

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF COTTERED PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN COTTERED VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 7.30 PM

Present	Bryan Pitman (Chair) David Charles John Harwood-Bee	Terry McGrath Francis Ridley
Officer attending	Marty Kilby	13 members of the public

APOLOGIES

13.80 Brian Murchie

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

13.81 **None**

13.82 Closure of meeting to the public

Proposed by Bryan Pitman, seconded by John Harwood-Bee that the meeting be closed to the public so that budget discussions relating to individual employees could take place.

BUDGET

13.82 Clerk

Proposed by John Harwood-Bee and seconded by Terry McGrath that the clerks salary be agreed at the current spinal point 22 (in accordance with NALC guidance), which currently amounted to £10.30 per hour. Noted and agreed that the clerk carried out 4 hours per week at £10.30 per hour (£41.20 per week). Also noted that the hours spent on Parish Trust averaged out to 1 hour per week and this should be paid at the same rate. Recommended to the Parish Trust that this be approved at their meeting on 10 December 2013. This would mean that the clerk would receive £41.20 per week from the parish council and £10.30 per week from the parish trust, all paid on PAYE basis through the agreed accountancy basis and by the Parish Council for reclamation of the Parish Trust part from the Parish Trust. This change to take place from 1 April 2014.

13.83 Litter Picker

Agreed that the litter picker be paid at the current rate, and that any increase from East Herts Council be passed on directly to the litter picker. Noted that the litter picker will be covered by volunteers during his current sickness leave..

13.84 New Homes Bonus

Buntingford Town Council had requested a meeting regarding the new homes bonus that will be paid to Cottered & Throcking Parish Council if the Pigeon development of 180 houses is granted and takes place. Agreed that the Chairman and councillors would make themselves available to meet Buntingford Town Council representatives to discuss all implications.

13.85 Precept

Having consider the calculations and budget put before the council, it was proposed that the precept be increased to £7,000 (the first increase since 2008 which was an increase of £1,000).

8.00 pm

The meeting was declared open to the public. It was reminded that all Parish Council meetings are recorded to help with preparing the accuracy of the minutes.

MINUTES OF MEETING

13.86 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 September 2013 was before the meeting and signed as a correct record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

13.87 30th September

The Chairman attended a small meeting in Buntingford concerning Buntingford Town Council's intention to generate a Neighbourhood Plan.

15th October

The rocking horse was repaired by a contractor using parts collected by the Chairman from the original manufacturer Wickstead. It was disappointing to find that insufficient bolts and screws had been supplied in the repair kit..

21st October

The Chairman and other Parish Council Chairmen attended a Neighbourhood Plan meeting with Buntingford councillors. It was decided that those local councils who do join together to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, should each nominate 3 Stakeholders to join a Forum. The Forum is to be the principle means of producing the overall Neighbourhood Plan, so Forum members should represent the overall views of the local community.

25th October

The Chairman sent Councillors copies of the Governance Document which sets out the overall rules which are to apply to the Buntingford Neighbourhood Plan. If Cottered PC decide to join with Buntingford in producing a plan they need to "sign up" at the next PC meeting on the 12th November

Cllr Brian Murchie has received 30 bags of salt from East Herts Council ready for distribution in icy weather.

FINANCE

13.88 Clerk's Finance Report

The Clerk's Finance Report (compiled jointly with the Internal Auditor) presented at the September meeting, was considered. The proposals were:

1. Risk assessments - The financial risk assessment be adopted.
2. An complete separation between the Parish Council and the Trust take place.
3. The Trust undertake all financial obligations and apply to the Parish Council for a grant under Section S137 rules if the Trust does not have enough finances to support its obligations.
4. These actions take place before 1 January 2014 to avoid further adverse reports from the auditors and to ensure legal compliance.

Resolved: That the Finance Report be adopted. Agreed unanimously.

Cllrs John Harwood-Bee and Francis Ridley reported on their recent course which had included guidance on Trustees. The Parish Trust meeting on 10 December will finalise the procedures between the two bodies.

Resolved: That at the Parish Trust meeting on 10 December 2013 a clear break between the Parish Trust will be implemented. Agreed unanimously

13.89 Finance Report and Payments Authorised

The finance report was before the meeting, together with a statement of the bank holdings. The authorised payments were:

679	Cottered Village Hall	£30.00	September and November meetings
680	CPM Playgrounds	£180.00	Repairs to rocking hore
681	CDA for Herts	£30.00	2014 sub
682	Stewart Bullard & Sons	£2302.29	Grass cutting including Parish Turst
683	HAPTC	£60.00	Councillor training (2 cllrs)
684	M Kilby	£98.49	expenses Oct-Nov 2013
685	M Kilby	£262.40	salary Oct-Nov
686	W Murchie & Sons	£20.70	Dieself grass cutting
687	HMRC	£98.40	PAYE Oct, Nov, Dec

13.90 BUDGET

The Budget figures had been considered and were before the meeting. It was agreed that a small increase in precept might be necessary and this would be finalised at the January 2014 meeting.

