

**MINUTES OF COTTERED AND THROCKING PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN COTTERED VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2018 AT 7.30 PM**

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

Officer attending: Denise Anderson (Clerk) 11 members of the public

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

**APOLOGIES**

18.01 Apologies were received from Cllr Terry McGrath due to illness and County Councillor Jeff Jones due to a prior engagement but he provided an email update to the Clerk to be reported at the appropriate Agenda item.

**It was resolved to accept Cllr McGrath's apologies****DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

18.02 None

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

18.03 Standing Orders were suspended to allow Public Participation.

The issue of the Nationwide Building Supplies signs on the A507 was raised. It was felt they were unsightly and it was believed a retrospective planning application for them had been turned down. This was confirmed.

A question was directed to Cllr Bayles who stated that if he had been aware this subject was going to be raised he would have declared an interest but confirmed he did know about it.

Nigel Bentley stated that the tractor owned by the Parish Council and used to cut the Recreation Ground grass required welding. It was agreed that Brian Murchie would be asked to provide a quote for the necessary work.

Nigel raised the issue of the footpath flooding between 36 to 40 The Crescent. Cllr Dean stated he had reported this to Cllr Jeff Jones at the last meeting and this had apparently resulted in a forthcoming inspection on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

Nigel raised the fact that there is no salt bin in or near the Village Hall. The Clerk was asked to request a salt bin from East Herts Council.

Residents from Aspenden Parish were also in attendance at the meeting to raise their concerns about **PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATION 3/17/2810/FUL Buttermilk Hall Farm Baldock Road Buntingford Hertfordshire** for the construction of a lagoon designed to store liquid digestate (biofertiliser) produced by the existing AD plant, including the importation of recovered soils to construct retaining embankments, and creation of agricultural tracks.

Residents stated that they were greatly affected by the current activities on the site and that they were concerned about the lagoon development and its implications. They feel developments on the site are unacceptable; they are extremely concerned about what has grown out of agricultural use to become an industrial energy plant and one which, in their opinion, is poorly managed.

It was felt if the original quantities stated in the planning consent were adhered to then a lagoon would not be required

It was also pointed out that there were out of date documents within the application and no mention of current businesses.

The increase in traffic due to the construction requirements of the site and the possible extension of activities on the site was also raised. The traffic would not be prohibited as it would be local traffic to support a local business.

The Chairman advised those present with concerns about the Planning Application to write individual objections and submit to east Herts Planning.

Standing Orders were resumed

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

18.04 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were before the meeting and signed as a correct record.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

18.05 On the 15<sup>th</sup> December, John Bull, Jason Salmon and Bryan Pitman inspected several trees on the Village Green. Various trees that required attention were identified and a quotation requested. The required work will be financed by the Cottered Greens Trust.

Just before Christmas the Chairman received a telephone call from a resident near Throcking, reporting that Throcking residents were concerned that an unauthorised parking area was being made in the village. The Chairman located a green area in front of a Throcking house which had recently been worked on.

The Chairman then sought the views of nearby house holders, who said as far as they were concerned the area had always been used for parking by the previous owners of the house and the new owner was only tidying up a muddy patch made by the previous owner's 4 x 4 vehicle. The residents did not wish the Parish Council to take any action. This information was then conveyed to the original informant, who appeared satisfied with the explanation.

**FINANCE****18.06 Finance report and payments authorised**

The finance report was before the meeting and the report is an appendix to the minutes. A £40.00 compensation from Thames Water was noted.

**18.07 Notification of external auditor appointments for 2017/18 financial year**

The Clerk confirmed that under the changes to the audit process Cottered and Throcking Parish Council choose to be opted-in to the central procurement process and therefore an external auditor has been appointed for the 5-year period commencing with the financial year 2017/18 and they are PKF Littlejohn LLP.

**18.08 2018-2019 Budget and Precept**

The Clerk had presented a Budget Proposal for Council's consideration at the Parish Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

**Unanimously resolved: The budget proposal was agreed and the Precept for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to remain at the current figure of £8,000**

The Chairman and two Councillors signed the Precept Levy form.

**PLANNING****18.09 Planning Report**

The updated planning schedule is an appendix to these minutes.

3/16/1253/FUL	Land North Of Park Farm Industrial Estate Ermine Street Buntingford Hertfordshire	Approved
3/17/2524/HH	3 The Crescent Cottered Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 9QU	Approved
3/17/2436/FUL	Radio Mast Site Adj The Old Rectory Cottered Road Throcking Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 9RR	Refused
3/17/2281/HH	4 Parkside Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 9RT	Approved
3/17/1926/FUL	Garden House Cottered Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 9PZ	Approved

**18.10 Planning Applications since the Parish Council Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

3/17/2780/FUL	Land Adjacent To 10 - 17 Stocking Hill Cottered Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 9PY	There was no objection by the Parish Council to this application
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**18.11 Planning Applications**

3/17/2974/FUL	Milling Barn Bluntwood Hall Cottered Road Throcking Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 9RU	There was no objection by the Parish Council to this application
LPA Appeal Reference: 17/00095/REFUSE	Land Adj To The Old Rectory Baldock Road Cottered Buntingford Hertfordshire SG9 9QP	The Parish Council considered that the original comments made with regards to this Planning Application were still relevant for consideration at Appeal

3/17/2810/FUL	Buttermilk Hall Farm Baldock Road Buntingford Hertfordshire	Although not within the Parish boundary and therefore the Parish Council were not formally consulted regarding this application the Parish Council objected to this Planning Application due to the impact they considered it would have on transport, the amenity of residents and the environment.
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### 18.12 Meeting with East Herts Planning

At the last Parish Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Cllr Kenealy said he would facilitate a meeting with Kevin Steptoe Head of Planning and Building Control to enable Councillors' questions to be answered. The Clerk was asked to email Cllr Kenealy and ask if any progress had been made with regard to a meeting with Kevin Steptoe.

