

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall annex at 7.30pm on 11 June 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

Cllr K Webb and PCSO Newson (Suffolk Police).

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2012 were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Woodcraft.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Prejudicial interests: none

Personal interests: none.

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

There was no report from the County or District Councillor. PCSO Newsom had sent a report which said that during April and May there had been two recorded crimes for Walberswick as follows:

- A dangerous dog causing injury in a public place
- A burglary, other building.

5. PLANNING

Planning applications:

Ryecroft, The Street, C12/1066: various alterations to include increase in height of roof together with removal of two existing roof lights and replace with dormer windows; single storey side extension and single storey rear extension with garden terrace over and erection of garden studio.

It was **agreed** to object to the application for the following reasons:

- The Council is concerned that there will be undue overlooking from the balcony (first floor garden terrace) into the garden of the adjoining property, Wickstead, The Street.
- The proposed external materials (timber cladding) on part of the property would be visually inappropriate given the present rendering of the property and its semi detached neighbour, Ryefield.
- There would be a loss of off-street parking in a part of the main street and entrance to the village where there is already significant on street parking and sometimes congestion.
- The proposed studio has sufficient amenities (the plans show a foul sewer, kitchenette area, heater) to allow for independent accommodation which is particularly concerning given the proposed loss of off street parking mentioned above.

6. ACCOUNTS

a) Receipts:

- ITV Drama, filming in village 21-23.05.12, donation - £350.00

- Collection from Luke Jeans' Walberswick film shows on 27.05.12 - £330.79
- VAT reclaim for period 25.02.11-31.03.12 - £517.44
- Bank interest, all accounts for period 01.04.11-31.03.12 - £4.04

b) Payments:

- Village Hall Management Committee, use of main hall 19.04.12 (Annual Parish Meeting), use of annex 02.04.12, 03.04.12, 14.05.12, 11.06.12 - £65.00 (no vat)
- Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC), Clerks' Day, 30.05.12 - £18.00 (incl £3.00 vat)
- Suffolk Acre (agent for Zurich), village sign addition to insurance for period 30.05.12-30.09.12 including IPT - £18.87
- Clerk's expenses, postage 15.05.12-06.06.12 - £4.10 and mileage for Clerks' Day - £32.40 - total £36.50 (no vat)
- Clerk's net salary, April 128 hours backdated increase in salary from 01.04.12 and May 131 hours - £2,143.81
- HMRC, paye and NI for Clerk - £697.93

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

c) Annual Audit and receipts and payments for the year ended 31.03.12

The Clerk gave each Councillor a bundle of financial documents to consider for this item. Councillors considered the receipts records, noting that the only change to be made before it was sent to the external auditors was the inclusion of a minute number for the receipt of bank interest. Councillors considered the payments records.

Councillors considered the summary receipts and payments record, noting the only difference from that submitted to the Annual Parish Meeting was the inclusion of the required certificate by the Responsible Financial Officer and a change to the way the receipt of £28.18 was recorded.

It was proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Morton that the receipts and payments for the year ended 31.03.12 had been properly recorded and this was **agreed**.

Councillors considered the year end bank reconciliation and noted the bank balance less unpresented cheques equalled the cash book balance of £6,492.78 and that the figure for box 8 in section 1 of the Annual Return was therefore £6,493.

Councillors considered the explanation of quantified significant variances relating to boxes 3 and 4 of section 1 of the Annual Return and **agreed** the explanation.

Councillors considered Section 1 of the Annual Return (accounting statements), which had already been signed and certified by the Responsible Financial Officer as properly presenting its receipts and payments. After scrutiny, the Chairman proposed and Cllr Woodcraft seconded and it was **agreed** that the Chairman sign Section 1 to indicate that the Council **approved** the accounting statements.

Councillors considered Section 2 of the Annual Return (annual governance statement). After scrutiny of each statement, Councillor Tibbles proposed and Cllr Woodcraft seconded and it was **agreed** that the Chairman and Clerk sign Section 2 to indicate that the Council **approved** the annual governance statement.

Councillors considered Section 4 of the Annual Return (annual internal audit report) which had been completed by Mr A D Kohn. It was proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Pearson and **agreed** that the annual internal report be noted.

It was proposed by Cllr Woodcraft and seconded by Cllr Tibbles that the Clerk be authorised to send the Annual Return for the year ended 31.03.12 to the external auditors and it was so **agreed**.

7. ADOPTION OF A NEW CODE OF CONDUCT

The Clerk reported that the Localism Act was to abolish the model code of conduct for members from 01.07.12, but in its place all local authorities were required to have in place their own code of conduct. As from 01.07.12 the regime over declarations of interests would also change. Prejudicial and personal interests would be replaced by pecuniary and non pecuniary interests, but regulations were not yet in place which would define those interests. A draft code had been prepared by Suffolk County and District Monitoring Officers with input from SALC, the draft had some gaps in it, pending receipt of the awaited regulations. It was proposed by Cllr Tibbles and seconded by Cllr Pearson and **agreed** to adopt the draft Suffolk Code of Conduct for Members as an interim measure as of 01.07.2012, but to acknowledge that the Code would need changing in due course as a result of advice or to meet the needs of Walberswick Parish Council. It was also **agreed** that the Clerk should use her delegated powers to provide Councillors with the Register of Members' Interests form they would need to complete for themselves and partner (if living together) and ensure they were provided to the Monitoring Officer and were available on the Council's website by the due date.

8. ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING BACK FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

This item was on the agenda for the previous meeting, but no decision had been made. It was **agreed** that the existing procedure of representatives reporting back from other organisations on an informal basis as and when representatives thought it appropriate should continue and it was so **agreed**.

9. VISITOR CENTRE UPDATE

The Clerk reported that there had been a delay in the surrender of the Suffolk County Council (SCC) lease and the grant of a tenancy at will to Walberswick Common Lands Charity (WCLC) for two main reasons:

- The solicitor acting for SCC had changed and there was a delay whilst the new solicitor clarified his instructions.
- The WCLC had not yet agreed to the proposed terms.

SCC was now pushing the Council to complete the surrender. The Clerk had therefore instructed nplaw to go ahead with the surrender and first registration of the Council's ownership of the site. This meant that the Council would be liable to insure, maintain and pay outgoings on the building until WCLC took over the responsibility. She was negotiating with AONB officers for funding to cover these costs as they were outside the ambit of the grant.

The Working Group (despite reminders) had not made suggestions for spending of the £500 grant, the deadline for which was 30.06.12. It was **agreed** to give the Clerk, after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, delegated power to spend the grant money.

10. CONSULTATION ON THE APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

The Audit Commission proposed to re-appoint BDO as external auditors for smaller bodies in Suffolk from 01.09.12 for a period of five years and was consulting on its proposal. It was **agreed** the Council had no objection to the proposal.

11. CONSULTATION BY SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL (SCDC) SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON ITS REVIEW OF HOUSING SERVICES

A survey form had been produced by the SCDC Scrutiny Committee for completion as a method of obtaining evidence from Parish Councils. Councillors considered the questions and the form was completed.

12. CONSULTATION BY SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL (SCDC) SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON ITS REVIEW OF PLANNING SERVICES

The SCDC Scrutiny Committee had reviewed planning services and made recommendations to SCDC Cabinet in 2010. It was now reviewing progress and had

asked Parish Councils for comments on the issues covered by its recommendations. Councillors considered the recommendations and indicated to the Clerk how the Council should respond.

13. JUBILEE TREE UPDATE

At the last meeting Cllr Pearson had suggested that a tree be planted in the Autumn to commemorate the Jubilee. He suggested a walnut would be suitable and suggested it be planted on the Green adjacent to Palmers Lane. Once it had matured he suggested a seat be placed around it. It was **agreed** to ask WCLC to give consideration to the planting of a walnut tree on the Green it owned adjacent to Palmers Lane.

14. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

Cllr Pearson suggested that permission be obtained to place an owl box on the Anglian Water Pumping Station in Sandy Lane.

Cllr Woodcraft said she had received many compliments on the way the various village organisations and individuals had worked together to produce such wonderful Jubilee celebrations. The Chairman agreed.

Cllr Morton said he thought that the Council's complainants would be reasonably satisfied to have an apology from the Council for its exclusion notices.

The Chairman pointed out that before service of the exclusion notices the Council had taken advice from SALC and their solicitors. He said that the footpaths should be cut imminently and that the grass at the water tower cross roads was now cut.

15. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr Ungless suggested that the Council made reference to the Parish Plan survey when replying to the SCDC Scrutiny committee on housing.

Mr Buncombe said that although he had put the union flag up for the Jubilee he was unable to take it down because of the trees. The Chairman said he would speak to the SCDC tree officer about the issue.

16. DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The date of the next routine meeting was agreed as Monday 9 July 2012.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed.....

Date.....