13.91 Internal Auditor

Mr Bill Pooley, Internal Auditor, had moved from Cottered and was unable to carry on with his work as internal auditor. It was noted that he had carried out this task for a number of years without any remuneration, and Council thanked him for his contribution to the village affairs.

The Chairman explained the governance document, and it was noted that the internal auditor is a legal mandatory post that has to be filled. It was agreed that the Clerk advertise the vacancy on the Cottered Parish Council website, on the noticeboards, and send notification to the village newsletter.

13.92 Litter Picker

Cllr John Harwood-Bee confirmed that volunteers will be covering for the village litter picker during his convalescence.

PLANNING

13.93 Planning Schedule

The updated planning schedule is an appendix to these minutes.

13.94 3/13/1846/FP - 7 The Crescent, Cottered

Reconstruction of fire damaged property to match original. Rebuild garage.
No objections

13.95 Neighbourhood Plan with Buntingford

The updated Buntingford Neighbourhood Plan reports had been circulated. Concern was expressed about the effect on the Cottered & Throcking parish. Noted that a new development of 180 houses plus sheltered housing and ancillary support had been submitted. This development was between the A10 Buntingford bypass and the old A10 and therefore within Cottered & Throcking parish boundaries.

Resolved to suspend standing orders and open the meeting to the public

After a wide-ranging discussion the consensus was that Cottered & Throcking would be better to join with Buntingford as agreed at the recent public meeting. 3 volunteers (with 3 backups) at least required from the parish to sit on the Buntingford Forum. Several names were suggested. Buntingford to be notified by 12 November (Chairman will do at the 12 November Forum meeting). JH-B will draft letter/notice requesting stakeholder volunteers to be put on the website and in the Gazette. Noted that eventually the neighbourhood plan will have to be approved by a referendum.

Resolved to resume standing orders

13.96 Peasecroft Houses 1-4

Four houses in Peasecroft had been condemned because on inadequate insulation. Noted that the Parish Council has no control or influence to Peasecroft housing. It was hoped that if residents had to be temporarily moved during any refurbishment, then this would be local and they could be reinstated as soon as possible.

HIGHWAYS

13.97 Brook End drainage

No update has yet been received from HCC Countryside Management.

13.98 Hedges

Hedgecutting in the area was on the Highways works schedule.

13.99 A507 Accidents

During the current year there have been 4 fatalities and several more accidents along the A507 from Cottered to Buntingford. Sgt Duncan Wallace has asked that the Parish Council consider requesting double white lines along the whole length of road from Cottered to Buntingford. After discussion agreed that the Chairman and Clerk liaise with Sgt Wallace on the most effective way forward.

RECREATION GROUND

13.100 Playground

The Rocking Horse had been repaired. Noted that to remove the slime then the equipment needs power washing at regular intervals.

13.101 Cricket Club

A break-in had occurred at the Recreation Ground Pavilion used by the Cricket and Petanque Club. The two clubs were pursuing insurance claims. Clerk to ascertain if grants were available for repair of village sporting facilities in this instance.

Agreed that Clerk to check the details and current status of any lease/agreement between the Cricket and Petanque Club.

TREES

13.102 Yew Tree 1 Coopers Coppice

A report was still awaited.

CLERK'S REPORT

13.103 The Clerk's report was before the Council and the correspondence noted.

OTHER BUSINESS

13.104 Peasecroft Parking

Vehicles were being parked down the whole length of The Crescent and Peasecroft resulting in the road being practically inaccessible during night time. Agreed Chairman would talk with Sgt Duncan Wallace to discuss possible practical resolutions.

13.105 Dog mess in Recreation Ground litter bins

Plastic bags of dog mess were being thrown into the hedges in the Recreation Ground. JH-B agreed to find out details and report back to next meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13.79 Tuesday 14 January 2014; 11 March 2014; 7.30 pm Village Hall;
13 May 2014 (Annual Meeting)

The meeting closed at 10.05 pm

Signed _____

Date _____

PUBLIC SESSION
Opened at 10.05 pm

1. Roger Gomm asked if anyone knew of any trees down on the public rights of way on the north side of the A507, please could they let him know.
2. Cllr Terry McGrath offered to mend the broken no parking sign beside the telephone box.
3. Requested that the Parish Council write to the Circule Anglia Housing expressing complete dissatisfaction with the service provided. To bring to the next Parish Council meeting..
4. A parishioner stated that Ringway come through the village during the middle of thenight and cut down and damaged between along the Baldock Road to Cottered.

The public session closed at 10.25 pm.