

WATERBEACH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Waterbeach Parish Council held on 1 October 2013 at 7.30 p.m. at the New Pavilion, Cambridge Road, Waterbeach.

OPEN FORUM

The need for a replacement school crossing attendant was raised and it was agreed this be discussed in the main meeting under Health and Safety.

Jane Williamson speaking in her role as a Trustee of Denny Abbey Fenland Museum pointed out that the museum was not much used by local people and wondered if there might be a way to raise the profile whilst at the same time making it more economical for villagers to visit. Currently only 4% of visitors are local. It might be possible to offer advantageous terms such as a discount for local residents. In return might the PC consider making a contribution to the costs? It was agreed that this might be considered and a formal proposal should be brought to the next Council meeting. It should be noted that there will be Halloween events after which the museum will be closed from the end of October for the winter.

COUNCIL

PRESENT

Councillor N Kay, Chair

Councillors B J Bull, W Bullivant, J Cornwell, K Grant, M Howlett, B Johnson, P Johnson, A Lloyd, J Rabbett, C Smith, J Williamson, M Williamson and A Wright.

IN ATTENDANCE

E Jones, Parish Clerk

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor D Smart

74/13 NEW PARISH CLERK

Elizabeth (Liz) Jones was introduced to the Councillors present as the new Parish Clerk, having been formally appointed through the Employment Panel under delegated powers. Councillors were invited to contact her at the parish office to make individual appointments to meet her.

75/14 MINUTES

Corrections were made as follows: -

(a) Noted that Councillor J Rabbett had in fact been present at the meeting on 3 September.

(b) Under 66/13 Camlocks, the final sentence of the second paragraph was amended to say “our representative (Amy Richardson, Taylor Vinters) advised the council not to take it on following a meeting between Waterbeach Parish Councillors and the developers”.

(c) Under 71/13 (viii) the following words were deleted “that if the pictures arrived in good time from the representatives of Wickstead”

The minutes were approved as a correct record subject to these corrections.

76/13 MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillor A Wright declared an interest with regard to any discussion about gritting.

Councillor J Rabbett declared a disclosable pecuniary interest with regard to payments to her husband, Mr C Rabbett, who was an employee of the Council.

Councillor P. Johnson declared an interest as a District Councillor in matters relating to South Cambridgeshire District Council.

77/13 CAMLOCKS

The council had written to Morris Homes on 9 September and a response received dated 11 September stated that the company is not prepared to reinstate the Open Space Maintenance Contribution as suggested by the Council.

The Council intends to offer a follow up meeting with the CamLocks residents' group.

78/13 REINSTATEMENT OF HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

It was proposed that the Highways Committee be re-instated as it had not met for some time. After some discussion as to whether it should instead be a working party or advisory group it was agreed that it should be a committee. As a committee there will be a need to publish agendas and minutes. It was noted that members of public may join the committee and listen and speak but that anyone co-opted has no right to vote and must declare any interests.

Progress should be made as soon as possible as there are outstanding consultations. Members when the committee last met were: C Smith, A Wright, M Howlett, K Grant, P Johnson, and W Bullivant. Information about the committee and a point of contact should be added to the next newsletter.

RESOLVED: that the Highways Committee be reinstated

79/13 MACHINERY REPORT

It was proposed to buy a new tipping trailer that the ground staff would use for transporting and depositing heavy material which needed to be moved in quantity such as loam for the cricket pitch, hedge cuttings and soil from the cemetery. It was suggested we could use some s106 money but there is £5000 in the machinery budget for the year and this cost would come within that, as would the cost for adding road lights. Councillors reviewed the information sheet supplied describing the item.

RESOLVED - To order the tipping trailer described in the information sheet

80/13 CAMBRIDGE PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE

Councillor Grant had been in contact with Cambridge Past Present and Future but had not been able to attend the meeting at which presentations were made. However there are two presentations available on the web. They discussed a strategy for the Cam corridor, to reinvigorate it and protect it from development, especially on the flood plain. There have been a series of meetings with many representatives from Parish Councils on the Cam, but not many from the lower Cam. Councillor Grant will inform councillors about the next meeting. In the meantime she would encourage all to look at the website which can be found by searching online for “Cam corridor strategy”.

81/13 RESIGNATION OF FORMER CLERK

(a) A letter had been received on 3 September 2013 from Councillor D Smart which had been circulated to councillors and published on the council website. Several of those present requested that the Chairman read it aloud to the meeting and she did so.

