

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF COTTERED PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN COTTERED VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 17 May 2011 AT 7.10 PM

Present Bryan Pitman (Chair) Terry McGrath
David Charles Brian Murchie
John Harwood-Bee Francis Ridley

Officer attending Joan Diales (standing in for the Clerk)

Present: County Cllr Rose Cheswright, District Cllr Jim Ranger, Sgt Duncan Wallace and PC Sarah Liddard (Hertfordshire Police), Ciaran Gold (The Mercury), and approximately 60 members of the public.

APOLOGIES

11.07 None

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

11.08 None

MINUTES OF MEETING

11.09 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th March 2011 were before the meeting and signed as a correct record

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

11.10 **28th March:** The Chairman attended the annual meeting of the Police Authority where the Chief Constable presents his latest Policing Plan. There is to be a 20% cut in Government grants, this amounts to £36M over four years. However the aim is maintain the number of front line officers, some 400 for a least the next 2 years. Whilst attending this meeting the Chairman spoke to a senior officer regarding the concern in the village that the police appeared to be endorsing a planning application for a large bund to be constructed around a grain store at Southern Green.

11.11 **14 April:** After much consultation and activity around the village relating to the planning application for construction of a large earth bund at Southern Green the PC submitted a 3 page letter to EHDC listing the village's objections to what many believe is a waste disposal project. Jane Pitman and Jim Ranger have also submitted letters of objection. Jane has also arranged for a County Councillor to speak on her behalf at the planning meeting on 24th May. The PC Chairman is also booked to speak at the same meeting.

As a result of several villagers complaining to the police about their apparent support for the bund and also the Chairman's conversation with them, the police have now made it clear that the reported statement is not the official policy of the Hertfordshire force.

11.12 **1 May:** Several residents contacted the Chairman, as they were very concerned about what appeared to be mischievous election literature being distributed around the village

ELECTION LITERATURE

11.13 As a consequence of anonymous election literature being circulated, which only named 6 election candidates, rather than the true number of 10, it was decided that the PC should publish and distribute to ever household the official list of 10. This was just achieved before Election Day on the 5th May.

The Chairman said he was aware that the matter had been reported to the Police and asked Sgt Duncan Wallace if he was able to give an update. Sgt Wallace addressed the meeting and said that he was aware of the complaints which had gone to HQ and it was only today that he had been asked to interview people on the matter and report back.

Councillor Harwood Bee suggested that this matter was sub-judice and therefore should not be discussed. The Chairman decided that since no warrant, charge, or court case, was yet initiated the agenda item could be discussed.

Mr Geoff Lawton stood to address the meeting but the Chairman asked him to sit down as he would have an opportunity to speak later.

PLANNING

11.14 Southern Green, Rushden, Bund

The HCC Development Control Committee to meet on 24th May to determine the application, since District Concillor Jim Ranger was now to represent Cottered at the meeting the Chairman questioned whether he should also speak on behalf of the Parish or whether it was better left to others, more qualified.

11.15 Planning Schedule

The updated planning schedule is an appendix to these minutes.

FINANCE

11.16 Financial Report

The financial report was before the Council and noted.

11.17 Payments Authorised

603	Clements Play Management	£547.20	Cottered play area repairs
604	HAPTC	£358.38	Annual subscription for membership
605	Clerk	£347.79	Clerk salary and expenses March and April
606	Cottered Village Hall	£15.00	Village Hall hire
607	Suffolk Acre Services	£787.13	Zurich insurance for Parish Council

RIGHTS OF WAY

11.18 Rights of way improvement plan

Initial response from Colin Hambrook on 14th March 2011 was:

- (i) waymarking ordered for paths 002, 003, and 004 and will expand if necessary
- (ii) any new waymark posts will have directional arrows
- (iii) diversions are never considered to be minor and would need a site visit
- (iv) Old Bourne paths will be discussed with map officer
- (v) dog bin in Bull Lane good idea but routine emptying puts this in the hands of EHDC.

11.19 Update on replacement stiles with gates

Copy of response from John Wood, Director of Environment and Commercial Services HCC forwarded to the owners of the land. Brian Murchie stated that a stock-proof gates in one of his fields fell off when opened, so not stock-proof. Pathways say it is the law but it is not

11.20 Diversion of Footpath 45

Responses from HCC and Oliver Heald MP confirmed that a charge would be made for diverting this footpath

CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

11.21 The Clerk's report was before the Council and the correspondence noted. The report is an appendix to the minutes.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 12th July 2011 – Councillor Francis Ridley doubted he would be able to make that date and sent his apologies in advance. The Chairman suggested it might be possible to change the date.

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm and was followed by the Annual Parish Meeting.

Signed _____

Date _____