

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF KEDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2007
HELD AT THE LIBRARY, ARMS LANE, KEDINGTON**

Present:

Cllr Terry Wheeler – Chairman of Parish Council
Cllr John Cahill – Vice Chair of Parish Council
Cllr Gloria Double
Cllr Peter Garner

Ms Marion Farrant (Clerk)

In attendance: Borough Councillor Marion Rushbrook; Mr Fred Phillips (Press); Messrs Marsh; Jobson; Bacon; Chase; Bowers; Downey (Public).

Cllr Ann Desborough did not attend the meeting and no apologies were received.

ACTION

1 Parishioners' Question Time and to acknowledge agenda items of interest to members of the public present:

Mrs Marsh said she, and other members of the public present, were interested in agenda item 11.3 – Cemetery / Churchyard. Mrs Marsh went on to say that they would like to see the new part of the Churchyard cut, the same as the old part. Mrs Marsh added she had provided photos to the Parish Council showing the difference between the two, and the appalling state of the new Churchyard at present. Other members of the public agreed, saying that it was very upsetting to see the new Churchyard overgrown, around where they were attending graves of loved ones.

The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had taken over responsibility for maintenance of the Churchyard approximately fifteen years ago. He added that there had been problems in the past with memorial stones being damaged by equipment used by the contractors. To try and alleviate damage to gravestones, it was decided to use "round-up", which was sprayed around graves. By doing this, strimming was kept away from gravestones. However, there was an incident where "round-up" was sprayed near to some "special turf" on one grave, causing distress to the grave-owner. Representatives from the Parish Council met with the Parochial Church Council and Rev John Eley (as they had done on two previous occasions) and it was decided to stop using "round-up" and ask the contractors to only cut within ½ metre of the gravestones. However, this did leave a problem where graves with no one to tend them would get overgrown.

The Chairman pointed out that the difference between the old and new part of the Churchyard, was that there was more space to manoeuvre equipment around the graves. Mr Garner suggested that the contractors be asked to use nylon wire on their trimmers used in the Churchyard, and not brush cutters.

Mrs Marsh asked if the Parish Council were happy with the work the contractors were doing. The Chairman replied that the contract had not been without its problems but still had one more year to run, which would have to be honoured. However, a parishioner in the village had expressed an interest in maintaining the Churchyard, on a part-time basis when he retired and the Parish Council would be looking into this further. In the meantime, the Chairman asked for any further problems regarding the Churchyard, be reported to the Clerk so she could bring it to the attention of the Parish Council.

Open Meeting

2 Welcome and apologies:

The Chairman welcomed everyone present.

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Karen Knight, Cllr Peter Donoghue and Cllr Peter Rowsell.

3 Minutes of last meetings

The minutes of the last meeting KPC 113-04 were agreed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Cahill and seconded by Cllr Garner.

4 To accept members' Declaration of Interests on agenda items:

Cllr Garner expressed an interest in agenda item 11.1.

Close meeting

5 Visitor's Reports:

Borough Councillor Marion Rushbrook reported:

Battery-recycling scheme introduced by the Borough Council within the last few months was going well.

School Organisation Review: Next round of meetings would be held in October.

Safer Neighbourhood Teams: Cllr Rushbrook reported that two Borough Council representatives had been appointed to attend the Tasking Force meetings, which would be held once a month. She reported that issues could be fed into the Tasking Force, through Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Parish Councils. Cllr Rushbrook spoke of a Street Surgery meeting to be held on 2nd October from 3.30 – 5.00 p.m. at the Library in Kedington, where representatives from the Safer Neighbourhood Team would be in attendance to listen to Parishioner's concerns/issues and to raise awareness about Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

Councillors Cahill, Double and Garner spoke about different incidents of vandalism in the village. Cllr Rushbrook said she would speak to Sgt Neil Ireland about this. Cllr Double also reported that she had received a telephone call from a Police Forum representative asking about the current vandalism.

Open meeting

The Chairman sought permission from Councillors to bring forward agenda item 11.3. Proposed by Cllr Double, seconded by Cllr Cahill. Unanimously agreed.

11.3 Cemetery / Churchyard

The Chairman apologised for the distress this matter had caused and photographs sent to the Parish Council by Mrs Marsh were passed around for Councillors to view. The Chairman proposed that the Clerk contact the contractors, Herald Contract Services, and inform them to revert to the old method of strimming in the Churchyard, but with equipment using nylon wire. Unanimously agreed by all Councillors.

MF

The Chairman read from the e-mail sent by Tony Farr to Cllr Cahill asking for a meeting to be arranged to inspect the Churchyard and put forward his proposals for maintaining it. It was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Garner that a meeting with Mr Farr should be arranged to ascertain what costs would be involved and whether he had the equipment to do the work. Agreed by all present.

TW/JC

Mrs Marsh and other members of the public present thanked the Chairman and Parish Council for their support and left the meeting.

Close meeting

Clerk's Report:

- Suffolk County Council's Environment and Transport Department have advised of the temporary closure of the C674 Rectory Road, Kedington/Stoke-by-Clare, between 17th and 21st September 2007. Reason for closure is to allow British Telecom to carry out pole and cable replacement works.
- Vandals have removed the safety netting on the new footbridge. Clerk will contact John Goodyear at Suffolk County Council to inform.
- St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Polling District Review. Following the consultation that went around to Councillors, Clerk has replied stating unanimous views of Kedington Parish Councillors that they thought changes were unnecessary and not needed. As Kedington was a compact parish with ease of access to the Polling Station(s) the current polling arrangements suited Parishioners well, particularly the elderly and those without transport.
- St Edmundsbury Borough Council's Planning Department have given permission for a dangerous tree in Dash End Lane to be removed. The tree is protected under TPO 229, but is deemed unsafe and removal was necessary. Urban Forestry has been contracted by the landowners to facilitate the removal of the tree.
- The landowner of a dangerous tree opposite the junction of Dash End Lane in Hundon Road has been contacted to ask if he can get the tree inspected and ensured it is made safe.
- An anonymous letter has been received, postmarked Peterborough, asking the Parish Council to take action about car sales on a piece of Common Land. No area was specified, so Clerk has driven around the whole village, including Calford Green, but could see no evidence of land being "churned up" as was stated in the letter, or of any car sales taking place.
- A report had been received from a Parishioner about a resident in Westward Deals who is repairing cars in his garage during the evening, which was causing congestion with parked cars and blocking access to some resident's driveways. Clerk asked for Councillor's opinions on this. *It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Borough Council for advice as the garage was being used for business and not private use.*
- Handyman has replaced the "steering board" on the play equipment that was broken off by vandals. No inspection of the equipment has yet been carried out by Playworld.

MF

6.1 Consider further action (on action taken or reports received since last meeting:

None.

At this point PC McKenna from the Rural South Safer Neighbourhood Team joined the meeting. The Chairman sought permission from Councillors to close the meeting in order that PC McKenna could give his report. Agreed by all present.

Close meeting**5. Visitor's Reports**

PC McKenna reported on recent incidents in the village at the school; community centre and shops. He said patrols had been increased in Kedington as the village had been named by Sgt Ireland as a "priority". PC McKenna said that response officers were aware of problems in the village and it was hoped that more Police visibility would be effective. PC McKenna said he had spoken to parishioners who had told him that early evenings saw younger groups of youths and older groups were not seen until later in the evening.

PC McKenna said that the Police were getting no "intelligence reports" and this made it difficult for problem youths to be identified. He added that members of the public wanting to give information to the Police, could do this over the telephone without leaving any of their personal details. He said that if they could identify at least one offender, they would be able to gather more information, which in turn could lead to prosecutions.

Cllr Garner asked if incidents of a mailbox being set alight and gates on a private house being targeted had been reported. PC McKenna confirmed they had and said that all incidents should be reported to the SNT as this saved the Police time in backtracking incidents; he again re-iterated all information given could be done anonymously.

Cllr Cahill said he thought that SNT Telephone Operators needed to be educated in procedures as he was aware of some problems. PC McKenna said that staff were being retained because of the vast changes with setting up of SNT's, and that things were getting better. He added that if a person is not happy with the operator when calling the SNT, they could ask to speak to a Senior Officer.

Cllr Cahill said he was aware that Kedington had been prioritised at the monthly Tasking Meeting, but said there is no feedback when cases are concluded. PC McKenna replied that if a person was charged and consequently found guilty of an offence then feedback would be given to the Parish Council.

Cllr Cahill also asked about lead stealing. PC McKenna said that a suspect had been interviewed but had no further information at present.

PC McKenna said that PC Ruth Horton and PCSO Debbie Beer would be hosting the Street Surgery at the Library on 2nd October from 3.30 – 5.00 p.m. He said this event had been advertised and the SNT were hoping for a good turnout.

