

BRANDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at the Village Hall on Tuesday 23 July 2013

Present

Councillors D Risk (Chairman), S Thurlow, K Churchill, J Fielder, W Elson and H Saxton
Dist Cllr B Snell
Cty Cllr P Bellfield
Parish Clerk and RFO, A M Hounsell (AMH)
9 Parishioners

1-1314/2 – Open Discussion with Members of the Public

The following two items were discussed.

(i) Sewage discharge (previous minute 13-1314/1 (i))

The clerk reminded the meeting of the previous promises from Anglian Water (AW) (stretching back over two years) that they would be acting to improve the surface water drainage in Brandeston which was a contributor to the problem of sewage overflows. Recent correspondence had suggested AW would arrange a public meeting in Brandeston but they had not responded to the dates proposed by the clerk or to the clerk's offer of assistance with publicity. Further, no mention of these sewage overflows had been made. The clerk suggested that he should write to the regulator of AW to attempt to obtain some progress on this issue.

Mr Rice advised that he had had an informal meeting with Mr N Minter of AW who had said they would be arranging a meeting. The clerk was instructed to write to the Managing Director of AW pointing out that this matter had remained unresolved for over two years with no sign of any real action by AW except fine words.

The clerk was also asked to point out the effects upon this problem of the construction of ten new houses in Mutton Lane under approved planning applications.

(i) Mutton Lane Developments

Mrs Scott Douglas advised that she had spoken to possible buyers of one of the six houses approved under detailed application C12/1979 and they had subsequently written to her confirming that they would not be proceeding with the purchase because they considered that the houses were too close together and too overbearing. The potential purchasers had advised that the developers, Landex had stated that the land to the east of these six houses would be added to the plots of the four large detached houses within the total development of six.

Mr Mitson Woods (RMW) advised that he had met with officers at SCDC, Planning Dept. and with Landex to discuss the current detailed application for four houses (C13/1278). Landex had claimed that their land included the ditch on the northern boundary, but he disagreed. RMW pointed out that the original outline application had shown the boundary as being along the line of the conifers whereas the detailed application showed the boundary on the north edge of the ditch. Landex had also stated that they intended to fill this ditch and/or pipe it. RMW considered that the density of the houses was too great and that the wall finishes and roof tiles were inappropriate.

The subject was raised of the inadequacy of the surface water and sewage drainage which will be affected by these developments.

The council agreed to incorporate these comments in their response on this application to SCDC.

2-1314/2 – Reports from Cty Cllr P Bellfield, Dist Cllr B Snell and PCSO C Hassler

Cty Cllr Bellfield reported as follows :-

SCC accounts have been produced and show that the savings are approximately £30M against a budgeted saving of £26M. Further cuts are required in coming years

SCC spends more than other highways authorities on repairs and maintenance and has increased spending this year.

Cllr Bellfield reported that the Endeavour card roll out has been delayed. It is intended to help the young with transport at a lower cost

SCC's IT contract with BT will be terminated when maturing next year due to cost increases by BT. But SCC has now been approached by BT for a 5 year extension on more favourable terms than the previous contract. It is thought that much of the work that BT will be doing is to be done in Ipswich which will be helpful to the local economy and will assist BT in reducing their costs. These would be costing this year £1.4M but the bonuses will only cost £850,000

Cllr Bellfield commented on the leaked story in the local press referring to bonuses for SCC staff. These bonuses will actually benefit SCC because following the reduction in staff from 11,500 to 4,500, morale at the authority was extremely low. However, the new Chief Executive has much improved this and the one-off bonus has been given but there will no longer be incremental annual increases resulting in much reduced overall staff costs for SCC

Dist Cllr Snell reported as follows :-

1. Local Development Framework (now renamed "the Local Plan")

On 6 June the Council was advised that the Inspector had found its Core Strategy (CS) "sound", subject to a set of "Main Amendments" that were suggested during the hearing. With these changes added, the Council approved the CS on 5 July and its contents can now be given considerable weight in planning decisions. We now await a timetable for Site Specific Allocations (as originally consulted on in 2008/9), which will identify individual sites, land and areas to be allocated for development to meet the needs set out in the CS.

Full details of the LDF and the inspector's examination are available on the Council's website.

4. Planning applications

The appeal against the Council's refusal for a 25MW solar farm at Hacheston will be heard at a local public inquiry on 25, 26 and 27 September, with a fourth day if required on Tuesday 1 October.

5. Sizewell C consultation

The process has doubtless been delayed by the stale-mate in the electricity price negotiations between EDF and the government. In addition, the prospects for a Hinckley Point style funding for the local community has receded, with alternative promises of direct payments from the government, but nothing is certain. The process of consultation and review will continue.

6. Number of SCDC Councillors

Following a public consultation earlier this year, the Boundary Commission (BC) announced that it is minded to recommend that the council should have 43 councillors in the future, twelve fewer than the current arrangements. The BC is now consulting (from 23 July to 1 October 2013) by asking local people and organisations to help draw up new wards for the district. As recommendations are developed, the BC will take into account local community identities as well as ensuring electoral equality for voters.

7. SCDC Accommodation

A confidential progress report on the review of the Council's office accommodation was presented to Cabinet on 16 July. An Accommodation Project Board had been set up to ensure Suffolk Coastal has office accommodation to suit its future requirements, as a progressive, modern council, following a previous report that the facilities at the Council's Melton Hill headquarters were no longer fit for purpose, because it is increasingly expensive to maintain and it is too big for the current staffing level. Cabinet granted delegated responsibility to continue with the work, with a report on the preferred option to be presented by the end of the year.

8. New Council Chairman

For the 2013/14 council year, Peter Bellfield has been elected Chairman of the Council. Your ward member, Bob Snell, has become Vice Chairman.

PCSO Hassler had advised his apologies but advised as follows :-

Brandeston crimes from 01/05/2013 through to 30/06/2013 there were 3 reported crimes

1. Burglary dwelling with intent happened between 29/04/2013 – 21/05/2013
2. Theft from a Motor Vehicle 03/06/2013 (handbag taken)
3. Criminal damage to a dwelling happened between 17/06/2013 – 23/06/2013 (broken window)

3-1314/2 - Chairman's Welcome, Formal Meeting Opening and Acceptance of Apologies for Absence

The Chairman formally opened the meeting and welcomed Councillors and others. He advised of apologies from PCSO Hassler

The meeting recorded its sadness at the passing of Parish Historical Recorder Mrs Wilda Woodland

4-1314/2 - To Receive Councillors' Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

ST declared interest in agenda item 10 (i).

5-1314/2 - Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 21 May 2013 were signed as a true record.

6-1314/2 - Matters arising from previous minutes

(i) Misrepresentations of the Brandeston Parish Plan (previous minute 6-1213/8 (i))

It was confirmed that the council had placed consideration of the Parish Plan on the agenda of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21 May 2013. Mr N Hayward had presented a full detail of the existing plan and the meeting had unanimously supported and endorsed the plan in its current form.

(ii) Discharge of Sewage (previous minute 13-1314/1 (i))

The clerk advised that he had exchanged correspondence with Anglian Water and had invited them to address the Annual Parish Meeting to explain their intentions to correct the raw sewage discharge in the village. They had declined the invitation but suggested a separate meeting and the clerk had proposed mid-July as had been agreed at the APM. No further correspondence had been received from AW.

This item was also covered under item i(i) above and the council's decision is reported therein.

(iii) Potholes around Brandeston (previous minute 13-1314/1 (ii))

ST reported that potholes were mostly now cleared but in particular the junction of Old Maids Lane and Low Street (on the left travelling towards church) was considered very dangerous. Also, the north end of Mill Lane required attention. The clerk was instructed to advise SCC, Highways.

7-1314/2 - Planning

(i) The clerk advised of receipt of application C13/1217 (40 The Street, Erection of Conservatory). The council agreed to support this application

(ii) Application C13/1278(Land at Office Farm, 4 dwellings - submission of details)

This application was discussed under item 1(ii) (above).

The council agreed its response should include the following items from the earlier discussion :-

- (a) The northern boundary is incorrectly shown and is not along the north edge of the ditch
- (b) The developer must not be allowed to fill and/or pipe the ditches anywhere on the land to be developed
- (c) The houses are too large and the wall finishes and roof tiles are inappropriate
- (d) Drainage must be fully considered within the development.

The council added the following considerations to those above :-

- (e) The bin storage shown on the plans is considered inappropriate in this rural environment
- (f) The clerk was instructed to advise the SCDC Flood and Water Management team (floods@suffolk.gov.uk) of the drainage problems because of flooding in Mutton Lane
- (g) Size and positioning inappropriate and garages are too large and should be integral. The new houses should not be larger than those of the approved outline application.
- (h) The houses are considered to be of completely inappropriate style and it should be noted that there is a traditionally styled listed cottage with a thatched roof to the north.
- (i) The houses and garages together with driveways cover far too great an area which will create large impervious areas leading to serious water run-off problems.

There were no other planning matters to consider.

8-1314/2 – Review of the decision made by SCDC to charge business rates on the village hall

The meeting was advised of the decision by SCDC to charge business rates on Brandeston Village Hall and that a letter asking for reconsideration had been sent by the chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee.

After consideration, the council agreed no further action pending the response to the hall chairman's letter

9-1314/2 – Report from Responsible Finance Officer (The Clerk)

The RFO presented the current financial position with the main account holding £5,659.86 and the 100+ account £769.94 (both after accruals for future income and approved expenditure).

10-1314/2 - Financial Matters

The council agreed payments as follows :-

- (i) £10.50 to Brandeston VH&RG for room hire for the next council meeting on date to be agreed (see agenda item 14).

11-1314/2 - Review of the Council's Financial Risk Assessment in Respect of the Current Financial Position of the Council

The council agreed that the current financial position was satisfactory

12-1314/2 – Correspondence

(i) The council considered the request received from a parishioner to request the adoption of a new footpath on the north outskirts of the village. (The parishioner had since withdrawn the request). The council agreed not to proceed with this proposal.

13-1314/2 - Any other business as may be raised and accepted as appropriate by the Chairman under Standing Order 16

The Chairman agreed discussion of the following item :-

(i) ST advised that she had received a request from a parishioner to raise the matter of the residence in the cartlodge at Red House Farm about which she had written to the clerk. The clerk confirmed that he had responded to this correspondence. KC explained that the residents had planning permission to live in the cartlodge for three years but then must revert to the previous approved permissions (including restoring the building to the approved design and other conditions regarding conditions of occupation)

(ii) ST also advised that one of the trees on the green adjacent to the Queen's Head was dying and she had arranged for a tree specialist parishioner to carry out an inspection to consider whether any remedial action could be undertaken.

14-1314/2 – Date of Next Meeting

Date for the next council meeting was confirmed as 24 September 2013 at 8.00 pm

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.