

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF COTTERED PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN COTTERED VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2012 AT 7.30 PM

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

Present: 19 members of the public.

APOLOGIES

11.97 None.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

11.98 Cllr Terry McGrath declared a personal interest in the planning application relating to Peasecroft Garages.

MINUTES OF MEETING

11.99 In minute 11.95, after correcting the wording of Warren Lane to read Brook End Lane, the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 January 2012 were signed as a correct record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

12.00 **28th January** - Vice Chairman and Chairman meet owner of Toppesfield and discuss ways of solving safety hazard problem in area around the footpath on the village green outside Toppesfield. Solution to be discussed by Greens Trustees on 13th January..

2nd March - Clerk and Chairman attend meeting with the PC solicitor to obtain a better understand the complex changes to the law relating to village greens.

3rd March - Chairman is informed by the Girl Guides Centre that they have been contacted by a Personal Claims Solicitor seeking damages for a female client who is said to have fallen in the hole at the entrance of the Centre.

General - Since the last meeting the Chairman has been contacted by residents concerning the following: -Demolishment of 20 garages, Luton Airport Enlargements, advertising signs on the village green causing visual obscuration of road traffic and removal of vegetation scrub from an area on the village green.

As a result of a winter of high winds the village greens are covered with fallen wood and traditional at this time of year parish councillors usually form a working party who clear the greens, several trailer loads of wood are normally collected.

PLANNING**12.01 Planning Schedule**

The updated planning schedule is an appendix to these minutes.

12.02 Mayville, Cottered

East Herts Planning enforcement had visited the site and had contacted the owners. The Parish Council had requested to be involved in the discussions and District Cllr Jim Ranger to be asked to support Cottered Parish Council in this request.

12.03 North Herts Local Development Framework

North Herts District Council had sent their consultation document on the NH LDF for comment. The contents were noted.

12.04 Waste Site Allocations

HCC had sent consultation documents relating to the pre-submission of waste site allocations. The expansion of the Buntingford Reservoir waste site was noted.

12.05 Planning application 3/12/0241/FP - Peasecroft Garages

The planning application to demolish 24 garages at Peasecroft, Cottered, and erect 2 semi-detached 3 bed houses (one building), was before the Council.

At 8.00 pm the Council meeting was suspended to allow the participation of the public.

A number of concerns were expressed by parishioners relating to the loss of 24 garages and parking spaces in Peasecroft. 19 garages were let and the loss of this parking would mean an additional 19 cars having to find somewhere else to park. There was no on-road parking space available in The Crescent or Peasecroft, which would mean that inevitably the cars would be parked along the A507, causing a hazard to traffic. Residents of The Crescent and Peasecroft were also concerned that there would be no access available to emergency services.

At 8.15 pm the Parish Council meeting was resumed.

Resolved: The Parish Council unanimously oppose the planning application to demolish 24 garages at Peasecroft and erect 2 semi-detached 3 bed houses.

HIGHWAYS

12.06 Girls Guides Entrance junction A507 Baldock Road

The Parish Council did not accept that the highway entry to the Guides building (previously the village school) was within their ownership and believe that the ownership and maintenance of this falls within the remit of the Highways Authority. Highways Authority dispute this. Highways Authority have refused to repair the entrance. County Cllr Jane Pitman to be kept informed of the current situation and made aware of a related accident claim received by the Guides.

RIGHTS OF WAY

12.07 Footpath 45

The Definitive Map Team Leader had questioned the usefulness of meeting members of the Parish Council. The Clerk to continue to pursue the arrangement of such a meeting.

12.08 Parish Paths Partnership

Roger Gomm gave an update on the parish paths. Noted that Colin Hambrook had retired, and the works contract is now under the authority of the Groundwork Trust, who will communicate directly with the Parish Council. There were no outstanding repairs.

FINANCE

12.09 Financial Report

The financial report was before the Council and noted.

12.10 Payments Authorised

621	NFU Mutual	£142.18	Tractor insurance
622	SLCC	£61.00	annual subscription
623	CDA	£30.00	annual subscription
624	Clerk	£352.48	Clerk fee and expenses March/April
625	LCN	£49.20	Web domain annual renewal
626	Village Hall	£15	March meeting

12.11 Mowers

The mower blades needed sharpening. Three estimates had been received, one for £1,500, one for £750 and one for £700. It was thought the Village Appreciation Society might be able to donate £300 towards the cost for sharpening the blades. Agreed that if this was possible then the estimate for £700 submitted by Buckles would be accepted.

