

**Minutes of the Meeting of Cottered Parish Council held on
Tuesday 9th March, 2010
7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall**

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

The Clerk, 31 members of the public, Sgt Duncan Wallace and PCSO Rebecca Rousell were in attendance

Action

1 **Apologies:** no apologies were received

2 The **minutes** of the meeting held on 11th January 2010, having been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

3 Chairman's report

- (i) On 25th January, while the B1037 was closed to through traffic, the Litter Picker and Members of the Parish Council took the opportunity to clear rubbish from the grass verges from the top of Warren Lane to Scaldsgrove. A total of 9 sacks of rubbish were collected.
- (ii) Meetings have taken place with Highways on 29th January and Best Kept Village on 4th and 18th February.
- (iii) The Chairman welcomed Sgt Duncan Wallace and PCSO Rebecca Rousell to the meeting and invited Sgt Wallace to speak. Sgt Wallace asked if there were any concerns from the Parish Council and Members of the Public present. A caravan parked in a lay-by on the edge of the village and broken car aerials were reported. Sgt Wallace described the crime numbers for the area as quite low and said he would investigate the matters raised.
- (iv) On the 29th March the Herts Policy Policing plan will take place.

4 Highways

- (i) The Clerk reported on a Highways meeting attended in Buntingford at the end of January where Highways reported on their increased costs due to the abnormally bad weather and the fact that all programmed work is on hold to enable Highways to carry out winter damage repairs to the roads as a priority. This meant that work such as replacement village signs etc. may not happen in time for the Best Kept Village judging.
- (ii) The Highways Manager for this area had commented on the bad state of the grass verge on the north side of the A507 where cars were now parking and asked if the Parish Council wanted bollards erected to prevent damage to the verge. In response the Clerk asked if Highways would consider a lay-by where cars could park legitimately to provide spaces to compensate for the parking lost as a result of the double height kerbs and bollards on the south side of the A507. Highway's response was favourable but the cost would have to be borne by the Parish and would be considerable. The general feeling of the meeting was that a lay-by would be welcomed by the village.

*Action***5 Maintenance**

- (i) **Telephone box at Brook End:** 2 quotations for cleaning and painting had been received one for £168, the other for £550. The meeting agreed that the Clerk should accept the quotation for £168 which included the cost of paint. *Clerk*
- (ii) **Playing field grass cutting** options: (a) sharpen and maintain existing mower approx £1,000 now, (b) buy another mower around £1,000 to £2,000 plus ongoing maintenance costs (c) pay to have the playing field cut at £36 per cut, as needed, at say 15 cuts per season, annual cost £540. As no decision could be reached at the meeting and it was agreed that a working party be convened. *PC*
- (iii) **Cricket Club car park:** access road and gate in need of repair. It was agreed that the work does need to be done and Councillor David Charles agreed to obtain a quote for repairing the access road. *DC*
- (iv) Dead/dangerous **tree outside Norton Cottage**, two quotes had been received to cut the tree down, one for £280 and the other for £550. The Clerk was asked to accept the quote for £280 and will advise the Tree Surgeon when official approval had been received from Malcolm Amey, EHDC. *Clerk*

6 Finances

- (i) The balance of the current account is £1,629.24 and the balance of the interest account is £5,290.81. The budget report for the 11 month to the end of February 2010 was accepted.
- (ii) The Budget for 2010/11 revised following the January meeting was approved.
- (iii) CPRE has raised the annual subscription from £29 to £30 (paid by DD)
- (iv) A VAT refund of £291.86 has been received
- (v) The following cheques were approved and signed
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|-----|-------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| 562 | J Diales | £31.00 | Expenses January to March 2010 |
| 563 | Village Hall | £20.00 | hall hire March 2010 |
| 564 | SLCC | £61.00 | Membership subscription |
| 565 | Kingsley Brothers | £102.22 | Hedge trimming, playing field |

7 Planning**Planning applications** received:

- (i) Broadfield Hall, Demolition of existing dwelling, erection of replacement dwelling, recommend reject (post meeting applications withdrawn).
- (ii) The Lordship, Installation of ground mounted Solar Photovoltaic (PV) system, recommend approval
- (iii) 10 Parkside, Buntingford, Single storey side extension, recommend approval.
- (iv) Magpie Farm, Car port/store (replacement for barn), recommend approval.

Decision notices from EH Planning Dept:

- (v) The Old Off Licence, Construction of detached double garage & store, permission refused.
- (vi) Wildwinds, 1st floor front and single storey extensions, permission approved.

8 Clerk's report

- (i) **Dog fouling:** an email from Justin Clarke, Area Environment Inspector regarding a complaint about dog fouling in and around Bull Lane had been received and reported to the new Animal Warden who will have the power to issue fixed penalty notices. A suggestion from the Area Environment Inspector to considered installing dog bins in the village was rejected on the grounds of cost.
- (ii) **Correspondence**
- (a) Letter from a resident concerned about the registration of **Parish Greens** with the **Land Registry**. Article about registration of Village Greens will

appear in the next edition of the Parish Magazine.

(b) Letters from local resident concerned primarily with **lack of communication** was received and responded to.

(c) Letters from Oliver Heald regarding **Draft Noise Action Plan for Luton Airport** asking that the Parish Council response were considered.

(d) **Rural parish Conference** to be held on Thursday 10th June at Datchworth Village Hall. Those Councillors wishing to attend should advise the Clerk.

(e) **Speed Management Strategy 2008/9** outcomes are now available to view on line at www.hertsdirect.org/ltp.

9 Best Kept Village competition:

- (i) The four **notice boards** in the Village, 2 Parish notice boards outside the old shop, and the Village Hall and others outside the Guide Centre, the Church need attention. Michael Morris agreed to attend to the 2 belonging to the village.
- (ii) Dry ditch cutting and **additional cutting of greens** before judging needed the permission of the Greens Committee and working in conjunction with Stuart Bullard the contractor who normally cut the greens.
- (iii) Chain fence around the pond near Flint Cottage is in need of attention. *BM*
Councillor Brian Murchie agreed to undertake this work.
- (iv) The Best Kept Village Committee planned to plant 7 areas with Busy Lizzies, at each sign into the Village on the Baldock Road, East and West, the B1037 from Walkern and Throcking Lane. Other sites at the top of Potato Lane, outside The Lordship and along the Church verge. A once a year fund raising event is envisaged in order to plant these areas on an annual basis.
- (v) The Chairman and Mr P Thody agreed to take care of the seat outside The Bull *Chairman*

The meeting closed at 9:30pm.

Dates of next meeting: Tuesday 18th May at 7pm Annual Meeting of the Parish Council followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 8:00pm

The meeting was followed by a Public session where the main item raised was a request to improve the consultation process with residents. The methods of communications preferred being website and Minutes on Notice boards.