

# WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall annexe at 7.30pm on 2 April 2012.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mr D Webb (Chairman), Mr A Hunt, (Vice-Chairman), Mr B Morton, Mr A Pearson, Mr B Tibbles, Mrs R Woodcraft, District Councillor M Gower, County Councillor R Leighton and Mrs J Gomm (Clerk).

## **1. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillors B Morton and A Pearson who had been elected as Parish Councillors on 22 March 2012 signed their acceptance of office and were welcomed by the Chairman.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor K Webb and PCSO Newson (Suffolk Police).

## **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2012 were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Hunt.

## **4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Prejudicial interests: Cllr Tibbles declared a prejudicial interest in item 21 on the agenda, appointment of a nominative trustee for the Walberswick Common Lands Charity.

Personal interests: none.

## **5. TALK BY MIK BEDSON, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, SUFFOLK ACRE, LOCAL FOODS**

Mr Bedson explained that the purpose of Suffolk Acre was to strengthen rural communities and one way was through local foods. The promotion of local food was better for the consumer, the environment, for economics (more income came to the local economy) and for the community. In the six months since the scheme had commenced 81 projects in Suffolk had started and it was due to continue until March 2014. Suffolk Acre could provide advice, training and occasionally access to grant aid. He took questions from the floor and the Chairman thanked him for attending.

## **6. TALK BY ERIC WILCOCK, HALESWORTH CAMPUS**

Mr Wilcock explained that people in Halesworth wanted to keep the North Suffolk Skills Centre open after the expected closure of Halesworth Middle School in July 2012. The Halesworth Playing Field Association didn't have enough land for sport in Halesworth. A feasibility study was undertaken and stakeholders, particularly in the areas of sport, health and education were involved. This had led to a proposal that Suffolk County Council (SCC) should gift the school buildings and land to a company to be set up, Halesworth Campus Ltd, the land owned by Halesworth Playing Field Association be sold for development and the funds released be used to facilitate the development of Halesworth Campus. A project manager is to be employed three days a week, paid for by SCC and health organisations. The Chairman thanked him for attending and it was **agreed** that the Clerk write to Halesworth Campus expressing support for the proposals.

## **7. REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND THE POLICE**

Cllr R Leighton explained that it was hard in Local Government at present, but there was a willingness for co-operation and partnership working. SCC undertook regular meetings with other organisations to discuss strategic issues. One such issue was the problem the Freedom of Information Act was causing to some Councils throughout the country. He said that the problem was that officers and members of all local

authorities were required to abide by codes of conduct, but that there was no requirement for members of the public, who could be as vindictive as they chose. It was a matter which may need to be addressed by the Secretary of State. Cllr M Gower explained that with the advent of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) adopted Local Plans were even more important. The Clerk reported that PCSO had reported that there had been no crimes recorded in Walberswick in the last month.

## **8. PLANNING**

### **Planning Notifications:**

**Te Awahou, Millfield Road, C/12/0213:** planning permission had been granted for the erection of a single timber garage and alterations to a dwarf boundary wall to form an access.

## **9. ACCOUNTS**

### **a) Receipts:**

SCC, ground rent for visitor centre, 2011 and 2012 - £5.20

Norse, recycling credits - £5.00

Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC), advance on precept - £2,000.00

SCDC, ½ year precept minus advance - £6,000.00

### **b) Payments:**

Suffolk Acre membership for 2012-2013 - £25.00

Suffolk Acre Services, Pavilion insurance 01.04.12 – 31.03.13 - £45.23

Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) membership for 2012-2013 - £150.00

Cllr Tibbles proposed and Cllr Hunt seconded that the payments be made and this was **agreed**.

## **10. TRAINING NEEDS OF COUNCILLORS AND CLERK**

It was **agreed** that:

- Councillors Morton and Pearson attend the New Councillors' training days run by SALC on 21 and 28 April and that the Council pay the costs of £216 plus vat from the training budget.
- Councillor Pearson attends the first Planning Workshop available and that the Council pay the cost of £30 plus vat from the training budget.
- Other Councillors and Clerk should attend planning workshops in due course when the workshop content has been amended to reflect the changes made by the NPPF.
- Councillor Hunt attends the Grants and Funding Opportunities course on 17 May and that the Council pay the cost of £25 plus vat from the training budget.
- All Councillors and the Clerk should attend training on the new Code of Conduct regime as soon as possible after it comes into force (expected on 01.07.2012) and that the Clerk try to arrange training in Walberswick immediately before a meeting.

## **11. REVIEW OF THE DELEGATION TO THE CLERK AGREED ON 05.12.11**

Councillor Hunt proposed and Councillor Woodcraft seconded and it was **agreed** that the delegation to the Clerk first agreed at the meeting held on 05.12.11 be amended to the following:

- The Council **agrees** to discharge its functions except those listed below by full delegation to the Clerk and Proper Officer pursuant to s101 Local Government Act 1972. She may, but is not obliged to consult with one or more Councillors before exercising any power or duty or implementing any decision or action.

In addition to the functions listed in the Clerk's job description and in Standing Order 3 this shall include, but not be limited to:

- Taking action on receipt of correspondence, emails, telephone and other conversations.
- Responding to consultations from other bodies.
- If expenditure has previously been agreed and minuted or the expenditure is provided for in the agreed financial documents monitoring expenditure against income for the current financial year, authorizing the expenditure subject to a limit of £1000 and financial regulation 3.4 shall be read accordingly.
- Convening meetings of the Council where the Clerk deems it inappropriate to exercise her delegated authority or if a matter falls outside this delegation.

