

**MINUTES OF COTTERED AND THROCKING PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN COTTERED VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2016 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Bryan Pitman (Chair) Terry McGrath  
Colin Bayles John Bull  
David Charles Barry Dean

Officer attending: Denise Anderson (Clerk) 5 members of the public

*The Chairman reminded the public that the meeting was being recorded for the accuracy of minute taking.*

**APOLOGIES**

16.01 None

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

16.02 Councillor Colin Bayles stated that he might be perceived to have an interest in Agenda item 6.2 and would therefore take no part in any discussions related to this item.

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

16.03 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015 were before the meeting and signed as a correct record.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

16.04 **Chairman's Report**

**10<sup>th</sup> November**

Parish Council meeting.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Week of November**

The Chairman was made aware that 3 men were using a tractor excavator to scoop soil around on the Village Green, immediately outside Ivy Cottage. The Chairman quickly made the men aware that they were committing an offence by digging up the Village Green. They were subsequently given a copy of the HCC registry map. After some discussions, apologies were received and the soil re-established on the green.

**16<sup>th</sup> December**

Neville Chuck, Roger Gomm and the Chairman, attended a Neighbourhood Plan meeting at Buntingford.

The meeting was called to review the overall Plan before it is formally presented to East Herts District Council. As a result of the meeting a number of amendments were made to the text and the Plan is now to be submitted to EHDC.

**9<sup>th</sup> January**

The Chairman spoke to the resident of The Old Barn who was planting what looked like a long beech hedge on the Village Green outside the barn. When informed that it was Village Green and was protected the planting continued.

**FINANCE**

16.05 **Finance report and payments authorised**

The finance report was before the meeting and the report is an appendix to the minutes.

16.06 **New Audit arrangements**

The Clerk explained that arrangements for external audit are changing due to the abolition of the Audit Commission and a new regulatory framework is being introduced. A sector led body (SLB) is being set up to procure audit for smaller authorities for the start of the 2017-18 financial year. Councils need to decide whether they wish to participate in the SLB or to opt out and make their own arrangements. The deadline of opting out has been extended from 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. This will be an Agenda item for the next meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

16.07 **2016-2017 Budget and Precept**

**Resolved: The Budget was agreed and the Precept for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to remain at the current figure of £8,000.**

16.08 **Transparency Fund Application**

The Clerk confirmed that the Transparency Fund Grant Application had been successful and the Council had been awarded £817.20 in order to purchase and set up dedicated Council IT equipment to assist Cottered and Throcking Parish Council in becoming compliant with the Smaller Authorities Transparency Code.

The Clerk presented a quote for £120.00 from an independent technical support service to provide the technical expertise required to advise and set up a laptop with the necessary software and a printer/scanner specifically for Parish Council administration.

**Resolved: To accept the quotation provided and for the Clerk to proceed with the purchase of the equipment.**

## **PLANNING**

### **16.09 Planning Report**

The updated planning schedule is an appendix to these minutes.

**3/15/2011/FUL** Hall Farm Broadfield Throcking Buntingford Hertfordshire - **Approved**  
**3/15/2148/HH**

3 Middle Farm Cottages Cottered Road Throcking Buntingford Hertfordshire - **Approved**

**3/15/2145/LBC** The Bull Inn Baldock Road Cottered Buntingford Hertfordshire - **Approved**

**3/15/2112/FUL** Broadfield Hall Broadfield Throcking Buntingford Hertfordshire - **Approved**

**3/15/1725/FUL** Elmfield Stables Thirty Acre Farm Broadfield Throcking Buntingford - **Refused**

**3/15/1413/FUL and 3/15/1414/LBC**

Nottingham Road Baldock Cottered Buntingford Hertfordshire - **Approved**

### **Planning Applications since the Parish Council Meeting 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**3/15/2272/OUT** Preswick Ermine Street Buntingford Hertfordshire

There was no objection by the Parish Council to this application

### **16.10 Draft Strategic Land Availability Assessment – Round 3 sites (Rural area)**

East Herts Council informed the Parish of consultation for the draft conclusions of the Round 3 Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA). The purpose of the SLAA is to assess the potential suitability of sites for future development. The results will inform ongoing work on the District Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.

The sites identified and suitability comments:

**Trinity Meadow** – Considered to be an unsuitable location for future housing

**Land to the rear of Peascroft & The Crescent** - Site is not considered suitable for future housing

**Warren Lane** - Cottered is a Category 3 village and so the site is therefore currently unsuitable. The site may be suitable for infill development subject to a change in village categorisation.

Maps showing the location of each of the sites are available on the East Herts Council website

[www.eastherts.gov.uk/slaa](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/slaa)

**It was resolved by a unanimous vote by Councillors to Suspend Standing Orders to allow public participation in the next two Agenda items**

### **16.11 Pre Planning Application consultation Orchard End Brook End Cottered SG9 9QR**

Cottered residents currently renting property in the village and buying Orchard End in Brook End wanted to advise Cottered and Throcking Parish Council of their intention to make a Planning Application to replace the current 1960's bungalow with a 2 storey house accessible for a wheelchair user. A Pre-Planning Advice Application document had previously been circulated to Councillors for information and was fully explained by the applicant at the meeting.

The Chairman thanked them for taking the time to inform the Council of their intentions and that the Parish Council would consider the full Planning Application when it was received by them.

### **16.12 3/15/2054/CLE The Farm House Lordship Farm (Certificate of Lawful Use or Development)**

The Chairman reiterated the process that had taken place and that comments were sent to the Planning Authority regarding this application. It was noted that the Planning Authority had received the comments from the Parish Council and that the application for Certificate of Lawful Use or Development had been refused.

The applicants directed a number of questions to the Parish Councillors regarding the comments sent to the Planning Authority. Councillors responded to and answered the questions raised.

**It was resolved to resume Standing Orders**

### **16.13 Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood Plan (BCANP)**

The Buntingford Community Area Neighbourhood is with East Herts District Council prior to the next stage of the process. It was noted that Plans of this type have been quoted in Planning Application decisions and that they were proving to have some weight.

## **HIGHWAYS**

### **16.14 Overgrown hedges affecting The Crescent**

It was noted that the problem with the overgrown hedge at 4 The Crescent has been resolved by the help of a willing local individual, who with the permission of the resident, trimmed the overgrown hedge back to allow a better view at the junction of the A507.

Councillors expressed concern that this remained a very dangerous junction and the hedges on both sides of the junction, although trimmed back, still create a barrier to a clear view of traffic in both directions. The Clerk was tasked with contacting Highways with a view to them assessing the visibility at the junction.

**PARISH MATTERS****16.15 Telephone Box**

Quotes for painting and repair being sought.

**16.16 The Old Barn and Village Green**

The Water Company is still being pursued for an easement.

**16.17 Notice boards**

It was noted that the Throcking notice board has fallen victim of the recent high winds. A quote was sought for repair and/or replacement. The cost of repair was quoted at £200.00 and the cost of a making a new notice board was £350.00. It was felt that repair was inappropriate due to the poor state of the notice board; replacement was the more sensible option.

The Clerk suggested that Council could look at a more modern alternative that would have more longevity due to the materials used, be lockable and more weather resistant. Some examples were provided and costs would be similar to the £350.00 quoted for the wooden replacement. The Clerk will do further research into the options available and provide a report to Council.

**16.18 Grass cutting contract**

The Clerk reported that the 3 year grass cutting contract the Parish Council had with Stewart Bullard and Son Ltd. ended in 2015. The Clerk asked Stewart Bullard to tender for the next 3 years and their quote was before the Council. The Clerk is tasked with obtaining further quotes to enable a decision to be made at the next Parish Council meeting.

**RECREATION GROUND****16.19 Annual Playground Inspection Report**

The Clerk is in discussion with Wicksteed Playgrounds regarding the price of replacement parts.

**16.20 Gang Mower**

The Clerk sought two quotes for the sharpening and set up of the Cottered gang mower. Only one quote was received in time for consideration at the meeting.

**It was resolved to accept the quote from Tuckwells for £818.00 (exc. VAT and 10% seasonal discount) to carry out this work.**

**COMMUNITY GRANTS**

16.21 The Chairman had been contacted by Councillor Rose Cheswright informing him there maybe some funds still available for community projects.

**CLERK'S REPORT**

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

**Correspondence for noting or not on the Agenda**

1. Letter from East Herts Council promoting consultation on the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for East Herts. The Clerk has uploaded the information to the Parish website and has placed hard copies of the letter on the Parish notice boards.
2. Letter from East Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service thanking Cottered and Throcking Parish council for their donation of £50.00. The letter stated 78 clients were assisted from the Mundens and Cottered Ward.
3. Letter from Hertfordshire County Council regarding Hertfordshire's Traffic and Transport Data Report 2015. The Clerk has uploaded the web link to the Parish website.
4. Letter from Hertfordshire County Council regarding consultation for the phased withdrawal of passenger assistants from taxis that accompany primary aged children to school. The Clerk has uploaded the web link to the Parish website.
5. Letter from Hertfordshire County Council regarding Notification of the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan, Employment of Areas of Search, Supplementary Planning Document (ELAS SPD). The Clerk has uploaded the Adoption Statement to the Parish website which details where the ELAS SPD and other associated documents can be viewed and holds a CD containing the information.
6. Letter from East Herts Council regarding consultation on draft East Herts Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy 2015. The Clerk has uploaded the web link to the Parish website.
7. Email from Verity Maclachlan First Aid Adviser for Girlguiding Hertfordshire stating they are exploring having a defibrillator on the outside of their building for the use of Guides and the village but think the Parish Council were planning one for the village phone box and would like to discuss putting funds towards that initiative. The Clerk needs to respond to this email.

**DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

All meetings to start at 7.30 pm in Cottered Village Hall  
Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

A number of issues were raised:

- A Circle Anglia van has churned up the grass at the end of Peascroft
- Parking in Brook End Lane obstructing the footpath to Peascroft
- Dog fouling in The Crescent and Peascroft - suggestion to install Dog Bins and notices requesting owners to clear up after their animals
- Stile at Brook End obstructed
- Overgrown trees obstructing the footpath outside The Rectory
- Drains and gullies near the lay by leaving Cotted towards Baldock need cleaning out to prevent continued flooding
- Potholes in Warren Lane
- Footpath between 36- 40 The Crescent being overgrown by grass verge.

Public session closed at 10.05pm