There was much discussion about the appropriate response, some considering no action should be taken and others suggesting the contents be noted and recorded in the minutes, regardless of whether the council agreed with the contents of the letter. Many present felt they wanted to draw a line under past disagreements and move forward with goodwill. It was also suggested that if an impasse were reached, perhaps the council should consider mediation.

What happened cannot be changed and what the former clerk experienced was clearly traumatic for her regardless of the intentions of those involved.

There was disagreement among councillors about whether or not the discussions should have taken place in public and whether individual councillors should have been named. It was acknowledged that care needs to be taken regarding what is said about individual councillors in meetings

It was noted that all councillors should be aware that solicitors had advised the council not to discuss confidential HR matters beyond the Employment Panel in order not to infringe the rights of employees.

RESOLVED

That the letter having been read out at the council meeting, the complaint was recognised and it was recorded that Councillor Smart refuted the allegations made.

(b) A similar letter had been received from Councillor Cornwell

RESOLVED

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82/13 EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL APPEAL

It was noted that notification had been received that the date had been set for the Employment Tribunal Appeal on 8 February 2014

83/13. CYCLE RACKS

RESOLVED

To authorise the Clerk to agree the style of cycle racks outside One Stop in consultation with the Groundsman and that advice should be taken from South Cambridgeshire District Council regarding any necessity for planning or conservation area permission.

84/13. FORMER IT BUILDING.

It was reported that whilst we had the option to express interest, it is expensive and is likely to be put on the market shortly at a price around £400,000.

It was suggested that there could be many possible uses – for example it would be an ideal location for the playgroup, which has issues with its current facilities

RESOLVED

To contact the County Council and ask if they could consider renting it to the Parish Council at a favourable rent.

85/13 CHITTERING PLAYPARK

The bench and table arrangement needs repair. If it has to be replaced the cost would be around £500 for one in recycled plastic but as it has a solid concrete base, options for repair should be explored.

RESOLVED To get quote from Mr W Jaggard to replace the broken wood

PROPOSED To ask the caravan park who make use of it whether they would contribute towards the cost.

Proposal not carried

86/13 SKATEPARK

It was reported that there are two potential locations for the skatepark – the advantages and disadvantages of which are listed on the attached report, along with information about the potential design and funding.

The question of fencing was raised and it was pointed out that the space does not have to be square. If anyone has any ideas or comments to feed into the process, they should contact one of the councillors on the working party: M. Williamson, J. Cornwell and P. Johnson

It was noted that some of the boys involved in using the skatepark had expressed disappointment that Councillor Smart is not on the working party.

87/13 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The gate to the little playground is bottoming out. Also there is a pad missing.
- Quotations are still awaited for improvements to the ramp access to the Old Pavilion
- As previously agreed, a bell should be installed at the bottom of the ramp to the office
- Fixing of an outside light for the end of the Old Pavilion is in hand.
- Councillor A Wright has been on a training course so 3 people are now trained for gritting. CCC say there is no time to do more training but there are notes that can be read in the event of finding extra volunteers. However if people are not trained, they will not be insured by the County. The Clerk will check as to whether they would be covered by the Parish Council insurance. It was noted that we may need to buy spreaders. There is a mobile phone alert system for when gritting is needed.
- The light on the pole at the corner of the tennis courts is in the process of being fixed.
- The solar light on the A10 in Chittering needs repair
- A new sign is needed for the cemetery. One suggested supplier is to contact Filcris in Bourn who use recycled plastic. The Clerk will get quotations from more than one supplier. It was noted that other signs are needed too.
- The Clerk was asked to write to the local MP to find out more information about what progress there is on the recently reported possibility of reopening cemeteries.
- Councillors were concerned that when there is development along the A10 in East Cambridgeshire there is currently no consideration of the effect on traffic on the A10 .

[Standing Orders were suspended to allow Jane Williams to speak about the transport strategy and to encourage all to respond before the closing date and time of 14 October 5pm.]

- There is concern about out of control dogs running off the recreation ground into Chapel Close.
- As always there are issues with dog faeces not being picked up.
- The catch is broken on the gate to Chittering playpark which is next to the road.
- A white school bus has been seen speeding along School Lane, Chittering.
- Tar needs to be cleaned off the slide and mat in the Chittering playpark
- The external toilet at the Old Pavilion needs cleaning on a regular basis

- There is a lack of white lines at locations where there are kerb drops for mobility scooters (off High Street) – this to be referred to Highways at Cambridgeshire County Council.
- The bus stop space needs marking on the road – Clerk to investigate who is responsible for that so that cars do not block the bus stop space.
- Leaves from trees on green may block the drains and cause localised flooding.

