

Minutes of the Meeting of Terling and Fairstead Parish Council held on 14th September 2010, at 7.00pm, at Terling Village Hall

Present: Mrs S McNamara (Chairman)
 Mr C Cutler
 Mr T Lewis
 Mr I Smith
 Mrs A Anderson
 Mrs S Alder
 Mrs P Bird
 Mr D White
 Mrs L Sime

Mrs J Halfhide (Clerk)
 10 members of the public

ACTION

Before the meeting commenced the Chairman expressed condolences on behalf of the Parish Council to Mandy Marshall and her family and asked those present to stand in silence to remember Clive.

Apologies for absence: Margaret Galione, Michael Lager, Robin Dixon, Hayley Wiseman, PC Corrigan, PCSO Doubleday

10.52 Meeting Open to the Public

Representatives of all the Parish clubs and organisations had been invited to attend the meeting with a view to seeking assistance from the Parish Council prior to the budget being set for the next financial year. The Chairman welcomed those present and the representatives put forward their requests. The Chairman explained that at this stage it was not known how much funding would be available, but that all requests would be considered by the Finance Committee who would then make recommendations accordingly to the full Parish Council. IS explained that in order to reclaim the VAT the Parish Council would prefer to pay on invoice for materials and services rather than make a straight donation. The Chairman assured those present that the decisions made by Parish Councillors would be in line with the Code of Conduct.

Police Report: The Clerk read an email report received from PCSO Doubleday. There were no major incidents to report. There had been some burglaries and thefts of metal, lead pipes and catalytic converters. The next NAP meeting in Terling is on 19th October, the mobile police station is out and about and they are they still continuing Beat Surgeries.

10.53 Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd August 2010 were unanimously approved. It was proposed by SA and seconded by PB that the Chairman should sign a copy of the minutes as a true and accurate record.

10.54 Matters arising from the meeting

There were no matters arising other than those covered elsewhere on the Agenda.

10.55 Declaration of Interests

None.

10.56 District Councillors' Reports

Cllr Galione had forwarded her report to the Clerk by email advising of grants which are

currently available via the Green Heart of Essex campaign:

One award of up to £8000 for community groups, two awards of up to £2000 for Primary Schools and two awards of up to £2000 for Secondary Schools.

Aims of the award are to improve the appearance of the local area, increase community participation, encourage pride and a sense of belonging in the community and to support the Green Heart Campaign

Cllr Galione would be attending a breakfast meeting in October with Eric Pickles, Minister for Local Government, and offered to discuss with him any issues which the Parish Council particularly wished to debate.

10.57 **Chairman's Report**

Nothing to report.

10.58 **Sub-Committees Reports**

Finance:

Copies of Receipts and Payments for the current financial year to date had been e-mailed by the Clerk to all Councillors. IS had been unable to distribute his Receipts and Payments, Budget and Forecast sheet due to technical problems. He would do so as soon as possible. IS

The following cheques were approved for payment and were signed. All invoices had been checked against cheques.

101298 7th September 2010 Terling Village Hall - Room hire	£ 19.40
101324 7th September 2010 M.G. Howard - Internal auditor	£150.00
101325 7th September 2010 Audit Commission - Audit fees	£334.88
101330 7th September 2010 C Cutler - Internet Café (PC, desk, chair)	£573.87
101331 7th September 2010 D W Jiggins - Village Handyman	£360.57
101333 7th September 2010 Lord Rayleigh's Farms - Garage Rent July & August, Surgery rental August	£45.00
101334 7th September 2010 J Halfhide - Clerk's expenses August	£70.55
101335 7th September 2010 J Halfhide – Clerk's salary August & holiday pay April to August	£577.66
101336 7th September 2010 HM Revenue & Customs – PAYE Tax	£219.55

The expenditure was unanimously approved. Proposed by SA seconded by AA.

The following expenditure was proposed by PB, seconded by SA and unanimously agreed:-

- Poppy Wreath/donation to Royal British Legion £16.50
- EALC Election Day Training Day for Clerk £60
- Replacement dog bin at Terling Ford £92.45 + VAT

It was also proposed by TL, seconded by LS and unanimously agreed that a donation of £50 in Clive Marshall's memory should be made to Farleigh Hospice.

Terling Tots had queried whether they would be able to apply to the Parish Council for funding along with the other clubs and organizations. IS confirmed that the Parish Council would be willing to consider the funding of certain materials, or for improving their facilities at the Village Hall if so desired and with the consent of the Village Hall Management Committee.

The Clerk reported that the annual audit for the financial year ending 31st March 2010 had been completed and there were no issues arising from the audit, other than those highlighted by the internal auditor. The Notice of Completion of Audit and Right to Inspect the return had been placed on the notice boards and website along with the certified annual return.