### 18.13 The District Plan

There was no further update on the review process.

### 18.14 Community Governance Review of the Buntingford Parish Boundary

The email from Cllr Jones provided a timetable for the Community Governance Review and stated a new Electoral Officer was being appointed and he would be overseeing the process.

Publish terms of reference	1 February 2018
Initial submissions invited	1 February – 3 April 2018
Consideration of initial submissions/ preparation of draft recommendations	4 April – 31 May 2018
Publication of draft recommendations	1 June 2018
Consultation on draft recommendations	1 June – 3 August 2018
Consideration of responses	6 August - 28 September 2018
Publication of final recommendations	1 October 2018
Council meeting to make any Reorganisation Order	17 October 2018 (tbc)
Revised electoral register published	1 December 2018

Councillors expressed concern about the short lead time to formulate a response.

## HIGHWAYS

### 18.15 The junction of The Crescent and A507

At the last Parish Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Cllr Jones said he would ask Highways to do a site visit regarding the ongoing concerns about the visibility and safety at this junction. The Clerk was asked to email Cllr Jones and ask if any progress had been made with regard to a site visit.

### 18.16 Throcking Road subsidence

The Clerk had reported the damage to the road to highways and has received the following response from HCC '*Thank you for reporting this issue. We have reviewed this fault and it is low priority; no action is planned*'. At Parish Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 Cllr Jones had asked that the report reference number be sent to him so that he could follow it up; this had been done. The Clerk was asked to email Cllr Jones and ask for his support in getting this hazardous road damage addressed.

### 18.17 Pedestrian crossing on A507 Baldock Road

The email from Cllr Jones confirmed he had funded a feasibility study to look at an appropriate pedestrian crossing in Cottered and that before Christmas had met with the consultant who will be preparing the report to brief him on the issue. Cllr Jones emphasised that a safe crossing is required to enable pedestrians to cross the busy A507 and to assist with reducing speeding traffic through the village.

He reported they had looked at two potential crossing points.

1. Immediately opposite the Village Hall and west of the bus stop. This was seen as the easiest and least costly location as a dropped kerb is already in place. Vegetation will need to be cleared/cut back on the northern side to obtain the relevant sight line when crossing north to south.
2. Just west of the Girl Guide centre which has good visibility but no footway on the south side.

The consultant hoped to present his report in February.

Councillors were surprised by the suggestion of a possible location being 'Just west of the Girl Guide centre' as most users of the centre arrive in a vehicle and had no need to cross the road to 'nowhere' and this location was some distance away from the Village Hall and the nearby bus stops.

Councillors asked that their initial suggestion be considered, which was, that a pedestrian crossing should be situated between Brook End Lane and the Village Hall. This view had been submitted to Lance Holman Project Engineer and acknowledged.

**It was resolved that the Clerk would contact both Cllr Jones and Lane Holman with their response to the latest suggestions for two potential crossing points.**

## PARISH MATTERS

### 18.18 The Old Barn and Village Green

Cllr Pitman agreed that he would contact Thames Water regarding the outstanding easement payment regarding this property.

### 18.19 Playground Safety Surface

Cllr Bull and the Clerk met with John Hambrook from Wicksteed Playgrounds on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to discuss the options regarding the replacement of the current playground safety surface.

Following the meeting a detailed breakdown of costs we supplied for Councillors' consideration.

The options were:

1. to replace the safety surfacing and edging with new Wetpour and concrete Pin Kerb onto the existing bases. Prices were given for each base area and they ranged between £1596.00 + VAT to £5977 + VAT and totalled **£14,882.50 + VAT**
2. to overlay the existing Wetpour pads with Ecotumble safety surfacing including filling gaps between Wetpour tiles - 100sqm of surfacing Total **£9,200.00 + VAT**
3. to consider the equipment and surface at one base at a time therefore a quote for the Junior Swing was sought:  
Junior Swing Replacement & New Surfacing – Uplift & remove 24sqm of existing Wetpour tiles & 3SQM of base works, remove timber edging. Supply & lay new Wetpour, concrete Pin Kerb edging & 1 No New Steel of 1 Bay 2.45m High Viking Swings with 2 No Flat Seats (new pad to be 7x3m and moved away from hedge) - **£6,397.00 + VAT**

Councillors were concerned about the high costs involved in the options outlined. The Clerk reminded Councillors that the VAT could be reclaimed.

**It was resolved that the Clerk would investigate the options available regarding grants for playground equipment and report back at the next meeting.**

### 18.20 Unauthorised parking in the Petanque/Cricket Club Car Park

It was decided that a meeting should be held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 7.30pm in Cottered Village Hall to discuss the ongoing issue of unauthorised parking in the Petanque/Cricket Club car park. Councillors felt that the meeting should be restricted to those invited and that they should confirm their attendance beforehand.

**It was resolved that the Clerk would send a letter inviting those concerned to a meeting on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 7.30pm in Cottered Village Hall.**

## CLERK'S REPORT

### 18.21 Clerks Report

The Clerk reported that the New Data Protection Regulations workshop on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 that she was due to attend had been cancelled because of the weather conditions at the time. This had been rescheduled for Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### Correspondence for noting or not on the Agenda

- Consultation on the Draft Minerals Local Plan. The consultation period runs from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

Cllr Bull reported that he had had a telephone from John Bosworth, Conservation Officer reporting that he was endeavoring to obtain a conservation order on the 4 'swiss houses' owned by Circle Housing.

## DATES OF NEXT MEETING

**All meetings to start at 7.30 pm in Cottered Village Hall**

13<sup>th</sup> March 2018

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_