

**Minutes of the Meeting of Cottered Parish Council held on
Monday 13th July, 2009
7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall**

Present: Bryan Pitman (Chair)
David Charles
Lesley Greensmith
Terry McGrath
Derek Newman

The Clerk and 5 members of the public

Action

1. **Apologies** were received from Brian Murchie.
2. The **minutes** of the meeting held on 18th May 2009, having been circulated, were approved as a correct record.
3. **Chairman's report.**
 - (i) Feedback following the **Annual Parish Meeting** on the 19th May indicated that the meeting was too long and it was agreed that at future APMs there should be a 5 minute time limit for each speaker including the Chairman with the aim of holding both APM and a Parish Council Meeting on the same evening.
 - (ii) After some research by the Chairman, the Parish made its own representation on the **Gypsy & Travellers'** web site (copy attached). This was supplemented by representation by 4 individuals from the village making 5 from Cottered out of a total of 79 for East Anglia. The end date for setting up the sites for both East & North Herts is 2011.
 - (iii) At the **East Herts Rural Parish Conference** on 27th May two of the main topics were Local Development Framework (LDF) and Alternative Refuge Collection (ARC) when black bins will be emptied fortnightly from 4th November. EHDC will give a presentation on ARC in Cottered Village Hall on Friday 16th October at 7:30pm with publicity via the Parish Magazine beforehand. The presentation is to provide information to residents, it is not a consultative exercise.
 - (iv) On the 19th June, the Chairman attended a **Civic Reception at Buntingford** to meet the new Mayor and used the occasion to network and find out how others felt about the proposed Gypsy & Traveller sites. Although Buntingford Councillors were generally undisturbed by the matter, the Mayor from Royston was more forthcoming. Following a discussion with John Warren,, the chairman obtained an assurance that representatives from Cottered will be invited to join discussions on the Buntingford Town Plan and associated issues in the Autumn.
 - (v) An email had been received from Jane Pitman, County Councillor, that they have a £10K, Jim Ranger, District Councillor has £1K to give to worthy causes.
 - (vi) Alan Chamberlain, Chairman of the **Football Club** has been approached by Stevenage Borough Ladies 2nd team to use the football facilities in the village. The meeting re-iterated what had been said in the past following such approaches, that Cottered facilities are for the village people and additional use by other clubs had, in the past, caused the field to become waterlogged and muddy.

- (vii) With the Cricket Club winding up the Chairman asked whether there might be a danger of the clubhouse becoming run down due to lack of use. There were assurances from other Councillors that the Clubhouse was presently being used by the Petanque Club and would continue to be well used.
- (viii) **Traffic calming measures:** The VA sign is all set up but as yet not working (post meeting information states “not yet switched on”). A report back from Highways on extending the double yellow lines further into The Crescent stated that 10metres was the standard and as additional parking restrictions had also been introduced suggested waiting until the changes had bedded in before considering extending the double yellow lines which would require an additional consultation process.
- (ix) The Chairman had obtained a copy of the conditions for the latest planning application for **Cumberlow Green** waste recycling plant implemented from March this year. The conditions confirmed that recent activities, where up to a reported 7 tractors & trailers at a time, had been ferrying loads of the finished product through Cottered and Throcking at week-ends and up to 10pm some evenings were contravening a number of these conditions. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Hertfordshire Planning Enforcement regarding the odour of the finished product, the number of movements of HGVs through the village, working at week-ends and after 5pm, mud on the road, whether an accurate log is being kept of traffic movements in and out of the site and the fact that condition 18 provided positive discriminated in favour of Rushden and other North Herts villages, by not allowing vehicles from the site to turn right and states that “No vehicles shall enter Rushden village” thereby forcing all traffic into East Herts mostly through Cottered and Throcking.
A widened entrance into Southern Green Farm from Cottered Road is being used by vehicles from Cumberlow Green in order to spread the finished products on local fields but the legality of the widened entrance is being challenged with Highways and Planning by a local resident.

4. **Finances.**

- (i) The annual payment for litter picking has been received, this is the same amount as last year, £1462.97, so no increase.
- (ii) The balance of the Parish Council current account at the end of June was £1,792.21 and the interest bearing account is £5,288.80.
- (iii) All Risks insurance cover for the telephone kiosk has been added to the policy at no additional cost this year. All risks insurance for the kiosk valuing it at £500 will cost £6.50.
- (iv) The Report of the Internal Auditor as circulated was accepted.
- (v) The first quarter budget report as circulated was accepted.
- (vi) A request for a grant from East Herts Citizens Advice was considered. It was agreed to make a grant of £100 to EHCAS as local residents use the service.
- (vii) A change of address form from Lloyds TSB signed by the required number of Councillors should complete the change of name and address process.
- (viii) A standing order mandate allowing the Clerk’s salary to be paid monthly directly into the bank was also signed.