The Finance sub-committee had met on 7th September 2010 to review the internal auditor's report and made the following recommendations and comments to the Parish Council:-

1. Mr Maurice Howard should be appointed as Internal Auditor for the current financial year. This was proposed by IS, seconded by AA and unanimously agreed. JH
2. IS, AA, RD and SA should meet to consider amending the approved Standing Orders to ensure compliance with the new NALC model. The Clerk was asked to expedite. JH
3. Regarding Section 137 payments it was agreed that none had been made in the last financial year.
4. The Finance sub-committee confirmed it was comfortable with the sums insured on the assets register. However, the Clerk was asked to amend the assets register to reflect insurance replacement values. JH
5. The Clerk had been asked to obtain a quote for increasing the Fidelity Guarantee Insurance from £30,000 to £47,600. This would cost an additional £25 per annum. It was proposed by IS, seconded by DW and unanimously agreed that the sum insured should be increased to £47,600. The Clerk was asked to complete a proposal form and expedite. JH
6. The Clerk's holiday pay would in future be paid on a monthly basis rather than half yearly to reduce unnecessary National Insurance payments.
7. The required review of the effectiveness of the internal audit would be carried out by AA, RD, SA and IS. The Clerk would arrange. JH

The Clerk was thanked for her work in ensuring the annual audit had been completed satisfactorily. JH

The Finance sub-committee recommended that a letter should be sent to the Braintree Association of Local Councils with a copy to Earls Colne Parish Council, stating that Terling and Fairstead Parish Council would support the continuance of the Parish Support Grant in its present form for both the parished and unparished areas until 2012/13 and would be willing to engage and contribute as may be requested to ensure the rural parishes are appropriately funded. The Clerk was asked to expedite. JH

As it was likely that in the future cheques would phased out, IS would be looking at alternative payment methods whilst ensuring the Parish Council's internal controls were not compromised. IS

The Clerk confirmed receipt of a cheque for £965 from Allianz being the insurance claim for the Ranks Green telephone kiosk repair, less the £125 excess.

Environmental & Footpaths:

The second footpath cut of the year was well underway.

Estate Liaison:

Alex Dyke mentioned Lord Rayleigh had another retirement bungalow which he was willing to make available to anyone in the Parish and asked the Parish Council to advertise this. It was also suggested that the Clerk should inform the Village Agent as she might know someone who would be interested. JH

Health & Welfare:

The ROSPA report had been considered again, in conjunction with the Playground Risk Assessment Review, undertaken by TL.

TL had identified five areas of risk which needed attention and the Handyman would be asked to attend to these. The Clerk was asked to seek an assurance from Lord Rayleigh than an arboricultural inspection had been carried out on the oak tree in the playground. JH

IT & Publicity:

CC reported that the Internet Café had been opened in mid-August. Skype had been requested, the software would be free, all that was needed was a headset costing £10. CC proposed that this should be purchased; seconded by AA and unanimously agreed. CC
Some users had also requested the Parish Council consider installing a printer/copier. CC estimated this would cost approximately £100. The logistics of this were discussed but it was agreed that this would not be taken further at this stage, but that it would be considered again at a later date. CC would also discuss this with the owners of Terling Village Stores. Other software being considered by CC was Deep Freeze which would cost approximately £30. CC would monitor the PC and would revert to the Parish Council if he felt this was necessary.
CC reported that he was three quarters of the way through the final draft of the Village Design Statement which would soon be presented to the Parish Council, then to Braintree District Council Planning Department and then the community.

Planning & Highways:

Planning Application: 10/01053 The Herons, Fuller Street – no comment.

Birds Farm Lane HGV Access: Alex Dyke reported that communications with ECC Highways were progressing and they are endeavouring to ask the landowners to cut back the overgrown vegetation in Birds Farm Lane to make it more accessible for HGVs. Lord Rayleigh's Farms had offered ECC assistance in this task, free of charge. It was hoped that ECC would be able to use their enforcement powers if this became necessary. ECC had suggested that the Parish Council should write to Boreham Parish Council to explain the issue and the Clerk was asked to do this.

Salt Bins: The Parish Council had previously requested a new salt bin in Fuller Street near Hillside Motors but this would not be possible due to limited space alongside the highway. As an alternative ECC Highways had suggested it be placed outside Orion Scaffolding yard but it was felt that this location would not ease the problem on the hill. SA agreed to speak to the owner of the garage to ascertain whether he would be prepared to have the bin on his land, and the Clerk was asked to find out from Highways whether this solution would be acceptable to them.

All Councillors had previously been emailed with details of a proposed salt/grit trial to be run by ECC Highways. The Parish Council had been asked if it would consider joining the trial. This was in response to the problems last year with salt/grit which were exacerbated by low salt supplies. Alternatives are being looked at and this trial is the beginning of the process. Commitment to the trial would mean the purchase of the two new bins could not go ahead. The proposals were discussed at length but it was felt that the details given so far were too vague and further information would be required before a commitment to the trial could be made. The Clerk would try to obtain proposals in writing before the next meeting.

Potholes: Several potholes which had recently been reported to ECC Highways do not meet the criteria for repair.

Directional signposts: The Clerk had sent a comprehensive list of all the missing/broken signs to ECC Highways. The old cast iron signs continue to be a problem. Repairs are extremely costly.

10.59 Councillors' Reports, including Village Hall and School Report

SA reported that the Shopper Bus was not being used very much. SM would speak to the local bus co-ordinator.

10.60 Clerk's Report

Hours worked in August: 45

There had been several complaints about overgrown hedges. The Clerk was asked to contact the landowners concerned and request that the hedges be cut back.

JH

Forthcoming Parish Council Surgeries:

- 2nd October 2nd: PB and SM offered to attend.
- 6th November: AA and SA offered to attend.

PB/SM
AA/SA

A letter had been received from Environmental Health at BDC setting out the changes to the former Community Warden Service. The warden's job title has been amended to Street Warden and their role has been changed slightly to focus on a greater emphasis on enforcement in support on BDC's Green Heart of Essex programme.

Two instances of fly-tipping had been reported – in Ranks Green and Fairstead, the items had been cleared quickly.

The Clerk had been asked to enquire about compulsory purchase of land. Cllr Galione had suggested the Clerk speak to Eleanor Dash in Planning at BDC, which she had done.

Compulsory purchase would not be possible but if the Parish Council wished to purchase land from a local landowner it could do so and Planning would be able to protect it as common land for perpetuity.

The Clerk reported she was arranging the Autumn Terling litter pick for Saturday 16th October, meeting Terling Village Hall at 10am. SA reported that a Fuller Street litter pick had been arranged for Saturday 30th October, meeting at 9.30am at The Square & Compasses.

JH

A query had arisen about trees which had apparently been planted outside Whites Cottages in Fuller Street for the Queen's Silver Jubilee. The trees now need some attention and SA offered to find out more details.

SA

10.61 Football Field Project

The Finance Committee recommended that the Parish Council take a year's licence on Terling football field. This was discussed at length. Alex Dyke confirmed that Lord Rayleigh was keen for the field to be used by the community and would be willing to lease the ground to the Parish Council for £25 per annum. Terling Football Club had not renewed their lease for the current year and Phil Palmer commented that whilst it was still the desire of the Football Club to return to Terling they would have no objection to the Parish Council taking over the lease. Grant funding and sponsorship was still available if the Football Club so wished to consider making the improvements required to bring the ground up to the standard required for matches and the Parish Council was still willing to assist if this is what the Football Club wished.

The Clerk was asked to look into the issue of public liability insurance before the Parish Council signed the lease and to consider the maintenance work for the field.

JH

The Clerk had investigated the cost of a new pair of goals which would cost £500 plus VAT plus a delivery charge. These would be heavyweight 60mm steel posts, with no stays or nets at this stage. TL proposed that a pair of goals should be purchased and erected on the ground once the licence had been granted. Seconded by SA. It was duly agreed that the Clerk should order the goal posts.

JH

The Clerk had sent an email to all Parish Councillors concerning the Village Agents scheme – a performance summary report for the pilot. Councillors were asked to comment

All

on this before 30th September.

- 10.62 **Essex County Council's Community Initiatives Fund Grant Scheme**
Details had previously been circulated to the Parish Councillors. The Clerk explained that the Community Initiatives Fund is a small grants scheme funded by Essex County Council to support communities to deliver improvements that matter to local residents. There is a maximum application of £15,000, the deadline is 29th October 2010 with decisions being made in February 2011. The expenditure must be capital in nature with certain criteria, which the Clerk explained. Match funding must be secured. Applications are invited from bodies which are properly constituted and broadly representative of their local community. IS offered to investigate further. IS
- 10.63 **Braintree District Council's Rural Services Survey 2010**
Parish Councillors had considered the Rural Services Survey and the Clerk would respond to Braintree District Council accordingly. JH
- 10.64 **School Green Project**
The Clerk reported that RD was endeavouring to meet with Alex Dyke to discuss the project. RD
- 10.65 **Ranks Green Telephone Kiosk**
The Clerk reported that the replacement door had been fitted.
- 10.66 **Terling Inn**
The working group had met and Alex Clarke was asked to give a summary of their meeting. He reported that there was a desire within the community to prevent any change of use application for the property and they had discussed the possibility of leasing a small part of the bar area as a community facility. It was firmly believed there was sufficient demand to make such a venture a success. This idea had also been discussed at the recent Finance Committee meeting and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the owner to further this.
The working group would be producing some posters to display prominently in the village to maintain momentum of the working group.
Alex Clarke received the assurance of Councillors that they would strongly resist any change of use planning application should one be applied for.
- 10.67 **Playground Risk Assessment**
[Covered previously under Health and Welfare (Agenda item 10.58)]
- 10.68 **General Correspondence to Note**
None.
- 10.69 **Any Other Business**
SA queried whether there was any formal policy on dealing with the press. It was agreed that this should be included in the Standing Order view previously discussed.
- 10.70 **Date of Next Meeting, including committees**
Parish Council Meetings:
Tuesday 19th October, 2010 at The Square & Compasses, Fuller Street
Tuesday 16th November, 2010 at Terling Village Hall, 7pm
Tuesday 14th December, 2010 at The Square & Compasses, Fuller Street, 7pm.

The meeting closed at 10:15pm