The functions **not** included within this delegation are:

- The setting of the precept
- The agreement of the budget
- The signing of cheques
- Making comments to the Local Planning Authority on planning applications, applications for conservation area consent, applications for tree works and other planning issues.

## 12. VILLAGE SIGN UPDATE

It was **agreed** the unveiling take place at 11am on Saturday 2 June 2012 and be carried out by children living in the village of primary school age or younger.

It appeared that the Walberswick Common Lands Charity's offer of plaques for the sign to be erected opposite the Church (the Church sign) and the Village Green sign had either been misunderstood by the Clerk or retracted by the Charity after the last meeting. The present position was that the Charity would pay for a Diamond Jubilee plaque for the Village Green sign and a 1953 plaque for the Church sign. It would also pay for the carving of "Walberswick" on the wood on one side of the Church sign and a plaque to commemorate its restoration. The following wording was **agreed**:

Erected 1953 to celebrate the  
Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II  
Restored to celebrate the  
Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II  
June 2012

The Clerk had investigated public liability insurance for the sign, once re-erected. The insurers were prepared to cover it provided a value was stated. The Village Green sign which was two thirds the size of the sign was insured for £3,565. It was **agreed** that the restored sign should be valued at £5,000.

## 13 INSURANCE FOR JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

The proposed tug of war across the River Blyth needed to be insured, but the Council was unable to do so as it fell within the boundary of Southwold Town Council. The Clerk had emailed the Town Clerk to enquire whether the Town Council would insure the event. It was **agreed** that if the Town Council did not confirm that the event would be insured by the time the Jubilee brochure was finalized then the event be left out of the brochure and the Parish Council would not take part in promoting or organizing it.

The unveiling of the restored sign and the picnic and games on the Village Green would be insured by the Council's policy, subject to six conditions that were discussed and could be met by the Council. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would email the conditions to Councillors and the Chairman would produce a risk assessment for both events.

## 14. VISITOR CENTRE UPDATE

The Clerk reported that nplaw had agreed to carry out the necessary legal work for the price stated provided the value of the land was £80,000 or less. If it was more, the land registry fees for first registration of the Council's title to the land would increase, but not significantly. Nplaw had recommended that a tenancy at will would provide better protection to the Council than a licence. This would need to include a period of notice to

be served by either party to terminate the tenancy. It was **agreed** to follow the advice of nplaw with regard to the tenancy at will and that a period of notice for either party of six months be proposed. It was further **agreed** that the Clerk continue to implement the decisions of the Council with nplaw.

The Clerk reported that the group proposing to operate the visitor centre had suggested that either the Clerk to the Council or the Clerk to the Walberswick Common Lands Charity (WCLC) carry out the book keeping and prepare the accounts of the visitor centre. The Clerk expressed reservations about doing this and it was **agreed** this should not be added to the duties of the Clerk.

#### **15. BEACH LITTER CLEAN**

The date for the next litter pick on the beach was agreed as Sunday 15 April commencing at 10am. Councillor Hunt would produce and display posters and Councillor D Webb would complete the form requesting gloves, bags etc from SCDC.

#### **16. REPORTS ON SEMINARS ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AND THE WORLD OF HOUSING**

The Clerk, Chairman and Vice-chairman had attended an evening seminar on neighbourhood planning and Councillors Morton and Pearson had attended a day seminar. Councillor Morton stated that the village plan would not be statutory and in his view was of little value. The Parish would need to link with other villages to create a neighbourhood plan. The Chairman agreed that the village plan would have no statutory force. He explained that a neighbourhood plan would only cover planning and land issues and would need to be compliant with the SCDC Local Plan. Its production would need to follow a statutory procedure and on a conservative estimate would cost at least £20,000 to produce. Councillor Pearson said he hoped it would enhance the village plan. Councillor Hunt pointed out that the village plan was not yet finished. He feared a neighbourhood plan would take volunteers about two years to complete as had the village plan so far. He hoped however, that the village plan, when finished, would be able to be taken into consideration when planning applications were being considered as it would reflect the views of the village.

The Clerk and Chairman had attended an evening seminar on housing provided by SCDC. The officers explained their current work priorities and new ventures they were exploring. The Localism Act 2012 gave Housing Associations the right to fix the length of tenancies for new tenants and officers said this was likely to be five years in the locality. The Clerk expressed concern that this would mean than new occupiers of housing association accommodation would find it hard to assimilate into the community if they expected to be temporary residents.

#### **17. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS**

None

#### **18. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mr Walpole asked what was happening with the visitor centre. The Chairman explained that the lease was being surrendered by SCC and a tenancy at will would be granted to the WCLC if the Charity wished to take it.

#### **19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 3 April 2012

#### **21. APPOINTMENT OF A NOMINATIVE TRUSTEE TO THE WALBERSWICK COMMON LANDS CHARITY**

The Chairman proposed and the Vice-Chairman seconded that the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of this item pursuant to section 100 Local Government Act 1972 and section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act

1960 because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. This was **agreed**.  
The Council had received two applications for the position of a Nominative Trustee. After careful consideration it was **agreed** to appoint Mrs Madeline Dabbs as a trustee with her term of office expiring on 31.12.15.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signed.....

Date.....