

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Terling and Fairstead Parish Council held on 16th November 7.00pm, at Terling Village Hall

Present: Mrs S McNamara (Chairman)
Mr C Cutler
Mrs A Anderson
Mrs S Alder
Mrs P Bird
Mr D White
Ms H Wiseman Mrs J Halfhide (Clerk)
Mrs L Sime 3 members of the public

ACTION

Apologies for absence: Margaret Galione, Trevor Lewis, Robin Dixon, Ian Smith

10.97 **Meeting Open to the Public**

The Proprietor of The Square & Compasses commented that he had been disappointed to read the Parish Council's comments submitted to BDC Planning concerning his current planning application. He had kept the Parish Council informed of his plans to upgrade the pub's septic tank to a Klagester, and that he was working towards this end in stages. The Chairman agreed the wording to the District Council was ambiguous and the Planning Committee would be asked to send a further letter to clarify.

CC

The Chairman of the Pub Working Group updated the Parish Council on what had been happening. Articles would be appearing in local newspapers shortly. It was believed that the manager's accommodation above the pub had been let by Beresfords. The Parish Council confirmed a letter had been sent to Planning Enforcement as no planning permission had been granted to allow an open residential use of this part of the building; the flat being ancillary to the primary use of the premises. The Clerk would circulate the response when received.

JH

10.98 **Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2010 were unanimously approved. It was proposed by HW and seconded by CC that the Chairman should sign a copy of the minutes as a true and accurate record.

10.99 **Matters arising from the meeting**

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

10.100 **Declaration of Interests**

None.

10.101 **District Councillors' Reports**

The Clerk read Cllr Galione's report which had been emailed. Cllr Galione had met with new owners of a property in Fairstead Road who were hoping to relocate their entrance. Cllr Galione had attended a Transport meeting recently and was pleased to report that the Shoppers' Bus is to continue. She had also visited Tilbury with other District Councillors to inspect the recycling plant, which she had found very interesting.

10.102 **Chairman's Report**

Nothing to report.

10.103 **Sub-Committees Reports**

Finance:

Copies of Receipts and Payments for the current financial year to date had been emailed by the Clerk to all Councillors. The Clerk distributed IS's Receipts and Payments, Budget and Forecast sheet and graph.

AA queried the expenditure for electricity. The Clerk commented that a significant portion of this had been for the new light at Terling Ford in the summer and the increase on previous years was due to the general increase in electricity prices.

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

4th Oct	1348 Elliot Pond Terling Stores – Internet Café	£ 76.90
2nd Nov	1349 A Harrison - Decorating United Reform Church	£260.00
2nd Nov	1350 Daniel Jiggins - Handyman Jobs	£ 79.95
2nd Nov	1351 Lord Rayleigh's Farms - Garage & Surgery rent	£ 25.00
2nd Nov	1352 J Wilson - Carpentry United Reform Church	£180.00
2nd Nov	1353 Earth Anchors Ltd - Dog Bin Terling Ford	£128.85
2nd Nov	1355 J Halfhide - Clerk's Expenses September	£127.32
2nd Nov	1356 Alan Jiggins - Handyman Jobs	£211.71
8th Nov	1357 J Halfhide – Clerk's Salary October	£497.29
8th Nov	1358 HM Revenue & Customs – PAYE Tax	£169.90
8th Nov	1359 C Cutler – Internet Café expenses	£ 12.02
8th Nov	1361 A J Lighting Solutions – repair to Ford light	£ 98.64

PB proposed that this expenditure be approved, seconded by SA and this was unanimously agreed.

HW would approach Terling School to request whether the Council would be able to quote for their grass cutting for the coming year. HW

Environmental & Footpaths:

DW confirmed that the revenue for the cutting of the parish paths for Essex County Council under the P3 Scheme would be £2,865 for the next financial year (compared with £5,762 for the current year). Despite the reduction in revenue the Parish Council would still have its costs covered and the entire Parish would benefit from having at least two complete cuts a year.

Estate Liaison:

Nothing to report.

Health & Welfare:

The Clerk was asked to call in a pest control expert to deal with the moles in the childrens' playground before the situation worsened. JH

IT & Publicity:

The success of the Internet Café grows with the new coffee bar in the shop as more people come to hear of it.

Planning & Highways:

The missing sails on The Windmill in Terling were discussed. The Planning Committee were drafting a letter to Planning Enforcement. RD, CC
PB

Hedges

The Clerk reported that ECC Highways will be was still trying to contacting the owner of the car park at the Terling Inn to request that the Leylandii hedge be cut back from the pavement. The Clerk would follow this up. JH

ECC Salt Bag Pilot Scheme

The proposed ECC Salt Bag Pilot Scheme was discussed at length. Councillors had considered the proposals carefully but, whilst in principle Terling and Fairstead would like to participate, it was decided it was simply not practical to find volunteers who would be willing and able to carry out the duties which would be expected of them, often during severe weather conditions, and over such a large geographical area. ECC would be asked to attend the next meeting so that the Council could attempt to explain the practical implications of running such a scheme in Terling and Fairstead. CC also offered to prepare a written response setting the issues which would hopefully assist ECC when they come to evaluate the pilot scheme.

JH

CC

10.104 **Councillors' Reports, including Village Hall and School Report**

SA reported that the light in the Fairstead phone kiosk was not working and that some of the daffodils from BDC's Green Heart had been planted in Fuller Street.

PB reported she had planted 300 daffodils in Terling. New flooring was being arranged for the smaller room at the Village Hall.

CC reported that he and AA had attended the Parish Summit held by Braintree District Council on 3 November 2010.

The meeting comprised information on the forthcoming budget cuts presented by Essex County Council and Braintree District Council plus two group working sessions

David Finch of Essex County Council reported that the proposed cuts will be front loaded; tough in year one and easier in the following years. The total budget for Essex is £2.18 billion. ECC needs to save £300 million over three years. They expect a loss of 7.25% in grants over next 5 years. Government grants will no longer be ring fenced, which means that they can be used for any purpose the council chooses. David Finch would be happy to attend Parish Council Meetings.

Graham Butland of Braintree District Council reported that the total budget for Braintree is £19 million per year; £10 million from central government and £9 million from local taxes and they are planning a 25% (~£5 million) budget cut. Discretionary spending is at £6 million. Future income will be mainly from local taxes (£9 million) and not from Central Government (£7 million). On the Government reward scheme for building new houses there would be no more Government target, all will be reward driven. BDC will attempt to keep rural areas free of new housing. Incentives will be in the form of equivalent Council Tax for up to six years. There would be no change to Parish Support Grant for 2011. Some services, such as Waste Collection, may be County managed instead of District Managed. In the future there would be a reduction in the number of Council Chief Executives and Councillors and a reduction in local services, such as Community Wardens, Parish Support Grants, Museums, Leisure, Parks, Community Transport Wardens.

It was CC and AA's view that Parish Councils will be asked to do considerably more (Parish Council do not cost anything). There will be a huge reduction in local services, including the Police. The "Big Society" is the way ahead – a reduction in Local and Central Government Services and the expectation that the public will volunteer to do the work. The Parish Council expressed concern, many people do not have the time or the training to do a lot of this work

The Chairman thanked AA and CC for giving up their time to attend this Parish Summit and for their report.

There had been no visitors to the November Surgery. In view of the poor attendance and lack of interest by the community it was agreed that the Surgeries would cease, and that the December one would be the last. The Clerk was asked to terminate the licence with Lord Rayleigh's Farms Ltd for the hire of the waiting room at the Doctor's Surgery. SM had volunteered to man the last Surgery, on 4th December.

SM

10.105 **Clerk's Report**

Hours worked in October: 66½

The Clerk had attended an EALC training course on 3rd November on the forthcoming Parish Elections which will be held next May, probably on 5th May 2011. It is expected this will coincide with the election of District Ward Councillors and the expected national referendum on the Parliamentary voting system. The Clerk explained she would assist Councillors with the nomination process nearer the time and that she would be encouraging a contested election, as it gives the Parish Council the legitimacy to work on behalf of the community. The Clerk would actively encourage members of the community to seek nomination by advertising the process, and she hoped that all existing Councillors would be seeking election.

There had been a complaint, which had been resolved, and which had been reported in full to the Complaints Committee. A window had been broken in Fairstead during some strimming work carried out by the Parish Council handyman. The Clerk had checked that the handyman had been following all the necessary precautions and the Clerk had assured the resident that every precaution would be taken in the future.

It was agreed that the December Parish Council meeting would be followed by an informal drinks party with mince pies, to a small invited number of the community who had volunteered their time and helped the Parish Council in the last year. It was also agreed that the Parish Councillors would contribute personally to the cost of their own drinks and food.

One suggestion had been received via the Suggestions Box *"Now that the Parish Council has "adopted" the phone box at Owls Hill could they please be responsible citizens to save precious energy by turning the light off which is shining from the phone box 24/7 to no purpose for anyone"*.

The Clerk confirmed the lights were on 24 hours a day in all the five adopted phone boxes, although three were not working at present. TL had been trying to find ways of accessing the bulbs but this was proving difficult. There were problems accessing the bulbs which TL had been investigating. The Clerk was asked to clarify the position with EDF and the electricity supplier, EoN, and she would report to the next meeting. The supply was unmetered. Alternatives would be looked at and would be proposed.

JH

The Clerk asked the Council what plans they had for the four old kiosks which were standing empty and unused (the Fuller Street one is a successful Essex Way Information Point). Several were in need of redecoration. Volunteers had come forward in the past and they would be contacted. Other Parish Councils had found ingenious uses for their newly adopted kiosks and the Clerk gave some suggestions. It was agreed that the community should be asked how they would like to see them used and the Clerk would seek the community's suggestions.

JH

10.106 **Football Field Project**

The Clerk reported that RD was waiting to hear from Lord Rayleigh's Farms in response to queries on the lease and concerns about the football field.

- 10.107 **School Green Project**
The Clerk confirmed she had given the contractor the go-ahead to commence the work.
- 10.108 **Terling Inn**
Discussed previously in the proceedings.
- 10.109 **Reviews of Standing Order / Complaints Procedures / Audit Policy / Effectiveness of Internal Audit**
RD, IS, AA, SA and the Clerk had met to discuss the Standing Orders review which incorporates the Complaints Procedure. IS had also prepared a draft Audit Policy and the Effectiveness of Internal Audit was also discussed. The Clerk was preparing draft documents which would be presented to RD, IS, AA and SA for further comment before being put to the full Council for approval. JH
As part of the Standing Orders a formal policy on dealing with the Press/Media is required and it was unanimously agreed that all approaches by the Press should be directed for comment to the Chairman in the first instance. If the Chairman was not available for comment the Clerk would be asked to handle the enquiry. This policy would be incorporated in the next draft of the Standing Orders. JH
- 10.110 **Memorial for Clive Marshall**
Mrs Marshall had confirmed that she would like the bench in memory of her late husband engraved "In Memory of Clive Marshall 1953 – 2010". The Clerk would proceed with the order. JH
- 10.111 **General Correspondence to Note**
Two letters of thanks and appreciation had been received in response to the Parish Council's letters to Clubs and Organisations who had been promised assistance at the last meeting.
- 10.112 **Any Other Business / Next Agenda Items**
None.
- 10.113 **Date of Next Meeting, including committees**
Parish Council Meetings:
Tuesday 14th December, 2010 at The Square & Compasses, Fuller Street, 7pm.
Tuesday 18th January, 2011, at Terling Village Hall, 7pm.
- The meeting closed at 9:20pm.