

## STANDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Standon Parish Council held on Tuesday, 23 March 2010, at 7.30 pm in the Community Centre.

*Cllr M Acford	Cllr A Lang
*Cllr Mrs R Arikans	*Cllr C W Marks
*Cllr G D Cowell	Cllr Ms E Painter
*Cllr Mrs J A Dearman	*Cllr R M Stacey (Chairman)
*Cllr K Goodsell	*Cllr Mrs M Wilkinson

\* denotes present.

In attendance: PCSO Amanda Higham  
6 members of the public

### AVIATION SECURITY PRESENTATION – STANSTED AIRPORT

Prior to the commencement of the meeting a short presentation was given by the Aviation Security Team aimed at raising public awareness into terrorism matters and the potential links to aviation. A short question and answer session followed the presentation.

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lang and Cllr Ms Painter.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Acford	Personal	Agenda item 10 (wife is Chairman of the Management Committee)
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Cllr Marks	Personal and prejudicial	Agenda item 18, Insurance Policy renewals
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#### 3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### (i) Launch of Hertfordshire Policing Plan 2010/2013

To note that the above event would be held on 29 March 2010 at the Fielder Centre, Hatfield.

##### (ii) East Herts Rural Parish Conference

To note that the above event would be held on 10 June 2010 at Datchworth Village Hall. The Clerk was asked to circulate details to all members and those interested in attending were asked to notify the Clerk by return.

(iii) Litter Agency

A letter of thanks had been received from Mr John Waldon in recognition of the Council's additional payment in respect of his litter picking in Colliers End.

4. PARISHIONERS' COMMENTS

(i) New Allotments

Concerns were voiced regarding the way the Parish Council had conducted matters in providing additional allotments without fully consulting with the residents of Cambridge Road, who, it was stated, would be affected by noise and nuisance and would suffer loss of privacy.

(ii) Open Day – Parish Plan

Praise was expressed for the efforts which went into providing a very informative event.

(iii) Telephone Service to Southfields

It was noted that the telegraph poles were in-situ.

5. PCSO'S REPORT

In the absence of Stephen Whittaker, Amanda Higham gave a brief report:

- Dog Fouling – Linda Last (EHDC) had visited Buntingford Police Station and she had been made fully aware of the problems in the Parish. Linda's role was in enforcement of the law relating to dog fouling and Amanda would be working with her over the next few weeks.
- Speeding – A120 – Continued to be given high priority and regular checks were being carried out. Stephen would give an update at the next Parish Council meeting.
- A120 incident – Following the incident yesterday involving the theft of a vehicle, two males had been arrested at the scene and one had been caught later.

6. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2010

Page 5, item (ii) – Temporary hire of ground, line 2 – Delete “Howden”  
Insert “Woodham”

Having given effect to the above amendment, the Minutes were accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

7. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Website

The Chairman confirmed that the Agenda was now displayed on the website, although there had been an earlier problem with a break in the link.

(ii) PCSO's Report

No response had been forthcoming from Sgt Wallace with regard to the funding of the high visibility jackets. PCSO Amanda Higham agreed to chase this matter.

(iii) Highways Matters

The Chairman confirmed that the bins at Tollsworth Way and Lunardi Court had been replenished with salt, but he was unaware as to the position regarding other bins in the Parish.

(iii) Community Centre

Cllr Acford stated that since the installation of the new heating/ventilation system, electricity costs had been reduced by half over the previous year.

8. PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Additional Application

No objections were raised on the following planning application:

3/10/0391/FP Pitched roof with two rooflights and new garage door to existing outbuilding at 4 High Street, Puckeridge.

(ii) Minutes of meeting held on 16 March 2010

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings.

(iii) Planning Changes – Information

Members had been circulated with the above document received from Oliver Heald, MP, setting out major new planning policies of the Conservatives to reform the present planning process.

The contents of the document were noted.

9. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

(i) Matters raised by members

It was reported that remedial work had been undertaken to the potholes near the Almshouses, Standon, but the repair was felt to be sub-standard.

(ii) A10 Wadesmill, High Cross and Colliers End Bypass – Post Opening Project Event

Members had been circulated with details of a consultation exercise currently being undertaken by Atkins seeking views on various environmental issues following the opening of the bypass.

Members were requested to feed any comments to the Clerk in order for him to formulate a composite response.

10. COMMUNITY CENTRE

(i) Minutes of the Community Centre Management Committee meeting held on 3 March 2010 (See Appendix A)

The Chairman referred to a number of issues arising from the above Minutes:

- Malfunction of the entrance gate – the gate was unable to be locked. The Clerk was asked to contact installer to affect a repair.
- As planning permission had been confirmed for the installation of the ventilation units on the building, the provision of a path extension around the cages would need to be addressed.
- Consideration was being given to installing a small kitchen in the bar area which would provide additional facilities for patrons.
- Fire doors – Denise had drawn attention to the problems encountered with the fire doors with four now being unlockable. Quotations had been sought for replacement doors with the lowest being from Layston Windows for £2,500. A question was raised as to the funding. Members were in principle agreeable for the work to be undertaken. No decision was taken on funding.

11. PLAYING FIELD

(i) Notice of Rescission

A notice of rescission had been received and signed in accordance with Standing Orders Number 36 (a).

(ii) Action following the above decision

Cllr Marks stated that he was aware of the previous discussions which had taken place on the provision of a hardstanding, but he voiced his concern that such a surface would be difficult to construct in view of the slope. Cllr Marks proffered an alternative solution which would be to access the play area from the bottom end of Southfields. The shorter distance would be easier to construct and would be less costly.

Suspension of Standing Orders

A resident supported Cllr Marks proposal which she felt would also be more accessible for mothers with buggies.

Reinstatement of Standing Orders

Members felt that there could be merits in the proposal and agreed that all options be considered and costed. Cllrs Mrs Dearman, Marks and Mrs Wilkinson, together with the Clerk, agreed to undertake to investigate the matter and submit a report back to the Council.

(iii) Zurich Inspection Report on Play Equipment

Members had been circulated with a copy of the latest play inspection report on the play equipment. Cllr Mrs Dearman made reference to the recommendations regarding the need to carry out risk assessments on various items of play equipment, the recommendations regarding the log bridge and the cradle swings and the continuing reference for the need to provide informative signage.

The Clerk suggested that an early meeting be convened with Broadmead Lesiure at which the various concerns expressed could be addressed. Members concurred with the Clerk's suggestion and both he and Cllr Mrs Dearman would attend the meeting.

(iv) Temporary hire of ground – Ware Cricket Club

Members had been circulated with a copy of a report compiled by the Clerk following a meeting with representatives of the Ware Cricket Club, the Football Club, the Tennis Club and the Chairman of the Management Committee.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

12. PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP

No meetings had taken place since the last meeting of the Parish Council.

### 13. ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk informed members that there had been no further progress on finalising the Lease documentation as the Council's Solicitors were still awaiting information from the Solicitors for Standon Charities.

New tenancy agreements would shortly be prepared for the existing allotment holders and a meeting was to be convened with Brain Durrant to secure information on the allotment holders' allocated plots on the new site.

The Chairman referred to the concerns expressed by residents under 'Parishioners' Comments' and at the outset wished it placed on record that the Council acted wholly in good faith in this matter. However, he felt that ways of mitigating the situation should be explored.

Cllr Acford, having heard the concerns, felt that the Parish Council should step back at the moment and reconsider its position.

#### Suspension of Standing Orders

A resident expressed a view that had the Council's decision to provide additional land been brought to the attention of the owners of the properties backing onto the allotments, then dialogue between both parties might well have addressed a number of the issues. As it was the action had been extremely stressful and concerns were expressed regarding the potential noise nuisance, the loss of privacy and the possibility of pollution of the ditch.

#### Suspension of Standing Orders

A resident stated that the 'ditch' was in fact the Puckeridge Tributary and should be kept clear at all times. A question was raised as to whether consideration had been given to any encroachment which might take place on the public footpath between the edge of the cultivated land and the back of the tributary. The Council should "put a brake on proceedings".

#### Reinstatement of Standing Orders

Cllr Acford was of the opinion that, in view of the above, the Council should go back on its decision and that the Working Party should meet with the residents at the earliest opportunity.

An assurance was given that no further action to further the use of the land would take place until the Working Party had reported back to the Council.

Following the above the meeting was adjourned for five minutes in order for the Working Party and local residents to agree a meeting date.

14. PARISH PLAN

Members were informed that the Working Party had last met on 9 March 2010. The questionnaires had been launched on the website with the deadline for receipt having been extended to 30 April. The prize draw would now take place at the May meeting of the Parish Council. The working Party would be arranging to publicise the Parish Plan at the Mayday Celebrations.

15. STANDON VILLAGE HALL

(i) Constitution – Update on revision

Cllr Goodsell again referred members to Minute 3(b) of the Minutes of the Standon Village Hall Management Committee held on 8 February 2010 which set out the agreed course of action.

16. GRANT APPLICATION

An application had been received from Mr T H Kemp, a resident of Northfields, seeking a grant to purchase a projector (value approximately £600) to complement his existing equipment to provide entertainment for people residing in retirement scheme accommodation.

Whilst members felt the objectives to be very laudable, nevertheless, it was their opinion that it would be inappropriate for the Parish Council to financially support such a project as there were other grant bodies available (Housing Associations, etc).

Cllr Acford suggested that an approach could be made to the Mayday Committee, although he pointed out that its funds were very limited.

RESOLVED that no grant be payable.

17. TELEPHONE SERVICE TO SOUTHFIELDS

The Chairman stated that the Clerk had had a further meeting with Mr Scott Saunders (Openreach) and it had been confirmed that the pole stays would be removed and the pole situated outside 5 Southfields would be repositioned to the boundary between 4 and 5 Southfields. Currently a new wayleave agreement was awaited to take account of the above. With regard to the underground cabling, investigations were under way to see whether it could be positioned in the verge between the fence and the highway.

Cllr Acford voiced his disgust at the way BT had acted in this matter without any prior notification of the works intended and in some way he was disposed not to accept the way leave payment which, if accepted, would signify the Council's acquiescence.

Cllr Marks wished it made clear that the new wayleave did not give BT carte blanche to undertake additional work in the future without further recourse to the Council. He also questioned whether the payment represented good value for the land and he suggested that the Clerk consult with HAPTC on the matter.

#### Suspension of Standing Orders

A resident stated that the Council should be fully aware of the terms and conditions of the wayleave and ensure that it was not giving approval to other work which might take place on the land in the future.

#### Reinstatement of Standing Orders

Cllr Acford was of the opinion that as the wayleave agreement was a legal document the Council should seek independent legal advice on its contents and that the cost of such advice should be met by BT.

#### 18. INSURANCE POLICY RENEWAL

The Clerk informed members that to date he had received three quotations from various Insurance Companies and he was awaiting an additional one. As a decision would need to be taken before the next meeting of the Parish Council, the Clerk suggested that delegated powers be given to the Finance Committee to conclude the matter. Members concurred with the Clerk's proposal.

#### 19. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT

The Clerk referred members to the requirements of the External Auditor for the Parish Council to review the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor in order to comply with Regulation 6(3) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2006.

Members were reminded that Cllr Ms Painter had undertaken a comprehensive review in 2009 and she had had in depth discussions with the Council's Auditor and she was confident of the professionalism of the Internal Auditor and that he fully met the criteria as laid down by the External Auditor. The Clerk stated that the same high degree of professionalism and competence was in evidence and the Council continued to receive an independent, unbiased and objective approach to the audit of the Council's accounts.

RESOLVED that having reviewed the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor, members confirmed that they were completely satisfied with the services provided and that the key risks of the Council were being addressed.

20. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(i) Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the accounts as detailed on the attached statement (see Appendix B) be duly authorised for payment.

(ii) Financial Statement

RESOLVED that the contents of the attached statement (see Appendix C) be received.

21. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- Review of Standing Orders (June meeting).
- Parish Travel Plan – Car Sharing – Presentation – awaiting confirmation of date.
- Renewal of notice boards – To receive report from Chairman.
- Presentation – 3 Villages Eco Group – date to be considered.
- Prize draw for questionnaire winners (May AGM).
- Parish Council Major Incident Plan – To consider adoption of document (currently on circulation).
- Allotment Working Party – Report of meeting with residents.

22. CONFIRMATION OF DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

It was confirmed that the next meetings would take place as follows:

- Finance Committee – 20 May 2010.
- Planning Committee – 13 April 2010.
- Highways Meeting – 26 March 2010 at 11.00 am.
- Parish Council meeting – 27 April 2010.

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There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.13 pm.