

EAST BRENT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of East Brent Parish Council held at the Village Hall on Monday 4th November 2013 at 7.30pm, when the following business was transacted.

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

Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

Apologies were received from Mr Bob Filmer, Cllr J. Bowden, Cllr B. Woodward and Cllr B. Bees.

Mr Martin Keegan attended the meeting and asked the Chairman if he could address the Committee with an update of the No Pilrow campaign strategy, for the planning appeal. The Chairman agreed and he suggested that item, **Minute14/13** on the Agenda, should be brought forward, since it was relevant to the meeting. At this point Cllr Gilling declared an interest in the topic of the debate, but remained present.

Mr Keegan proceeded to advise the Committee that on the 11th October 2013, Government Minister Mr. Eric Pickles had made a direction that all wind farm planning appeals were to be called into his department, as he felt that local opinions were not being considered sufficiently. The planning Inspectors will therefore only prepare reports, not make a final decision on each planning appeal. The political decision has therefore been taken away from the Inspectors. The result of this is that the outcome of the West Huntspill appeal will probably not be known before the Pilrow appeal starts. If that appeal is rejected on environmental grounds, it would greatly assist in the Pilrow appeal process. Regrettably therefore, the West Huntspill appeal may not act as a barometer for this appeal.

The appeal process therefore continues in earnest and Mr Keegan again urged all Councillors to make written statements to the Inspectorate before the deadline of 10th December 2013. He will be prepared to assist any Councillor or local resident with the preparation of these statements, with the intension that they contain different grounds and evidence, rather than simply be duplicates of others. The Planning Inspectorate will visit the area on 12th January 2014. S.D.C. have instructed Arup Plc. to prepare a report on landscape issues of the appeal, despite the fact that Broadview have also instructed Arup, via its solicitors (Eversheds). In Mr Keegan's opinion, this will enable lively cross-examination of the evidence, as Arup state in one report that Brent Knoll itself is a most suitable site for a wind turbine! A preparatory meeting of the evidence to be submitted will take place on the 12th November when Janette Burton of S.D.C. will attend. Mr Keegan concluded his address by saying that "time is of the essence" in preparing the case against the appeal.

Cllr Walker raised the cost of hiring a coach to enable the Inspectorate to visit the important local sites which will be affected if the wind farm was approved. He said that a verbal estimate of £160.00 per day had been received. He also said that the Parish Council had previously agreed to assist the No Pilrow group financially, in its campaign. He proposed that the cost of hiring the Village Hall on 30th October 2013 (£8.00) for a public meeting, should be paid by the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Lloyd-Jones and then passed unanimously by the whole Committee. The Chairman then urged all present to canvas support for the rejection of the appeal in both written statements and verbal representations when the appeal starts in January 2014. The appeal preparations will be reviewed again at the next Committee meeting.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on Monday 7th October 2013, were signed by the Chairman as being a true reflection of the business carried out by this Parish Council on that date.

ONGOING ISSUES

Minute 04/13 Review of the funding of the Parish Magazine. Cllr McGreavy said that he had not received the information he had requested from Mrs Richards and therefore the review was no further forward at this time. Cllr Rawles said that November and December were important months for the magazine, as a lot of information is given about forthcoming events in the area. If possible the distribution of the magazine should be speeded up, so that all residents receive their copy within a similar time scale. It must be emphasised that no criticism is being levied against Mrs Richards. The topic will be placed on next month's Agenda for review.

Minute 24/12: Defibrillator Equipment . Cllr Webb addressed the meeting and said that one of the defibrillators had now been installed at the Rooksbridge Post Office and is now operational. She said that she was awaiting details of the training programme which will be given to Parishioners about how to use the equipment. It is hoped that the second defibrillator will be installed in the telephone kiosk on Brent Road before the date of the next meeting. Preparations for the painting of the kiosk were in hand. Cllr Webb suggested sites for the positioning of signs telling the public where the defibrillators are located. Cllr Gilling suggested the Methodist Church and he gave Cllr Webb the relevant contact details. Cllr Lloyd-Jones suggested that an entry is made in the village magazine, giving the public these details.

The Chairman suggested that the letter the Council had received from Tessa Munt MP, concerning the gift of one defibrillator unit to one of the Parishes within her constituency by the Plymouth Brethren, should be discussed at this point rather than later in the meeting. A copy of the letter had already been circulated by the Clerk to each Councillor and everyone was therefore aware of its contents. After a general discussion about the merits of having a third unit available for the Parish, it was decided that a request to be considered as the recipient of the unit, should be submitted. Cllr Webb agreed to undertake this and she will ensure that it was available before the deadline of the 14th November 2013. The Chairman once again thanked Cllr Webb for the hard work and effort she has put into this project.

Minute 08/13: Playing Field Project at Pill Road, Rooksbridge: Cllr Gilling declared his interest in the land in question. Cllr Lloyd-Jones addressed the meeting and said that the planning application is proceeding with S.D.C and the RLT3 grant application which he had submitted to S.D.C for funding of some £6,000, will be included into the next Costal Cluster meeting on the 20th of November. Therefore, hopefully by early December the outcome of the planning application and grant should be known and so far it's looking positive to obtain approval of both. Cllr Lloyd-Jones will keep in contact with S.D.C and other related parties to check on progress and any other possible requirements needed. He will also in the next month, submit an application to the Nuttall Trust for funds to support this project.

Minute 15.13: Arrangements for the Village Christmas Tree 2013.

The Chairman said that Cllr Bowden has in the past organised the arrangements for the Christmas tree, but unfortunately was not able to be present at this meeting. He has however indicated his willingness to undertake this again this year. It was agreed that Cllr Gilling will arrange for the purchase of the tree. Cllr McGreavy has already checked the functioning of the lights. It was the general consensus that the tree should if possible, be in place and illuminated by the 7th December 2013. The Councillors who normally undertake this, will contact each other to make the appropriate arrangements and meeting times.

PLANNING MATTERS

The Chairman read out the list of decided applications shown on the Agenda. He then addressed the current application (No. 24/13/00021 Rookery Manor, Edingworth by Mr I. Clapp for change of use to residential accommodation). He invited Cllr McGreavy to address the meeting. Cllr McGreavy said that he and Cllrs Bowden and Roscorla had visited the site. He outlined the details of the application and concluded by saying that they could find no reasons why the application could not receive the support of the Parish Council, after reviewing the criteria the Council must follow. Cllr Gilling commented that he had heard that there were concerns about the extra drainage usage this would create. The Chairman said that he was aware of these, but that they were not correct. The accommodation if converted, is unlikely to create any more waste than it currently does. Cllr McGreavy therefore proposed that a recommendation of approval of the application, should be sent to S.D.C. This was seconded by Cllr Roscorla and unanimously passed by the whole Committee.

The Chairman then raised the second application on the Agenda (No. 24/13/00023 Pill Road, Rooksbridge by East Brent Parish Council itself). He said that it was not appropriate for the Council to comment on its own application and the decision making process should be left to S.D.C.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Approval for the payment of all of the costs listed on the Agenda (together with the additional payment of £8.00 to the Village Hall Management Fund, referred to above) was proposed by Cllr Rawles 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 Lloyd-Jones then addressed the Committee on the preparations to determine the amount of the Precept for the forthcoming financial year. He circulated a draft budget summary to the members and explained the thinking behind the various costs. It does appear that with the playing field project being hopefully progressed next year, there may be a need to increase the annual budget. Also Cllr Webb commented on raising the amount spent on village maintenance. Cllr Rawles agreed with her that this should be increased. Cllr Lloyd-Jones will endeavour to get the draft budget to the other members not present at the meeting and this item will be reviewed again and hopefully agreed, at the next meeting in December. Clarification of the time line for submitting the Precept request to SDC and what changes if any there will be in the funding set-up, will be obtained.

CORRESPONDENCE The Chairman referred to the letters received Somerset County Council Highways Dept. regarding the temporary closure of Pill Road, Rooksbridge from the 18th November 2013 for a six week period to install a new water main. As these were purely advisory letters, no formal debate was necessary. The letter received from Tessa Munt MP had been dealt with previously in the meeting.

MATTERS OF REPORT

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had learned that Cllr Webb had been nominated for inclusion in the list of a 100 influential women and congratulated her on this achievement.

Cllr Rawles reported that there was a parking problem at Mill Batch. A car was being advertised for sale and left on the highway. Cllr Gilling said that his understanding was that any vehicle displaying a current road fund licence, could be parked legally on all public roads, as long as it was not causing an obstruction. This was endorsed by the Chairman, who said that the Parish Council was not able to take any action to prevent this.

Cllr Gilling reported that there was also a vehicle being parked near his property which was displaying for sale notices. Again the Chairman said that there was no action the Council could take. He recommended that Cllr Gilling should approach S.C.C. Highways dept. personally if he wished to pursue the matter.

Cllr Webb offered thanks on behalf of the Councillors, to Cllr Rawles for the hard work she and her husband had done, to plant the contents of the 25kg. bag of bulbs given to the Parish Council by S.D.C. It is hoped that spring 2014 will show a great display of daffodils along the A370.

Cllr Roscorla reported that vehicles appear to be serviced by a resident residing in the affordable housing complex in Rooksbridge on the adjacent road. She thought that this might be in breach of regulations and be illegal. The Chairman responded that it would be for the Housing Society to take any action against this person; not the Parish Council, to prevent further trading/conducting a business, from the property.

Cllr McGreavy, on behalf of the absent Cllr Bowden, raised the possible danger to road users and pedestrians using the road adjacent to the Methodist Church. A hole has developed which needs urgent attention. The Clerk confirmed that he had already reported this to the Highways dept.

Cllr Walker reported that Ian McWilliams had reviewed the building site adjacent to the Knoll Inn at East Brent, to see if any enforcement action could be taken against the developers for failing to complete the entire project. This was particularly relevant as the nights are now drawing in and darkness is coming earlier. There is a real danger of injuries being sustained by pedestrians using the road. Cllr Walker has been told that Liam Gill will try to arrange for the pavement to be completed and for the costs involved to be recovered from the developers. Cllr Walker said he was encouraged to see the delivery of a skip to the site recently. This might suggest that the developers are intending to carry out further works at the site. He will monitor the situation. He also suggested that the Clerk adopts a new system of reminding Councillors of their responsibilities and commitments to do tasks, following each Committee meeting. He recommended that a list of actions is made for the Councillors and circulated with the Minutes of the preceding meeting. This should be in "bullet point" detail only and restricted to viewing by Councillors only, said Cllr Rawles. It was agreed that this system should be trialled and formally adopted if it was considered to be successful. The Clerk will prepare this, starting from this meeting onwards.

Cllr Roscorla advised the Clerk that she can now receive communications regarding the Parish Council via email. She wished her email address to remain confidential, however.

Cllr Lloyd-Jones reported that Matthew Wall had kept his word by arranging for the local drainage channels to be cleared. This was particularly important with the onset of predicted wet weather conditions.

Cllr Lloyd-Jones also reported that the goal posts on the playing fields in the Red House Road area were in urgent need of repair. They are loose and could be wrecked by deliberate pushing over actions by youths. He agreed to approach Dave Aggett at S.D.C. about this item.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

The next meeting of the East Brent Parish Council will be on Monday 2nd December 2013 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.