

# BRANDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minute of a meeting of Brandeston Parish Council held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 7.30pm in the committee room of the Village Hall.

**Present:** *Councillors Elson (in the Chair) Buckingham, Churchill, Duffy, Kirton, Mitson-Woods and Norman*

**1-1516/9 Welcome from the Chairman Councillor Elson.**

The meeting adjourned for parishioners to raise any issues pertaining to the village and for District Council Suffolk County Council report. PCSO Hassler had informed the Clerk before the meeting that he was no longer permitted to attend Parish Council meetings and crime report may be found by Councillors need online. The Clerk had not received an apology or report from SCC or SCDC Councillors. Councillors asked the Clerk to contact Councillor Herring, leader of SCDC to remedy proper representation and reporting from Councillor Hudson and Rous.

**2-1516/9 To receive any Declarations of Interest** – Councillor Mitson-Woods declared an interest in items 6/1516/9 f-i.

**3-1516/9 To receive and consider apologies for absence**

There were none.

**4-1516/9 To receive and sign as a true record the minutes of the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 (Circulated)**

These were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record

**5-1516/9 Progress report from January and February meetings.**

No decision yet on Red House Barn, Ben Woolnough, Planning Officer, had informed the Clerk that SCDC planning officers were 'in discussion with the applicants about retaining part of the agricultural building'. The Clerk reported money was in the bank from the Transparency fund.

**6-1516/9 Finance**

a) To receive a financial report from the Responsible Finance Officer. *(Finance paper and Appendix Attached)*

b) Following the repeal of s150 of the Local Government Act 1972 to consider adopting online banking for the Parish Council Accounts and setting appropriate checks and balances. Councillors discussed the options for appropriate and effective checks and balances that would need to be put in place if the two signatory cheque payment method is no longer used if the PC banks online. Suggestions were:

That using the business model of invoices being authorised at Director level, two Councillors should sign each invoice at a Council meeting to authorise a payment being made via BACS; the Clerk informed Councillors that the Internal Auditor should be involved in the decision. Councillors agreed that she should talk to Don Evans.

c) To consider the Clerk's advice to use the Government's new audit system for the year 2017-18 rather than seek an outside resource. Councillors agreed this was sensible. After 2018 there will be no external audit imposed on PCs but there will be a body, replacing the Audit Commission but yet to be named, to which parishioners are able to take complaints. Copies of the new NALC Standing Orders for 2016 have been circulated to Councillors to prepare for adoption at the PC AGM.

d) To consider a further expenditure on the Village Hall gates of 260.00 above the contingency budget of 125.00 to produce a long term result from the refurbish. Councillor Norman reported that he had seen the gates after they had been sand blasted and noted weak places where water had ingressed and settled causing decay. The extra work would ensure that these areas are protected in

future by adding drainage holes. Councillors were unanimously agreed that the extra money should be committed to keep the gates in good order for a long period.

e) To note acceptance of BPC request for funding from the Transparency Compliance fund. The Clerk reported that £827.34 has been paid into the PC Account since the Agenda was posted.

f) To approve purchase by the Clerk of a laptop and scanner/printer for the Council using funding from the new Transparency Compliance fund. Approximate values Laptop 333.00 ex VAT and scanner/printer 60.00 ex VAT. It was agreed that it was urgent that the Council has a dedicated laptop and a scanner to enable documents to be scanned and uploaded to the website. This would be our final compliance with the new Governance and Accountability Guidance.

g) To approve salary payment to the Clerk from January 1<sup>st</sup> to end of March 2016. Thirteen weeks totalling 260.00. Thus was agreed and Councillors Elson and Norman signed cheque number 100411.

h) To approve Clerk's expenses for 2016/17. Cheque number 100412 for 216.61 (Inclusive of VAT at 20% to be reclaimed) was approved and signed by Councillors Elson and Norman.

i) To approve payment by the Clerk of 100+ prize money for the year April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to March 1<sup>st</sup> 2017; 35.00 per month for 11 months and 185.00 in December for Christmas draw. This was agreed for the year.

j) An invoice had been received from Brandeston Village Hall since the agenda was posted. It was agreed that this should be paid and cheque number 100413 for 26.25 made out to Brandeston VH was authorised and signed by Councillors Elson and Norman.

#### **7-1516/9 Reports from Councillors**

a) Broadband speed in the village – to receive an update from Councillor Buckingham Cllr Buckingham advised that there was no update on her previous report as The Better Broadband for Suffolk Programme has yet to announce the next phase of superfast broadband rollout locations. In the meantime, she will check whether the provision of faster broadband via Framlingham Broadband is an option for Brandeston residents.

b) Report from SALC area meeting - Councillor Mitson-Woods The next meeting is on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Councillor Mitson-Woods was asked to raise the following issues to see if other PCs share our current issues. These include the failure to get attendance or reports from District and County Councillors; to discover what other PCs are using to address speeding through their parishes;

c) Village Hall grant funding. Councillor Churchill to speak on application to principal authorities for funds. The only response from District Councillor was a 'one-liner' from Councillor Hudson saying grant funding will be 'looked at' in May.

**8-1516/9 Speeding issues in the village including feedback from PCSO Hassler's black box monitoring** (*Attached report*) PCSO Hassler's report of the speed monitoring results. It has been agreed at a previous meeting that Councillor Kirton will do a presentation to the APM on the options open to us and get a mandate from the village for what action should be taken. Councillor Duffy questioned whether anything could be done about parking on the road near the pub. There is a similar situation near the junction of Mill Lane. The Clerk suggested that the Council obtain a mandate from the APM on what the parishioners want and if they are willing to pay for the preferred option.

#### **9-1516/9 Dog waste bin**

**Clerk to report back from Village Hall liaison. Councillors to authorise expenditure to supply and installation just inside VH gate. (175.00 including installation)**

The VH Committee reported that this was a good plan; it wished for a red bin to be placed just inside the village hall gates. The Clerk was authorised to order a red bin and check the exact position that is acceptable for SCDC to empty it. The Clerk will check that the bin is placed inside the gateway but does not prevent the gates being opened and closed.

**10-1516/9 Highway Matters.**

a) Opportunity for Councillors to report potholes, verge damage etc. for the Clerk to report to Highways on the website. The Clerk reported that the broken signage had been reported via email to the Area Highways officer, Tony Robinson – no reply has been received.

b) **Councillor Churchill to report on footpath sign near Hill House.** Councillor Churchill reported that about two years ago the footway sign had been replaced after it was damaged by a vehicle, with a sign marked footpath. Clerk to contact Footpath Officer at SCC to clarify why this has been done and attempt to get the new sign replaced with one stating footway. The path had been created initially by the highways authority to improve safety for pedestrians. Councillor Churchill defined the difference between footways and footpaths. Footways are to preserve safety for pedestrians at roadsides whereas footpaths are for access

c) **Low Street Triangle.** Councillors thanked Councillor Norman and Martin Churchill for clearing the triangle at Low Street. Young oak saplings can now thrive and the area is much improved. The Clerk reported that as Lady Cunliffe had told her that she did not think the land at the two triangles, one at the end of Mutton Lane and the Low Street area, belonged to her and her husband. The Councillors agreed that the Clerk should seek clarity on ownership from HM Land Registry. If there is no registered Title owner the PC will seek ownership for the village via Adverse Possession. This would entail the PC advertising itself as owner for a period of 10 years. If nobody comes forward in this period with an original Title Deed the areas would be registered as a village asset.

**11-1516/9 Trees on Mutton Lane Hill** -Clerk to report back on contact with tree surgeon. Councillor Norman was concerned that as Mr Tuckwell had not responded to a letter from the Clerk seeking his permission for the Council to prune the trees further contact should be made. The trees had been planted in 1983 under the SCC Plant a Tree in '83 scheme when Mr Leach owned the land beside the lane. Councillor Norman agreed to speak to Mr Tuckwell before Councillors undertook the work themselves.

**12-1516/9 14-1516/9 Planning Matters - To consider a response to DC/160747/TCA**

From Mr Andrew Payne - to reduce the height of 33 yews around the west, south-west and south sides of Brandeston church to 2 metres and restore to hedge. The Council supports the application. Councillors Norman and Churchill offered to take a look at the site and report back to the Clerk in order for a response to be compiled. There was concern that the lowering of the yews would open up a view of the Hall car park to the churchyard.

**Date of next meeting – PC AGM**

The date was due to be Tuesday 10th May but the Clerk and two other Councillors were unable to attend on this date. Therefore the next meeting may be Monday 16th May 2016 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room of the village hall providing the Committee Room is free. As Tuesdays seem to be difficult evenings it was agreed that the Clerk should discover if the Committee Room is free on another evening. Mondays seemed to fit with most Councillors, apart from Councillor Duffy, but he felt he could change his arrangements for the few Mondays each year. The Clerk was asked to discover when the Committee Room is free for PC meetings for the second Monday of every other month starting in May 2016 to March 2017.

**The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May if the main hall is free. The APM Agenda should include Chairman's Report, RFO Finance report and Councillor Kirton's presentation on speeding and Councillor Buckingham will report on the provision of Superfast broadband.**

The meeting closed at 9.45pm