

RATTLESDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the full Council held on 30 June 2015 at 7.30pm in Rattlesden Village Hall

Present: Cllr Ms Pauline Baker (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Kerry Burn,
Cllr Mrs Bridget Goodchild, Cllr Mrs Esther Jewson and
Cllr Russell Morley.

In Attendance: Seven members of the public; and
Parish Clerk: Doug Reed.

2015/031 Apologies for Absence

Accepted from Cllr Dan Jewers who was on holiday.

2015/032 Declarations of Interest

None.

2015/033 Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr Burn, seconded by Cllr Morley, that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 19 May, be signed as a true record. The proposal was carried.

2015/034 The meeting was adjourned for reports from external bodies and for public comment and questions:

034.1 District and County Councillor: Cllr Otton had sent apologies for absence. Her report had been circulated previously. There were no matters arising.

034.2 Suffolk Constabulary: PCSO 3218 Steve Pendergast had sent apologies for absence. His report had been circulated previously. It was noted that there had been one crime, a theft in Birds Green, reported since the last Council meeting. Councillors wanted further details about the crime and the Clerk was asked to contact the PCSO accordingly.

034.3 Public Discussion: Two residents presented details of a forthcoming planning application they were to submit regarding a property in Lower Road. They wanted to inform councillors in advance and, if possible, seek early feedback on the proposals which included a potential access across the river. Other residents present spoke to raise some questions about the plans. Councillors noted the intentions whilst emphasising that formal comments could not be offered in advance of the actual application. However, the suggestion of a bridge over the river promoted anxieties amongst councillors who had, in the context of a previous application, raised serious concerns about any possible permanent structure. Councillors were, nonetheless, grateful for the early information and in advance of the actual application agreed that they would endeavour to visit the site to review the implications against the information kindly supplied by the residents. Other residents spoke to comment about planning applications 1943/15 and 1944/15 (minute 2015/036.1 refers) and about the suggestion that street signs be erected relating to Church Path (minute 036.5 refers).

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Meeting resumed:

2015/035 Parish Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was noted. The main item of concern was that relating to the cutting of the grass at the 447th Bomb Group memorial. It had been hoped that this would be able to be undertaken by the Council's grass-cutting contractor. However, that was not possible for 2015-2016 and so an alternative solution needed to be found for the remainder of the financial year. Cllr Jewson knew of a potential contractor for the work and offered to speak with that person.

2015/036 Planning

036.1 Applications:

1943/15 and 1944/15 concerned 1 Church Path - to replace existing single-glazed windows in kitchen and porch with new double-glazed windows; replace door in porch with new timber stable door; block-up existing window in kitchen; reinstate window to kitchen and install new double-glazed window; block up external door in utility room and install new high-level window; and Listed Building Consent. The Council had no objection; and

1972/15 concerned Jay Cottage, School Road - erection of a single storey front extension and single storey rear extension. The Council had no objection.

036.2 Applications - Responses: There were no applications which had had to be considered in advance of the meeting because of their deadlines.

036.3 Decisions: It was noted that applications 0699/15 concerning Townfield, Baby Lane, 0944/15 concerning Malvern, High Street and 1230/15 concerning 11 St Nicholas Close had been granted. Further, that 1140/15 concerning Walnut Tree Farm, Mitchery Lane had been withdrawn.

036.4 Rising Sun Hill Housing Development: As requested by Mid Suffolk District Council, councillors considered the name of Owers Close proposed for the development. Given that this was the name suggested, in fact, by the Parish Council then it was duly proposed by Cllr Morley, seconded by Cllr Jewson, that this be accepted. The proposal was carried.

036.5 Street Signs - Church Path: The Council was asked to consider the installation of signs at one or both ends of Church Path. The request had emanated from Mid Suffolk District Council based upon requests from residents. In formal discussions, councillors had mixed views on the signs which, if approved, would need to be funded by the Parish Council. Concerns centred on the potential location of the signs given the need to secure permission from residents and/or St Nicholas Church, whether they were free-standing or fixed to walls, and their potential 'look' as part of the street scene in the Conservation Area. In the circumstances, it was felt that a decision should be deferred pending further specific information.

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2015/037

Finance

037.1 Financial Report: The report to 31 May was received. It was proposed by Cllr Morley, seconded by Cllr Burn, that the reconciliation be approved and duly signed. The proposal was carried.