Resolved: That if the VAS could donate £300 toward the cost of sharpening the mower blades then the quotation from Buckles for £700 be accepted.

CPRE VILLAGE OF THE YEAR

12.12 Noted that the VAS and Cllr John Harwood-Bee was organising the CPRE Village of the Year competition.

LUTON AIRPORT EXPANSION

12.13 The suggested expansion of Luton Airport was discussed and it was agreed to take no action until firm plans were proposed.

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

12.14 Cllr John Harwood-Bee reported that the village hall had been reserved for the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th of June but no specific indoor events were yet planned. It was hoped to have a bring a barbeque afternoon with the bar open for everyone in the village hall. Cllr John Harwood-Bee was, with the VAS, organising the village celebrations.

CLERK'S REPORT

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

RECREATION GROUND FENCE

(It was noted that a member of Cllr Bryan Pitman's family owned land sharing a boundary with the Recreation Ground and to the south of the land owned by 1 Home Close and although this did not constitute a personal interest in relation to the fence under discussion, it was thought appropriate to minute this interest)

12.16 A letter had been received from the surveyor representing the owners of 1 Home Close. The surveyor agreed he had taken his scaled measurements from the Land Registry plan and used this scaled measurements to determine the exact size of the land and therefore the boundaries within the ownership of Mr and Mrs Lawton.

Resolved to suspend Standing Orders and invite Mr Lawton and members of the public to join in the discussions.

The validity of using the Land Registry plan for scale measurements was discussed (it is noted that the Land Registry state on their plans that these should not be used for such scale measurements). The position of the fence was disputed and whether or not it had been erected on Parish land or land owned by Mr and Mrs Lawton. The position of the ditch was disputed, and the position of the opening in the new fence used by pedestrians was disputed. Some parts of the discussion were conducted in a vigorous and animated fashion.

Resolved: to resume Standing Orders and continue the Parish Council meeting.

Proposed: by Cllr David Charles that the Parish Council write to the owner of 1 Home Close requesting him to remove the fence erected on Recreation Ground land on the Recreation Ground side of the ditch within one calendar month, and if this request is not complied with then the Parish Council will take corrective action.

Voting: 3 in favour, 3 against, 1 chairman's casting vote used in favour.

Resolved: That the Parish Council write to the owner of 1 Home Close requesting him to remove the fence erected on Recreation Ground land on the Recreation Ground side of the ditch within one calendar month, and if this request is not complied with then the Parish Council will take corrective action.

FOOTPATH OVER RECREATION GROUND LAND

12.17 A parishioner had applied for an application for a modification order to the definitive map, adding a footpath to be ratified over the access road to the cricket pavilion, over the recreation ground ditch, and across land owned by 1 Home Close onto the village green land next to Flint Cottage. Council agreed that this footpath had been used for a great number of years though in the past there was a stile over the recreation ground ditch which was located next to Flint Cottage.

Resolved: to suspend Standing Orders and invite Mrs Naeem and members of the public to join in the discussions.

Mrs Naeem stated she was the applicant and this was because that with the erection of a fence she was very concerned that this footpath used by parishioners, particularly children going to school, would be closed at some time in the future, forcing pedestrians on to the A507 where there was no footpath at that point. Mr Lawton, owner of part of the land in question, stated that he had created a permissive path over his land. At a request from the Chairman, Roger Gomm gave the criteria for the creation and notification of a permissive path, which did not appear to be in place at the position in question. Mrs Naeem was concerned that even if a permissive path were created, this could be withdrawn at any time by any one of the landowners along the route.

Resolved: to resume Standing Orders and continue the Parish Council meeting.

Noted that the Council would receive a formal application for comment would be received from Herts County Council at some time in the future.

OTHER BUSINESS NOT PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

12.18 **Throcking**

Complaint received that large amounts of rubbish were being dumped on the bank in Throcking.

12.19 **Potholes**

There were two large potholes on the Throcking Road outside Hunters Mead, and the road was also in bad repair in front of Lower Farm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 22 May 2012 at 7.00 pm, followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 8.15 pm.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm

Signed _____

Date _____