
MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 15th May 2007

Time: 7.30 PM

Venue: COMMUNITY HOUSE, THE STREET, BIRDBROOK VILLAGE

PRESENT: Councillors (6)

T R Walker (Chairman); R J Bolton (Vice Chairman), Mrs H Hodge,
D Hoye, R Kirby, J Rook..

Officers (1)

S De Luca - Clerk to the Council

Also in Attendance (0)

No Members of the Public Present.

The meeting was called to order by Councillor Walker (Chairman 2006/07) who welcomed back re-elected Councillors and newly elected Cllr J Rook to the Council. Councillor Walker expressed his thanks to fellow Councillors and the Clerk for their support during his year of office as Chairman. He also thanked those Councillors and the Clerk for carrying out various actions on his behalf whilst he had been on a six month sabbatical.

Nominations for the office of Chairman for the new Municipal Year were then invited.

07.01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor R Bolton proposed, and Councillor Mrs H Hodge seconded, Councillor T R Walker. As there were no other nominations, Councillor Walker was elected as Chairman of Birdbrook Parish Council for the current Municipal Year and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman was duly executed.

On taking the Chair, Councillor Walker thanked Members for giving him the opportunity and their confidence in his ability to once again take the Office of Chairman.

07.02 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

On the proposition of Councillor D Hoye, seconded by Councillor Mrs H Hodge, Councillor R Bolton was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman of Birdbrook Parish Council for the current Municipal Year.

07.03 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)**

NOTED that apologies had been received from Councillor Fenner.

07.04 **OTHER ABSENCES**

NOTED apologies from County Councillor David Finch.

07.05 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meetings held on 6th March and the 26th March 2007 were confirmed.

07.06 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

NOTED that there were no declarations of interest.

07.07 **MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING COMMITTEES**

The membership of the Council's Standing Working Committees was confirmed as follows:

- (a) Planning Committee (All Members)
(the Clerk has delegated power to act between Council Meetings)
- (b) Parish Transport (1 Member)
[Councillor Walker]
- (c) Footpaths and Ponds (2 Members)
[Councillors Hoye and Fenner]
- (d) Litter and Play Parks (3 Members)
[Birdbrook Village - Councillors Hodge and Kirby]
[Baythorne End – Councillor Hoye]
- (e) Highway Matters (2 Members)
[Councillors Walker & Bolton]

07.08 **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Members *APPROVED* payment of the following Subscriptions for the forthcoming Municipal Year

Essex Association of Local Councils	Braintree Association of Local Councils
Rural Community Council Essex	

07.09 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

NOTED that no questions had been received.

07.10 **PART III LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - ETHICAL FRAMEWORK****a) Registration of Councillors' Interests**

Members were reminded that the Standards Board for England recommends that, on an annual basis, all Members should complete a declaration indicating whether or not they wish to amend their previous registrations of interest. The Clerk advised Members that the Monitoring Officer had confirmed that "The checking process for compliance with the ethical framework in relation to Parish Councils will be undertaken on an annual basis and that the findings reported back to the Standards Committee". The Clerk, therefore, reminded Members of the following:

- Their obligations to observe the Code of Conduct.
- Their duty to register any interests required to be registered under paragraph 13(1) of the Code of Conduct. If any Member considers a personal interest to be 'sensitive information' as defined in paragraph 14, this must be brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer.
- To review their respective Register of Interests; and
- Their duty under paragraph 13(2) of the Code of Conduct to provide written notification to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes.

Members were advised that an Audit of Members' Interests would be carried out during the current Municipal Year by the Monitoring Officer.

b) Revision to The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 SI 2007 No 1159

Copies of the revised Model Code of Conduct was shown as an Appendix to the Agenda and it was *NOTED* that the Standards Committee had recommended its adoption by all District, Town and Parish Councils. All Councils have until 1st October 2007 to adopt the new Code and it had been recommended that all Town and Parish Councils place this item on the agenda for their Annual Meeting. The relevant legislation: Section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000, requires the new Code of Conduct to be formally adopted in place of the existing Code.

Members *AGREED*, in principle, to adopt the revised code, and that an item be placed on the Agenda for the June meeting for a resolution to be passed to facilitate this.