The Chairman thanked PC McKenna for his attendance at the meeting.

Open meeting

7 Finance Committee

7.1 Receive draft minutes and Financial Statements of 11 September 2007:

Cllr Cahill went through highlights of the meeting:

Financial position was satisfactory; Clerk's travel expenses had been reposted to Accountancy & Audit heading as this was for delivery/picking up Internal Audit documents.

Chairman of Finance Committee and Clerk will be attending the Budget Workshop being run by SALC on 11th October 2007. Cllr Cahill also attending the Charing Skills course, which he noted will have an impact on this year's training budget.

Vote of thanks proposed to Clerk and Accountant for their work on Internal Audit. Clerk will write to the Accountant on behalf of Parish Council.

MF

As in previous years, a grant has been given to the Royal British Legion to purchase a wreath for the Parish Council and donate residue to RBL Poppy Day Appeal.

Cheque for renewal of Insurance Premium had been signed in readiness for renewal on 1st October 2007, which was before the next scheduled FC meeting.

7.2 Consider matters arising from 10 July 2007 minutes:

None.

8

Local Filter

Cllr Cahill reported on an article in the "Rural News" (issued bi-monthly by St Edmundsbury Borough Council) referring to the Code of Conduct Complaints – The Local Filter. Suffolk is piloting the proposed 'local filter' for complaints about Councillors' conduct. Legislation due next year meant that complaints about all Councillors in the Borough would be made directly to the Standards Committee of the member in question's council, and not the Standards Board for England. They would then have to decide whether or not the complaint merited investigation and if it did, they would need to put in motion a process, which could lead to a Standards Committee hearing.

Annex 1

Cllr Cahill said he had sent an e-mail to Joy Bowes, Monitoring Officer at St Edmundsbury Borough Council asking her to clarify more how the Local Filter would work. He also reported that he had asked SALC for clarification, but they had no knowledge of this at present.

9

Office Accommodation (update)

Clerk confirmed she had a copy of the Deeds and Lease for the garage currently being used as an office for the Parish Council. The Chairman pointed out that as two members of the Working Party were not present, the matter should be deferred to the next meeting.

10

Affordable Housing Scheme

The Chairman read a letter received from Donna Wagers, Housing Policy and Development Officer with St Edmundsbury Borough Council, offering her assistance in any way possible with the proposed affordable housing scheme. The Chairman confirmed that the Clerk had responded to the letter, saying that the main stumbling block for the scheme was the availability of land in the village to build on and also mentioning a private proposal (that had not yet gone to the planning stage) to build a large development in the village that would include affordable housing.

11

Environmental / Grounds Maintenance Matters

11.1

Consider quotations for Autumn Cutting contract:

At this point Mr Garner declared an interest, signed the Members Declaration of Interests book and left the meeting.

The Chairman passed around to Councillors the four quotations received. One of the contractors could only fulfil part of the work, as he did not have the equipment to carry out cutting along the riverbank. Another quotation was several hundred pounds higher than two others. A further quotation received from a current contractor used by the Parish Council was also deemed to be too costly. The quotation received by Peter Garner was by far the most cost effective and it was proposed by Cllr Double and seconded by Cllr Cahill that the contract be awarded to him. Agreed by all.

Mr Garner rejoined the meeting and was informed by the Chairman that the contract had been awarded to him as it represented "Best Value" against the other quotations received. However, the Chairman said that the work would need to be done to Parish Council standards and checked by Cllr Cahill who had volunteered to do this. The Chairman went on to re-iterate that if the work was not done as per the specification, the Parish Council would expect it to be rectified within the price quoted. Mr Garner accepted this and agreed to let Cllr Cahill know when he would be commencing the work.

PG

The Chairman also asked for it to be noted, that Grounds Contract "C", Autumn Cutting would need to be a new budget heading for the next financial year.

