

***Minutes of The Great Bentley Parish Council Meeting Thursday
6th July 2006 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm***

Present

Cllr William Herbert(Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter De-Vaux Balbirnie, Cllr David Gibbon, Cllr George Wright, Cllr Jonathan Hills, Cllr Robert Taylor, Cllr Ian Morton

In Attendance

C. R. Finn (Stand in Clerk), ECC Councillor D Robinson Approximately 16 members of public.

Questions from the Public

A lady congratulated the council on the floral displays throughout the village.

A question was asked as to why the two parish councillors who are also district councillors, voted in favour of the district plan at district council when this parish council has registered its objection to the Oasis Development. Cllr. P De-Vaux Balbirnie and Cllr. R. Taylor both explained that they were voting on a composite plan which had to be agreed as a whole with no alternative.

Several questions were asked and a long discussion ensued regarding the Wednesday motor cycle meet on the green. Problems, including obstruction of the highway by burger vans, bikes on the green, litter and lack of action by police were all discussed. PC Andy Hughes said that the police did what they could but suggested that the situation could be better managed by all if it were classed as an 'organised event' and restricted to a certain area. The main problem with this would be finding one of the bikers to take responsibility for the event. PC Hughes suggested that discussions take place between the police and councillors to examine options.

Cllr .R. Taylor has asked Environmental Health Department to check on the registration of the burger vans.

Councillors suggested that the clerk should check up on the council's public liability insurance for both an organised and non-organised event on the green.

It was noted by one member of the public that the green was being dug up in one place. Cllr. W. Herbert was aware and had been assured that it would be reinstated.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Fox who is currently in hospital

2. Election of Chairman

Cllr. R. Taylor nominated Cllr. Jonathan Hills as chairman. Cllr. P De-Vaux Balbirnie seconded this. There being no other nominations, Cllr. J. Hills accepted the position and chaired the meeting from here onwards.

3. Acceptance of Office

Cllr. J. Hills signed the acceptance of office form for chairmanship. Cllr. J. Hills thanked the previous chairman for her service to the council and asked that the clerk send a letter of thanks to her.

He also welcomed the new Cllr. I. Morton to the council.

4. Minutes

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th June were approved and signed as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr W Herbert and seconded by Cllr P De-Vaux Balbirnie

5. Declaration of Interest

Cllr. R. Taylor declared a possible interest in Allotments

Cllr. W. Herbert declared an interest in planning

6. Resignation of Councillor

The clerk read out the letter of resignation from Lynda McWilliams

7. Vacancy

There were three applicants for the one vacant post on the council. These were Mr Roger Adams, Miss Yee Wah Cheung, Mr Colin Johnson.

Cllr. P De-Vaux Balbirnie proposed and Cllr. D. Gibbon seconded a secret ballot to co-opt the councillor.

The result of the ballot was a clear majority for Mr Roger Adams

After signing the Acceptance of Office form and Register of Interests Cllr. R. Adams joined the meeting.

8. Correspondence

- Letter from Mr M Dorling regarding the map of the village to be sited in the village centre. He asked that the map be purchased by the Parish Council so that the VAT element may be reclaimed. Proposed by Cllr. R. Taylor seconded by Cllr. P De-Vaux Balbirnie, the clerk was asked to liaise with Mr Dorling and purchase the map.
- Email from Bev Adams querying ownership of the land by telephone box where cars are for sale. Councillors said that this had been investigated and was part of the highway. Clerk to write to Bev Adams
- Letter from Gt Bromley PC ref Oasis development. Agreed that the council had already made their objections to this site known.
- Email from Bev Adams thanks to Carnival Committee
- E-on Energy – notification of increase in charges.
- Letter from A. R. Blake expressing concerns about motorcycle meet.
- Copy of Parish Magazine letter from Barry Spake regarding sale of grass verge adjacent to Simmons site.
- Letter from Jan Turner, Conservation Group, re planting of wild daffodils and recycling issues. Proposed Cllr. P De-Vaux Balbirnie seconded Cllr. D Gibbon it was agreed clerk should write to Conservation Group giving permission to plant.
- Report from Mr M Dorling outlining the history of the spinney plus a Letter from David Gollifer, Conservation Group, regarding a survey of the spinney.
To be discussed at next meeting, clerk to put on agenda.
- East of England Rural Forum Priorities for Task Group – to Cllr. P De-Vaux Balbirnie

- ECC Highways Winter Service Review – to be completed by clerk.
- ECC Highways Planned Parish Visits Satisfaction Survey – to be completed by clerk.
- TDC Gambling Licensing Policy Statement
- TDC District Replacement Plan Inquiry – Pre Inquiry Meeting minutes.
- Minutes of TDC and representatives of town and parish councils meeting.
- Minutes from Tendring Community Safety Partnership.

9. Information and Reports

Cllr .R. Taylor asked to discuss the article put in the parish magazine by the clerk.

10. County and District Councillors Reports

Essex County Council Report

Cllr. D. Robinson said that there was little to report from county council. He did however say that ongoing discussions were taking place with Network Rail regarding realignment of roads at level crossings which will effect Gt. Bentley. The next parish council meeting will include a presentation by Network Rail.

Tendring District Council Report

Cllr. R. Taylor reported that TDC finances were healthy with the budget outturn on target. This will allow proposed capital expenditure to go ahead.

11. Update

a) Policing

PC Andy Hughes reported that the number of reported incidents increased when the fairground was in the village. This is normal. He also reported that there had been a spate of thefts from diesel storage tanks in the area and warned everyone to be wary of this.

b) Highways

Councillors expressed concern over two electricity poles, one at Heckford Corner, one in Plough Road, which are leaning over and bringing the cables close to high vehicles. It was reported that the pole at Heckford Corner had been outstanding for 2 years. Agreed that clerk should report these two poles to Electricity Company (EDF).

c) PCSO

The clerk reported that he had seen the PCSO that morning and she sent her apologies for not attending. It was agreed that the PCSO should be sent a copy of the Agenda in future. Clerk to arrange.

d) War Memorial

Agreed that it would be necessary to apply for and be awarded grants, before authorising the contractor to start work. The contractor must also be informed that the work must be completed by, or started after November, to avoid remembrance day. Clerk to apply for grants and inform contractor.

e) Network Rail

This will be discussed at the next meeting.

f) Bovis – Simmons Yard

Cllr. J. Hills reported that correspondence was continuing in attempts to obtain the best possible deal for the Parish Council to the benefit of the village. At the moment details must be kept out of the public domain as negotiations are ongoing. Cllr. J. Hills to continue with negotiations.

g) Affordable Housing

Nothing to report.

h) ROSPA

The safety inspection report was passed to Cllr. W. Herbert so that he could check on what needs to be done.

i) Resource Centre

Councillors agreed that there was no problem with the PCSO using the resource Centre. Any problems that this might cause can be discussed at the next meeting when both the clerk and PCSO should be present.

12. New Items for Agenda

a) Trees for Village Green

Cllr. J. Hills reported that he had received a proposal that trees should be planted on the edge of the green. Councillors were unanimous in their objection to such a proposal.

b) New Tree Warden

Letter from TDC asking the council to confirm Janet Bloomfield as a Tree Warden for Gt. Bentley. Agreed that only one Tree Warden was required and that the clerk should check up with TDC in case the existing Tree Warden had not completed the correct paperwork. To be discussed and the next meeting.

c) Committees

Councillors were asked to review the composition of the committees. Cllr. W. Herbert suggested that perhaps the allotments committee was unnecessary as it rarely met. It became apparent the Play Area Committee was also convened very rarely.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Constitution/Standing Orders should be amended to reflect a proposed structure of just four committees.

1) Combined Allotments, Play Area and Village Green Committee, (new name yet to be agreed) with membership of five. Nominated councillors are: Cllr. I. Morton, Cllr. R. Taylor, Cllr. W. Herbert, Cllr. G. Wright, Cllr. D. Gibbon

2) Planning Committee. Nominated councillors are: Cllr. P De-Vaux Balbirnie, Cllr. J. Hills, Cllr. R. Taylor, Cllr. G. Wright, Cllr. W. Herbert, Cllr. E. Fox,

3) Finance Committee. Nominated councillors are: Cllr. R. Adams, Cllr. J. Hills, Cllr. W. Herbert, Cllr. R. Taylor, Cllr. I. Morton

4) Action Committee. Nominated councillors are: Cllr. W. Herbert, Cllr R Taylor, Cllr. J. Hills, Cllr. G. Wright

Clerk to produce draft changes to the constitution for approval at the next meeting.

13. Finance

a) Items of Expenditure for Approval

The schedule of expenditure for July was submitted to Council, Schedule attached.

Proposed to be approved by Cllr. W. Herbert, seconded by Cllr. R. Taylor Council agreed. The cheques were signed.

b) Bank signatory Mandate

Clerk reported that the bank mandate is still being processed by the bank. Cllr. J. Hills was given a mandate form for completion.

c) End of Year Accounts

Cllr. R. Taylor reported that the previous clerk said that he had now completed the year end accounts for 2004/5 and that 2005/6 would be completed by 1st August 2006

14. Clerks Report

Nothing to report.

15. Committee Reports

a) Allotments

Cllr. W. Herbert reported that the toilet cistern needed replacing. It was agreed that this should be done and Cllr. W. Herbert agreed to organise the plumber.

b) Planning

Three applications were examined – comments on each are shown and will be passed on to TDC Planning Department.

06/01059/FUL Retrospective application for change of use of redundant farm buildings to class B8 (Storage) - South Heath Farm, South Heath Rd.

Councillors had no objections to the change of use but were concerned as to the purpose of the other barn on the site.

06/01097/FUL Extension and alterations – The Croft, Thorrington Road, Great Bentley.

Councillors object to this application due to the lack of vehicle parking available on and around these premises. It is felt that any extension could necessitate more staff which will require more parking

Tree Preservation Order 06/00011 Specified trees on land at rear of The Hawthorns, Station Road. Great Bentley.

Councillors noted the order.

Clerk to pass comments to Planning Department.

c) Play Area

Cllr. D. Green reported that some of the items highlighted by ROSPA have been done. He will check what else needs doing. The roundabout supplied by Record Play Equipment is seized. Clerk requested to write to them asking that they rectify the problem.

d) Village Green

Cllr. W. Herbert read out the Committee's report. Again the main concern was over the motorcycle meetings. It was agreed that a working party comprising Cllr. R. Adams, Cllr. W. Herbert and Cllr. G. Gibbon committee to discuss with police and other interested parties.

Clerk was asked to check whether the Highways Agency payment for verge cutting had been applied for yet.

16. Other Reports

a) TDALC

Minutes of last meeting are available.

b) Footpaths

No Report

c) Transport

No report

d) Caretakers Report

The caretakers report was read out. The caretaker asked who he should liaise with in the course of his duties. It was agreed that this should be the clerk.

Clerk to inform caretaker.

17. Matters Arising From Minutes

a) Cllr. J. Hills reported that investigations into the ownership of the strip of land had proved inconclusive through an initial Land Registry Search.

b) Cllr. R. Taylor raised a matter of an article placed in the parish magazine without first getting approval of the chairman. To be discussed at the next meeting.

18. Further Questions from the Public.

- a) The previous council chairman, Lynda McWilliams said that some of the problems raised in the ROSPA report were already being dealt with.
- b) Someone asked if the RBL Flag pole could be serviced as some of the rollers were jamming. It was agreed that this work should be carried out. Clerk to arrange.
- c) It was reported that Highways were supposed to be clearing the junction of Heckford Road an A133 but do not yet appear to have done so. Clerk to chase.

Chairman.....

Date.....