

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall annex at 7.30pm on 1 October 2012.

PRESENT: Councillors Mr B Morton, Mr A Pearson, Mr B Tibbles, Mr D Webb, Mrs R Woodcraft, District Councillor M Gower and Mrs J Gomm (Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

County Councillor Leighton.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2012 were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Pearson.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Pecuniary interests: Cllr Tibbles, items 5(c) on the agenda (proposed tree works at Millfield House, Millfield Road and Old Farm, The Street) and Cllr Pearson, item 5(c) on the agenda (proposed tree works at Old Farm, The Street).

Local non pecuniary interests: None.

4. REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND THE POLICE

Cllr Leighton, no report.

Cllr Gower reported that he had recently attended a full District Council meeting. Items discussed included agreeing the accounts, the food hygiene service, localisation of commons. Westleton and Knodishall Parish Councils would take over the management of the commons in their parishes. Wenhaston was still considering the issue.

PCSO Newsom, no report.

5. PLANNING

Planning notifications:

1 Valley Farm, Ferry Road, C12/0855, 0856, 0857, 0875: Listed building consents and planning permissions have been granted for four retrospective applications to retain a balcony on the East elevation and retain a games room extension.

Planning applications:

None.

Cllrs Tibbles and Pearson left the room whilst this item was discussed.

Notice of intention to carry out tree works:

Millfield House, Millfield Road, C12/00112/TCA: proposal to remove of two white poplars. **Agreed** to make no comments.

Old Farm, The Street, C12/00119/TCA: proposal to remove two white poplars, one walnut and remove the limb from third white poplar. **Agreed** to object to the removal of the walnut, but not to make comments in respect of the other trees.

Cllrs Tibbles and Pearson returned to the room.

6. ACCOUNTS

a) Receipts:

- None

b) Payments:

- J K Linley (also known as J K Gomm), Clerk's net salary for September - £1,128.92
- J K Gomm, Clerk's expenses, postage - £2.10, ink cartridges - £48.73 plus £9.75 vat, total - £60.58
- HMRC, Clerk's tax and NI, July to September, Employer's NI July to September - £679.75

It was proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Woodcraft that the above payments be made and it was **agreed**.

c) Appointment of External Auditor

The Clerk reported that BDO LLP had been appointed as external auditor for the Council by the Audit Commission for five years from 1 September 2012.

d) Agreement and payment for insurance

At the last meeting the Clerk had been requested by the Council to negotiate with the Council's insurer to:

- Remove a number of seats from the policy (cost reduced from £62.87 to £14.96)
- Remove the strimmer and mower from the policy (cost reduced by £73.10)
- Add the visitor centre to the policy (additional cost of £77.94)
- Transfer the insurance of the sports pavilion from a separate policy to the main policy (additional cost of £39.97 for year, previous policy cost £45.23 for year)
- Use the five year undertaking to make a saving on the costs (saving of £96.90).

This produced a total cost to insure all Parish Council business and assets of £872.13 for the year from 01.10.12, inclusive of insurance premium tax and administration charge. It was proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Pearson that the insurance payment be made and it was **agreed**.

e) Review of the receipts and payments for the quarter ending 30.09.12 and comparison with the budgeted figures and consideration and management of the financial risk posed by dealing with Freedom of Information requests

The Clerk reported this matter had last been considered at the meeting of 09.07.12 for the quarter ending 30.06.12 when transfers between budget heads had been agreed. She pointed out that whilst the expenditure on salaries was within the revised budget the budget head was almost used. It was proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Pearson that in addition to the £1,000 transferred to salaries on 09.07.12, £1,000 be transferred from administration to salaries and £2,000 be added to salaries, using funds which had been donated to the Council late in the last financial year and therefore had not be budgeted for, giving a revised budget for salaries of £11,000 and it was **agreed**. The Clerk reported she had carried out a bank reconciliation on 18.09.12 and the bank and cash book agreed at the figure of £4,148.28.