MF

11.2	Risbridge Meadow (update):	The Chairman read from a e-mail sent by Dave Bax. It confirmed that the Volunteer Group had made good the path in front of the third bench, which had been highlighted to them and also cut a window through the vegetation so the river could be seen at this point. Chippings had been topped up on the steps and the new disabled gate way had been installed. The Volunteers also pulled out some of the Ragwort. Mr Bax confirmed that he had spoken to Mark Felton about cutting some of the meadow, so he was aware of what to cut and what to leave.	
11.3	Cemetery / Churchyard:	This matter had been dealt with earlier on the agenda.	
11.4	Report on trees on Watermill Field / Riverside Walks:	<p>Cllr Garner reported that he had inspected the tree on Watermill Field and agreed with comments made by Susan Berridge in her e-mail to the Parish Council. Cllr Garner said he would recommend felling the tree. The Chairman proposed that the Clerk should write to Vesty Estates to ask if they had a Tree Specialist who could look at the tree, as it was situated on their land.</p> <p>Cllr Garner also reported that he had been down on the Riverside Walks to look at the Ash Tree where paths 2 & 3 are located. Cllr Garner agreed with Susan Berridge's comments that the branch on the tree (resting on the ground) could be left in place and paths cut around it. He agreed that the branch would make a good habitat for wildlife.</p>	MF
11.5	Adults playing football on Old School Field:	Cllr Double reported there are two men regularly using Old School Field to play football. Cllr Double added that the goal posts on the field are for the use of children, not adults. She said that a child had been knocked over by the force of the ball kicked by these men and she proposed that the Parish Council put up a sign to help alleviate this happening again. The matter was discussed and it was agreed that there would be problems "enforcing" wording on a sign. Councillors felt that the play area was to the side of the field and some of the equipment had fencing around it to protect children.	
11.6	Any other environmental/grounds maintenance matters:	<p>A suggestion was made for the Parish Council to approach Susan Berridge to see if she would like to take on the permanent role of Tree Warden. The Chairman asked the Clerk to contact Mrs Berridge.</p> <p>The Chairman read from an e-mail received from Peter Byron informing the Parish Council that a large branch had broken off a tree at the Westward Deals end of Church Walk and stating that this may well serve as a reminder that works need to be carried out to some of the tree along Church Walk. The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had commissioned a survey of the trees in 2005 and that legally the landowners are responsible. The Chairman suggested that the Clerk write to the landowners to see if they would be prepared to facilitate the work needed.</p>	MF MF
11.6.1	Permission to plant a tree on Risbridge Meadow in memory of Geoff Rushbrook:	Borough Councillor Marion Rushbrook had requested permission to plant a tree on Risbridge Meadow in memory of her late husband, Geoff. The Clerk confirmed that John Smithson from St Edmundsbury Parks Department had given his permission. It was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Cahill that the Parish Council gave their consent. Agreed by all present. Cllr Garner offered assistance to Mrs Rushbrook in the purchase and planting of a tree and he will liaise with her direct about this.	PG

12	Highway/Footpath/Street Furniture Matters	
12.1	Relocation of Post Box in Silver Street): The Chairman reported on a letter received from the Royal Mail requested permission to relocate the post box outside the village stores on to the strip of land owned by the Parish Council. The Chairman passed around a photograph showing the new location and all Councillors present agreed this.	
12.2	Lay-by in Hundon Road (update): Clerk is currently looking into further funding grants.	MF
12.3	Wooden Gates (update): Clerk confirmed that specifications still not received from Suffolk County Council and she will follow this up. The Chairman brought an article in the Ketton Review about the proposed gates to the attention of Councillors present. It was noted that some of the facts in this article were incorrect and a reply from the Parish Council would be drafted for the next issue of Ketton Review. It was discussed that flashing "30mph" signs might be an alternative to slow down traffic entering the village. Clerk requested to look into this.	MF
12.4	School Crossing (update): Nothing heard from Kevin Shipp at Suffolk County Council. Clerk will chase this.	MF
12.5	Any other highway/footpath/street furniture matters: Notice Board in School Road has been vandalised again. Clerk reported that someone had tried to set fire to it and one side was completely blackened. The Chairman proposed that the Handyman be asked to repair the Notice Board, rub down and stain. When the repair is done, the contractors will fulfil order to put in laminated glass. Seconded by Cllr Cahill. Agreed by all present. The Chairman requested that the Gazebo in Silver Street Park be put on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting. He added that some of the panes of glass in the roof had been smashed and as they were very expensive to replace, an alternative should be discussed. Cllr Garner reported about flooding in Silver Street during heavy rain. He proposed the Parish Council write to Highways about the drains in Silver Street (which need replacing) as the pipes that allow the water to run off into the river are blocked and broken. The Chairman seconded this. Agreed by all present.	MF
	Guillotine With the time at 21.45 p.m. the Chairman asked Councillors if they would like to raise the guillotine. It was proposed by Cllr Cahill and seconded by Cllr Garner that the guillotine should be raised by fifteen minutes. Agreed by all present.	
13	Housing / Planning	
13.1	Applications for discussion at meeting:	
13.1.1	5 Mill Road: Rona Hopkinson, Principal Planner with St Edmundsbury Borough Council had visited the site with the Developer, who will be submitting plans showing the hedge and drive set back off the highway. The Developer will write to the occupiers of the houses. Once the Developer has submitted an appropriate scheme, which the Council can discharge/agree, he will implement the works by the end of the next planting season.	
13.1.2	The Limes, Mill Road The Chairman reported about portable structures being installed in the garden of The Limes in Mill Road. This matter was now being looked in to by the Planning Department.	

