

Culford, West Stow and Wordwell Parish Council

MINUTES

of the Meeting held electronically via Zoom on

Thursday 25th March 2021

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

In attendance: Maximilian Clay (Clerk to the Council)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Council's first virtual meeting and especially welcomed Cllr Turnill to his first meeting following co-option at the last meeting

33. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Myrtle McQueen.

34. Declarations of Interest

- a. There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda.
- b. There were no declarations of Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda.

35. Minutes

- a. The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2020 were agreed to be a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them as such on behalf of the Council.

36. District and County Councillor Reports

- a. District Councillor Glossop had submitted a written report to the meeting. This was received and discussed briefly and Cllr Glossop added that she had received complaints about littering in the woods. This is a nation-wide problem and Cllr Murdoch had forwarded a very good leaflet about addressing the problem and D Cllr had forwarded this to Risby.

The illegal gate installed by Culford School across the public right of way had been modified but remained in place. Other signs had been put up following the removal of permissive rights over those paths that are not public rights of way but were subsequently removed. Funding had been made available by D Cllr Glossop and C Cllr Hopfensperger for the surfacing of the car park in front of the church which is used extensively by walkers. D Cllr Glossop suggested that the need for further funds be publicised and Cllr Luke displayed a notice doing so, that will shortly be put up.

- b. County Councillor Hopfensperger presented a written and verbal report and informed the meeting that the general council tax of 1.99% and 2% for social care had been agreed. Much hedgerow is being replaced around the county. Referring to the illegal gates mentioned above an enforcement notice had been served and seems to have had an effect. The drains at Brockley corner had been jetted and are now on a regular cleansing schedule to keep them clear. In relation to the culverts at Wordwell, these should be added to a schedule There has also been a great deal of mud on the road and Highways will be in touch with the land owner to ensure that this is attended to. The area near the Fornham roundabout had also been jetted and the County is in discussion with the adjacent land owners to see if the ditches can be reinforced to avoid the run-off that cause the flooding.

Responding to a question from Cllr Luke, C Cllr Hopfensperger said that she would ensure that the lane outside West Stow Hall is also included in the schedule. She also added that capital spending on addressing flooding caused by drainage issues has been made available.

The new rotational speed camera scheme, in which the Parish Council has expressed interest in participating; was mentioned. The scheme has the advantage of producing enforceable speed measurements, meaning that speeders will receive penalty notices.

The problem of lorries in West Stow was raised by Cllr Luke; another incident which almost caused a fatality occurred recently as a result of lorries mounting the pavement. The pavement is damaged as a result of this specific event but also many others. Cllr Hopfensperger encouraged Cllr Luke to submit a report (she would send him the form) as the company in question can then be contacted and held to account.

Cllr Hopfensperger confirmed that the review of lorry routes had been delayed but would be started at the end of April/ beginning of May.

37. Public Forum

A member of the public lamented the fact that the School had demonstrated that it could no longer be relied upon to act with goodwill. He argued that this had been demonstrated by the fact that the Headmaster of Culford School had said at the last meeting that he was aware that the school was acting illegally but was unwilling to do anything about it.

It was pointed out that a similar situation had arisen on the path that runs east from Benyon Gardens, where a very high obstacle had replaced a V gate. This had been reported to the County for action

38. Clerk's Report & Administrative Business

- a. There were no decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting.
- b.
 - i The Clerk reported that more than a year on from the original instruction Lloyds Bank had still not responded to the Council's instruction to change the address and furnish old statements - this will have an impact of the end of year reporting and audit processes. The Council agreed to send a further very strongly expressed letter to them.
 - ii It had emerged that like-for-like replacement batteries for the VAS are no longer available and a different type has been ordered.
 - iii Residents of Culford had been expressing concern about speeding through the village.
 - iv The Village Hall had been granted planning permission for the proposed improvement works and would also be carrying out some tree works.
 - v The County Council had been chased about the new gate on the footpath leading from Benyon Gardens.
 - vi The connection of the street lights mentioned at the previous meeting would be dealt with when Culford next comes up on the regular programme of maintenance works to lighting.
 - vii The Council had been granted £250 towards the wildlife village project, from D Cllr Glossop's locality fund.
 - viii Elections will take place on the 6th May. In our area this will be for the election of a county councillor and for the Police Commissioner.
 - viii Replacement of the tree outside Toad House has been followed up and this should be attended to.

39. Planning & Environment

- a. To consider responses to planning application consultations, as follows and as may be launched by the Planning Authority prior to the meeting.
 - i **DC/21/0503/TCA - Kiln Cottage, Ingham Road, Culford:** *Trees in a conservation area notification - one Birch (T1 on plan) - fell.* There was no objection.
 - ii **DC/21/0486/TCA - Tanglin, 4 Chimney Mills, West Stow:** *Trees in a conservation area notification - 14 conifers - fell.* There was no objection.
- b. There were no update report(s) on planning applications considered previously.
- c. The Clerk reported that complaints had been received from residents about lighting arising from the Place Farm glasshouse plant and presented images showing the problem. In discussion it was felt that the impact was greater on Culford than Ingham and that lighting, even if necessary for security should be better adjusted. It was agreed that Enforcement would be contacted and that Ingham PC would be asked if this was a problem that had been raised with them.

- d. The Clerk reported that other matters that had been raised with regard to development had all been approved by previous planning permissions.

40. Public Rights of Way Problems

This had been dealt under previous items, above.

41. Wildlife Friendly Village

Cllr Salt reported that, following the good initial meeting upon which she reported at the last meeting, not much had happened because of the further Covid lockdown but some individuals had taken some small initiatives as agreed. Advice had been sought about types of seed to sow and the timings of verge cutting. Ownership of verges is a complicated issue which varies considerably. Views were being sought about other ways of taking forward the project, with habitat boxes for birds and bats emerging as popular ideas. The Chair thanked Cllr Salt for her work.

42. Telephone Box

Cllr Salt reported that the renovation was almost complete - just a piece of glass still needed and this was likely to cost about £30. Improved lighting was being donated by Cllr Salt and shelving would be the next step, probably a small rack arrangement and Cllr Salt also offered to donate this. There were already signs that the book exchange was starting to be used and that the kiosk was also being used as a drop off point for the Olio scheme (which is aimed at avoiding food wastage). There was some discussion about whether the kiosk was suitable for the latter but it was agreed to permit this but to keep it under review.

43. Use of Noticeboard

It had been drawn to the Council's attention that the noticeboard was being used for commercial notices. In discussion it was felt that commercial notices could be placed on the board in the phone box and that the noticeboard should be kept strictly for Council and community notices but that the righthand side should be left unlocked to facilitate legitimate community use.

44. To consider the purchase of Jigsaws in readiness for the re-start of the Friday Club

It was reported that the cost of jigsaws had risen considerably during lockdown but Cllr Salt has come to an arrangement with a community group in Newmarket to acquire some puzzles. It was resolved that up to £140 could be spent on puzzles.

45. Finance

The schedule of receipts and payments was received and it was resolved to approve the payments.

46. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

Cllr Salt raised the problem of manure that had been placed on the verge. It has emerged that the land in question is owned by the equestrian centre and so from that point of view is legal. However, the quantity of manure near trees will cause damage and could seep into the water courses and a problem was also caused by the burning of the manure from time to time. The Enforcement team are aware and are dealing with this.

Cllr Luke reported that he and a friend were undertaking a litter pick and he felt that, coming out of Covid restrictions, a greater need will arise. Cllr Turnill had reported fly-tipping.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.54pm

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chair

Date