The following cheques were approved and signed:

541	Cottered Village Hall	£20.00	Hire of hall July meetings
542	J Diales	£309.85	Salary & expenses June & July

543	E Hayden	£121.91	litter picking July
544	E Haydon	£121.91	litter picking August
545	T McGrath	£11.41	Petrol for mower
546	East Herts Citizens Advice	£100.00	grant

5. **Planning.** The following planning applications have been received since the last meeting:

7 Parkside, Buntingford. Two storey side extension to match existing and new pitched roof to front porch. The Parish Council raised no objection.

Cripplegate, Warren Lane. Single storey link extension between house & garage. The Parish Council raised no objection.

Land at Stocking Hill. Erection of a wind-break fence along the northern boundary for a limited period of 3 years to protect recently planted hedgerows and trees. The Parish Council objected to this Planning Application on the grounds that it served no useful purpose and could foresee problems with the removal of the fence in 3 years time.

3 Church Lane, Coopers Coppice. Single storey rear extension and front porch. The Parish Council raised no objections.

Lower Farm, Baldock Road. 0829: Insertion of 12 roof lights at eaves (6 per side), insert 1 window at north gable and 2 windows in south gable and installation of new wood burner. **0830: New roof incorporating the** insertion of 12 roof lights at eaves (6 per side), insert 1 window at north gable and 2 windows in south gable and installation of a new wood burner **with flue**. The Parish Council raised no objection.

The following **decision** has been notified:

Land at Stocking Hill: Alteration of double garages to 2 dwellings to single garages with residential accommodation, provision of 2 no. surface parking spaces with associated landscaping and minor alterations to bin store. Although Planning recommended granting permission, the Planning Committee on 10th June refused permission. However, it has been noted that the contractors have filled the gaps awaiting garage doors with a pedestrian access door and large window, not garage doors. Planning have been notified.

The following potential Planning contraventions have been notified to Planning:

Magpie Farm possible re-instatement of additional access onto the A507 is awaiting a response from Hazel Summerfield EH Planning.

Flanders Green Cottage, Brook End, report of ménage being constructed was reported to Planning Enforcement and the following response received from the Planning Enforcement Officer, Glyn Day.

“I have looked at the planning history of the above site and note that planning permission was granted on the 12th June 1998 under reference 3/98/0603/FP for a ménage and area for working horses. I also note that my letter of the 3rd February 2004 to Cottered PC refers to my visit to the site and that I had seen a new ménage; therefore it appears that the ménage has been on site for several years and no investigation is necessary.”

It was reported at the meeting that an additional larger ménage was now under construction. The Clerk therefore undertook to contact Planning Enforcement again.

6. **Clerk's report.**

(i) The Clerk reported on a visit to **County Archive** to find out how best to archive Parish Minutes and Financial Records.

Action

- (ii) Ian Bishop of **Highways** has offered to meet with the Clerk to look at and discuss outstanding issues, e.g. additional salt bins, kerb along the B1037 at the top of Warren Lane and “unsuitable for HGV” signs.
- (iii) **Litter along the B1037** EH Environmental Services sweep the edge of this road every 13 weeks, next due in August. Full sweep is yearly. However upon request, they undertook to do an extra sweep which would include the bank from Cheynes Lodge to Rennies Cottage.
- (iv) **Bridleway** new entry created along Burymead Lane, feedback from Colin Hanbrook indicated that the land owner was within his/her rights in creating a new entrance in this situation.
- (v) **Grass cutting contract** ends this year, so will be looking to get quotes in the Autumn

7. **Other matters**

- (i) Brook End Lane it was reported that strimming had stopped down the left hand side, it was thought this was due to the hedge becoming overgrown. It was also noted that the refuge man was no longer going right to the bottom of the Lane. Council members agreed to meet one evening to inspect Brook End
- (ii) Hedge outside flat No. 32 Peascroft was extending across the path. The contractors who trim adjacent Council hedges had kindly trimmed it as a favour but it was agreed that a request be made to the owners of the property to trim the hedge themselves should be made. Clerk
- (iii) Damaged pavement outside the Old Rectory was marked up as if ready for repair. Clerk
- (iv) The A507 outside Childs Farm & Paddock Wells, West side, is breaking up. Clerk will report to Highways.
- (v) Two concrete bollards knocked over on The Green opposite the garage. The Clerk to discuss with Ian Bishop to ascertain who is responsible for these. Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm and was followed by an open session.

Dates of next meetings: Monday 14th September 2009