

GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GREAT CHESTERFORD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8TH 2014 AT 7:30PM IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, GREAT CHESTERFORD

Present: Neil Gregory
Sharon Tricerri

Matt Rowan
Howard Rolfe (from 8:30pm)
Simon Witney

Alan Cattley – Clerk

Seven members of the public.

14/157. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Bevens, Redfern, Newcombe and Hall.

14/158. Declaration of Interests

Cllrs. Rolfe declared himself as a member of Uttlesford District Council.

14/159. Minutes of the Last Meetings

The minutes of the meeting on 10th September were approved as signed as a correct record of events.

14/160. Public Forum

Concern was expressed that insufficient consideration had been taken by the developers of the proposed development covered by planning application UTT/14/0425/OP (land off Bartholomew Close) of the very restricted access into the site and that this would cause severe problems with construction traffic. It was pointed out that even the weekly refuse collection was difficult, with the lorry often mounting pavements to negotiate parked cars.

Cllr. Gregory suggested that residents register to speak at the meeting of UDC's planning committee to make their points. It was pointed out that the PC had supported development on the site, but this was on the understanding that development would occur simultaneously with the Stanley Road site. The access criteria had changed between the first and second applications.

It was understood that there was to be a site meeting on October 13th.

The PC had been informed that hedgerow had been removed by Bellway; the landowner had written to UDC to state that he had not been responsible for its removal.

The meeting was informed that details in respect of planning application UTT/14/2301/LB were available on the UDC website, but it was not apparent what material was to be used for the proposed chimney.

In response to an enquiry about the progress on the allotments, the following points were made:

- The PC was expecting to take possession of the field next spring.
- It was proposed to have a tarmac path to the far end of the site, a fence with access via a gate and a water supply.
- Grants applications had been made for the provision of hedges.
- There were to be 20 plots available; there were 23 names on the waiting list, but it was not yet known whether all applicants were still interested.
- It was proposed to establish an Allotment Committee for which volunteers were being requested.

- The possibility of providing or allowing sheds was under consideration. One possibility was the provision of a large shed with lockers, although the cost implications were still to be ascertained.

14/161. Planning

To consider any comments to be returned to Uttlesford District Council (UDC) on the following applications:

UTT/14/2301/LB. To install a wood burning stove complete with twin wall chimney system..

Location: Old Post Office South Street Great Chesterford Saffron Walden CB10 1NW

Resolved: To support subject to the use of appropriate materials.

UTT/14/2801/P3JPA Prior notification of change of use from offices to 2 no. dwellings.

Location Units 1 And 8 Norfolk House Great Chesterford Court Newmarket Road Great Chesterford Essex

Resolved: To submit no comment

14/162. Hedgerows.

It was noted that although regulations prevented the removal of hedgerows on farmland without permission, no such protection existed for those on private domestic land. As much of the hedgerow in the village was in locations where the regulations did not apply, it was suggested that the PC adopt a policy of requesting hedgerows to be retained in responses to planning applications.

It was **resolved** that the PC consider the status of hedgerows in planning applications with the presumption of retention, taking due notice of the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations where appropriate.

To this end, Mr. Colin Day offered to undertake a survey of hedges in the village, possibly with the assistance of the Essex Wildlife Trust. This offer was gratefully accepted.

The PC would contact UDC's Enforcement Officer in respect of the removal of the hedge adjoin Bartholomew Close.

14/163. Finance

The receipts and payments were noted without comment.

The half year financial report was received.

Budget holders' reports were deferred until next month's meeting.

The review of the asset register was continuing.

It was reported that the cost of fencing the allotment site was estimated at £1750.

14/164. EALC letter re data protection.

In view of the onerous nature of the requirements it was **resolved** not to respond to the Essex Association of Local Council's request for information on data protection policy.

14/165. Suggestions from pupils at Great Chesterford C of E Primary Academy.

These were circulated and it was noted that there were a number of sensible and helpful suggestions, and the writer was commended on the quality of the handwriting.

It was commented that plans were in hand for the suggested reduced speed limits in the village.

The suggestion of a village map was considered to be a very good one, and it was suggested that the school might like to consider holding a competition for its design with the winning entry to be used as the basis for a professional implementation.

The question of dog fouling was a perennial one, and it was noted that the problem seemed to be on the increase again. It was suggested that reminders be sent out on the Google group again reminding owners of their responsibilities and the penalties for failure to clean up after their dogs. Other suggestions included asking the children to design posters and another reminder in the Broadsheet.

14/166. Blocked soakaway behind Community Centre.

The clerk was asked to contact the Flood Officer for suggestions of suitable contractors to perform a survey. Expenditure of up to £200 was approved for this.

14/167. Village Google group

It was noted that Tony Redfern had already produced suggested guidelines for moderation criteria and it was decided to review these before further consideration at the next meeting. In principle, the important criteria were felt to be that postings must have a direct local relevance and should be limited to facts, not opinions.

It was agreed that it should be made explicit that responsibility for any libellous postings should be the poster's and not the group's.

It was also agreed to encourage more residents to sign up to the group via the Broadsheet and elsewhere.

14/168. Ditch clearance.

The proposed letter to landowners was still outstanding and the PC is awaiting quotes for the work.

It was suggested that Gavin Hamilton might be requested to help undertake the work.

It was decided not to pursue an offer from the probation service to provide labour by ex-offenders.

14/169. Community Land.

Progress on allotments had already been covered under agenda item **14/160**.

It was reported that the PC will need match funding for grant money..

14/170. Village Website.

It was agreed that the design of the website was in need of improvement. The clerk was asked to review the content and to check usage figures.

Cllr. Rowan will obtain an informal estimate of cost from a professional designer.

In the absence of Cllr. Redfern whose portfolio includes communications, it was decided to defer further consideration to the next meeting.

14/171. Little Chesterford Footpath.

It was **resolved** not to apply for change of status from footpath to bridleway.

14/172. Bollard in Rose Lane.

A resident had provided photographic evidence of damage to plant tubs in Rose Lane caused by a lorry attempting to pass.

Cllr. Rolfe had raised this matter again with Chris Stoneham from ECC's Highways Department and it was understood that a quotation of £200-£300 was likely to be forthcoming soon.

It was agreed to approve expenditure on another bollard to match the existing one subject to a limit of £500.

14/173. Matters for further discussion.

Response to Local Plan – Cllrs Newcombe and Witney would draft a response with additions from Cllr. Gregory which would then be circulated.

It was possible that the s.106 funding from the developer of the NWT which was earmarked for improvements to the play area could be used for replacement swings and safety surface.

Initial estimates for these were around £6,000 and metal safety fencing would be around £19,000.

Cllr. Tricerri was asked to select replacement trees for Horse River Green. These were to be native species and in keeping with the location.

14/174. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Wednesday 12th November at 7:30 in the Community Centre.

14/175. Exclusion of the public and press due to the confidential nature of item 14/176.

It was **resolved** to exclude the public and press as specified in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 section 1(2). The clerk left the meeting at this point.

14/176. Clerk’s terms of employment.

Noted: In discussion

That the nature of the Clerk's duties had changed and that this process of change was continuing.

That proposed increased levels of development within the village were adding to workloads.

That councillors did not, in aggregate, have the amount of time to devote to PC matters that hitherto had been the case.

That there had been oversights in proper documentation of the Clerk's duties leading to a failure to review pay and conditions in a timely manner.

Agreed:

To thank Mr Cattley, the incumbent, for his diligence and understanding.

Resolved:

That in order to correct the historic oversight, wef 1 October 2014, the Clerk be placed upon Point 24 of the NJC July 2013 scales for the aggregate hours worked.

That the Parish Council consider and review the duties, roles and responsibilities of the Clerk with the intention of revisiting this matter prior to 1 April 2015.

That in conjunction with the review above any defects of documentation be addressed and resolved promptly.

That Councillor Rolfe be requested to enquire of relevant parties as to the status and best practice of superannuation arrangements for the Clerk

The meeting closed at 10:50 pm

Signed (Chairman).....

Date: 12th November 2014