

EAST BRENT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of East Brent Parish Council held at the Village Hall on Monday 6th January 2014 at 7.30pm, when the following business was transacted.

Present: Councillors; Cllr E. Champion, (Chairman) Cllr A. Gilling, Cllr J. Webb, Cllr Y. Roscorla, Cllr N. Lloyd-Jones, Cllr S. McGreavy, Cllr J. Bowden, Cllr B. Woodward and Cllr B. Bees, together with the Clerk Mr M. Shobbrook.

Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

Apologies were received from Cllrs. V. Rawles and W. Walker, together with Mr Bob Filmer.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on Monday 2nd December 2013 and Thursday 19th December 2013, were signed by the Chairman as being a true reflection of the business carried out by this Parish Council on those dates.

ONGOING ISSUES

Minute 04/13 : Review of the funding of the Parish Magazine. Cllr Webb has obtained a quote to use a 3rd party printer, which would save a lot of Ms Richards' time, as she currently personally undertakes all the required printing for the magazine. The quote is very similar to the production per edition cost which Ms Richards had provided. Cllr McGreavy is to contact Ms Richards to discuss the option of outsourcing the printing. Some Councillors expressed views that ideally more than 6 editions annually would be preferred. A main concern is that if the advertising income declines further, the Parish Council would more than likely have to contribute more, financially. It was proposed by Cllr Bowden that the Parish Council budgets for a thousand pounds contribution for 6 editions in 2014, this was seconded by Cllr Lloyd-Jones. Also, it was felt updates on the income should be obtained, in order to assess how the overall budget for the magazine is developing for the year.

Minute 24/12 : Defibrillator Equipment . Cllr Webb addressed the meeting and said that the painting of the telephone kiosk had not been possible because of the bad weather conditions recently. This will be undertaken as soon as the conditions improve. Thereafter, it is hoped that the second defibrillator unit can be installed within a short while.

A request for the installation of a new electricity supply to the telephone kiosk, has been made to E.on, since BT has refused to support this project. E.on has been promised publicity coverage if it agrees to provide power to the kiosk at no expense to the Parish Council and a favourable response is anticipated. Cllr Webb said that she can arrange for a training session to be given by the CHB (The Community HeartBeat Trust) at the Village Hall. This will be open to the local residents to receive training on the use of the Defibrillator equipment.

The Clerk will make arrangements for this to take place on Wednesday 5th February 2014 at 2.00pm. Similar sessions at other locations have attracted as many as 150 people. The duration of the session is likely to be about an hour and a half.

Updates on the training session and installation of the second Defibrillator in the old telephone kiosk, will be given at the next Committee meeting.

Minute 30/12: The completion of the pavements adjacent to the building site at The Laurels, Old Bristol Road, East Brent. As Cllr Walker was not able to attend, the Chairman directed that this item should be postponed until the next Committee meeting. Cllr Walker has been dealing with negotiations with Ian McWilliams and David Crowle over this matter and his input was necessary. Cllr Gilling did however report that the pavement has been re-surfaced, but it is still not to an adoptable standard and it needs further attention. The general situation however has improved and is now safer for pedestrians.

Minute 03/13: The Horse Chestnut Trees on the "Village Green" Cllr Lloyd-Jones updated the Committee saying that he has been in written contact with Ms Burton at S.D.C., to explain that the Parish Council would consider financial support to remove the TPO and make improvements to that area, including possible seating and flower planting. Also new trees could be planted in other close-by areas, so that the overall number of trees was maintained. The reply received from Ms Burton stated her current view is that the trees are of a high amenity value. Ms Burton will be tied up with the Wind Farm inquiry for the next few weeks, so after that the aim is to request a site meeting with her to discuss the future of these trees.

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 gave an update, saying that the RLT3 Grant funding application was approved on December 3rd and Planning Approval was given at the planning meeting of December 17th. The Planning Approval does come with a number of conditions relating to the possible football goal equipment and the maintenance of the area. Cllr Lloyd-Jones has already started a dialogue with Harley Cook at S.D.C on these matters and will continue to work on the resolution required; including suggesting a site meeting. He has also made an application to the Nuttall Trust and has been in contact with the Housing Association and Lights for Life, to update them both on the progress being made. One of the key next steps, is to put in place a lease of the land to the Parish Council and Cllr Gilling was asked to provide via his legal representatives, a draft lease which the Clerk will review on behalf of the Parish Council.

Minute 14/13: Planning Appeal relating to the Pilrow Wind Farm. The Chairman acknowledged the hard work put into this matter on behalf of the Parish Council, by Cllr Walker. He reminded the Committee that the Appeal process starts on Tuesday 7th January 2014 and everyone who is able to do so, should attend the Inquiry at the Princess Hall in Burnham on Sea, during each day. This will indicate the local opposition to the wind farm. Cllr McGreavy said that he will attend each day for the first week and Cllr Lloyd-Jones said he would attend at least two days as well. The Chairman said that arrangements were in hand for the Parish Council to take the members of the Inspectorate around the area on the 17th January to enable them to see for themselves the impact the turbines would have on the environment. The Parish Council will pay for the cost of this coach trip.

Minute 15.13 : Arrangements for the Village Christmas Tree 2013.

The Chairman thanked Cllrs. Gilling, Bowden, McGreavy and Walker for their efforts with the erection and lighting of the Christmas tree during last December. Cllr Bowden proposed that the usual donation of £15.00 should be made to the Village Hall Management Fund for the electricity used to light the tree and this was seconded by Cllr Woodward. Cllr McGreavy said that now the tree lights were LED's, the amount of energy used was less than in previous years and so the donation would certainly be sufficient to pay for all the power consumed.

Minute 16/13: The Village War Memorial: The Clerk advised the Committee that the application for a renovation grant which he had previously submitted to the War Memorial Trust, has been successful. The Trust has agreed to make a grant of 50% of the restoration costs, towards the works needed. He will therefore make the appropriate arrangements with Well Cathedral Stonemasons,(the Parish Council's preferred contractor) to commence the work. It is hoped that this will be completed in time for the commemoration of the one hundred year anniversary of the outbreak of World War One, later this year. Various conditions are attached to the payment of the grant money by the Trust, but the Clerk will try to ensure that these are met. The Chairman acknowledged the extensive preparation work for the submission of the grant application, initially made by Cllr Webb and subsequently by the Clerk. Further reports on the progress of the restoration work will be given to the Committee during subsequent meetings.

PLANNING MATTERS

Before any debate commenced on planning matters, Cllr Gilling advised the Chairman that he had been advised by the Solicitor to S.D.C. that he should absent himself from any involvement in Parish Council planning matters. This is because Cllr Gilling is a member of the Development Committee at S.D.C. He therefore retired from the Hall for the duration of the debate on planning matters.

The Chairman went through the decided planning applications listed on the Agenda and no questions were subsequently raised upon them.

He then addressed the current application shown on the amended Agenda. The Clerk explained that he had received the paperwork relating to application number 24/13/00027 (by Mrs Wendy Dover at Hill Lane East Brent) on Thursday 2nd January 2014. He immediately arranged for its inclusion in the amended Agenda which was posted at the Village Hall later that day. This therefore facilitated the review of the application within the strict time deadlines. The Clerk further explained that he had discussed the application with Cllr McGreavy (the Council's appointed Planning Officer) and that it was decided that a site visit to Mrs. Dover's property would not be necessary. Cllr McGreavy therefore invited the Committee to review the application during this meeting. He circulated the copy paperwork supplied by S.D.C. and a debate followed. He declared an interest in this application, being related to an adjoining house owner. After a thorough discussion by the rest of the Committee, it was felt that there was no reason why this application could not receive the support of the Parish Council. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Bowden and seconded by Cllr Lloyd-Jones, that the application should receive the support of the Committee. A unanimous vote in favour then followed. The Clerk was instructed to convey this to S.D.C., in the usual way.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Clerk highlighted the receipt of the incomes shown on the Agenda and then referred to the proposed payments. He said that the invoice received from Greenacres Garden and Estate Management for grass-cutting during 2013, was very reasonable and only exceeded the equivalent invoice for 2012, by a very small margin. Cllr Bowden led an agreed recognition by all, that this contractor provided good services to the Parish Council and they should be congratulated.

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

Cllr Lloyd-Jones, in his capacity as Finance Officer for the Council, will present to the Committee at the next meeting, a budget for the spending costs for the remainder of the financial year.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairman told the Committee about a letter of complaint sent to the Clerk on the 3rd January 2014 by Mr Clive Waddell, regarding the problems associated with the parking of a very large number of mourners cars, during a funeral service at the Parish Church on that day.

The actual email was read out by Cllr Lloyd-Jones and debated by the Committee. The general consensus was that the problems Mr Waddell referred to in his email, were recognised and accepted. However, it was unanimously felt that this was an exceptionally large funeral gathering to mark the death of a prominent and well liked local farmer and it was not a regular occurrence. It was pointed out that the roads used by mourners to park their vehicles were public highways and as such, they are under the control of the Police and the Highways Department at Somerset County Council and not under the control of the Parish Council. It is hoped that in similar circumstances, mourners will be respectful of the accessibility requirements of local residents to their own drives and properties and also events associated with the local school. It was decided that the Clerk would formally reply to Mr Waddell's email, pointing out the facts above, but nevertheless recognising Mr Waddell's concerns.

MATTERS OF REPORT

Cllr Webb offered her thanks to Cllr Lloyd-Jones, Cllr Walker and to several others who had given her assistance in retrieving the sand bags which had been strewn around the Village by youths, during a speight of "high spirits". Eighty bags have now been filled with sand in readiness to be used during periods of flooding. It is hoped that this action will prevent the misuse of either the bags, or the sand in the future as they will be too heavy to abuse. It was also mentioned that the recent works carried out to the drainage channels in the Village have so far assisted in preventing a repeat of the flooding problems encountered during last year.

Cllr Bees said that the work carried out at "Footers Corner" has been successful in preventing flooding there as well.

Cllr Bowden told the Committee that the chippings from the recent tree works on the Yew tree in the Church yard have been spread along a path leading to the field in an attempt to improve the usage of the path. It had become very muddy during periods of heavy rainfall. He told the Committee that he would be pleased to offer help to the Church if further works were required in the Church yard, in providing access for machinery and materials over the Cemetery land. Cllr Gilling reminded everyone that chippings from Yew Trees are poisonous to livestock and should not be spread near the adjacent field.

Cllr Woodward said that she had been approached by an owner of one of the affordable houses at Rooksbridge and told that children from The Chantry are playing on the Affordable Housing complex. Whilst nothing could be done to stop this, it was thought that the "problem" might be alleviated when the new playing field is available.

Cllr Lloyd-Jones reported that the new children's play equipment at Red House Road was proving to be a success with children. He gained agreement with S.D.C. to immediately carry out a lot of clearing of overgrown foliage both around the play equipment area and adjacent car park. Drainage problems have also been addressed and the car park is now more usable. The Chairman thanked Cllr Lloyd-Jones for doing this, as it has greatly improved the appearance of the whole area.

Cllr Lloyd-Jones raised the topic of the Community Warden Scheme. He asked if the Parish Council is still interested in the scheme, as requested in a recent email sent to the Clerk and circulated to all members. Cllr Gilling replied that he intended attending the forthcoming meeting of the neighbouring Villages when this scheme will be discussed and he will say that East Brent would like to be an active member of the scheme. He will at that time find out if there will be any funding for the scheme from S.C.C. as there is currently no provision for this item within the Parish Councils 2014 budget.

Cllr McGreavy said that there appears to be a persistent offender who allows their dog to mess on the pavement and may look to set up a camera to try to capture images of the dog owner and then report the offender to S.D.C.

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 3rd February 2014 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.