeting.

Cllr V. Clapp raised the following:-

The messy building site near to the Village Hall 30/12

She reported that the site looked disgusting and seriously detracted from the visual appearance of the immediate area. She asked what action, if any, could be taken to improve this. The Chairman said that as this was private land, the powers of the Parish Council were very limited. He recommended that contact should be made with the Estate Agents who are marketing the properties for sale (West Coast Properties) and a request made for them to contact the owners. The owner should be asked to improve the appearance of the site for the good of the community. Cllr S. McGreavy offered to speak to the Branch Manager of West Coast Properties and he will report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

Cllr J. Bowden raised the following:-

1. **The need to change the name of the Clerk to the Parish Council** and his contact details, on all official notice boards and signs in the Village. He kindly offered to undertake this on behalf of the Parish Council and will commission the necessary action.

2. **The contract of Employment of the Clerk to the Council 31/12**

He pointed out that the Parish Council had a legal responsibility to provide whoever holds the position of Clerk, with a Contract of Employment. The newly appointed Clerk offered to produce a model form of contract to the Chairman and other members of the Committee, for their consideration. Such a contract follows a standard format and merely needs to be tailored for the particular Parish involved.

Cllr Y. Roscorla raised the following:-

Speeding motor bikes and other vehicles through Rooksbridge 32/12

She asked if any action was proposed to be taken to restrict/prosecute offending motorists in this area, following the removal of the Speed Cameras there.

The Clerk asked the Chairman if he could interject at this moment, as he had information on this topic which he proposed to raise during his opportunity to address the committee, later in the meeting.

The Chairman agreed to defer Cllr Roscorla's questions until the Clerk had spoken, in the hope that they would be answered to her satisfaction. He therefore moved on to the next Councillor in line to invite the presentation of reports.

Cllr B. Woodward raised the following:-

1. The vegetation on the wall opposite the Butchers Shop was causing a hazard for pedestrians as it was obscuring visibility along Church Street. 33/12.

She asked if action could be taken to cut back the vegetation.

The Chairman will approach the Strimmer operatives to see if they can attend to this.

2. The Field above the Cemetery—escape of grazing sheep therefrom 34/12

Cllr J. Bowden in his capacity as Chairman of the Cemetery Committee, asked the Clerk to write to Greenslade Taylor Hunt (the Parish Council's Agents who deal with the grass keep and grazing rights) and ask them to address this point with the owner of the sheep. The Clerk will report to the next committee meeting thereon.

3. The length of the grass and the cutting thereof in the Cemetery. 35/12

Cllr Woodward said that she had received a number of complaints about the length of the grass in the Cemetery and the mess left by the contracted gardeners after they had mown it. She also reported that on occasions the contractors had started cutting the grass at 7.00am, thus disturbing the immediate neighbours.

Again, Cllr Bowden addressed this issue in his capacity as Chairman of the Cemetery Committee.

He said that these points have been raised several times this year. It was because of the exceptionally high amount of rainfall which has fallen, that the grass had grown more quickly than usual. Also, the weather conditions had stopped the contractors from carrying out their duties on some of the appointed cutting days and times.

Cllrs Bowden and Champion will visit the Cemetery to view the state of the grass and take any appropriate action.

Cllr W. Walker raised the following:-

Planning Application for a Wind Farm

He reported that if the "B.o.S. dot.com" is to be believed, then a planning application will shortly be submitted for a wind farm.

The Chairman advised that he knew nothing of this, but if it were true, then the Parish Council would be notified about it in the official way by S.D.C. The Parish Council could then address it properly, through the appropriate channels.

Cllr J. Webb raised the following:-

The presentation of a retirement gift to the former Clerk Mr Bob Strachan.

She reminded the Committee that she had a picture purchased from funds raised in Bob's honour, to mark his retirement. Did the Chairman know when Bob was going to return to East Brent to say, "Goodbye"? The Chairman said that he had endeavoured to encourage Bob to return to Somerset (without giving away the proposed presentation of the gift) but that Bob's commitments have been intense of late, as he was celebrating his own retirement. He will continue to try to arrange for this to happen. Cllr Bowden also said that the Parish Council's official records need to be handed over to the new Clerk at the earliest opportunity. They are currently in the custody of Bob Strachan and this could be used as an encouragement for him to visit East Brent, thus also facilitating the gift presentation without, "giving the game away".

The Clerk raised the following:-

1. The letter from S.C.C. Highways Dept. regarding the alterations to the Highway alongside the Brent Knoll Inn 36/12

The former Clerk, Mr Bob Strachan had forwarded to Mr Martin Shobbrook (on the 27th June 2012) an email sent by Arminel Goodall from S.C.C. Highways Dept. It was not clear from the minutes of the meeting recorded by the temporary Clerk, Mr Owen Cullwick, whether this matter had been addressed by the Committee. Mr Shobbrook said that he would re-circulate the email to all committee members and he asked if they could advise him if the issue had been dealt with. If it has not, then it will be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

2. The letter from S.C.C. Highways Dept. regarding the proposed installation of V.A.S. signs at Rooksbridge 37/12

Cllr Y. Roscorla had raised this issue earlier in the meeting and it had been deferred. The Clerk advised the Committee that he had received an Email from Mr Bob Strachan on the 25th June, who in turn had forwarded a copy of an Email he had received from Mr Dave Grabham at S.C.C. Highways Dept.

The Email asked the Parish Council to consider the proposals and to respond, giving its views.

Copies of all Emails, plans and photographs were distributed to all Committee members and the topic will be minuted for debate at the next Committee meeting, thus allowing Councillors time to consider the proposal in detail.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

The Next Parish Council Meeting planned for Monday 3rd September 2012 at 7.30pm or earlier if a planning meeting is required.