

BRANDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at the Village Hall on Tuesday, 28 September 2010

Present

Councillors D Risk (Chairman) (DR), H Saxton (HR), W Elson(WE), K Churchill(KC), J Fielder(JF) and S Thurlow (ST)

Parish Clerk and RFO A M Hounsell (AMH)

Cty Cllr P Bellfield

Parish Historical Recorder Mrs W Woodland (WW)

Parishioners Mr N Hayward and Mr R Reade

1-1011/3 – Open discussion with members of the public who may be present

- (i) The Chairman opened discussion regarding dog litter. He gave a summary of the letter from Mr Porter of SCDC, Environmental Health with the proposal to install one bin and one notice but advised that there had only been one complaint. The meeting noted that the relevant land owners of Ford Lane (Lord and Lady Cunliffe) would much prefer not to see these items installed. After discussion, the meeting agreed that this subject had been thoroughly aired and that bins and notices were an unnecessary blight on our rural environment. It was agreed to close the matter except for future monitoring. The clerk was instructed to so advise Mr Porter and Lord and Lady Cunliffe.
- It was also agreed to attempt to persuade all dog owners around the village to clear up their dog's litter and WE agreed to edit and issue a suitable note for publication in the Parish Magazine, the website and the Brandeston. It was agreed to seek publication of the poem by KC on this subject.
- (ii) WW suggested that the council and parishioners would be interested to know that photographs of the graves of all Brandeston men (bar one) who fell in WW1 were now available.

2-1011/3 – Reports from Cty Cllr Bellfield, Dist Cllr Snell and PCSO Hassler

Cty Cllr Bellfield reported as follows :-

SCC is undertaking a comprehensive review of spending under the title of "New Strategic Direction". The intention is a reduction in spending by the council of 30%. Possible ways by which expenditure might be reduced include outsourcing to the private sector of work currently carried out by SCC. Charities and other voluntary bodies will be approached for their help and support. Cty Cllr Bellfield emphasised that the studies were at a very early stage and no decisions had yet been taken – consequently, there was no data available at present of possible loss of services or job redundancies.

He suggested that Brandeston Parish Council might like to consider ways in which they could contribute to reduce spending by SCC.

Dist Cllr Snell had advised the Clerk of his apologies but reported as follows :-

1. LDF status

Core Strategy published in June as interim planning policy; Regional Spatial strategies abandoned by government; housing numbers being re-examined in bottom-up approach based on demographic and other evidence and forecasts; site specific allocations exercise delayed till 2011.

2. More savings at Suffolk Coastal and Waveney

Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Cabinets will meet simultaneously on Monday 13 September in the next step towards cost-saving shared services. The two Councils already share a Chief Executive and Heads of Planning and Finance, as part of an initiative that has helped both councils save well over £200,000 in the last two years. The Cabinets agreed Stephen Baker, the shared Chief Executive's proposal to move to one senior management team by October, with nearly 30 per cent fewer posts than before and ongoing savings of around £400,000 p.a. This move was endorsed by SCDC and full Council on 23 Sept and will be put before Waveney Council meeting on 28 Sept.

3. Electoral register

The annual update of the Electoral Register is underway. Residents can save SCDC time and money by going online or using the freephone service – last year more than 10,000 registration with no changes cost us more than £3,000 in postage alone, plus the hours spent by staff opening and checking all the forms that could have been updated on the phone or the Net.

4. Planning Scrutiny

The SCDC Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee met again on Friday 17 September at 09.00 to hear from six town/parish councils and six district councillors in its continuing review of the Council's Planning

service. Its recommendations are expected to come from a further meeting at the Ufford Park Hotel at 09:30 on 4 October.

5. Beachwatch

The 25th annual Beachwatch event to protect local beaches and marine wildlife took place on Sunday 19 September at Bawdsey Quay. For events at beaches elsewhere in the district, contact the AONB unit on 01394 384948 or email lynn.allen@suffolk.gov.uk

6. No action against Council over Gressingham Foods

The Local Government Ombudsman has concluded that a complaint about the way Suffolk Coastal dealt with reported unauthorised developments at Gressingham Foods "is not one that he should pursue further". Senior investigator James Park said "I do not see the Council acted unreasonably" in its investigations and "I have seen no clear evidence that this (increased production at the site) was as a result of the unauthorised development that has taken place". The Ombudsman also said that the link between any suggested breaches of planning permission and increased traffic was "unproven" and queried the figures used to measure the alleged increase in traffic.

PCSO Hassler had advised the Clerk of his apologies but reported as follows :-

Crime Report

I am happy to report that from

The 21st of July 2010 to the 26th of September 2010.

There has been NO reported crime in the village of Brandeston.

Speeding and Parking concerns

Speed enforcement checks in and around the village will continue, so please be mindful to watch your speed.

Crime Prevention Advice

The following advice is recommended to guard against distraction burglaries:

1. LOCK Keep your front and back doors locked, even when at home.
2. STOP Before you answer the door, stop and think if you are expecting anyone. Look through the spy-hole or the window to see who it is.
3. CHAIN If you decide to open the door, put the door chain or bar on first. Keep the chain or bar on while you are talking to the person on the doorstep.
4. CHECK Check their details and identity before you let them into your home. If it is someone claiming to be an official, ask for and carefully check their identity card

3-1011/3 - Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman welcomed Councillors and Parishioners and advised receipt of apologies for absence from Cllr P Summers and from Dist Cllr Snell and PCSO Hassler.

4-1011/3 - To Receive Councillors' Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

ST declared interest in agenda item 9 (i)

5-1011/3 - Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 21 July 2010 were signed as a true record.

6-1011/3 - Matters arising from previous minutes

- (i) Parish Plan – Brandeston Hall lighting (previous minute 6-1011/2 (i))
The clerk advised that he had written to Mr Andrew Payn at Brandeston Hall (with copy to the Headmaster), as instructed by the Council, stating the Council's views on the discourtesy of the failure to respond to its correspondence.
The Chairman advised that he had written to the Chairman of the governors of the school who had advised that this matter would be addressed.
Further, the clerk advised that an email and letter had been received from Mr Payn indicating that the Brandeston Hall application for part-funding for the new airhall will be considered by the LTA funding committee around Christmas 2010 and if this is approved it is proposed to construct the building next Summer, to be completed in time for Autumn 2011. As you [the council] are aware, the design of the new building will involve the removal of the current lighting stanchions to be replaced by lower less diffused lighting that will be installed within the building. Brandeston Hall intends to address the remaining external lighting stanchions at that time. With regard to the car park lighting located next to the hedge running alongside the road, Brandeston Hall does not share the council's view over the level of light pollution that these lights generate. Nevertheless, Brandeston Hall has agreed for them to be replaced. In their most recent financial budget this project (the replacement of the lights), in competition with many other projects at both

Brandeston Hall and Framlingham College, does not merit sufficient urgency to be included in the works programme this year. The work has not been cancelled and will feature again when Brandeston Hall consider the budget early next year. Whilst Mr Payn cannot forecast what decisions will be taken, the intention is to carry out next year those projects that were unsuccessful for funding this year.

The council noted these comments and agreed to leave the matter until the council meeting early in the New Year.

- (ii) Blocked highway drains (previous minute 6-1011/2 (iii))
The clerk confirmed that he had forwarded the list of blocked drains to SCC, Highways.
- (iii) Salt bins and approved operatives (previous minute 6-1011/2 (vi))
The clerk confirmed that he had advised SCC, Highways of the requirement for refilling the council's salt bins. He had also received confirmation that those listed in the minutes of the last meeting (namely, John Garratt, Paul Baker, Richard Martin, ST, KC, PS, DR, JF, WE and Steve Western), were covered by SCC insurance.
- (iv) Settlement boundaries under LDF (previous minute 7-1011/2)
The council agreed to support the proposed boundaries shown on the documentation from SCDC. [Boundaries shown have very minor changes from the existing boundaries]
- (v) Untidiness at grass triangle at junction of Old Maid's Lane and The Street (previous minute 12-1011/2 (iii))
The clerk confirmed that he had spoken to Lord and Lady Cunliffe who advised that there was some in clarity in regard to the ownership of this land. However, they certainly raised no objection to the council undertaking some tidying-up. JF agreed to arrange a working party.

7-1011/3 - Planning

The clerk advised of approval by SCDC of applications C10/1672 (Grove House, Riggle Street, retention of tractor shed and siting of portable stable), C10/1618 (33 The Street, replacement of porch, alterations to rear door, demolition and alteration of part of shed and alteration to rear garden) and C10/1657(33 The Street, insertion of door in garden wall and part removal and alteration of sheds).

There were no other planning matters to consider.

8-1011/3 - Report from Responsible Financial Officer (The Clerk)

The RFO advised that the external auditor had approved the council's accounts with two comments :-

1. "Fidelity guarantee is considered too low" – The auditor pointed out that the insured guarantee (at £5,000) is below the recommended level of the "maximum amount of money that the council holds at any one time during the year". This is the same issue as raised for the year 2009-10 when the council debated the matter and agreed that there was no need for an increase.
The council again debated this subject and agreed that the current guarantee was sufficient.
2. "The council's reserves are considered too high" – This matter had been raised with the RFO by the auditor by telephone. The RFO advised that he had explained that the council had been "saving" for an emergency generator for the village hall but had decided not to pursue this purchase. In addition, the RFO explained the existence of the 100+ account intended solely for village hall benefits but that there had been no recent purchases. Hence the year-end carried forward balance in this specific account had been £2,580, which was considerably more than usual.
The council noted this auditor comment and agreed to take steps to reduce the level of reserves.

The RFO advised the meeting that the audit fee for 2009-10 was £58.75 (including VAT) and not the amount of £141 which had been approved at the meeting of 19 May 2010.

The RFO then presented the current cashbook position showing the community account with a current balance of £5,785.40 and the 100+ account a balance of £2,239.14 both after accruals and allowance for future approved expenditures.

9-1011/3 - Financial Matters

The Council agreed payments as follows :-

- (i) £9.00 to Brandeston VH&RG for room hire for the next council meeting on date to be agreed (see agenda item 14).
- (ii) £278.62 to Suffolk ACRE Services for insurance premium (budget £320)

10-1011/3 – Review of Financial Risk Assessment

The council then considered the Financial Risk Assessment and agreed that all was in order and the financial position of the council is satisfactory.

11-1011/3 – Dog Litter

This agenda item covered under minute 1-1011/3 (above)

12-1011/3 - Correspondence

The clerk advised of documents received from SCDC seeking assistance in correctly identifying road names in Brandeston. The council instructed the clerk to request extension of time until the council's next meeting.

13-1011/3 - Any other business as may be raised and accepted as appropriate by the Chairman under Standing Order 16

There was no discussion under this heading

14-1011/3- Date of Next Meeting

Date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 30 November 2010 at 8.00 pm

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm