

STANDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Standon Parish Council held on Tuesday, 22 September 2009, 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: 6 members of the public
Cllr D Andrews (EHD/HCC)
Mr B Durrant, Allotment Representative

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Acford, Mrs Arikans, Lang, Marks and Cowell.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Councillor Training Session

Members were reminded that the seminar was scheduled for 1 October 2009.

2. CDA Meeting

The Chairman informed members that he had recently attended a meeting of the CDA which had dealt with climate change and Parish Plans. The meeting had been extremely useful and informative, especially in relation to Parish Plans. A suggestion had been made that the Council could consider joining CDA and the cost would be £30 per annum.

PARISHIONERS' COMMENTS

1. Amenity Bulb Planting

Mrs Dorothy Harris had informed the Chairman that the Parish Council could apply on line for 150 bulbs free of charge for amenity planting. The Chairman agreed to apply for the bulbs.

2. Tree damage outside 7 Town Farm Crescent

A number of residents of Town Farm Crescent were of the opinion that the trees should be removed and they were concerned at the apparent impasse situation. It was hoped to set up a meeting with Oliver Heald MP, County Council representatives and the Parish Council in order to try to resolve the problem.

PCSO'S REPORT

In the absence of Stephen Whittaker, the Chairman read out the content of an e-mail he had received from Stephen by way of an update.

The attached document (see Appendix A) represented a synopsis of the points raised. With regard to item 1, it was requested that the offensive images be removed.

The Chairman thanked Stephen for his report.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 28 JULY 2009

Page 7 – “Parish Plan Way Forward”, line 1 –

Delete “had made contact”, insert “had tried to make contact”.

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

MATTERS ARISING

1. Trees – Town Farm Crescent

To note that a letter had been forwarded to the occupier of 7 Town Farm Crescent setting out the position.

2. Co-option of Parish Councillor

To note that Cllr Mrs Arikans had duly signed her declaration of acceptance of office.

3. Community Centre

To note that the windows had been installed and payment required authorisation by the Parish Council.

PLANNING MATTERS

1. Current planning applications:

No objections were raised on the following application:

3/09/1418/FP Provision of a summerhouse at 22 High Street, Puckeridge.

2. Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 11 August 2009

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 11 August 2009 be received.

3. Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 8 September 2009

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 8 September 2009 be received.

HIGHWAYS MATTERS

1. Minutes of the Highways Meeting held on 8 September 2009

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Highways Meeting held on 8 September 2009 be received.

2. Matters raised by members

(i) Salt Bins

Reference was made to the item raised at the Highways Meeting with the following locations being identified:

Junction of South Road/Station Road	Aston Road
Top of Batchelors	Town Farm Crescent
Tollsworth Way	

All of the above bins were empty.

(ii) Dog Waste Bin outside Roger de Clare School

The bin was broken and in need of repair. It was agreed that no action be taken until completion of the review of all bins in the Parish.

COMMUNITY CENTRE

1. Minutes of Community Centre Management Committee meeting held on 10 September 2009.

No Minutes were available for the meeting.

The Chairman gave a brief resume of some of the points which had been discussed at the meeting with specific reference being made to the production of a 5-year business plan which was to be the subject of discussion at the next Community Centre meeting.

PLAYING FIELD

1. Skateboard Equipment

The young people using the equipment had remarked on the surface being slippery (Clerk to refer to the manufacturer) and had asked whether consideration could be given to fencing the area.

The Chairman felt that as part of the Parish Plan, the Parish Council should engage with the young people in order to ascertain their aspirations. Grants were available from a number of organisations (Police, East Herts, Groundwork Trust).

2. Inspection Reports (East Herts Council, Zurich and Broadmead Leisure)

Members had been circulated with a copy of the above reports for information. The Chairman referred to a publication produced by the CDA entitled “Community Play and Recreation” which he agreed to put on circulation. The Clerk was requested to forward the EHC report and that of Zurich to Broadmead Leisure Ltd.

3. Fencing the Play Area abutting Station Road

The Chairman informed members that it had been necessary to undertake a repair to the chain link fencing which had been damaged by vandals. This now posed the question of whether to replace the chain link fencing with more robust fencing similar to that surrounding the children’s play area and to consider the future of the gate. A suggestion was also made that the fencing could be replaced with a hedge and the gate removed.

Suspension of Standing Orders

The views of the public were sought following the suspension of Standing Orders.

The general consensus of opinion was that the chain link fencing should be replaced with bow-top fencing of a similar height and the gate should be removed. The provision of a hedge was not favoured as it would tend to screen the play area from the current open aspect.

Reinstatement of Standing Orders

Members agreed to investigate the cost of providing bow-top fencing as suggested and for the Clerk to ascertain the planning position on the provision of new possibly higher fencing.

SURE START CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Information had been received from the Charity Commission with regard to the possible release of land for the provision of a building either for sale or lease. However, the Trustees would need to establish whether the objects of the activity proposed were charitable in the eyes of the Charity Commission.

Members were referred to the discussions which had taken place at the last meeting since when correspondence had been received from the Rib Valley Heads which favoured the provision of a mobile unit in furtherance of the Sure Start Project.

RESOLVED that a permanent structure was not supported. However, members were supportive of a mobile unit. A confirmation letter should be forwarded both to the Rib Valley Heads and the YMCA notifying them accordingly.

STANDON VILLAGE HALL

1. Provision of Sensory Light

Cllr Goodsell informed members that work in installing a sensory light on the building had been completed at a cost of £85 which had been paid to the contractor by the Village Hall Management Committee.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council reimburse the Management Committee for the expenditure incurred.

The Chairman reminded members of the need to inform the Clerk, in advance of the Agenda being prepared, of any items requiring a decision by the Parish Council.

AIRCRAFT NOISE

Members had been circulated with a copy of a letter received from Mrs Liz Sapsford with regard to the inability of the airport authority to satisfactorily address her complaints concerning overflying noisy aircraft. A suggestion was made that a note be placed in PS compiled by Mrs Sapsford requesting residents to log complaints over a period of one month.

The Clerk referred members to a draft Consultation document which had been issued by BAA (Noise Action Plan 2010-2015) which set out BAA's proposals for managing noise impacts over the next 5 years. Stop Stansted Expansion had issued a guide to completing the questions raised on the Consultation.

Members noted the contents of the letter from Mrs Sapsford. However, they did not feel that the noise from overflying aircraft was a problem for the Parish, as no other complaints had been brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

With regard to the Consultation response (which was noted) it was agreed that Mrs Sapsford be supplied with the information.

ALLOTMENTS

Members were informed that John Harris had discussed the request by the Parish Council to rent additional land with both Martin Sallows and Andrew Pearce who currently farmed the land and both were in agreement to let a corner of the field. A number of issues would now need to be addressed and an early meeting was requested to take the matter forward. Planning permission was discussed.

Suspension of Standing Orders

Mr Durrant expressed his pleasure at the possibility of additional land being provided which he stated would provide approximately 20 (10 rod) plots and would address the current waiting list.

Mr Durrant along with the Clerk had produced a list of all the current allotment holders in plot number order.

Retention of Standing Orders

The Clerk, in liaison with Cllr Acford, was requested to pursue this matter with the Standon Charities. It was agreed that any professional fees in relation to the land acquisition would be met from the new allotment rents.

PARISH PLAN

Cllr Ms Painter had circulated members with a copy of a Parish Plan produced by Wheathamsted Parish Council and she referred to an approach made by a Mrs Sheila Pilkinton, a Councillor of Markeyate Parish Council on the possibility of Mrs Pilkinton offering her assistance on a consultancy basis in the preparation of a Parish Plan for Standon. Cllr Ms Painter felt that the Wheathampsted plan, which was up and running, was very good and gave the thrust of how she would like to see a Standon plan going forward. Mrs Pilkinton's interest sounded like a good business proposition which would cost the Parish Council £1,500. There was the possibility of funding being made available.

The Chairman felt that there was a need to secure the view of the whole parish on the proposed plan and he would like to see the public meeting, as previously suggested, instigated as soon as possible. To this end it was suggested that the 5 councillors who had expressed an interest to form a Parish Plan Committee convene an early meeting prior to the next meeting of the Parish Council to discuss a way forward.

The Chairman continued to reiterate his feeling that the production of a Parish Plan was an essential element which would be held in high esteem by both the County Council and the District Council. The Chairman also stated that the CDA would assist for free in the initial stages if the Parish Council became a member.

LITTER AGENCY

The Clerk informed members that he had spoken to the volunteers who had agreed to carry out their duties unpaid.

The District Council had been requested to adjust the litter agency payment made to the Parish Council to take account of the increase in the number of litter bins currently emptied by Mrs Denise Sallows.

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2009

Cllr Ms Painter referred members to the draft budget and she emphasised the Committee's desire to maintain the precept for 2010/2011 at the same level as the current year.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be received.

COMMUNITY ORCHARD (3 VEG)

Members had been circulated with a copy of an e-mail with regard to a proposal by the 3 Villages Eco group to develop a community orchard on land in Braughing. The Group was now hoping to replicate the initiative in Standon/Puckeridge and the Parish Council was being asked whether there was any land in the area which could be used in this connection.

Members could not identify any land at present, but were fully supportive of the initiative and they requested that representatives of the group be invited to a future meeting to give a presentation.

3 VILLAGES ECO GROUP

Members had been circulated with a copy of the attached Minutes (see Appendix B) of the meeting held on 3 September 2009.

The contents of the Minutes were noted.

TRANSITIONAL PERIOD FOR THE COMMONS ACT 2006 IN HERTFORDSHIRE

Members had been circulated with documentation regarding the above. There were no matters relevant to new or amended Common Land boundaries which had not already been addressed.

The Chairman referred to the Common Land situated at the junction of Barwick Lane/Dowsetts Lane and to the protracted dispute concerning the unauthorised fencing. The Hertfordshire County Council been successful in establishing that the fencing should be removed to allow unrestricted access and Stephen (PCSO) was monitoring the situation.

ANSWER PHONE FOR THE CLERK

Members noted that the Clerk, as requested, had installed an answer phone.

RESOLVED that the expenditure be met by the Parish Council.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(i) Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the accounts as set out on the attached statement (Appendix C) be duly authorised for payment.

(ii) Financial Statement

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

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- Standon Village Hall – Minutes of 9 November 2009
- Precept 2010/2011
- Fencing the Play Area.

CONFIRMATION OF DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- (i) Planning Seminar – Thursday, 1 October 2009.
- (ii) Planning Committee – Tuesday, 13 October 2009.
- (iii) Presentation by EHC “Alteration to Refuse Collection” – Tuesday, 17 October 2009 – 7.30 pm)
- (iv) Parish Council meeting – Tuesday, 27 October 2009 – 8.00 pm.
- (v) Highways meeting – Tuesday, 13 November 2009.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.