

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall annex at 7.30pm on 7 January 2013

NOTES of the pre-meeting public participation session

Mr MacCarthy asked whether the fact that Mr Leighton had left Suffolk County Council (SCC) should have been minuted in the minutes of the last meeting. Cllr Leighton replied that he was still a SCC Councillor.

Mr MacCarthy asked whether the statement made by Cllr Webb at the last meeting that he would stand down as a Councillor at some time should have been minuted. Cllr Webb replied that the Clerk was only required to minute decisions of the Council.

Mr MacCarthy asked whether the item referring to "Clerk's pension in lieu of gratuity" on the Clerk's "to do" list which he had been provided by Cllr Gower would have budgetary implications. Cllr Gower said he did not know, but would find out.

Mr MacCarthy asked whether the Council's policy on dealing with communications with the public had been changed. A general discussion ensued on the question of correspondence (mainly by email) with the Clerk and Councillors. Cllr Austin pointed out that correspondence should be with the Clerk, because no Councillor had authority to act on behalf of the Council, only the Clerk could so act. Councillors expressed the view that they were happy to receive copies of correspondence sent to the Clerk.

Mr Gilby asked what recent discussions the Council had had with SALC. Cllrs Gower and Burroughes said they had had none since Cllr Gower had met with an officer of SALC and others in October 2012.

Mrs Hunt referred to the discussion at the last meeting dealing with the hours the Clerk was expected to work. She pointed out that in the summer 1,000 vehicles a day could enter the village and this and other issues led to additional work for a Clerk in Walberswick compared with a village elsewhere of similar size. Examples of the extra work were visitor management, beach issues, railings and other safety measures, sea and river defences, additional planning issues. She said that she and Clerks before her had always been expected to work 40 hours per month and from her experience she knew that they worked it. Cllr Burroughes replied that he didn't see how the matters she had listed would impact on the work of the Clerk.

MINUTES of the Meeting

PRESENT: Councillors Mr P Austin, Mr S Burroughes, Mr M Gower (Chairman and District Councillor), Mr D Tytler and Mr D Webb, County Councillor R Leighton and Mrs J Gomm (Clerk).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

PCSO Newson.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2012 were signed by the Chairman, proposed by Cllr Webb and seconded by Cllr Austin.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Pecuniary interests: None.

Local non pecuniary interests: Cllr Burroughes and Gower, member of Suffolk Coastal District (SCDC).

Cllrs Austin, Gower and Webb declared that they knew all the applicants for the position of a trustee to the Walberswick Common Lands Charity (declared during discussion of item 14 in the minutes).

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

County Cllr Leighton reported that he still had some money available in his Suffolk County Council (SCC) Locality Budget for community welfare and benefit projects which had to be spent by 31.03.12. He had received a communication from the Clerk with a proposal for expenditure of some of the budget and was considering it. He referred to the two consultations taking place concerning Sizewell C Power Station, one by EDF and one concerning a review of emergency plans whereby Walberswick would fall within the area covered by the emergency plans.

District Cllr Gower reported that there had been an important planning session last week where members had approved a planning application for a Tesco store in Aldeburgh.

PCSO Newson had sent a report saying that there had been no reported crimes in Walberswick during December.

5. ACCOUNTS

a. Receipts noted:

- None.

b. Payments:

The following payments were **agreed**:

- J K Gomm, stamps Oct – Dec 2012, £3.80, no VAT – total £3.80
- J K Linley (also known as J K Gomm), Clerk's net salary for December, for the dates 28 Nov – 19 Dec, comprising 67 hours 55 minutes, of which 21 hours, 35 minutes were spent on Freedom of Information related work - £913.03, no VAT – total £913.03
- HMRC, Oct – Dec 2012, employee's tax, employer's NI and employee's NI, £285.19, no VAT, total £285.19
- Essex and Suffolk Water, bill period 15.06.12 – 12.12.12, for sports field, £76.94, no VAT, total £76.94.
The Clerk pointed out that this was over budget by about £41 and represented a large increase in water usage. Cllr Webb offered to check the site for leaks.
- Information Commissioner, renewal of registration as Data Handler, £35.00, no VAT, total £35.00

It was proposed by Cllr Austin and seconded by Cllr Burroughes that the above payments be made and this was **agreed**.

c. Review of receipts and payments for the quarter ending 31.12.12 and management of financial risk posed by dealing with statutory requests for information, compared with budgetary provision

The Clerk referred to the cumulative summary of payments and receipts and pointed out that in accordance with the Financial Regulations transfers were required between budget heads. It was proposed by Cllr Webb and seconded by Cllr Austin and **agreed** to make the following transfers:

- £300 training to administration
- £100 training to salaries
- £1,000 village facilities to salaries
- £250 grants to salaries
- £1,150 reserves carried into year to salaries
- £1,000 carried into year to elections.

The Clerk reported she had carried out a bank reconciliation on 11.12.12 and the bank and cash book agreed at the figure of £8,077.61.

d. PAYE Real Time Information

The Clerk reported that HMRC required her to report that as from the beginning of the new tax year every time a salary payment was made real time information would be passed to HMRC by employers. This would mean that P14s and P35s would no longer be necessary.

6. BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2013/2014

Cllr Austin proposed and Cllr Webb seconded that the budget for 2013/2014 (draft budget papers dated 11.12.12) showing a precept of £16,000 be accepted and this was **agreed**. Cllr Tytler proposed and Cllr Burroughes seconded that the precept for the financial year 2013/2014 be set at £16,000 and this was **agreed**. It was **agreed** to accept the government grant of £117.00.

7. REVIEW EXISTING RISK ASSESSMENT ADOPTED 01.10.12 AND ADDITIONAL DELEGATIONS TO CLERK DATED 01.10.12

It was **agreed** to defer this item to the next meeting.

8. RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Cllr Gower produced a draft policy. Cllr Austin proposed and Cllr Tytler seconded the policy be adopted and this was **agreed**. Pursuant to Standing Order 26 it was **agreed** to suspend Standing Order 11 (relating to rescission of resolutions passed within the last six months) when it became clear that the Clerk had not been given sight of the policy document. Cllr Austin proposed that his earlier proposal be rescinded and this was **agreed**. Cllr Austin proposed that the draft policy be placed on the website so that members of the public and the Clerk be given a chance to comment and that the matter be brought back to the next meeting and this was **agreed**. Standing Order 11 was reapplied.

9. REVIEW OF DELEGATIONS TO THE CLERK IN RESPECT OF THE DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS 2004

Cllr Tytler proposed that this matter be brought back to the next meeting after some Councillors had had a discussion with the Clerk and this was **agreed**.

10. CONSIDERATION OF FOUR EXCLUSION NOTICES ISSUED IN THE AUTUMN OF 2010 AND THE CORRESPONDENCE LEADING TO THEIR ISSUE

Cllr Gower explained that he wished to move a motion. Pursuant to Standing Order 26 Cllr Gower proposed and Cllr Burroughes seconded and it was **agreed** to suspend Standing Order 4 (relating to motions requiring written notice). Cllr Gower proposed and Cllr Tytler seconded the motion and it was **agreed** as follows:

Walberswick Parish Council

1. Undertakes to act in accordance with legislation and other requirements applying to it.
2. Withdraws the invalid "Exclusion Notices" issued in October, November and December 2010 that failed to conform with FOI guidelines and codes of practice.
3. Withdraws the "Internal Review" decision of the Council taken in July 2011.
4. Apologises to individual members of the public, who were wrongfully issued with the "Exclusion Notices".
5. Apologises to individual members of the public, who were wrongfully referred to in the Council's flawed internal review.
(Individual letters of apology will be sent to Henry Gilby, Stephanie Harvey, John MacCarthy, and Alan Walpole). Letters will be in the public domain.
6. Will make every effort to redress the consequences of the decision to issue "Exclusion Notices".
7. Agrees the need to ensure Councillors take responsibility and effectively control the Council's decisions and actions.

The council will:

- a) Clearly identify and agree priorities for the Council.

- b) Improve the council's financial management and budgetary control, and carefully monitor all expenditure.
- c) Review the scheme of delegated authority to the clerk
- d) Request Suffolk Coastal District Council to trigger elections to fill the current vacancies on the Council so that a new Parish Council can be in place by May 2013.

Standing Order 11 was reapplied.

11. PROPOSED DONATION TO COUNCIL OF ADDITIONAL PLAY EQUIPMENT FOR SPORTS FIELD

Cllr Webb explained that two further pieces of play equipment had been offered to the Council for the sports field. He undertook to confirm with planning officers at SCDC that they did not require planning permission. It was **agreed** to accept the donation and to insure the equipment.

12. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

Cllr Tytler recommended that, with the intention of there being an elected Council in place by May 2013, the Council should encourage members of the community to stand for election to the Parish Council. Councillors asked for suggestions from the public on how an awareness exercise could be undertaken.

Cllr Austin referred to the mud on the B1387 and on Lodge Road. The Clerk said she would write again to SCC, copying in Cllr Leighton and also ask SCDC to impose conditions on planning permissions requiring the developer to reinstate the relevant highway after work had been completed.

Cllr Webb referred to the road junction between Alexandra Place and The Street which he considered to be a dangerous tripping hazard and said he would contact SCC Highways Department about it.

13. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Monday 4 February 2013 provided the Village Hall annex is available.

14. APPOINTMENT OF A TRUSTEE TO THE WALBERSWICK COMMON LANDS CHARITY

Cllr Gower asked members of the public to leave the room so that the Council could discuss the matter in private. The public left the room.

It was proposed by Cllr Gower and seconded by Cllr Austin and **agreed** that Mrs R Woodcraft be appointed as a trustee.

The meeting closed at 9.27pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