7. REVIEW OF THE EXISTING RISK ASSESSMENT

The Clerk reported that the risk assessment which had been adopted on the 03.04.12 needed to be reviewed as a result of the External Auditor's report. Councillors considered it page by page to determine whether anything needed to be amended, added or deleted. The Clerk reported that in recent months, a lack of Councillors, due to holidays and the need to declare pecuniary interests had impacted on the ability of the Council to make some decisions either in a timely manner or at all. It was proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Pearson that an additional risk be added to the risk assessment dealing with this risk; it was so **agreed** and the Chairman signed the risk assessment adding the risk.

8. DELEGATIONS TO THE CLERK AND AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The amended risk assessment agreed in the above item required additional delegations to the Clerk and amendments to standing orders and financial regulations. The Clerk

proposed changes under seven headings as set out in appendix 1 to the minutes. Councillors considered each separately. The Clerk's proposals under headings 1 to 4 and 6 and 7 were **agreed**. No agreement was reached on the proposal under heading 5 and this was deferred to the end of the meeting.

9. AUTUMN BEACH CLEAN

It was **agreed**:

- Beach clean to be held on Sunday 21 October commencing at 10am
- Posters would be made and posted by Mr A Hunt
- Gloves and bags and bag collection by Suffolk Coastal District Council would be arranged by Cllr Webb
- Risk assessment would be carried out by Cllr Webb
- Insurers be informed that the Clerk would be present and Cllr Webb would supervise the beach clean ensuring compliance with the insurer's requirements.

10. BONFIRE NIGHT INSURANCE

Cllr Webb informed the Council that the Bonfire Group had sought the permission of the Walberswick Common Lands Charity (WCLC) to have the event on Cliff Field and Cliff Field car park as usual.

It was **agreed**:

- Insurers be informed that the Clerk would be present and Cllr Webb would supervise the event ensuring compliance with the insurer's requirements
- If numbers seeking entry to the site exceeded 250 there would safe areas they could be dispersed to outside the site
- Risk assessment would be carried out by Cllr Webb.

11. CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST FOR A COMMEMORATIVE BENCH

Mr and Mrs Gainsford who had been visiting the village for 15 years had asked whether it would be possible to make arrangements in their wills for a commemorative bench either on Bell Green or near the ferry. It was **agreed** to suggest they to seek permission from the WCLC to site the bench near the ferry as there was already a bench on Bell Green.

12. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

Cllr Tibbles asked whether the WCLC could store their tools in the pavilion whilst carrying out work on the common. The Councillors saw no problems; the Clerk explained that the tools would not be covered by the Council's insurance.

Cllr Webb said he had attended a meeting in his personal capacity with Natural England, East Suffolk Buildings Preservation Trust and the Blyth Valley Preservation Trust concerning the proposal to repair and convert the wind pump on the marshes into a bird hide. He understood that the owner of the building was happy with the proposals and he personally thought them a good idea.

Cllr Webb said he had received letters dated 01.10.12 from Cllrs Tibbles, Morton, Pearson and Woodcraft. He opened and read the letters to the meeting (summarizing in parts). The letters were resignations from the Parish Council to take effect at the close of the meeting. Cllr Webb then read a letter he had addressed to the Clerk also resigning, at the close of the meeting, from the Council.

13. DEFERMENT OF PART OF ITEM 8

This was a proposal by the Clerk that she be given delegated powers to work overtime when necessary to deal with requests under the Data Protection Act 1998, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and matters arising. Cllr Morton asked the four people making the requests to desist now that all Councillors had resigned. He asked whether those people could be asked for their views. The Chairman suspended standing orders to permit them to make a statement should they so wish. Mr Walpole, Mr Gilby, Ms Harvey and Mr MacCarthy each made statements.

Other members of the public also made statements. Mrs Hunt thanked the present and previous Councillors for all the work they had put in over the years.
No decision was taken on the proposed delegation.

14. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In view of the lengthy debate which had taken place with the public under item 13 the Chairman closed the meeting without taking questions from the public.

15. DATE OF THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

None.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Signed.....

Date.....