07.11 COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORT OF THE CLERK

Members **RECEIVED** the following communications that the Clerk placed before the Council.

a) Grass Cutting

Members **AGREED** to retain the services of the Councils Contractor for a further year as this Council is pleased with the service that it is being provided with and they believe it represents 'Best Value'. The Clerk has been advised by Essex County Council that the cutting will be single swathe in Spring and double in Summer.

b) Street Cleansing Partnership

Members **AGREED** that they would continue the agreement with Braintree District Council for the year 2007-2008.

c) Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit

The Clerk advised of new requirements relating to Internal Audit, all Members received a copy of the very comprehensive document relating to this matter. Members **NOTED** the new requirements which this Council will carry out in accordance with the documentation received.

d) Street Naming Procedures Within the Braintree District

Members **NOTED** the communication received from Braintree District Council in relation to the way that street naming is to be considered.

e) Parish Cluster Meetings

Members **NOTED** the forthcoming round of Parish Cluster Meetings. Helions Bumpstead is the first Council on the new rota system to host the meeting. The date and time is to be advised.

f) Street Scene Community Champions

Members **NOTED** the documentation from Braintree District Council who are looking for parishioners to become Community Champions and to act as the eyes and ears in relation to Environmental Matters. Members would advise the Clerk if there is anyone that they consider would be willing to undertake such responsibilities. The Chairman would also place an article in the Birdbrook News. The Chairman advised Members that he felt that the Members of the Parish Council could be deemed to already hold the title of Community Champion as they continue to undertake work for the Parish.

g) Development of the Sector – Local Government White Paper

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk has received very detailed papers in relation to a report received from the Chief Executive of NALC. Members were asked to advise the Clerk if they wished to receive a copy.

07.12 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT

NOTED the documents that had been received and/or deposited with the Clerk to the Council since 6th March 2007.

- 1 **Essex Oyster** – RCCE Newsletter – Spring 07 Edition
- 2 **The Playing Field** – EPFA Newsletter Spring 07
- 3 **Making the Links** - ECC & EALC Newsletter April 07
- 4 **EALC County Update** – EALC Newsletter April 07

07.13 FINANCIAL REPORT**a) STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Members *APPROVED* the Statement of Accounts and *NOTED* the summary of monies received and the account balances at the end of the month. *Appendix 1* showed cheques signed up to 31st March 07, *Appendix 2* showed cheques signed and account balances up to 30th April 07.

b) APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS 2006 - 2007

Members *RESOLVED* to *APPROVE* the End of Year Accounts 06-07 as shown on *Appendix 3*.

c) PRECEPT AND PARISH SUPPORT GRANT

Members *RECEIVED* the Confirmation of Parish Precept & Support Grant

d) INTERNAL AUDIT 2006/07

Members are asked to *NOTE* the mid-term report of the Internal Auditor which is enclosed.

e) INTERNAL AUDIT 2007/08

Members *APPROVED* the Appointment of Internal Auditor for the year 2007 – 2008, subject to the compliance with the new legislation.

f) AUDIT – ANNUAL RETURN – 2006-2007

Members considered, agreed and approved the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement, together with noting the new requirements for reviewing the effectiveness of internal audit.

07.14 CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

The Clerk apprised Members of documents which are available for consultation:

a) Twenty Questions – Essex County Council

Using the Parish & Town Council Network to involve the local community in inviting comments on various consultations that they may wish to be consulted on..

b) **Post Watch**

Consulting on the Future of Local Post Offices in the East of England .

c) **Issues & Options Document – Braintree District Council**

The Core Strategy for Setting out the long term vision for the future of Braintree District.

The Clerk would make any necessary comments.

07.15 **PLANNING MATTERS**

a) Members were advised of the following planning applications from Braintree District Council that have been received by the Clerk.

App No: 07/00696/CON & 07/00665FUL

Location: 1 Prospect Place, The Street, Birdbrook

Description: Replacement of Existing Rear Boundary Hedge with Red Brick Wall of the Same Height Retaining Existing Wooden Gate Entry

Comments: **STRONG OBJECTION**

App No: 07/00608/FUL

Location: 13 Moat Road, Birdbrook

Description: Erection of Single Storey Rear Extension

Comments: **NO OBJECTION**

b) Members **NOTED** that no planning decisions had been received from Braintree District Council

07.16. **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Councillor Bolton asked for the following matter to be placed on the Agenda for the July meeting

a) Placing of Stones and Other Such Items adjacent to the boundaries of properties.

.....*Chairman*

Date