

Hartest Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at The Institute on Wednesday 6 July 2011 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Chris Browning (Chairman), David Burr, Jo Pask and David Turner
In Attendance: Co Cllr R Kemp, Mrs P M Lamb (Parish Clerk) and 1 Member of the Public

ACTION

- 11/050 Apologies for absence: Dist Cllr James Long
- 11/051 Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the 1 June 2011 were approved and signed.
- 11/052 Matters Arising: None
- 11/053 Declarations of interest: Cllr Burr re Oak Hill House appeal
- 11/054 Public Forum: No matters raised.
- 11/055 Police report: During the period 1 June to 1 July 2011, no crimes had been recorded within the parish compared to 1 crime for the same period last year.
It is reassuring to see that no crimes have been reported in relation to the parish of Hartest. Ongoing patrols continue following a spate of metal thefts. Police are encouraging residents, businesses and farmers to keep their security to a maximum and to report any suspicious activity, persons or vehicles.
- 11/056 County Councillor's Report:
Chief Executive departure: This week saw the news that Chief Executive Andrea Hill would be leaving Suffolk County Council with immediate effect. SCC released this statement to the media;
"The Dismissals and Appeals Committee of Suffolk County Council has today (4 July 2011) concluded its investigation into the 'whistleblowing' allegations made against Chief Executive, Andrea Hill.
"Bullying and harassment allegations were robustly investigated by an independent firm of solicitors. Although it remains a concern that such a perception existed, the Committee is satisfied that there was no evidence to support those claims or that she was responsible for the death of David White (former Head of Legal Services). The Committee wants to reassure staff that all allegations are treated extremely seriously.
"The Committee also received a report into Mrs Hill's expense claims during her tenure as Chief Executive. It has concluded that whilst there were undoubtedly claims which, in the current climate, might not represent best use of public money, the Committee accepted that there was no dishonesty in the claims made.
"Following a lengthy discussion last Friday, and negotiations between representatives of both parties over the weekend, the county council can now confirm that Mrs Hill will be leaving her post with immediate effect.
"There has been significant media attention attached to Mrs Hill which has become a distraction and both parties accept that with new political leadership of Suffolk County Council in place, it is better to allow the organisation to move forward with new managerial leadership.

"The county council would like to thank Mrs Hill for all she has done over the past three years and wish her well for her future.

"The total value of compensation to be paid to Mrs Hill is £218,592. This figure includes her contractual notice period."

County Council Scrutiny and Health Scrutiny Committee:

The Scrutiny Committee will meet on the 13 July, and discuss a number of different items including the Supporting People Programme grant. This item will consider how the programme is being affected by the changes in the way it is being funded and what is being done to mitigate the impact on people in need of housing related support services. The second item is an interim report from the Academies and Free Schools Scrutiny Task and Finish Group. The report focuses on the impact of the creation of academy and free schools on the provision of education in Suffolk.

The meeting starts at 10 o'clock and is open to the public. In addition to this Scrutiny Meeting, the SCC recently decided to reinstate the Health Scrutiny Committee. The next meeting will be on the 20 July. For further information, copies of the reports and agendas please head to the Suffolk County Council's Council and Democracy pages.

County Council – Public Questions & Agenda: The next Full Council meeting will take place on the 14 July at 2 p.m. As usual, members of the public have the opportunity to ask questions to portfolio holders at the beginning of the meeting. If you are interested in asking a question then please head to the Suffolk County Council website for further details, and the form to fill in. The deadline for the questions is Friday at noon. On the agenda for the meeting is the petition to Save Suffolk Libraries. This petition is an amalgamation of all the different petitions for each of the libraries.

In addition to this, there is also a motion put forward by the Liberal Democrats to extend the time that concessionary bus passes can be used for free. Currently the County Council opts for the basic scheme of free travel between 9:30 and 11 a.m. The motion recommends that for those who have the concessionary pass on the basis of age they should be able to travel freely from 9 in the morning rather than 9:30. For those who are eligible for the pass on the basis of disability, there should have no time limitations on their card. The Lib Dems state that implementing this system, as many other County Councils do, would help to increase social mobility, and allow individuals to reach places of work, socialise, and to make hospital appointments. The other agenda item is regarding traded services. You can find out more about the County Council agenda on the Suffolk County Council website.

Cabinet Ups County Contribution to Suffolk Broadband Bid:

The County Council at an emergency Cabinet meeting has increased its contribution to the Suffolk Better Broadband Bid, up from the previous amount of £439,000, to a potential £10m over four years.

This increase in contribution is a result of the Government organisation responsible for providing the funding rejecting the bid from Suffolk County Council. The feedback received from the County Council indicates that a higher contribution from the local authorities is required to ensure Government funding. Out of a total of 18 bids, only three Counties were successful and each of these contributed significantly more money to the programme than Suffolk. Norfolk - £15m; Wiltshire £16m; and Devon, North Somerset and Somerset County Councils are contributing £22m. The funding for this increase in contribution will come from the County Council's reserves, with possible recouping of costs through increased business rates and capital receipts.

For more information; see SCC website, Council and Democracy pages.

11/057 District Councillor's Report: No report provided in Cllr Long's absence.

