

BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5 November 2015 at the Community House, Birdbrook at 7.30pm.

Present: Mr T R Walker Mr P Smart
Mr S Rhenius Mr A Cook

Clerk: Mrs D Hilliard

Joy Darby of the EALC came to the meeting. Richard Walker conducted welcomes and introductions. He summed up Birdbrook's situation regarding councillors. Discussions took place regarding the precept and percentage increases. It was agreed that Joy would stay until approximately 9.00pm and offer comments on the agenda items as the meeting progressed.

15/86 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

15/87 OTHER APOLOGIES

None.

15/88 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed. Proposed by Steve Rhenius and seconded by Peter Smart. All in favour.

15/89 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

15/90 COMMUNICATION AND REPORT OF THE CLERK

UK Power Network letter – A reply had been sent earlier this year. Debbie will resend it.

Transparency Briefing – Richard read out the email. Joy Darby will book Debbie on the 8th December date.

Laptop – It was agreed to purchase the £469 option but will also obtain a quote for a printer/scanner. Do not purchase until after Debbie has attended the transparency briefing as there may be a possibility of grant funding for the equipment.

15/91 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT

BDC Business loans – Richard will put on notice boards.

Glaston magazine – Noted.

ECC Bus Review Consultation – Richard

Oyster magazine – Noted.

District Local Plan – It was agreed to reply that our previous comments still stand. Debbie will draft an appropriate reply and circulate.

Joy suggested doing a neighbourhood plan and articulate development within it which should then give the Parish Council some control over what

development occurs regarding provision of shops, etc. Debbie will ask Jan Cole of the RCCE to attend a meeting to provide information on carrying out a Neighbourhood Plan.

15/92 MEMBERS REPORTS

(a) *Pond* – Richard still needs to meet with William Rook regarding responsibility for the pond. He advised that pond rakes can be purchased for pond clearing. Leigh Carter and Alan Cook have sorted out the duck house. Another pair of waders would be helpful.

(b) *Parks* – The Open Spaces Action Plan was discussed. Birdbrook's play area needs to be added.

Fenland Leisure have carried out the inspection of play equipment and its report was circulated. It was agreed that Fenland Leisure be asked to carry out the necessary works.

(c) *Chairman's* – Richard has spoken to ex Cllr Hoye about the heating in the Community House. It was also noted that the contractors who replaced the bus shelter in Baythorne End have taken the bin and not replaced it. Debbie will contact Moira Mason of ECC regarding this.

Dog bin – Steve Rhenius confirmed that Baythorne End would like a dog bin to be located near the playing field. Debbie will contact BDC and ask them to install one, also need to find out the cost.

Litter Bin – Agenda for January

Telephone boxes – Alan reported regarding reglazing the box in Birdbrook – Plastic panels and metal fixings £630 inc VAT
Toughened glass £822 inc VAT.

Discussion took place regarding what to put in the box, eg. Tourist information board or a defibrillator. Joy Darby may have some information on this and will email it to Debbie.. Steve Rhenius will ask at Steeple Bumpstead also.

It was proposed by Alan and seconded by Peter that the telephone box be refurbished using glass with a view to installing a defibrillator. All in favour. The Chairman asked the Clerk if there would be enough money. Debbie advised that the current account balance showed there should be enough money to finance this as the Parish Council does keep to its budgets.

(d) *Highways* – The speed tests have been put out on A1017 for one week. The results are awaited.

Richard reported the salt has arrived and been stored in the shed.

15/93 VILLAGE PUB

Richard updated Joy on the situation regarding the two pubs in the parish. Richard put forward his suggestion that the Parish Council buy the business leasehold and run it as a community business. The seller of the pub has had some interest shown in it. At this stage no further action could be taken.

15/94 SOLAR ENERGY SCHEME

Richard advised Joy that Birdbrook is responsible for its street lights and that his idea was to install solar panels on some vacant land in Birdbrook to provide the electricity for these street lights and that the parish could benefit from any surplus being sold onto the national grid. Joy will see if she has any information. Richard will speak to Argents, the landowners, to see if the land would be available. Joy will research any similar schemes that other parishes may have carried out. Debbie will contact Angie Balcombe of CIF to see if a project would be applicable for grant funding under the CIF scheme.

15/95 GRASS CUTTING

The letter from New England Landscaping was circulated at the meeting giving details of the contract renewal. It was agreed to re-appoint New England for 2016 under its current contract. The contract with Mr Shears also has another year to run. It was agreed that the Parish Council will review the whole situation regarding grass cutting for 2017. Debbie will write to New England Landscaping regarding this.

15/96 BIRDBROOK NEWS

Joy advised that the Parish Council need to publicise the work it carries out far more in the magazine and on the website.

Carrie and Chris Webb have advised that they will continue to edit the magazine for the time being.

Debbie is attending the Transparency Code briefing on 8th December and Joy advised there may be funding available to provide a new laptop and printer and also training in website management. Debbie will report back in January.

15/97 BIRDBROOK COMMUNITY HOUSE

The last meeting took place in September. Debbie will forward the minutes to the Parish Council.

15/98 VILLAGE SIGN PROPOSAL

Debbie reported she had spoken to Sturmer Parish Council and details of their sign had been provided by email which she will circulate.

Debbie will ask ECC Highways regarding siting a village sign on the triangle of Fell Road/Moat Road/The Street.

15/99 EMERGENCY PLAN

The changes were agreed and the plan will be returned to BDC.

15/100 PLANNING

Richard reported that the parish plan expires in 2015. He proposed that Peter and himself carry out a review and update of the parish plan to carry through to 2019. Agenda for March meeting with a view to it being ready to release at the AGM in May 2016. Agreed.

15/101 FINANCE

The financial report was agreed.

Budget for the year 2016/17 – The budget form had been previously circulated. It was agreed that the budget figures would remain broadly as per this financial year until the amount of the Localism Fund was known. All in favour.

Annual Audit for the year 2014/15 – Debbie read out the comments made from the Annual Audit. She will reply as appropriate.

15/102 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

Not applicable as no confidential items to discuss.

15/103 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

None

15/104 TIME, DAY AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 7 January 2016 at 7.30pm in the Community House, Birdbrook.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 10.10pm.

Signed: Dated: