

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held in the Village Hall annex at 7.30pm on 20 May 2013

NOTES of the pre-meeting public participation session

Mr MacCarthy said that at the meeting held on 04.03.13 the Clerk had been instructed to deal with his outstanding Freedom of Information (FOI) requests concerning donations, but that she still hadn't. The Clerk reminded him that at that meeting she had said she had no outstanding FOI requests from him, but she acknowledged, as she had acknowledged on 04.03.13, that she may not have received some of his emails. Cllr Gower said he would forward to the Clerk Mr MacCarthy's email or letter concerning donations.

Mr MacCarthy said that there was an item on the agenda entitled questions from the public, was that a mistake? After some discussion Cllr Austin said that it was better to have a discussion with the public before the meeting, rather than at the end, as this helped Councillors in their decision making.

Mr Gilby pointed out, in relation to the issue of charging for documents produced under the Publication Scheme, that the maximum charge was 10p per sheet. The Clerk agreed with him in relation to A4 sheets.

Mr MacCarthy said that the item on the agenda concerning the visitor centre should not be held with the public excluded. Mr Gilby suggested the visitor centre be transferred to the Village Hall Management Committee or the Walberswick Common Lands Charity (WCLC). Mr MacCarthy suggested that the visitor centre should be sold for value to WCLC.

MINUTES of the Meeting

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

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Gower was proposed by Cllr Austin and seconded by Cllr Tytler as Chairman for the forthcoming Council year. There were no other nominations and so Cllr Gower was elected. He signed the declaration of acceptance of Office before Mrs Gomm, the Proper Officer of the Council.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Cllr Tytler and seconded by Cllr Austin that no Vice Chairman be elected and it was so **agreed**.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Burroughes and PCSO Newson.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2013 were **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Webb and seconded by Cllr Tytler.

5. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Pecuniary interests: None.

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

6. ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Cllr Tytler proposed, pursuant to standing order 26, and it was **agreed** to suspend standing order 2j so as not to consider items 6 to 15 and item 17 on the agenda and to consider them when the Council sees fit.

7. THE SETTING OF DATES, TIMES AND PLACE FOR ORDINARY MEETINGS FOR THE COUNCIL FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR

The following dates were **agreed**:

- Monday 3 June 2013, Monday 1 July 2013, Monday 2 September 2013, Monday 4 November 2013, Monday 3 February 2014, Monday 7 April 2014, and Monday 12 May 2014 for the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council all in the village hall annexe to commence at 7.30pm.
- Thursday 24 April 2014 in the main village hall for the Annual Parish Meeting to commence at 7.30pm.

8. REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Cllr Gower reported that today Suffolk Coastal District Council had a full Council meeting to discuss the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) and had concluded that it was sustainable. At present the Council did not have a LDF and did not have a five year land supply for housing development. There would be 11,000 new houses built in the District by 2031. He reported that the conservative group on Suffolk County Council (SCC) only had 3 more members than all the other groups. He also reported that in the next 4-5 years SCC was facing a huge budget gap.

9. ACCOUNTS

a. Receipts noted:

- VAT refund for year 01.04.12 - 31.03.13 from HMRC £325.81
- ½ year precept for 01.04.13 – 31.03.14 from SCDC £8,000.00

It was noted that Mr Kett had not used the visitor centre on 1 and 2 May 2013 (see minute 602/4) and so the invoice sent to him would not be paid.

b. Payments:

The following payments were **agreed**:

- Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC), 6 months payroll services to 31.03.13, £42.00 plus £8.40 vat, total £50.40
- SALC subscription for 01.04.13 – 31.03.14, £154.00, no vat, total £154.00
- HMRC, Clerk's tax and NI, January and February, Employer's NI, January and February, total £265.29
- Walberswick Common Lands Charity (WCLC), ground rent for spots field and pavilion, £1.00, no vat, total £1.00
- J K Linley (also known as J K Gomm), Clerk's net salary for:
March 2013, 26 February to 29 March, total time 57 hours, 29 minutes
April 2013, 30 March to 26 April, total time 40 hours
May 2013, 27 April to 14 May, total time 31 hours 50 minutes, of which 11 hours 40 minutes was spent on Freedom of Information work
Total £1,786.96

The Disability Advice Service for East Suffolk had written requesting a donation towards its work as in the past year it had dealt with 7 enquiries from Walberswick. There was nothing in the budget for donations or grants and so it was **agreed** not to make a donation, but to pass the letter to the WCLC.

c. Review of the level of the fidelity guarantee insurance cover

For audit purposes, Parish Councils were advised to do this on an annual basis, at a time when the bank accounts were at their highest level (generally, at the time the first half year precept is received). The current cover was for £25,000 which was sufficient. It was proposed by Cllr Austin and seconded by Cllr Webb and **agreed** not to increase the cover.

10. CLERK'S ANNUAL APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The Clerk's contract required an annual appraisal. The Chairman **agreed** to contact SCDC to obtain a copy of its annual appraisal form which he thought would be suitable.

11. REVIEW OF THE SCALE OF CHARGES FOR PROVIDING COPIES OF INFORMATION UNDER THE PUBLICATION SCHEME

At the previous meeting Cllr Burroughes had agreed to obtain SCDC's scale of charges to compare with the Council's. As he was unable to attend the meeting Cllr Tytler proposed that the Council should charge the cost price and in any event not more than 10p for an A4 sheet and this was **agreed**.

12. RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

The draft records management policy had not been agreed at the previous meeting as Cllr Burroughes wished to take advice from the Solicitor to SCDC concerning emails he sent and received using a SCDC email address. Cllr Gower proposed and Cllr Tytler seconded that the policy be adopted and this was **agreed**.

13. CONSIDERATION OF VARIOUS TIME RECORDING SYSTEMS OPERATED BY THE CLERK SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The Clerk reported on the three time recording systems she had recently been asked to operate and explained that it sometimes took her approximately 20 minutes a day to transfer all the information to the systems. Cllr Gower said that she had done what she had been asked to do and that the matter could be reviewed in a few months.

14. COUNCILLOR GOWER'S LONGER TERM ISSUES PAPER

Cllr Gower explained that his discussion paper had been on the website for some time, but that no comments had been received. He felt it was worthwhile to keep it on the website as a statement of intent.

15. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

Cllr Austin thanked the Clerk for her efforts with regard to the potholes in the village, one had been mended.

Cllr Webb said that the damage to the verges by building contractors had been taken up with SCDC (planning) and SCC (highways) by the Clerk and he asked the District and County Councillor to take it up with the respective authorities.

Cllr Austin asked members of the public to write to their District and County Councillor about the matter.

16. CONSIDERATION OF THE USE OF THE VISITOR CENTRE

The Clerk updated Councillors on the relevant issues concerning the visitor centre and its possible use, including the working group consisting of two Councillors, two Trustees and two members of the History Society, that had been set up. Cllr Tytler suggested nominating a small group of Councillors to produce recommendations which could be considered by the Council. Cllr Gower said he thought that the visitor centre could be used in the short term commercially to produce income and that in the long term perhaps it could be sold to WCLC, but that it probably wasn't a decision that appointed Councillors should make. Cllr Webb thought that, as the Council was in a difficult position, every option should be considered, but this was not what the Council had originally intended. Cllr Austin asked whether a survey had been done as there could be problems with leasing the building. It was proposed by Cllr Tytler and **agreed** that the previous working

group be re-established and asked to make recommendations, the Councillor group members being Cllrs Austin and Webb.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed.....

Date.....