11/058 Finance & Administration:

- (a) Payments: The following payments were approved:
`Contact': Advertising July 2011-June 1012: £42.00
Boxted & Hartest Institute: Hall Hire – 6, 13 and
27.4.11, and 11.5.11: £52.00
Clerk's salary, mileage and sundries: £626.20
Post Office Ltd: PAYE: £133.60
An increase in the Clerk's mileage rate from 40p to 45p was approved. Clerk
- (b) PAYE/SALC: Members agreed to SALC being instructed to deal with the PAYE administration etc on a quarterly basis @ £7/qtr. Clerk
- (c) An allowance of £15/month was approved for the Clerk's office expenses (Broadband, pc, printer, maintenance)
- (d) Grants: Notices to be placed in `Contact' in October and November seeking grant requests to be received by end November. Further notices will be placed in April and May 2012. Clerk
- (e) Website: Following discussion, Members agreed that advertising on the village website would be permitted from the following villages; Brockley, Chadacre, Hawkedon, Lawshall, Shimpling and Stanstead. Where applications are received with reference to areas outside this list, the website moderators may refer these for discussion. It was further agreed that no charge would be levied in this regard. JP
- (f) Parish Council Vacancies: An application had been received for one of the current three vacancies from Mr Howard Hirst, who had been welcomed to this meeting. Following further discussion, it was agreed to co-opt Mr Hirst with effect from the meeting on 7 September. Clerk
Cllr Turner enquired as to whether it is permissible for a husband and wife team to serve on the same council, as his wife had expressed an interest in that connection. Whilst it was considered that there would be no problem in this respect, the matter would be checked. Clerk
- (g) New Cheque Signatory: Cllr Browning's appointment is to be expedited. Clerk

11/059 Planning:

- (a) Decisions received: Permission refused: B/11/00031/FUL/ETR: Neat House land east of Old Bakery
- (b) Withdrawn applications: None
- (c) New applications: None
- (d) Tree Preservation Order/Tree Conservation Area Applications: Permissions granted:
B/11/00630/TCA: Cotters, The Row: Fell 1 no Willow, Abies & Cypress
B/11/00629/TCA: 14 The Row: Fell 1 no Cypress
- (e) Appeals: Oakhill House, Somerton Road: Informal Hearing to be held on 13 September at 10 a.m. in the Cricket Meadow View Room, Council Offices, BDC. Members agreed that Cllrs Pask and Turner would attend this hearing. Full details regarding IH Procedures are to be obtained. A discussion would be held at the Next PC meeting. Clerk
- (f) Other Planning Matters: None

- 11/060 Green, Cemetery and Churchyard
- (a) Undergrounding of Cables: A meeting held been held with a representative of Messrs UK Power Networks, which served to clarify the works proposed. Members were happy with the contractor's proposals. UKPN is to contact residents of the houses affected to explain work involved. A Wayleave agreement in this regard had been sent to the PC for signature. A one off payment of £250 and annual rental payments of approx £3 will be made by UKPN. With Members' approval, Cllr Browning signed the aforementioned document. Clerk
- (b) War Memorial: All quotations received will be gathered and any shortfall addressed with a view to making a grant application to the War Memorial Trust following review at September's meeting. Clerk
- (c) Cemetery Works - Gates/Cemetery Notice etc: Cllr Pask advised that she is still awaiting a quote from Jason Konrath re the notice board for the cemetery gates. Cllr Turner is awaiting quote from Michael Ashman re fencing. A request is to be sent to Mr Lamprell re an area of scrub in the cemetery. JP
DT
Clerk
- Cemetery Headstones: Cllr Pask had been unable to obtain from Messrs Hanchetts details re the three fallen headstones. All cemetery paperwork is to be reviewed to ascertain details of relatives. The condition of the grave of Mr Tighe was discussed, but it was agreed not to take any action at this juncture. Clerk/JP
- 11/061 Highways and Footpaths
- (a) Traffic Management - Solar Powered Speed Sign: Response is awaited from Highways regarding the possibility of speed measurements in three locations.
- (b) Repositioning of Speed Signs: This matter was discussed. A further request, along the lines of the PC's earlier communication, would be sent to SCC in this regard. Clerk
- (c) Lime Tree o/s Sturgeons: Trimming of the basal growth had been done on the road side; SCC would be asked to remove the growth on the footpath side. Clerk
- (d) Darney Lane re Quad Bikes: Response is awaited, but it is understood the officer concerned is currently on annual leave. Clerk
- (e) FP 16: Cllr Pask reported that only one half of this path had been cut; this will be reported to SCC. Clerk
- (f) Cross Green: Hedge Trimming: A letter requesting the co-operation of the residents of Wisteria Cottage and its two neighbouring properties is to be sent. Clerk
- (g) Cross Green: Possible Re-positioning of Sign: Members to look at situation due to poor car parking ready for consideration at the next meeting. All
- 11/062 Correspondence: BDC: Review of Polling Districts. Members envisaged no change being required to the current arrangements. BDC would be advised accordingly. Clerk
- 11/063 Matters of report:
Cllr Burr commented on the recent recruitment advertisement received from SALC re two Promotion of Lunch Time People at a salary of £25k each p.a. It was agreed a letter would be drafted in this regard in the light of the current financial situation.
Cllr Burr also stated that, although BDC's car park income was expected to achieve target, its revenue of just under £50k would not cover the cost of the two car park attendants. Clerk
- 11/064 Matters for consideration at the next meeting:
Parish Council Vacancies and Community Shop
- 11/065 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 7 September (Meeting closed 2030)
Approved at the Parish Council Meeting held on 7 September 2011