

## **BIRDBROOK PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7 January 2016 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

### **Members of the Public: 2**

The Chairman welcomed all to the first meeting of 2016. One member of the public, Dominic Simpson had previously expressed an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor. It was agreed to co-opt Mr Simpson to the Parish Council. Proposed by Alan Cook and seconded by Peter Smart, all in favour.

### **16/1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None

### **16/2 OTHER APOLOGIES**

None.

### **16/3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5 November 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed. Proposed by Steve Rhenius and seconded by Alan Cook. All in favour.

Regarding today's agenda the Chairman requested that item 7d of the agenda be moved to the end of the proceedings as it was likely to require considerable time. All agreed.

### **16/4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **16/5 COMMUNICATION AND REPORT OF THE CLERK**

*Transparency Code* – The Clerk advised on the transparency code briefing which took place at EALC on 8 December 2015 regarding new regulations which the Parish Council will need to undertake. Debbie advised that grant funding was available for the purchase of a laptop and scanner plus staff time to undertake training and take on this new legislation. The form was circulated and agreed. There was some questions raised about the staff costs element – on what to do if these funds were not fully used, it being unclear as to exactly how much staff time should be claimed for. Debbie will seek clarification of this from the EALC before submitting the application.

*Village sign* – Debbie had not progressed with this item but will report back to a future meeting.

*Network group* – The Chairman updated Dominic on the Network Groups. Debbie reported that she had received a positive response from all 3 parishes – Sturmer, Steeple Bumpstead and Helions Bumpstead. It was agreed to set a date for the first meeting of the group for Thursday 7 April 2016 at 7.30pm in the Community House, Birdbrook. Debbie will notify the parishes of the date.

*Open Spaces Action Plan* – Agreed and signed by the Chairman. Debbie will send it in.

## **16/6 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT**

*Superfast Broadband* – Response noted.

*Devolution circular* – Noted.

*Birdbrook PCC* – The letter of thanks from the PCC was noted.

## **16/7 MEMBERS REPORTS**

(a) *Pond* – Richard will try and speak to Mr Rook by the March meeting. The Parish Council has 2 pairs of waders. It was suggested that putting barley straw into the pond should clear the water.

(b) *Parks* – Debbie will check if Fenland have carried out the work.

(c) *Chairman's* – Re the village pub, Richard has spoken to Mr Trinder. The pub is still for sale. However, after some discussion over finance it is apparent it would not be a suitable project for the Parish Council. It was noted that the Tavern in New England is now closed. Debbie will contact BDC regarding licensing.

*Birdbrook News* – Advertising is up for renewal. Richard reported that M&M will not be renewing. Moo Juice will and he has yet to hear from the other advertisers.

**16/8** Debbie reported that Moira Mason had advised that the contractors have the bin and will reinstall it on the bus shelter at Baythorne End as soon as possible.

## **16/9 SOLAR ENERGY SCHEME**

Richard has spoken to Argents, the landowners. The owners and surrounding owners have hopes to use the land for building which would make the costs too high for the Parish Council to consider. He will continue to monitor the situation.

## **16/10 REVIEW OF PARISH PLAN**

This item will be put on the March agenda. Jan Cole of RCCE will be invited to attend the APM to present and discuss Neighbourhood Plans.

## **16/11 GRASS CUTTING**

The quote from Mr Price for verge cutting for 2016 was noted.

**16/12 PLANNING**

Application No: 15/00724/FUL – No comment  
Application No: 15/00042/COUPA – No response required.

**16/13 FINANCE**

The financial report was agreed.

*Budget for the year 2016/17* – The budget form had been previously circulated. The Parish Council has now been advised of the level of Localism Fund the budget and precept for the year 2016/17 were agreed as written. All in favour.

**16/14 HIGHWAYS**

The Chairman reported emails received from Warren Brace regarding the speeding issues on the A1017.

The Chairman noted the emails appeared to show that the speed checks were not placed on the sections of road as detailed in the LHP application. The actual speed checks were carried out at the Sturmer end but no reports have been published on these. No mention has been made of the safety of pedestrians and local residents.

Richard will write to Cllr Finch of ECC. He also suggested involving local press. The Chairman will draft a letter and circulate.

**16/15 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

Not applicable as no confidential items to discuss.

**16/16 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

None

**16/17 TIME, DAY AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 3 March 2016 at 7.30pm in the Community House, Birdbrook.

Meeting dates for 2016:-

- 11 May (AGM & APM)
  - 30 June
  - 14 September
  - 3 November
  - 5 January 2017
- All at 7.30pm in the Community House

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 9.40pm

Signed: ..... Dated: .....