13.2	Planning Applications – Observations conveyed by Parish Council:	
	2 Haverhill Road Acceptable	Erection of single storey extension to front elevation.
	Mill House, Sturmer Road Acceptable	Erection of single storey extension to front & side elevations following demolition of existing front porch and washhouse.
	16 Dane Close Acceptable	Erection of conservatory to rear elevation following demolition of existing conservatory.
	Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road Acceptable	Change of use from woodland to domestic garden and construction of tennis court.
	Dane House, Haverhill Road Acceptable	Erection of single storey extension to west elevation and single storey extension to east elevation and retention of structure over pond
	23 Haverhill Road Unacceptable	New dwelling and double garage following demolition of existing garage.
	“Southview”, Haverhill Road Acceptable	Erection of single storey extension to provide entrance hall and link from house to garage.
13.3	Land adjacent to “Serena” Dash End Lane Unacceptable	Erection of 2½ storey dwelling. Creation of new vehicular access and landscaping following demolition of sheds.
	Land adjacent to “Wishing Well” Sturmer Road Unacceptable	Erection of two storey dwelling and alteration to vehicular access following demolition of garage.
	Planning Applications – Decisions received from Borough Council:	
	Land to rear of Nos 4, 5, 6 School Crescent, Kedington Granted	Relocation of garage (revised scheme)
	Ketton Early Birds Granted	Erection of pre-school/out building at Kedington Primary School
	2 Haverhill Road Granted	Erection of single storey extension to front elevation.
	Mill House, Sturmer Road Granted	Erection of single storey extension to front & side elevations following demolition of existing front porch and washhouse.
	16 Dane Close Granted	Erection of conservatory to rear elevation following demolition of existing conservatory.
	Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road Granted	Change of use from woodland to domestic garden and construction of tennis court.
	Dane House, Haverhill Road Granted	Erection of single storey extension to west elevation and single storey extension to east elevation and retention of structure over pond
	23 Haverhill Road Refused	New dwelling and double garage following demolition of existing garage.
	“Southview”, Haverhill Road Granted	Erection of single storey extension to provide entrance hall and link from house to garage.

13.4	Any other housing/planning matters: Chairman read from a letter received from Jane Stanley, Principal Enforcement Officer with St Edmundsbury Borough Council concerning land to rear of 4, 5 and 6 School Crescent, in reply to concerns raised by the Parish Council. The letter stated that a temporary access had been constructed on the site until a telegraph pole had been relocated. This work had now been carried out, the temporary access filled in.	
14	Consultations	
14.1	Closure of Post Officer: This will be circulated to Councillors.	MF
14.2	Suffolk Strategic Partnership – Performance Reward Grants: This will be circulated to Councillors.	MF
14.3	Shaping Health – Commission for Patient & Public Involvement in Health: This will be circulated to Councillors.	MF
15	Any other reports (on-going matters)	
15.1	Contact Magazine: It was agreed that the Contact Magazine will be published on the Parish Council Website. Clerk will print off one copy and ask the School for a quotation to print off 500 – 1000 copies, which will be distributed to homes in the village by mail drop.	MF
16	Events	
16.1	Nominations:	
16.1.1	Suffolk ACRE 70th Anniversary AGM (27th September 2007): Any Councillor wishing to attend to inform Clerk.	
16.1.2	Suffolk Preservation Society Training Days: Any Councillor wishing to attend to inform Clerk.	
16.2	Councillor absences (update): These were noted by Clerk.	
17	Any other business (new matters) None	
	The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 16 October 2007 at 7.40 p.m.	

The meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.

Signed:

Date: