

WATERBEACH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Waterbeach Parish Council held on 3 December 2013 at 7.30 p.m. at the New Pavilion, Cambridge Road, Waterbeach.

OPEN FORUM

Mrs Strange wished to register the fact that she was unhappy about the way her comments at the November Parish Council meeting had been dealt with as she felt she had raised an important Health and Safety matter. The Chair explained that when the Parish Council website indicates complaints should be made to the Council that means they should be raised via the Clerk at the Parish Council Office. Mrs Strange asked about the hours worked by the groundsmen and was advised that one is full-time and one part-time. She also wanted to know how much machinery is paid for from s106 money and how much from council tax. It was explained that the expenditure on machinery this year has been largely for replacement items following the burglary; also that s106 money is specifically for amenities/open spaces

COUNCIL

PRESENT

Councillor N Kay, Chair
Councillors B Bull, W Bullivant, J Cornwell, K Grant, M Howlett, A Lloyd, B Johnson, P Johnson, J Rabbett, D Smart, J Williamson, M Williamson and A Wright.

IN ATTENDANCE

E Jones, Parish Clerk

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor C Smith

109/13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 5th November 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed. Proposed: P Johnson, Seconded: A Wright

110/13 MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillors J Williamson, M. Williamson, P Johnson and A Wright declared an interest in item 9(a) request for grant to the Farmland Museum

Councillor P. Johnson declared an interest as a District Councillor in matters relating to South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) planning applications.

Councillor J Rabbett declared an interest in item 12 Accounts as her husband is an employee.

111/13 PLANNING

Application S/2106/13FL for demolition of existing extension and provision of new two storey extension to the existing chemist's shop. Demolition of existing detached building to the rear of existing chemist's shop and its replacement with a two storey detached single bedroom dwelling. 6 Chapel Street, Waterbeach, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB5 9HR

RESOLVED

To recommend that the application be refused for the following reasons:

- (i) Overdevelopment of the site
- (ii) Vehicular access proposed appears too narrow for a pedestrian and a car to safely pass at the same time
- (iii) Insufficient room for a vehicle to safely turn and exit onto the highway.

Proposed: J Cornwell, Seconded: K Grant

112/13 CAMLOCKS

There was nothing new to report but attempts are still being made to find a date for a follow-up meeting with the representatives of the residents.

113/13 SKATEPARK

Despite a great deal of effort and chasing on the part of Councillor Cornwell, only one company has sent quotations. These range from £60,000 to £80,000. Others have informally mentioned up to £150,000. The working party plans to meet again shortly to discuss funding possibilities. Contractors have been shown the wish list compiled from current skatepark users and asked to quote according to what they feel can be fitted into the site, the most important criteria being that it should have a concrete base. There will be significant costs related to the necessity for heavy vehicles to access the construction site. Further discussion will be needed to decide the best way to organise such access. The working party continues to chase the other potential contractors and hopes to be able to bring a proposal to the January Parish Council meeting.

114/13 OUTDOOR FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Amey Cespa have confirmed that they have now received all the required supporting information for the funding application for this equipment and we await their decision.

115/13 EQUIPMENT PURCHASE

With regard to the possible purchase of a replacement BillyGoat machine, after a lengthy discussion, it was

RESOLVED

To ask the Clerk to report back to the next meeting, covering the following points:

- i) whether the existing machine can be modified
- ii) what work is it needed for
- iii) is it the best machine for those purposes
- iv) is there an alternative

Proposed: K Grant; Seconded: A Lloyd

116/13 FINANCE

- (a) Finance Committee Update
 - (i) Work is ongoing in creating updated headings for expenditure and income which Councillor M Williamson will deal with before the next Parish Council meeting in January.
 - (ii) It is planned to deposit £50,000 into an account with Close Brothers Bank at a 2% managed rate. This will come from Barclays Bank where money is only earning .05%. There is currently £50,000 in Cambridge and Counties Bank and another £50,000 in Cambridge Building Society.
 - (iii) We are looking at obtaining specialist accounts software.
- (b) Report on Tillage Hall bills
There have been 6 bills in the current year: -
 - (i) Three from Cambridge Water have been repaid by Tillage Hall and the Clerk has now arranged for the bills to go directly to Tillage Hall
 - (ii) That from Alan Lamb was a final snagging payment from the construction project
 - (iii) Those from C J Murfitt (£128) and Better Planet (£326) should be debated between the Tillage Hall and the Parish Council as to whose responsibility they are.
 - (iv) We also need to sort out splitting the electricity supply which is currently shared with the Groundsman's store.
 - (v) It was agreed to create a subgroup of representatives from the Tillage Hall and the Parish Council to agree which organisation should be responsible for which items both past and future – e.g. some work may need to be done on the acoustics.
 - (vi) Councillor Williamson reported that generally speaking the Tillage Hall is holding its own in terms of lettings. A copy of last year's accounts will be made available as a matter of courtesy.
- (c) Parish Precept 2014-15
A detailed report was presented by Councillor Williamson. He was asking for guidance from the Parish Council to the Finance Committee so that a budget could be planned for 2014-15. He pointed out that over the last 9 years Waterbeach is one of 3 councils with the lowest rise in Precept. Last year the rise was kept to 0.4%. However without the Council Tax Support grant, Band D council tax will rise by