[9.20pm Councillor Cornwell left the meeting]

RESOLVED

To keep up as far as possible with the removal of leaves from the village green and the Gault as appropriate

- The previous school crossing operative retired in the summer and there is no safe place to cross outside the school as there is a lot of fast traffic on the road as well as parked cars. The council agreed to enquire of Cambridgeshire County Council and County Councillor Maurice Leeke, who was present, agreed to look into this. He indicated that it was unlikely to be a funding problem. It was suggested that the Highways Committee look at the option of a crossing there and whether it would be possible to have a 20 mph limit in the centre of the village. In the meantime the Clerk agreed to ask the PCSO if he can attend at the school gates at those times and note illegally parked cars. It was noted that it is possible to take a car number and report it.
- It was noted that there are similar issues of parking alongside the road near the railway.
- The community association feels that the village needs more litter bins, especially around the green. This matter will be added to the next council agenda.
- The cemetery paths need attention – there are differing suggestions for remedying this which will need further discussion.

88/13 REPORTS

(i) County Councillor

- A bicycle shelter has been erected at the railway station with about a dozen loops – room for 24 bicycles. It was agreed that the parish council would put up a sign on the platforms to tell people the facility is there.
- The worst potholes on Winfold Road have been filled temporarily but it still needs resurfacing.
- There is a proposal, yet to be confirmed, for parking charges at park and ride sites
- The Highways Strategy Consultation had been extended to 14th October so people can still make representations – for example about East Cambs and the A10.
- Funding is available towards bus facility improvements such as bus shelters, cycle parking and real-time bus information. Local buses have the transponders already so we would just need the signs. Expressions of interest need to be submitted by 4

November.

RESOLVED that the council should apply for funds towards real time bus information

(ii) **District Councillor**

- Councillor Johnson had circulated a report
- No decision has yet been taken about a new route for the A10.
- The amount available for the bus project mentioned above is £40k.
- Another possible provider for signs would be Signart who are based in Waterbeach.
- It has been confirmed that the additional S106 money will be received for 9 Denny End Road.

(iii) **Chairman**

- There is an ongoing problem with dogs whose owners do not keep them under control. It seems that bossy signs don't work. Recent signs on the trees seem to have worked better. There are some amusing ones around or the council could create something new. There is also a need to keep changing the notices. All are encouraged to send suggestions to the Clerk.
- A new sign is needed for Kirby Road at the junction with Cody Road, asking dog owners to keep their pets under control.

(iv) **Library Officer**

- Councillor Grant read out an email she had circulated along with a report from Maggie Crane about the library. Councillor Grant indicated that Mrs Crane was doing an amazing job managing the operations of the library, recruiting and training volunteers and keeping the displays refreshed and relevant.
- Councillor Grant indicated that Mrs Crane is perturbed by delays in her requests for maintenance and by the perception that she cannot talk directly to the Headteacher about matters relating to health and safety etc. at the Community Building. Mrs Crane runs a team of volunteers over the summer and there had been some issues around cleanliness and security – evidently the door is not very secure.
- The Chair indicated that she had not prevented Mrs Crane from meeting with the Headteacher and took her concerns seriously. She will take them up with the Headteacher – especially the question of security.
- It was noted that the Community Association, gardening club and village society all use the room for meetings. Anyone can hire the room. The pantomime group use it as a changing room and it is also used for Feast.

(v) **CAPALC**

It was noted that the Clerk's contract of employment is out of date – for example references to the Green Book should be removed. The employment panel are taking expert advice on the subject.

(vi) **Neighbourhood Watch**

There has been little recent news on this project but a big launch is planned by Sergeant Rogerson.

(vii) **Trees**

There are 2 dead trees on the Gault which need to be removed and replaced.

89/13 ACCOUNTS

A list of bills due to be paid was circulated to councillors

RESOLVED To pass the accounts for payment

[10 pm Councillor Grant left the meeting]

90/13. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED *in accordance with section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960 that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted at the next agenda item (s) the Chairman asks that in the public interest the public and press are temporarily excluded from this meeting and herewith instructed to withdrawal*

91/13. SALARIES ETC

Councillor J Rabbett left the room.

RESOLVED to approve the salaries for payment

The Meeting closed at 10.02pm