

LITTLEPORT PARISH COUNCIL

Report of a Parish Council Meeting held in The Barn on Monday 15th October 2007 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillor G Norman
Councillor C M Ambrose Smith
Councillor D J Boyd
Councillor F J Brown
Councillor P M Cox
Councillor J H Crane
Councillor D E Gardiner
Councillor B W Hayes
Councillor J M Howard
Councillor S D Kerridge
Councillor T J Lee
Councillor M Pyrah
Councillor A N Wright

Also present the Clerk, Trainee Clerk and one member of the press.

1. DECLARATIONS:

Councillors Crane and Wright declared their interests in Agenda Item 12

2. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions received

3. YOUTH FACILITIES IN LITTLEPORT:

The Chairman welcomed Mike Davey and Jo Sollars from Cambridgeshire County Council to report on the progress for youth work in Littleport. A copy of the report follows these minutes.

Members asked how much money they were anticipating they required from the Parish Council for some of their work and a figure of £4000 for next year was quoted. There is still an issue with the Parsons Lane Primary School on the unaffordable hiring charges for project based youth work. Negotiations are on going.

Members questioned the need for the parish to make financial contributions to youth work when it is the responsibility of the County Council to provide services. They said they were hamstrung on money. Concerns were raised about the possible duplication of youth services in view of the work by a private group led by Philip Malkin. County Council are trying to work with Mr Malkin. A youth project based at the Regal funded by a Youth Bank grant is due to start soon.

Mr Davey and Mrs Sollars were thanked for attending and would return in another six months or so to report on further developments.

4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Remembrance Day Parade 11th November. Muster at Ponds Hill 10.00am

The Continental Market would like to come back next year. Agreed.

5 APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor F J W Brown Councillor D T Murfitt and District Councillor Morrison

6 MINUTES:

Before the reports of the Planning, Finance and Parish Council Meetings held on 17th September 2007, the Planning Committee Meeting and the Cemetery Working Party Meeting held on 8th October 2007 were confirmed and signed Councillor Mrs Kerridge asked for her comments in the Cemetery Working Party Meeting Item 4 paragraph 2 to read that she was unhappy with the Cemetery Working Party favouring one site in particular.

7 FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Councillor Brown reported on the following recommendations:

Section 137 Grants: The Field Theatre Group £500.00 subject to satisfactory answers to queries approved by Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Littleport Village Hall £1500.00 subject to obtaining two further quotes for the Emergency Lighting improvements. Chairman and Vice Chairman empowered to accept best quote

Grass Cutting 2008 -2011 Chairman and Vice Chairman empowered to make final decision on three year grass cutting contract subject to clarification from C G M on their quote to cut the Parsons Lane field.

Agreed

8. FOLLOW UP DIARY:

The Clerk reported:

Mereham Campaign would like someone from Littleport to speak at the enquiry. Campaign documents were circulated.

Black Horse Drove Community Centre – the County Council would like a sound business plan before they could consider selling the site for a peppercorn sum. The correspondent had no knowledge of a precedent for this kind of transaction. Letter to be sent to the Government Minister Ruth Kelly following her press release regarding a new scheme to sell off redundant buildings to local communities for £1.00

9 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

Councillor Ambrose Smith reported on the District Council Chairman's Annual Event at the Maltings.

Councillor Wright reported: Full Council Meeting will take place on the 16th October where a planning application on a site in Littleport was being put to full council following a planning officer disagreeing with the Planning Committee's decision on the scheme.

It is now very likely that the Council's Constitution will be changed.

10. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

No report

11. PADDOCKS TRANSFER OF LAND:

Members reviewed the transfer document issued by the District Council's Legal Department noting clause 4:2 whereby the transfer comes into effect when the 326th dwelling is completed. Councillor Mrs Kerridge felt the need for the document to be looked at by an outside solicitor to protect the Parish Council's interests.

Following discussion Councillor Wright proposed accepting the document, Seconded by Councillor Crane.

Councillor Kerridge proposed an amendment to have the document looked over by another solicitor and if all clear accept the document otherwise it is brought back to the next meeting for further discussion. Seconded by Councillor Lee.

Members voted on the amendment which was carried.

12. LITTLEPORT LEISURE CENTRE:

Councillor Cox outlined the background to the financial difficulties being encountered by the Leisure Centre. As a parish council representative on their Management Committee if they had been trading whilst insolvent he could have been held accountable. He has since resigned his position. Councillor Hayes produced correspondence he had had with one of the Trustees stating they had taken financial advice and were solvent.

Councillor Wright outlined the history of the centre where some land was purchased by the District Council, covenants were on other land which could not be sold - it would revert back to the family trust.

It was therefore agreed that a special parish council meeting be held with the Chairman, Vice Chairman of the Management committee, Club Manager and their auditor to discuss the matter.

The Clerk would check with our insurers about Councillor Indemnity.

13. PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE TO LEISURE CENTRE:

Agreed to hold this over until after the Special Meeting.

14. CEMETERY:

Councillor Pyrah proposed increasing the burial costs for the coming financial year with an additional £100.00 grave digging fee to cover the cost of hiring/buying a new mini digger. A copy of the new fees accompany these minutes.

Members approved the draft precept allocations for the next financial year.

Councillor Pyrah produced a detailed report on the negotiations and current state of play in the search for a new site another cemetery.

Discussion ensued on the merits of three sites. Each site would require significant expenditure and site works to meet the requirements of the planning and highways authorities.

Councillor Cox proposed the progressing the Oak Lane site Seconded by Councillor Pyrah. The vote was recorded. Those for the proposal Councillor Boyd, Gardiner, Cox, Pyrah, Ambrose Smith, F J Brown, G Norman and Lee

Against the proposal Councillors Kerridge, Howard and Crane.

Abstentions Councillors Hayes and Wright.

The proposition was carried.

15. ALLOTMENT GATES:

A request from an allotment holder to have lockable gates installed at the Station Road Allotments following a recent spate of burglaries was turned down.

16. CONGESTION CHARGES IN CAMBRIDGE CITY:

Councillor Mrs Kerridge wished to raise awareness to the council of the proposed congestion charges for Cambridge and the financial impact it will have on not just Littleport residents working in Cambridge. It is understood it will add £80 a month to peoples travel costs to work.

17. JIGSAW PROJECT:

Members agreed to support the JIGSAW Community Archaeology Project.

18. BARKHAMS LANE TRAFFIC ISSUES:

Councillor Cox drew attention to the traffic problems in Barkhams Lane and wished to see traffic calming measures introduced.

Councillor Wright pointed out his vested interest and that three councillors were in fact residents of Barkhams Lane, therefore no decisions were made and clarification on the rules will be brought back to the next meeting.

19. LEGAL HELP FROM DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Following the written response from the Legal Services Department confirming they could not act for parish councils; Councillors Wright and Brown will follow this up in their capacities as District Councillors.

20. RISK ASSESSMENTS:

Councillors received and approved the Office and Financial Risk Assessments. The other risk assessments are work in progress.

In confirmation of the foregoing report

CHAIRMAN

DATE