over 6% even if our Parish Precept is not raised at all. It might be possible to keep the precept at the current level and absorb any increase in expenditure from reserves or to reduce the precept, again by spending from reserves and s106 money and/or by cutting expenditure. There was some discussion and the general feeling was that it would not be fair for residents to have to suffer a 6% increase in one year as we do have reserves to call on. However we should not create a situation where we are simply putting off increases to a future date. We should always seek good value for money in any expenditure and proper quotations. There is a need to bear in mind matched funding from s106 money for big projects.

It was

RESOLVED that the steer to the Finance Committee was to work on the basis of a 3% increase in Band D for the 2014-15 year.

Proposed: A Lloyd, Seconded B Bull Unanimous vote in favour

117/13 **REQUESTS FOR FUNDING**

(a) FARMLAND MUSEUM DENNY ABBEY

Councillor J Williamson had presented a report and, in answer to a question, said that the same proposal had been made to Landbeach Parish Council – i.e. a request for a grant based on a calculation of 30p per household.

[Councillors with a declared interest did not take part in the discussion.]

Other options were discussed e.g. basing a grant on the number of residents using the site, but these were felt to be impractical options on an administrative level. It was

RESOLVED to make a financial contribution for the financial year 2014/15 of £1278.80 under s137 to support the operation of the Farmland Museum in return for local visitor season tickets for local residents for the season beginning 1 April 2014 [priced at £6.50 for an individual].

Proposed: N Kay, Seconded B Bull

(b) WATERBEACH INDEPENDENT LIBRARY

A report had been received from Mrs M Crane. In answer to a question, it was clarified that the Parish Council pays the library rent to the school, currently £2,000 per annum. The reading challenge is well supported and it was generally agreed to continue the arrangement to support that. Councillors asked about fundraising and Councillor Grant explained that book sales are held, but only small amounts can be raised in this way.

It was

RESOLVED

To award the grants requested - £500 towards the reading Challenge 2014 and £1000 towards the purchase of new books and running costs in the 2014 budget.

[Subsequent to the meeting Councillor Grant asked to have a correction recorded to the report in that the number of volunteer hours should read 3500 and not 8500]

118/13 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The Clerk confirmed that one quotation had been received and others were awaited a the replacement access ramp to the Old Pavilion
- Whilst road works are ongoing near the station, pavement access is difficult
- There are problems caused by trucks parking across the pavement outside One Stop so that people with buggies can't get by and the path has been damaged. Whenever possible, such incidents should be reported directly to the PCSO, giving a time and a registration number so they can be followed up. The same applies to vehicles parked on corners in a way that obstructs views of the main road.
- Thanks were expressed to those councillors and volunteers who had cleared the path to Back Stile. There was some discussion about who is responsible for maintenance of this tarmac path and whether it was covered by the Parish Paths Partnership. It had definitely been resurfaced by the County Council, who said at the time that they were responsible for it. County Councillor Maurice Leeke agreed to investigate exactly who is responsible for what, both for the path and the ditch alongside it.
- The County council had acknowledged responsibility for the footpath between the chip shop and Jubilee Close. However this was said in August and nothing has yet been done.
- There are still missing street lights on Rosemary Road and Burgess Road. This is also a County Council matter.
- A positive report – the hedge on the building site on Rosemary Road has been replaced with fencing.
- South Cambridgeshire District Council are now emptying the dog bin on the green, but the one facing the end of Rosemary Road is a health hazard. SCDC need to check the full circuit. Councillor Bull agreed to ring SCDC about this.
- It was suggested that a reflective band might be put around the tree that is very close to the path near the Old Pavilion.

119/13 REPORTS

a. Parish Clerk – see report

- The Clerk reported also that the Assistant Clerk had left and her last day of employment had been 30 November. Arrangements would be made shortly to advertise the vacant post.
- It was agreed to consider a grant to Victim Support at the January meeting
- It was confirmed that the CCTV has evidential settings on the cameras – expenditure on additional cameras to be considered at the January meeting.

- With regard to the approach from Mr Langley, the Clerk as advised to consult minutes from 2008 – possible the Highways Committee – to find out what had been agreed at the time. Councillors had no objection to the landowner erecting a fence, but did not feel the Parish Council could help with this.
- It was requested that leaves be cleared from the skatepark if possible.
- The Clerk as asked to arrange for signs both in the car park and on Cambridge Road to indicate the location of the Recreation Ground and associated buildings.
- The Clerk was asked to approach AmeyCespa, given that there is a grant application pending, to ask whether we can still apply for other grants under their recently announced scheme - for example to cover the cost of the toys for the Gault.
- If contractors are to be engaged to clear moss from the tennis courts, it was requested that they also look at the possibility of cleaning the playpark surface at Chittering.
- It was suggested that the tennis courts be treated with sulphate of iron.
- It was pointed out that the Footpath diversion affects FP16, not 17.
- On the last occasion when a continental market was held on the Green, the fee was not paid so if we are to approve another such event the fee would need to be paid in advance. The Clerk agreed to approach SCDC to ascertain if licences would be required.
- We would be happy to welcome circus tyranna again but the date would need to be after the Feast or to have finished at least 2 weeks beforehand.
- Information about the Keeper's Daughter play to be circulated – this might be suitable for the Tillage Hall.

Councillor Cornwell left the meeting at 9.45 pm

- The Clerk will change the office answerphone message to ensure there is information for callers about how to proceed during the closure over the Christmas/New Year break.

b. County Councillor

- Councillor Leeke had been in contact with Balfour Beatty about the missing street lights on Burgess Road / Rosemary Road and would chase again.
- He will be happy to attend a meeting when the time comes to support the pedestrian crossing application.
- He reported that idea of the tolling of the A14 had been abandoned
- Not only are Park and Ride charges to be implemented but fare concessions from Park and Ride sites will also be suspended

c. District Councillor – see report

d. Chairman

- Newsletter – Councillors were asked to provide feedback by the following afternoon.

- East of England Ambulance Service have confirmed that a defibrillator will be delivered in January to be placed on the outside wall of the Old Pavilion. They are also in negotiation to place a second one either outside the doctor's surgery or Panther taxis. Other suggestions for sites at that end of village can still be put forward. The Clerk will circulate the information about running costs. It will require a new battery after 5 years and if used it will need replacement pads, electrodes etc. It is very low cost to run and will use a special low voltage connection.
- Councillor Smart had approached Councillor Bull regarding her statement to the Employment Tribunal stating that it was libellous. The Chair wanted it noted those who provided statements on behalf of the Parish Council had done so in good faith at the request of the Council and its legal advisors. She wanted to ensure all councillors are aware of this situation in case others are approached in the same way and asked councillors to inform the Clerk if they were subject to such actions. Councillor Smart stated that Councillor Bull had accused him of theft, saying that he took tools from the shed and he asked for a public apology. Councillor Bull declined to apologise, stating that her statement referred to tools being removed which were Councillor Smart's own property, as she believed to be the case at the time. Councillor B Johnson said that she thought all councillors had agreed to let this matter rest in the past and asked if it would ever stop? Councillor Smart quoted a number of instances where Mrs Smart's actions as Parish Clerk had been held to be wrong and wanted to know why others should not be disciplined for similar actions. Councillor B Johnson said that rules and procedures had changed in the interim. She asked why Mrs Smart would have been dismissed if she had done nothing wrong. Councillor Smart claimed that there was a vendetta. Councillor Lloyd said that these matters were still subject to court proceedings and should not be discussed.

e. Library Officer – see report

Questions were raised regarding the security of the building and insurance for the books and furniture. Councillor Grant offered to arrange for a furniture list to be supplied to the Clerk so that she could ensure the replacement cost of furniture was covered.

It was suggested that a key safe might be the best solution to the problem of the book drop not coinciding with the presence of volunteers. The Clerk will enquire with the school as to whether this is a practical option,

It was noted that there are over 500 active readers using Waterbeach Library.

f. CAPALC

The AGM will take place on Monday 9 December

A list of bills to be paid was circulated to councillors

In response to a question, the chair explained that the spreader was used for spreading product on the cricket and bowls greens.

It was agreed to provide a copy of the nominal codes sheet to councillors at future meetings.

It was

RESOLVED to pass the accounts for payment

Proposed: J Williamson, Seconded: A Lloyd. 12 in favour, 2 abstentions

The Meeting closed at 10.31 pm

Chairman

UNAPPROVED