MINUTES OF A MEETING OF KEDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, 20 MARCH 2012
HELD AT THE LIBRARY, ARMS LANE, KEDINGTON

***Present**:*

Cllr Terry Wheeler (Chairman)
Cllr Zoe Palmer (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Peter Byron
Cllr Peter Donoghue
Cllr Peter Garner
Cllr Nathan Loader
Cllr Simon McGuire
Cllr Richard Pound
Cllr Peter Rowsell

Ms Marion Farrant (Parish Clerk)

In attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Anne Gower; Mrs B Surridge (Parishioner); Mr Shaun Jarvis (Countryside Forum Representative).

ACTION

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

Mrs Surridge expressed an interest in agenda items 9 and 10.1. Mr Jarvis expressed an interest in agenda item 11 and reported he had done the bird survey along The Cut as requested. Mr Jarvis also stated he would be writing a letter in support of the Chairman to the Haverhill Echo in light of their published article on the Standards Committee Hearing.

Open Meeting

2 Welcome and apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone present. Apologies for absence were received from PCSO Kayla Packman, Bury Rural South Safer Neighbourhood Team.

3 To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2012

Cllr Donoghue requested a change to agenda item 8 - Review Kedington Parish Council Standing Orders. Cllr Donoghue offered up different wording for the previously agreed new Standing Order, which he suggested should read "The Parish Council reserves the right, having previously accepted apologies for absence, to withdraw their acceptance in the light of new information". A resolution to accept this change to the minutes and then agree the minutes as a true record was put forward by Cllr Rowsell and seconded by Cllr Garner. There were no other resolutions. Unanimously agreed. The Chair duly signed the minutes, with the exception of the second page, which he will initial after the changes have been made.

4 To receive members' Declarations of Interest on agenda items in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct (and section 106 of the LGFA 1992)

Councillors Palmer, Garner, McGuire, Loader and Rowsell declared an interest in agenda item 7.4. Councillor Pound declared an interest in items 11.1.

Close meeting

5 Visitor's Reports

Suffolk County Councillor Anne Gower

- Suffolk County Council has confirmed there will be no costs for permission to close roads or being supplied with road closure and diversion signs for those hold a Diamond Jubilee Street Party.

- Suffolk County Council has launched a new referral service provided by CareAware. It is the first local authority in the country to directly refer customers to CareAware in order to help families prepare for any future care needs. CareAware offers free and impartial information and advice for the people of Suffolk; it is a non-profit making public information and advisory service specialising in the issues relating to the funding of long term care for older people.

- Phase 1 of the School Organisation Review had now been completed. The new two-tier system saw improvements on Key Stage 2 results in 2011 on 2009 levels – when the process started.

- Suffolk Libraries management has now been moved to a new operating model. The Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) is now being established and will help to reducing the budget by around 30% over three years, from £9m to £6m.

Bury Rural South Safer Neighbourhood Team

- Report from the Bury Rural South SNT is attached to these minutes as Annex 1. — Annex 1

Open meeting

6 Clerks' Report

Clerk's report is attached to these minutes as Annex 2. — Annex 2

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

It was suggested that the Friendship Club; Royal British Legion (Kedington) Branch; Kedington Women's Institute and the Community Café could be possible beneficiaries of a legacy left by a Kedington woman in her Last Will and Testament.

7 Finance Committee

7.1 Consider any matters arising from 14 February 2012 minutes:

None.

7.2 Receive draft minutes of 13 March 2012 meeting:

Cllr Palmer (Chair of Finance Committee) went through highlights of the meeting:

- Financial position at 29 February 2012 is that £35,358.29 (80.32%) of the budget had been spent, leaving a balance of £8,661.71. Additionally £21,265.14 is held in Reserves.
- Routine payments for rent, broadband and Clerk's salary agreed.
- Statement for expenditure of grants and donations for 2011/2012 received.
- No outstanding payments for the financial year 2011/2012.
- Fidelity guarantee agreed on current insurance policy at £100,000.
- Asset Register reviewed and agreed for financial year 2012/2013.
- No confirmation of precept payment from St Edmundsbury Borough Council for financial year 2012/2013 received to date.
- NALC have reported there would be no pay increases for third consecutive year. Parish Council had allowed for this at precept

meeting in November 2011 and agreed if there was no national pay increase, Parish Council would offer a 2% pay rise to Clerk.

- A review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit in accordance with the Account and Audit (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2006 was carried out and agreed.
- Ten payments totalling £2,692.69 for supplier payments as at 29 February 2012 approved on 13 March 2012 and cheques signed by Cllr Palmer and Cllr McGuire (Nat West cheques only) and Cllr Garner (Bank of Ireland cheques only).

