

Culford, West Stow and Wordwell Parish Council

MINUTES

of the Meeting held at Culford Village Hall on

Thursday 23rd January 2020

Present: Councillors: Joy Childs (Chair), David Fisher, Paul Luke, Bruce Murdoch and Rachael Salt.

In attendance: Maximilian Clay (Clerk to the Council)
There were no members of the public

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr McQueen and the reason was approved by the Council.

2. Declarations of Interest

- a. There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda.
- b. Members of the Village Hall Committee and of the Parochial Church Council declared Other Disclosable Interests in relation to their memberships (item 9c).
- c. Members of the Village Hall Committee and of the Parochial Church Council had sought and been granted dispensations in relation to their memberships.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2019 were agreed to be a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them as such on behalf of the Council.

4. District and County Councillor Reports

- a. District Councillor Glossop was present and made a brief report to the meeting, including:
 - ◆ Although budget-making was in progress, there was nothing to report at yet.
 - ◆ Car parking charge increases, contrary to press reports, had not yet been determined and would be considered by the District Council cabinet in due course.
 - ◆ Parking enforcement will now be transferred to the District Council from 4th April 2020; this involves the recruitment of 18 new staff, with the retention of revenues by the District.
- b. County Councillor Hopfensperger was present and reported:
 - ◆ Discussions concerning potential safety improvements at Rats Corner; although various ideas had been discussed, significant changes were highly unlikely to be agreed by Highways but improvements to the current arrangements could be undertaken. This would involve more and clearer sign-posting of the 20mph signage. C Cllr Hopfensperger is arranging for a firm proposal, with costings, to be brought together and the matter will be discussed at the next meeting.
 - ◆ The County will be undertaking a review of lorry routes; this applies to lorry specific limits such as weights and there will be a consultation from mid February. C Cllr Hopfensperger will let the Council know how to feed into the consultation.
 - ◆ Road Closures for road works (for example, by utilities companies) will now be governed by a system of Permits, replacing the Closure Orders system. This is aimed at being able to manage closures more tightly and thereby reduce the length of closures.

5. Public Forum

There were no matters raised by members of the public.

6. Clerk's Report & Administrative Business

- a. There were no decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting.
- b. The Clerk reported that:

- ◆ The handover from the previous Clerk had progressed a little further but bank statements were awaited and there were still no electronic files of any description and this continues to hamper progress, especially in relation to correspondence and financial records;
- ◆ The web site was in the course of being updated and made clearer. Information is being set out more systematically and intuitively and the many duplications of information across pages are being eliminated;
- ◆ He had visited the owner of Park Cottage and discussed the works that had been undertaken, especially the damage to the external fabric of the cottage by the insertion of inappropriate windows. The owner explained that she had been unaware of the sensitivities of the conservation area and especially that the blank window at the front of the cottage had been designed as such, rather than having been blocked up at some time in the past. Her plan had been to finish the window in due course but she said that she would now aim to replace the flint infill, in time. The barn at the back of the house was also discussed and the Clerk was in process of taking advice on its status and therefore whether it would be in order for the owner to demolish it.

7. Planning & Environment

- a. There were no applications to consider.
- b. The application for an extension to Fieldgate Cottage was still pending.
- c. The Council resolved to support C Cllr Hopfensperger's suggestions for Rat's Corner (see 4b).

8. Speedwatch Scheme

It was reported that the equipment would cost about £1,500 but it is sometimes possible to borrow it. A minimum of 8 committed volunteers is necessary to establish and keep a scheme going. Many schemes fold after an initial burst of enthusiasm and the most common cause is volunteer attrition. An advertisement would be placed in the parish magazine to see whether there was any interest amongst residents.

9. Financial Matters

- a. **Financial Records and Financial Statements** - The Council received a report on financial records. As some vouchers and bank statements had still not been passed across to the new Clerk, a reconciliation was not possible but the Council approved the Quarter 3 Financial Statements as being as complete a record as possible.
- b. **Receipts & Payments** - The Council received the schedule and resolved to approve payments.
- c. **Budget for 2020/21** - The Council resolved to adjust the amount designated for grants to £1,800 but otherwise approve the budget as drafted. It was further resolved to designate £1,456 to a future projects reserve.
- d. **Precept for 2020/21** - The Council resolved to charge a precept of £9,584 for the coming year.

10. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

The possibility of the Parish becoming Wildlife Friendly Villages was raised for future discussion and Cllr Salt was mandated to undertake some research and report back to the next meeting. Cllr Salt also reported that she had had further information about the the Councils Self Help scheme for local works and the council mandated her to take this forward.

It was agreed to place discussion about seeking an Article 4 Direction in relation to the Culford conservation area on a future agenda.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chair

Date