

Minutes of Great Oakley Parish Council Meeting

Held at The Village Hall Tuesday 18th February 2020

20/030 Present: Mrs Y Bailey – Chairman, Mr M Bush – Vice Chairman, Mr P Day, Mr J Tierney, Ms K Schooling, County Cllr A Erskine

20/031 Apologies: Mr N Daniels

20/032 Chairman opened meeting at 7.30pm.

Ms Schooling recorded the minutes of the meeting in the absence of a clerk.

20/033 Declaration of Interest: Mrs Bailey declared a personal interest in agenda item 14, Planning Application, and advised that she would leave the room for this item. She had arranged for Mr Bush, Vice Chairman to take over chairing the meeting in her absence.

20/034 Public Participation: There were seven members of the public present who raised the following issues:

- A parishioner asked about the role of Parish Councillors and why they were there. The Chairman outlined what Parish Councillors do and their commitment to working in the best interests of the residents of the Parish. Mr Bush explained that he was a Parish Councillor because he was passionate about the community and ensuring everyone in the village was involved.
- Parishioners asked what was happening with the Red House and Essex Stores; the windows were rotten. Mr Bush said he would provide an update on the Red House in his report. There was nothing to report about Essex House at this time.
- A Parishioner reported they had emailed the clerk about 5 tyres and concrete posts dumped at the soils and requested Tendring District Council contact details to report fly tipping. Mr Bush said that TDC has changed the way fly tipping is managed and there is now a website portal to report it as they have lots of call about the same incidents. The Chairman will email the resident the website address.
- A resident from Partridge Close asked for a rubbish bin at the Partridge Close Bus Stop. Clerk will be asked to find out the cost of installation and emptying for Parish Council consideration at the next meeting.
- An update on the situation with the ditch on Beaumont Road on the bend near to Red Barn Lane was requested. Cllr Erskine reported that Essex CC were in the final stages of enforcement to put back the ditch to how it was and was now awaiting a final inspection. Mr Bush suggested that neighbours attend the ECC surgery.

20/035 District Councillor Report: Mr Bush reported he had attended a full council meeting last week where £5 on an average band D property increase was agreed although TDC only receive a small proportion of that. Council also voted in favour of an increase in members allowance although Mr Bush voted against. The Revenue Support Grant from Government has been decreased over the years and was due to end completely this year but Central Government have agreed to continue it for one more year and Parish Councils will get a portion of it. TDC are building up reserves but Mr Bush did not agree to services being cut while money is being put into reserves. He suggested the money should be used for welfare support; Big Community Fund; keeping the villages tidy; improving enforcement for fly tipping and illegal parking etc. £250,000 has been reserved for this fund.

Mr Bush also reported on proposals to be submitted for road closures on Farm Road for VE Day and Community Gala on 7th June. There was some confusion about the Community Gala event and whether it was on and the same as the VE Day Celebrations. Ms Schooling will investigate.

As Mr Bush had not attended the previous meeting he added his congratulations to Mrs Ling for her Pride of Tendring award as recognition of her work in the community.

On the Red House Mr Bush advised on plans discussed with Tendring Planning Officers and Council Heritage to keep the Red House as it is with one ground floor 2 bed room apartment and one first floor 2

bedroom apartment together with a link ground floor extension with a one bedroom studio apartment above. This had been well received by the Council. Discussions about car parking would take place when new people move in.

20/036 County Councillor Report: Cllr Erskine reported that Budgets had been ratified at Essex County Council with a 1.99% Council Tax Rise with 2% going to Adult Social care. County Council recognised not enough was being spent on Adult Social Care with spend in Tendring in particular being very low on looking after people in their own homes. ECC spends more on Adult Social Care than anything else in their budget but it must be increased further to be able to meet growing needs. More money is going into highways/pavements and they are looking into how to respond to emergencies e.g. roads after extreme weather conditions. They are dealing with potholes in the short term to make roads more useable until the road can be permanently fixed. A pilot project at Little Clacton where they had been given money to fix road signs, pavements and roads etc. in their own area has appeared to work well b using small contractors to do the work. County are awaiting a final report on the project which will be heard at the next full Council meeting in April. It is planned to devolve responsibility for Public footpaths to Parish Councils. In future budgets are to be looked at over 3years rather than yearly as at present. The drain cover at Sparrows Corner has been reported.

20/037 Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 21st January 2020, after being circulated, were proposed as correct by Mr Tierney, seconded Mr Day, and carried unanimously.

Progress Report

20/038 Fly Tipping: Clerk had reported to TDC

20/039 Footpath: Ploughed in footpath has been reported. Clerk has contacted the landowner but no response yet – ongoing.

20/040 Hedge Opposite Partridge Close: Clerk has contacted landowner but no response as yet. It can be enforced; Rangers can do it and send the owner the bill. Chairman to contact the land owner in the first instance as this must be done before the nesting season.

20/041 Bird Scarers: Reported to the landowner, Mr Thompson confirmed the bird scares have now been removed. Chairman commented that Mr Thompson had been very helpful and positive in his email.

20/042 Play Inspection Reports: Clerk has not yet received any response to her request. Chairman will follow up with written request.

20/043 The Soils Pavement: Clerk has contacted the owners of the hedge and they are happy for that the Rangers can help. Clerk has passed this on to Steve Gove at The Rangers TDC.

20/044 Zip Wire: Clerk is in talks with a maintenance company and is in the process of arranging a site visit.

20/045 VE Day: Chairman read out Mr Daniels report confirming contact has been made with local groups including the Oakstones, School, Art Club, Maybush and Church. All considering celebrations and will confirm details. All submissions to Coast to Coast will need to be in by beginning of March for April publication.

20/046 Fly Tipping: Mr Bush explained he had received confirmation of the reports of fly tipping and a website has been set up for reporting purposes. He advised this is an ongoing problem and if anyone sees anything to contact him.

20/047 20 is plenty: Chairman reported she had been in contact with the Chairman of Governors at the local school. They had not been contacted by ECC about the scheme but were keen to be involved Cllr Erskine suggested they arrange to visit the Chairman of Governors and the Head to discuss what could be done in this respect. Chairman to arrange.

20/048 Highways: Mr Tierney reported that Parish Council has been notified of the closure of Soils Road which has now been put on the website.

20/049 Burial Ground: At the last Parish Council meeting Councillors deferred their decisions and requested Clerk to ask EALC for advice regarding the Burial Ground. Clerk has circulated EALC response to all Councillors for their consideration. Clerk advised she has been looking into rules and regulations for some time and will submit to Councillors for consideration when completed. The Chairman referred to the advice given by EALC, and Clerk's recommendations. Parish Council agreed this was a very delicate matter and must be treated in a sensitive way.

On the question of written rules and regulations Council agreed it was important to publish these as soon as possible and it was not acceptable to wait any longer. If Clerk has anything prepared for immediate release this should be circulated for consideration. Chairman said that she had recently looked at Tendring Cemeteries Rules and Regulations and, while they include a number of regulations that would not apply to us, we could adapt to suit our requirements. In that case we would demonstrate a consistent approach across the District. Chairman said she would look at what can be put together and circulate to all Councillors for consideration.

It was agreed that letters should be sent by the Chairman as soon as possible to the families with the paving slabs and marble slab apologising for any distress caused and explaining that updated rules and regulations would be issued within the next few weeks to address the issue of what has been placed on other graves. It was also agreed that Parish Council would waive the cost of the removal of the paving slabs, have the graves re-turfed at Council expense and return the paving slabs to a local address at a date and time to be agreed. The request for retrospective permission for the marble slab was given careful consideration and approved conditional on the slab being lowered to ¼ inch, as advised by a local contractor, above ground level for ease of strimming and to prevent any damage to the slab. Updated rules and regulations will include this exemption and its conditions and stipulate that permission must still be applied for and will only be granted for a single slab in the same material and colour as the Headstone; no inscription or any ornaments or other adornments would be allowed. Proposed by Mr Day, seconded by Ms Schooling and approved by three votes to one with one abstention.

It was also agreed as soon as the rules and regulations have been agreed by Parish Council they must be published on the website. All owners of graves must be sent two copies to be signed with one copy returned and one retained for future reference. Mr Tierney suggested, and all agreed that they be sent recorded delivery including a return stamped addressed envelope. If Clerk has any difficulty locating any owners the funeral directors and stonemasons must be contacted for a last known address. Notices referring to the updated rules and regulations and where to access them should be put on full view display at the burial ground and on notice boards throughout the village to ensure we can demonstrate we have done everything possible to locate owners of the graves before considering any further action.

20/050 Public Rights of Way: Nothing to report.

20/051 Village Hall: Waste: Clerk has looked into the possibility of a large bin receptacle with a minimum cost of £10 every two weeks. The caretaker currently uses waste bags at a cost of £2.40 per week. Clerk suggested the possibly to reduce waste we could supply recycling boxes from TDC. All options were considered and it was agreed to ask user groups to take their rubbish with them to reduce waste with the remainder taken care of using the waste bags and continue to monitor the situation. Clerk to arrange with the Caretaker.

Table: Clerk had received a message from the Caretaker that the leg had broken off the big table by people dragging across the hall. As there was a children's party planned the following day it was too dangerous to leave so had been dismantled and stored in the gents toilets. The Chairman explained that as the table belonged to the Oakstones they must be informed and asked what they wished to do with it. The Chairman will advise the Chairman of the Oakstones accordingly.

Refurbishment Update: Chairman advised that she had received the quotes from a local contractor. A series of options were quoted for including refurbishing the kitchen and improvements to the toilets through to extending the hall into the side garden which would cost in the region of around £35k. It was agreed that we needed to look at long term use of the hall and work should be carried out to meet community needs for the future. Therefore, we should try to secure funding for everything and Chairman

would take this forward. A CIF funding session was available at EALC on 2nd March and Chairman had asked Clerk to arrange a place for her to attend. Mr Bush indicate he wished to attend and Chairman agreed to follow up arrangements

20/052 TDALC Report: Mr Tierney reported that Joy Darby and the new CEO of EALC visited and went through issues they could support. There was also a report from the Local Highways panel on highways devolution. A fund has been established to support groups addressing the high rate of suicides in the area with grants available up to £2k for focused projects. The next meeting was planned for March 2020.

20/053 Carbon Reduction: Mr Bush reported that an APSE energy briefing meeting had been held to consider options available to reduce our carbon footprint and become carbon neutral by 2030. Council residents could be encouraged to install solar panels. The Chairman asked if the Village Hall could access funding to install cost effective heating. It was agreed to investigate ways and grants to improve village hall energy efficiency.

20/054 Planning: Chairman gave notice of a declared personal interest left the room. Vice Chairman Mr Bush took over for this item.

Application No: 20/00161/TPO

Proposal: 1 No. Horse Chestnut Tree – Fell and replace with Sweet Chestnut Tree

Location: Chestnut Cottage 14 School Road, Great Oakley, Harwich

Great Oakley Parish Council had no objections regarding this application.

20/055 Accounts for Payment:

Parish Council Income

R Gwinnell	Inscription		£ 100.00
Essex County Council	Amenity Grass Cutting		£ 529.80

TOTAL **£ 629.80**

Parish Council Expenditure

A & J Lighting Solutions	Street Light Maintenance	722619	£ 47.82
E-On	Street Lighting	D/D	£ 172.47
Miss J Bootyman	Expenses Ink, stamps etc	722620	£ 75.79
Miss J Bootyman	Wages	722621	£ 269.02
Chairman	Printer	722622	£ 45.00
TOTAL			£ 610.10

Village Hall Income

Post Office	Hall Hire		£ 50.00
Line Dancing	Hall Hire		£ 17.00
10.0'Clock Club	Hall Hire		£ 102.00
Private Dancing	Hall Hire		£ 17.00
Line Dancing	Hall Hire		£ 17.00
Line Dancing	Hall Hire		£ 17.00
Dog Club	Hall Hire		£ 85.00
Dance Practice	Hall Hire		£ 17.00
Line Dancing	Hall Hire		£ 17.00
Line Dancing	Hall Hire		£ 17.00
Dog Club	Hall Hire		£ 68.00
TOTAL			£ 424.00

Village Hall Expenditure

Calor	Standing Charge	422023	£ 10.30
Julia Turner	Wages	422024	£ 177.90
Julia Turner	Expenses	Cash	£ 6.64
TOTAL			£ 194.84

Village Hall Account currently stands at £3,686.42

After being circulated, accounts were proposed as correct by Mr Day, seconded Mr Tierney, and carried unanimously.

Minute Book

Clerk advised we are nearing the completion of the current minute book which holds 4 years of minutes. The cost of the same type replacement is £135 + VAT.

After due consideration it was agreed we need to be consistent and the purchase of a same type replacement was proposed by Mr Tierney, seconded by Mr Bush and carried unanimously.

Printer

The Clerk has been having problems with the printer and has tried to solve the issue of not printing in black by purchasing and installing new ink cartridges but the problem persisted. Clerk spoke to the Chairman after finding the same printer on offer for £45.00 (instead of £95.00) and a purchase was agreed. Retrospective permission was therefore requested; proposed by Mr Bush and seconded by Mr Tierney and unanimously agreed.

20/056 Correspondence:

Complaints: Chairman reported she had received several verbal complaints from local residents about a dog in a property on School Road left outside in a back garden from early in the morning until after dark and continually barking all day. Residents pointed out that at the moment most have their windows closed but in the warmer weather it will become more problematic. It was agreed that Clerk should write to the owners in the first instance to give them the opportunity of addressing the issue. If this request is not actioned escalation to the appropriate authority would need to be considered.

Email: Clerk received an email from the resident regarding the Recreation Field Hedge and the apparent confusion about which tree was being discussed. The resident referred to the June 2019 GOPC minutes 19/116 Tree maintenance – Orchard Close which indicated that Mr Bush had reported about the tree to the GOPC. The resident went on to say that if there was still confusion they would be happy to meet with any Parish Councillor at the property to help. However, they did explain that they had both thought the letter and email received from the Parish Council on this subject had been quite personal and threatening, bordering on harassing. Councillors agreed that before any decision could be taken it was important to establish contact with the resident to arrange a site visit. Clerk to arrange with the Chairman and Tree specialist.

There being no further business, Chairman closed meeting at 10.15pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....