7.3 Consider quotations for Watermill Bridge improvements:
Cllr Donoghue reported he had received quotations from two contractors:

M D Landscapes £1292.00 plus vat
Rushmere Fencing £3195.00 plus vat

The quotation from Rushmere Fencing included temporary traffic lights while the work was being carried out. M D Landscapes' quotation included manual traffic control while the work was being carried out. A resolution was put forward by Cllr Donoghue, seconded by Cllr Palmer that M D Landscapes be offered the contract for this work. There were no other resolutions; motion carried by eight votes; one abstention.

7.4 Review grant application from Ketton Early Birds and Kedington School:
At this point Cllrs Palmer, Garner, McGuire, Loader and Rowsell declared an interest, signed the Interest's Book and left the room while the matter was discussed. The Chairman read out respective letters from Ketton Early Birds and Kedington School.

A resolution was put forward by Cllr Byron, seconded by Cllr Donoghue to grant Ketton Early Birds £375 towards the cost of a new piece of ICT equipment called 'Fizz book', under Sn 137, LGA 1972, as being of benefit to local people. There were no other resolutions. Unanimously agreed.

A resolution was put forward by Cllr Donoghue, seconded by Cllr Byron to loan Kedington School Eco Group some of the litter picking equipment donated to the Parish Council from St Edmundsbury Borough Council and grant the group £50 towards the cost of gloves, under Sn 137, LGA 1972, as being of benefit to local people. There were no other resolutions. Unanimously agreed.

8 Standards Committee Hearings for alleged breaches of Code of Conduct
The Chairman addressed the meeting, stating in light of the recent news article in the Haverhill Echo, he wanted to give clarity on the Standards Committee Hearings. The Chairman reported there were three separate complaints made to the Standards Committee at St Edmundsbury Borough Council by former councillor Gloria Double:

- Complaint 01/10 cited six councillors for allegedly humiliating a fellow member of the Parish Council; verbally abusing and making false accusations towards the fellow member and collusion with other members of the Parish Council to bully and harass the fellow member. One councillor was also alleged to have physically hurt the fellow member and at times was threatening towards the fellow member. Five councillors were found not to have breached the Code of Conduct, but Cllr Wheeler (Chairman) was found to be in breach. At a Hearing in February 2012, Cllr Wheeler was censured for using a politically incorrect phrase, but cleared of bullying and harassing a fellow councillor and collusion in that he covered up discrepancies in the minutes of Parish Council meetings.

A resolution was put forward by Cllr Donoghue, seconded by Cllr Palmer, for a vote of "confidence" in the Chairman. There were no other resolutions and the motion was carried after a unanimous show of hands in favour.

- Complaint 03/10 cited four councillors and an ex-councillor for allegedly using their positions improperly to try to have a pavement constructed outside properties they owned and attended meetings of the Parish Council and meetings with others at which the provision of the pavement was considered. That another member of the Parish Council colluded with other members by chairing a meeting at which the alleged interests of one councillor and former councillor were discussed. Three councillors (one of which was Cllr Wheeler) were cleared of breaching the Code of Conduct. One councillor (Cllr Palmer) and ex councillor Jane Farmer were found to be in breach, but the Hearing for this complaint concluded that no action would be taken against Cllr Palmer for not declaring a prejudicial interest when the question of creating a footpath that would run in front of a property which she owned was discussed. At the time of the alleged breach, she had been a new councillor for only a short period and had been given inappropriate advice about declaring an interest. After she sought further advice and attended training an interest was declared at all future meetings.

- Complaint 06/10 cited a now ex-councillor for bullying, harassment and collusion with other councillors to discriminate against a fellow councillor. The now ex-councillor was found not to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.

Councillor Palmer also addressed the meeting to give clarity about complaint number 01/10, in which she was found not to be in breach of the Code of Conduct for bullying, harassment and collusion. Councillor Palmer stated the Investigating Officer for St Edmundsbury Borough Council found that in the balance of probability, Councillor Palmer had not breached the Code of Conduct. With regard to complaint number 03/10, Cllr Palmer confirmed that no action was taken against her, as the Chairman of the Standards Committee felt there were mitigating circumstances.

9 St Edmundsbury Borough Council's Vision 2031

Cllr McGuire addressed the meeting stating his concern about the Haverhill Vision 2031 and the plan to build 2,500 houses in north east Haverhill. Responses to the consultation documents have to be in by 30 April 2012.

Close meeting

Mrs Surridge reported that the Vision 2031 consultation documents showed an increased area to that in previous LDF documents. She added that the consultation has to be underpinned by the Core Strategy and this showed no coalescence of Kedington with Haverhill. Mrs Surridge said in the previous LDF consultation, the Inspector had written he trusted the Borough Council would give sympathetic thought to Calford Green and that the beauty of Suffolk, with little hamlets comprising of listed buildings should not be swallowed up by large developments. There are also wildlife corridors/areas to be considered. Mrs Surridge said the Borough Council would welcome responses by groups of people and they would be looking at the quality of comments made.

Cllr Loader stated the Core Strategy regarding the development of Haverhill is not supported. He requested the Parish Council should insist land within the Haverhill boundary is developed first before it spills out into other parishes.

Open meeting

10 H M Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations 2012

10.1 Commemorative gift for children in the Parish under 16 years of age:

Cllr Garner declared an interest and signed the Interest's Book. Cllr McGuire provided a catalogue containing commemorative gifts which all councillors looked at. A resolution was put forward by Cllr McGuire, seconded by Cllr Pound that a commemorative coin and case be purchased for each child in the

village and Calford Green under the age of sixteen years, with the wording "Presented by Kedington Parish Council" on the reverse of the coin There were no other resolutions, unanimously agreed. Chairman asked Clerk to order 300 coins and cases plus 15 extra, which the residents of Barton Grove requested and will pay for.

11 Environment / Grounds Maintenance Matters

11.1 Strimming Contract 2012:

Councillor Pound declared an interest, signed the Interest's Book and left the meeting while the matter was discussed. Cllr Garner stated he had been looking into regulations from the 1981 Wildlife Act concerning cutting in March and April. The Chairman reported the new "windows" had now been measured and marked out. A resolution was put forward by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr McGuire that the contact for 2012 should be renewed in favour of Mr Pound at a cost of £871 (same as last year) and a man-hour rate of £13.00. There were no other resolutions, unanimously agreed. Cllr Rowsell asked for Mr Pound to furnish a Risk Assessment and Method Statement for the contract.

11.2 Award Grounds Maintenance contracts for next three years (2012 – 2015):

Quotations from M D Landscapes (Anglia) Ltd and Suffolk County Council were received and discussed.

Grounds Contract "A" – Churchyard, Watermill Field, Riverside Walks awarded to M D Landscapes at a cost of £8,000 for three years (price held each year) under a resolution put forward by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Donoghue and unanimously agreed.

Grounds Contract "E" – Great Meadow awarded to M D Landscapes at a cost of £1,360 for three years (price held each year) under a resolution put forward by Cllr Palmer, seconded by Cllr Byron and unanimously agreed.

Grounds Contract "B" – Silver Street Park and Old School Field awarded to Suffolk County Council at a cost of £570.52 for Year 1; £584.78 for Year 2 and £599.40 for Year 3 under a resolution put forward by Cllr Palmer, seconded by the Chairman and unanimously agreed.

Grounds Contract – Calford Green awarded to Suffolk County Council at a cost of £360.74 for Year 1; £369.75 for Year 2 and £379.00 for Year 3 under a resolution put forward by Cllr Palmer, seconded by Cllr Garner and unanimously agreed.

11.3 Any other environmental/grounds maintenance matters:

The Chairman read out an e-mail from Steve Brown from the KCA requesting a further dog bin been placed near Bell Cottage at the end of Arms Lane. Councillors debated this issue and felt that as there were already three dog bins servicing the Great Meadow, if dog owners were not of a mind to use these, they would not use one at the end of the lane. Councillors were requested to bring ideas for signs that could be put up to deter dog owners letting their dogs foul on open areas and pathways. Agenda item for April meeting. MF

Cllr McGuire reported the dogwood in Mill Road near to the entrance of Risbridge Meadow needed pruning and cutting back. Cllr Byron said he would attend to this. PB

12 Highway/Footpath/Street Furniture matters

12.1 Suffolk County Council Street Lighting Initiative

Cllr Rowsell reported he had received no reply to an energy review document he had sent to Suffolk County Council about LED lights, which could be offered as an alternative to turning off street lights. Agreed that Parish Council would write to ascertain why Cllr Rowsell had received no response. MF

12.2 Any other Highway/Footpath/Street Furniture matters:
Temporary road closure on 26 March 2012 - Kings Hill and School Road for manhole replacement.

Temporary road closure from 02 – 10 April 2012 – Mill Road between Risbridge Drive and Dash End Lane for BT Duct Laying.

13 Any other reports (on-going matters)
None.

14 Housing/Planning

14.1 Applications for discussion at meeting:
None.

14.2 Planning Applications – Observations conveyed by Parish Council:
None.

14.3 Planning Applications – Decisions received from Borough Council:
None.

14.4 Any other housing / planning matters:
None.

15 Consultations

15.1 Healthwatch in Suffolk is on its way
This document had been e-mailed to all Councillors.

16 Events

16.1 Nominations:
16.1.1 St Edmundsbury Parish Conference, Monday 23 April 2012, Great Barton Village Hall, 6.00 – 9.00 p.m.
Cllr McGuire
16.1.2 Working together in the Stour Valley Conference, Thursday 17 May 2012, Langham Village Hall, 9.45 a.m. – 2.45 p.m.
No uptake
16.1.3 NALC People in Action Conference, 24 May 2012, London
No uptake

16.2 Councillor absences (update):
The Chairman requested Councillors update the Clerk with any planned absences.

17 Any other business (new matters for discussion only)
None.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

The date of the next meeting will be **Tuesday 17 April 2012** commencing at 7.40 p.m.in The Library, Arms Lane, Kedington.

Signed …… Dated ……..