037.2 Payments and Income: It was proposed by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr Jewson that the schedule of payments be approved. The proposal was carried. The schedule comprised the following:

- ◆ Litter-picker salary (June) - £125.65;
- ◆ Clerk salary (June) - £267.49;
- ◆ PAYE (June) - £66.80;
- ◆ The Felsham Gardeners - cemetery grass-cutting - £380.00;
- ◆ Suffolk Association of Local Councils - cemetery management training attended by the Clerk - £80.00 + £16.00 VAT;
- ◆ Mid Suffolk District Council - annual cost for bin emptying - £335.00 + £67.00 VAT;
- ◆ Clerk - administrative expenses (April-June) - £69.70; and
- ◆ Mid Suffolk District Council - election fees - £87.50.

Income received was duly noted as follows:

- ◆ Business account interest (May) - £0.86; and
- ◆ Business account interest (June) - £0.78.

037.3 Internal Audit 2014-2015: Both the formal letter and accompanying report from Mr Graham Reid, internal auditor, were circulated to all councillors before the meeting. The Council noted and welcomed the actions already taken in response to the findings and resolved unanimously to accept and implement the recommendations put forward. One concern discussed subsequently was that of insurance for the War Memorial. Taking all possibilities into account, it was resolved that little benefit would accrue from the insurance cost and that the potential for damage was a risk that the Council should accept. It was noted that the Chairman, Finance Councillor and Clerk would meet with Mr Reid at the earliest to discuss the report in more depth. Meanwhile, the Clerk would convey the formal thanks of the Council to Mr Reid for his excellent and very detailed work.

2015/038

Council Governance

038.1 New Legislation, Codes or Regulatory Issues: None.

038.2 Risk Register, Policies and Internal Controls: It was acknowledged that the Council decision not to insure the War Memorial against damage and destruction would need to be added to the risk register. There were no decisions or actions which impacted upon Council policies or internal controls.

2015/039

Correspondence

There were no issues arising from the list of correspondence.

2015/040

Cemetery

The Council needed a Tier 1 Risk Assessment, as required by the Environment Agency, to be carried out in relation to the land earmarked for an extension to the cemetery. Four prices had been secured for the work. Cemetery Development Services Ltd estimated £3,800.00 but that

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price also included a Tier 2 Risk Assessment. On that basis it was felt that the likely cost for even just a Tier 1 Risk Assessment was likely to be prohibitive. Three comparable quotations had been received from Geosphere Environmental Ltd at £655.00, A F Howland Associates at £1,250.00, and RSA Geotechnics Ltd at £1,100.00. All were exclusive of VAT. In the circumstances it was considered that there were no grounds for selecting other than the least expensive option. Accordingly, it was proposed by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr Jewson, that Geosphere Environmental Ltd be commissioned to undertake the work.

2015/041 Birds Green - Grass 'Triangle'

Further to concerns raised by residents councillors reviewed the situation with this small area of land. It was suggested, based upon what had been seen in a nearby village, that cobbles might be preferable to kerbing where the edge of the grass had been eroded by vehicles. This idea would be raised with the County Council. Regarding continued difficulties with visitors trying to find the access road to the Pavilion, the Clerk was asked to again raise the matter of signage with the Community Council.

2015/042 Telephone Kiosk - Felsham Road

It was noted that the kiosk had now been painted. The Council expressed its warm thanks for the work in that respect undertaken by residents who had volunteered to manage the now redundant telephone box. With regard to suggestions for its use, several had been received but it was felt that more ideas would be appreciated and so the Clerk was asked to submit a short article for the next edition of "Revelations" to that end.

2015/043 Parish Council Composition

With one remaining vacancy on the Council following the recent election, it was resolved to co-opt Mrs Julie Rayner to the position.

2015/044 Matters to be Brought to the Attention of the Council

Cllr Morley reported on progress with the Rattlesden mast as informed by a resident. It was noted that, when fully-functional, the mast would encompass all available operators to 4G standard. With work still to do the intention was to 'go live' on a single day but, while imminent, no date had yet been announced.

2015/045 Next Meeting

It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council would be held on Tuesday 28 July at 7.30pm in Rattlesden Village Hall prior to which there would be a site meeting at the cemetery, for councillors only, starting at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.