

BRANDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at the Village Hall on Wednesday, 12 March 2008

Present

Councillors D Risk (Chairman) (DR), H Saxton (HS), W Elson (WE), K Churchill (KC), S Thurlow (ST) and J Fielder (JF),
Parish Clerk and RFO A M Hounsell
County Councillor P Bellfield and District Councillor R Snell
Parishioner Mr D Evans (part time)
Parish Historical Recorder Mrs W Woodland

1-0708/9 - Open discussion with members of the public who may be present

There was no discussion under this heading

2-0708/9 – Report of Cty. Cllr. Peter Bellfield and Dist Cllr Bob Snell

Cty Cllr Bellfield advised as promised on the subject of event posters. He stated that these may be removed by anyone but there is a theoretical risk of accusations of theft. However, it may be done officially through SCC at the Saxmundham office. Informally, posters are permitted by SCC for 7 days before an event provided they are taken down on the day after the event.

Cty Cllr Bellfield reported that SCC council tax for 2008-09 is increasing by 3.75%, which is below RPI increase and below the state pension increase.

He commented that the salary of the new Chief Executive is not as outrageous as being painted in the media and possible local government reorganisation may mean she will not have a job after 2 years. The commission examining local authority boundaries has terms of reference requiring that they look at an alternative of a unitary structure for Ipswich and the surrounding area. They are required to propose a unitary structure or explain why not. The commission commence work on 03 March 2008 and are to report by 16 December 2008. He suggested that Brandeston could best make it's voice heard through SALC. A similar exercise is being undertaken at Waveney and South Norfolk.

Dist Cllr Snell said that SCDC council tax is up by 3.9% overall against an estimated level of inflation in council tax services of 4.1% and our rise lower than in adjacent areas. He stated that local government reorganisation changes (whatever they might be) would be likely to be in place in early 2010.

He mentioned that as part of SCDC's commitment to reducing costs, the SCDC Chief Executive will be undertaking the same role at Waveney with shared cost between the two authorities. He also mentioned that concessionary bus fares will become effective nationally starting in April this year. On planning matters, he advised that an application at the Parham windfarm to change the height and size of blades will be subject to public consultation. At Debach, lawful use for storage has been established by use but other uses outside the specific area will be subject to enforcement.

Cllr Snell agreed to provide details of possible sources for funds for playspaces/maintenance to the Clerk.

3-0708/9 – Formal Meeting Opening, Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman then formally opened the meeting and welcomed Councillors and visitors. He advised that there were no apologies for absence.

4-0708/9 – To Receive Councillors' Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

ST declared interest in agenda item 9 (i)

5-0708/9 – Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meetings of 16 January 2008 and 06 February 2008 were signed as true records.

6-0708/9 – Matters arising from previous minutes

(i) Drainage in The Street (previous minute 1-0708/7)

The Clerk confirmed that he had written to the owners at The Cottage. They have since spoken to him and were reluctant to undertake works to improve drainage since they suspected that the drain blockage would "reappear" further down The Street.

The Chairman advised that he and the Clerk had met at The Street with Mr Aldous of SCC, Highways. Mr Aldous agreed to undertake further works at 40 The Street and at The Cottage which he expected to resolve the problem.

- (ii) Planning application C07/2362 - West Hill Farm, Conversion of redundant farm buildings to three lettable units (previous minute 3-0708/8)
The Clerk confirmed that he had written to SCDC, Planning as instructed by the council meeting of 06 February 2008. Advice of the latest status is awaited.
- (iii) Legal Charge on BVH&RG (previous minute 11-0708/7)
The Clerk advised that he had spoken to solicitor, Lyn Gurney who in turn had approached the Big Lottery fund with the Council's request that the legal charge be only upon the building itself together with reasonable access thereto. The lottery had requested provision of site plans outlining the proposed land areas and the Clerk confirmed he had provided these. Further response is awaited.

7-0708/9 – Planning

The council noted Planning Applications for demolition at Red House (C08/0262) and for summer house at Rose Farm Cottage (C08/0026) but made no comments for report to SCDC, Planning Department.

8-0708/9 – Financial Report by RFO (The Clerk)

The Clerk advised that arising from difficulties (now resolved) created by Barclays Bank, they had agreed an ex-gratia payment to the Council of £50 and the Clerk had arranged for this to be credited to the 100+ account. Change of signatories for both Council accounts is now in place.

The Clerk also advised that the grant, amounting to £1,267 for the Parish Plan had been received from Suffolk ACRE. The Clerk confirmed that he had applied for VAT refund as appropriate on the Council's 2007-08 expenditure.

The Clerk then circulated the current cashbook statement showing that the main account has a current balance of £2,693.48, together with the unspent balance of the Parish Plan grant, amounting to £908, and the 100+ account a balance of £104.18 (both after allowing accruals for cheques raised and for latest receipts). The Clerk pointed out there were various future expenses to be met (including room hire and other items for which the Council's approval would be sought later in the meeting). He confirmed that the Council's finances continued to be satisfactory.

9-0708/9 – Financial Matters

- (i) The Council agreed payment to BVH&RG of £14.00 for room hire for the next Council meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting at the village hall on a 14 May 2008.
- (ii) The Council considered the accounts internal audit procedures (using the briefing note issued by SALC) and agreed the procedures were satisfactory.
The Council confirmed confidence that the system is working correctly and agreed a vote of thanks to Mr Don Evans for his work as Internal Auditor
- (iii) The Council considered and approved payment of the Clerk's office expenses of £283 for the year ending 31 March 2008 and offered their thanks to the Clerk.

10-0708/9 – Agenda for Annual Parish Meeting

The Council agreed that the agenda include County and District Councillors reports, report on Parish Plan progress and draw for the four £25 prizes for returnees of questionnaires, village hall report and Good Neighbour Scheme (with invitation offered Gavin Hodge of Suffolk ACRE).

11-0708/9 – Correspondence

There were no items for discussion under this item.

12-0708/9 - Any other business as may be raised and accepted as appropriate by the Chairman

The Chairman agreed to permit discussion of the following items

- (i) The Suffolk Acre request for payment of £25 for 2008-09 subscription. This payment was approved.
- (ii) Instruction to the Clerk to forward Mr Nick Hayward's notes on the latest LDF consultation to Council members.
- (iii) It was noted that the glass in the phonebox in The Street has been broken for some time. The Clerk was instructed to contact BT requesting repair.
- (iv) Cllr Thurlow (on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee) advised that there is need for a new catering style fridge at the hall. Purchase was agreed at a maximum of £500 using funds from the 100+ account. The Clerk reminded of the requirement of a VAT invoice rendered on the Council

13-0708/9 Date of Next Meeting

Dates of the next meetings were confirmed as 14 May 2008 (Annual Parish Council Meeting at 7.00 pm and Annual Parish Meeting at 8.00 pm). The meeting thereafter was agreed for 16 July 2008 at 8.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm