

POLSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21st February 2008 in the Village Hall Polstead.

Present: Mr Nick Brandt (in the Chair), Mr Michael Hackford (Vice-Chair), Mr John Baxter, Mrs Mandy Flather, Mr Richard Kilshaw, Mrs Anne Macwilson, & Mrs Trish Ravensdale.

In attendance: Mr David Yorke-Edwards (County Council), Mrs Sue Wigglesworth (District Councillor), Mrs Sandra Gray (Clerk) and four members of the public

1) Apologies for Absence: Melissa Gaylean

2) Declarations of Interests:

Councillor Richard Kilshaw declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 Heath Road Footway. The Declarations of Interest book was signed.

3) Minutes of the meetings of 17th January 2008

The Minutes of the 17th January 2008 were approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman.

4) Matters Arising:

The Chairman reported that the work on by way 34 (Item 6) had been completed and that the thank you letters to Father Christmas and the vicar in relation to "Carols on the Green" had been sent (Item 6).

5) Reports:

a. County Councillor:

David Yorke-Edwards reported to the Council that the council tax rate increase for the next year would be 3.75%, one of the lowest in East Anglia.

As a result of the refusal of Ipswich to become a unitary authority, the Government has asked the Boundary Committee to look at Local Government in Norfolk & Suffolk. Their proposals are due to be completed by the end of the year.

b. District Councillor

Sue Wigglesworth reported to the Council that a letter regarding a seminar on the 9th April 2008 for local affordable housing would soon be circulated. She requested that a Councillor from Polstead attend, as affordable housing had been a success in Polstead. This success should encourage other Parish Councils.

c. Suffolk Constabulary

The Clerk reported that Melissa had sent her apologies and would request another officer, Glen Boreham, to attend the meeting. The Clerk further reported that Melissa had been unable to attend the January meeting due to an incident in Boxford requiring her attendance.

Glen Boreham attended prior to the Council meeting and reported to the Clerk and Councillor Trish Ravensdale that there had been two incidents in Polstead. One was the damage done to the fencing on the Playing Fields and the other was a piece of lead stolen from the Church roof. He requested that, if anyone is approached for scrap metal, they should contact the police and, if safe to do so, takes the registration number of any vehicles.

The police are currently emphasising the locking of car doors.

Due to theft at a farm Glen Boreham had to leave before the meeting started.

6) Reports & Questions from Councillors:

Councillor Richard Kilshaw reported that the vandalism on the Playing Field on the 27th January 2008 was now what the Police describe as “finalised” as there was nothing more that could be done in terms of their investigation. The Council discussed the placing of a metal pedestrian gate at some stage at the entrance to the Playing Field. The Council agreed the revised amendments to the Playing Field Conditions on the application form. A copy is attached to the Minutes, Appendix One.

Councillor Richard Kilshaw reported that a badger set had been blocked in Dollops Wood and DEFRA were investigating the situation.

Councillors Richard Kilshaw and Anne Macwilson reported that the fencing around the allotment was in progress and the exact requirements and cost would be reported at the meeting in March.

The Council expressed concern about the state of the gate at Homey Bridge and it was agreed that replacing the present wooden one with a metal one would be a future agenda item.

The Chairman closed the Meeting

7) Reports & Questions from Parishioners

There were none

The Chairman reopened the Meeting

8) Highways & Footpaths.

- **Permissive Footpath**

Chairman Nick Brandt informed the Council of his meeting on Friday 8th February 2008 with Roberta Meadows of Countryside Access at Suffolk County Council.

The Clerk had been in attendance at the meeting. Vice-Chair Michael Hackford informed the Council of the history of the claim. The notice on the gate had been placed ten years ago as allotment holders had been upset at people walking through and the dog fouling that had taken place. The Chairman outlined the various course of action that the Council could take in view of this claim.

After much discussion it was proposed that the Council would not object to this claim. There was 1 abstention, 1 against and 5 in favour.

It was agreed for the Clerk to contact Roberta Meadows at Suffolk County Council and inform her of the decision and also request the incorporation of the Highways Act Section 31 Statutory Declaration at the same time as the Creation Agreement.

- **Heath Road Footway**

The Clerk reported to the Council that Suffolk Highways had planned to implement a footway, requested by the previous Council, in 2008. Vice-Chair Michael Hackford and Councillor Sue Wigglesworth gave some background history to the scheme explaining that parents of children under 8, who are unable to play in the playground, were concerned about the walk to the Playing Fields as are the organisers of the Playgroup.

Councillor Michael Hackford raised the issue that the previous Council had not consulted the residents of Heath Road and the concern that, if there were a footpath, parking of cars would cause a danger. Councillor John Baxter raised the view that current policy was to have no footways as motorists slow down when pedestrians are in view.

In view of the Councils discussion, it was agreed for the Clerk to contact John Goodyear at Suffolk Highways and arrange a site visit with the Chairman and John Baxter at Heath Road.

9) Planning Matters:

a) Planning Application No B/08/00106/TCA/DP Mill Cottage Mill Street Polstead CO6 5AD. Fell 1 No. Willow Tree

The Clerk reported that permission had been given to cut down the willow tree.

b) Planning Application No. B/08/00055/LBC/LJB Old Bakers, White Street Green, Polstead CO105JL. Application for Listed Building Consent-Insertion of Replacement Windows.

The Councillors discussed the above application and had no objections.

c) Planning Application No: B/08/00019/FHA/CJT New House Farm, Rockalls Road, Polstead, CO6 5AT. Erection of 2 No. extensions and alterations to existing outbuildings to provide cart lodge type covered parking, garden store and domestic workshop(part amended scheme P.P.B/06/02081FHA)

The Councillors discussed the above application and had no objections.

d) Planning Application No: B/08/00094/FUL/CJT Former Hostel Site, Plough Lane Leavenheath, Colchester. Erection of 15 No. Chalets and a communal building. Alterations to existing vehicular access. Consulted as adjoining Parish.

The Councillors discussed the above application and, although consulted as an adjoining Parish, had reservations that, in relation to Babergh Local Plan Alteration No 2 (June 2006) policy CN08, the proposed plan did not “preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area or its setting”.

The Council were concerned that the trees would take time to establish and, therefore, would not “be of an appropriate scale, form, and detailed design to harmonize with its setting”.

e) Planning Application No: B/08/00092/FHA/BHW 45 Rockalls Road, Polstead, C06 5AR. Erection of attached garage with games room to rear and store over.

The Councillors discussed the above application and had no objections.

B) Any Urgent Planning Matters:

The following planning application was received after the agenda had been distributed:

Planning Application No: B/08/00152/FUL/MB Land west of Snail Hall, Millwood Road Polstead. Change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden. Erection of tennis court with demountable fencing.

The Councillors discussed the above application and had no objections

The Clerk reported to the Council the following:

Planning Application No: B/07/02007/LBC/MC Application for Listed Building Consent-Erection of 1 No. stack; internal alterations (as amended by details dated 22/01/08) Polstead Hall, The Ponds, Polstead, Colchester.

Planning Permission had been granted with conditions

Planning Application No B/07/02028/FHA/CJT White House Farm Straight Road, Polstead, Colchester. Erection of garden building

This application had been refused.

10) Bus Shelter/Bus Stop

The Chairman suggested to the Council that the setting up of a “committee” was not intended but instead that a “working party” should investigate the feasibility of a bus shelter/bus-stop. The Clerk reminded the Council of the differences between the two and it was unanimously agreed that the intention of the Council was to form a working party.

Councillors John Baxter Michael Hackford, Richard Kilshaw and Michael Hackford Trish Ravensdale reported to the Council the meeting with Mr Alan Keeble, the Lord of the Manor, and the agreed a location for the bus shelter/bus stop. The Clerk confirmed that she had a copy of Mr Keeble’s letter and the Council agreed for the Clerk to write to Mr Keeble confirming the Council’s decision with respect to the bus shelter/ bus stop.

The Council also agreed for Councillor John Baxter to draft a letter for the Clerk to send to Suffolk Highways regarding funding for the bus shelter/bus stop.

11) Location of Polstead Black Cherry Trees

Councillor Richard Kilshaw reported to the Council that Mr Keeble and the PCC of Polstead Church had approved the location for three of the four Polstead Black Cherry trees, namely:

- On the small area of the Village Green opposite the Village Hall

- At the Manorial Wastage verge, boundary with fence line adjoining Rockalls Road
- Outside the Church

The W.I did not wish to have a tree by the elm hedge as they felt it would not be in keeping and expressed concerns that it would compete with a tree already there. Mr Engleheart did not wish to have the trees on the bank due to root penetration affecting the bank's stability.

The Council agreed after discussion and consideration of other trees in the vicinity, particularly in respect of pollination, that the fourth tree should be placed at Polstead Heath.

It was unanimously agreed that, if Polstead Black Cherry trees were to become available in the future, priority would be given to planting in White Street Green and Bower House Tye

11) Summer Hog Roast

The Chairman confirmed that the "hog" had been ordered.

12) Polstead Website

It was agreed by the Council that, if there were any information to be given to Richard regarding the Polstead Website, the Clerk would inform him immediately after a Council meeting rather than wait until the Minutes were approved.

Councillor Mandy Flather read the report given by Richard to the Council, attached as Appendix 2. The Council wished to record a vote of thanks to Richard for all his hard work in maintaining an excellent website.

13) Village Survey/Questionnaire

The Chairman confirmed that the Clerk had been given the Hog Roast Survey/invitation as discussed at the Council meeting in January and that the postman had agreed to distribute the survey as he did the allotment notice in September 2007.

14) Financial Matters

With regards to the Accounts and Audit (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2006, the RFO confirmed that this would be an agenda item in March when the review of the systems of internal control will be given along with the updated Standing Orders.

The RFO informed the Council that the Audit Commission had appointed BDO Stoy Hayward LLP as auditor to Polstead Parish Council.

The Chairman requested that the total expenditure for 2007/8 be presented to the Council by the RFO at the March meeting.

15) Correspondence Received

Since the issue of the Agenda, the Clerk reported the following correspondence:

- Babergh Media Release - Brantham Affordable Homes given the green light!
- Babergh Media Release - Commission of new report of the retail industry tenders from experienced consultants published.

16) Chairman & Clerk Reports & Correspondence

The Clerk reported to the Council that she had still not received a signed Allotment Contract from Mr Hewson. The Clerk had delivered a second agreement by hand at the beginning of January, which had still not been received back. The Council agreed for Councillor Richard Kilshaw to liaise with Mr Hewson and another resident who had expressed an interest in the allotments about sharing the plot.

The Clerk reported to the Council that the family of Mrs Freda Hutchings would like to make a small memorial gesture to their mother. The Council agreed for the Clerk to write to the family accepting a bench to be placed either at the edge of the Pond or by the allotments.

The Clerk brought to the attention of the Councillors the “Local Councillor” and the training courses available. It was agreed that the Councillors who had not attended a new Councillor Training Course do so in the near future.

The Clerk reported that the £700.00 requested from the County Councillors Locality Budget had been given and that she would be writing to confirm the expenditure to the Locality Budget Officer.

17) Future Agenda Items

Bus shelter/bus stop
Internal Audit Review
Standing Orders
Hog Roast
Bus shelter/bus stop
Allotment fencing
Gate at Homey Bridge

18) Dates of next meeting

20th March 2008
17th April 2008
Annual Parish Meeting 22nd April 2008
Annual General Meeting 15th May 2008

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 22.05