

BRICKENDON LIBERTY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Brickendon Liberty Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 25 September 2014, at 7.30 pm in the Franshaws Room, Brickendon.

*Cllr Mrs Ashley

*Cllr Mrs A Downes (Vice Chairman)

Cllr K Kotting (Chairman)

*Cllr Mrs M Laybourn

*Cllr J C Lambie

* denotes present.

In attendance: 6 members of the public
Plus PCSO N Major

In the absence of Cllr Kotting (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Downes (Vice Chairman) took the chair.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Kotting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs Ashley

Monks Green Farm

Personal and Prejudicial

3. PRESS AND FILMING TABLE AND RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chairman drew the attention of the meeting to the presence of a press table to the rear of the hall and she proceeded to explain why this was now necessary. Under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 it was now mandatory on Parish Councils to provide facilities for the filming and oral recording of all the meetings of the Parish Council. She stated that this would mean that any member of the public was at liberty to film the Council's proceedings, but not the public who were in attendance. This facility would now be present at all meetings of the Council.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 24 July 2014 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

4a. POLICE REPORT

PCSO Major gave the meeting a resume of the crime statistics for the months of August and September (see Appendix A).

Mr Downes stated that fly-tipping was a problem in Pembridge Lane and he felt that, if there were signs erected prohibiting such practices, this would act as a deterrent. A request was made that the concerns expressed be discussed with the Crime Prevention Officer. Neal agreed to action this matter.

Neal stated that he had recently attended a 'Drive safe' course at which one of the aims had been to promote volunteers to engage in speed awareness by being trained to use a hand held speed gun to monitor the speed of traffic entering a village. It was pointed out that offending motorists would not be prosecuted. However, all speeds would be recorded and continuing offenders would be visited by the Police.

Mrs Lambie referred to the lack of a Police presence at the recent Village Fete and she felt that this was a missed opportunity for the Police to raise awareness of Police activities and something which would have acted as a recruitment drive for both regular and special constables. Neal agreed to take this on board with a view to implementation for next year's fete.

Cllr Lambie asked whether there were any restrictions on the Parish Council installing speed recording equipment (post mounted). Neal stated that there were no restrictions other than discussing any planning implications with the District Council

Cllr Lambie stated that he was hoping to convene a meeting with the Police and the Highways Authority with a view to discussing what could be done to improve the safety at the junction of Fanshaws Lane and Brickendon Lane. As an interim measure the Parish Council had purchased a safety mirror to be erected opposite the junction. Neal stated that he would be happy to attend such a meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Annual Litter Pick

Cllr Mrs Ashley stated that there was no problem with arranging the warning signs for the event and she would speak to Cllr William Ashley (EHC) with regard to this matter. It was generally felt that arrangements should be made to advertise the event in both the newsletter and by displaying notices on the public notice boards, in addition to notifying the regular volunteers by e-mail.

(ii) Access to Village Green

Members were informed that a meeting had taken place with the Golf Club which had been very amenable with a desire by the Club to minimise the disruption to the village consequent upon the Club's recent planning approval for residential development.

(iii) Closure of the Farmer's Boy

Cllr Lambie confirmed that the application to East Herts Council for inclusion of the building and land on the list of assets of a community value had been successful and it was encouraging to learn that this was the only community asset which had been registered in East Herts. The successful outcome in this matter would now mean that, if the Public House was put up for sale within the next 5 years, it would first have to be offered to the Parish Council who would be given six months in which to raise the necessary capital to purchase the property.

6. PARISHIONERS' COMMENTS

(i) Dog Litter Bins

Concerns were expressed by Jean Retallick regarding the lack of dog bins in the village of Brickendon. A request was made that two bins be purchased, one to be sited on the car park and one near the telephone box.

(ii) Defibrillator

Mrs Matthews informed the meeting that Mrs Oakes had expressed her desire to support the Parish Council if it decided to purchase a defibrillator and she would be happy to arrange coffee parties to help raise the necessary funds. The Chairman stated that on a recent visit to the village of Berden, she had noticed that such equipment had been sited in the village telephone box. She felt that such equipment would be a useful asset to the parish. She was given to understand that the equipment was relatively easy to operate and it would be ideal, should the Parish Council decide to proceed with the purchase, if local residents agreed to undertake training.

(iii) Road signs

Mrs Matthews referred to the 'drive carefully' sign situated on the verge in front of her house which, because of its position and its affect on sight lines in exiting her property, constituted a traffic hazard. Cllr Lambie stated that the proposed provision of the new path down to the station could well solve this problem, as the scheme incorporated a provision to move this sign to the other side of the road.

Cllr Mrs Laybourn agreed to discuss this mater with Hertfordshire Highways.

(iv) Vehicular parking on the Village Green

Although unsubstantiated it was brought to the Parish Council's attention that UK Power Networks had advised that the many power cuts experienced earlier this year had not been as a result of the indiscriminate parking of heavy vehicles on the verges adjacent to 10a The Green as the mains cables were too deep to be affected.

7. PLANNING

RESOLVED that the contents of the attached schedule (see Appendix B) be received and the decisions taken be duly ratified.

8. FANSHAWS ROOM COMMITTEE

(i) Minutes of the Fanshaws Room Committee held on 30 July 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the above meeting be received. (see Appendix C)

(ii) Minutes of the Fanshaws Room Committee held on 29 August 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the above meeting be received. (see Appendix D)

9. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Cllr Mrs Laybourn stated that there were no new highways issues which had been brought to her attention, other than the forthcoming road closure on White Stubbs Lane.

The Chairman referred to the height of the kerbs at the junction of White Stubbs Lane and Pembridge Lane which, she felt, were highly dangerous. Cllr Mrs Laybourn agreed to take up this matter with the County Council along with issues raised under 'Parishioners' Comments'.

10. PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP

Cllr Lambie had been in discussion with the Rights of Way Officer with a view to progressing the provision of the new path down to the station. There was still an impasse in that the Highways Authority had still not agreed to accept responsibility for the adoption of the path. This matter was being pursued

11. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH/POLICE REPORT

No matters were raised under this item.

12. VILLAGE DEFIBRILLATOR

The Chairman opened up the meeting in order for information to be gleaned from Ms J Perkiss (new landlord of the Farmer's Boy) who was a professional person knowledgeable in the use of defibrillators.

The salient point which emerged was that the equipment was very simple to use and could not be operated unless a person had experienced a cardiac arrest. It was in fact a fail-safe piece of equipment voice activated and battery operated with step by step instructions.

It was generally felt that, if the PC decided to purchase the equipment, it was essential that it was available for use at all times and ideally should be situated on the outside of a building in a waterproof unlocked box.

Members were generally in favour of purchasing such equipment, which would cost in the region of £2,000. Funding could be by grant from an outside body or from the Parish Council's new homes bonus funds. The Chairman felt the benefits from such equipment far outweighed the immediate problem of worrying how it was to be financed. The general feeling was that the Parish Council could ill-afford not to have the equipment which would be in the best interests of the residents of the Parish.

RESOLVED that in principle a defibrillator be purchased subject to a suitable location being found.

13. HIGHFIELD NOTICE BOARD

Members were informed that the notice board for Highfield had been purchased and was on display in the village hall. The metal based sockets to secure the notice board had been provided and the notice board would be erected as soon as possible.

14. PLAY INSPECTION REPORT

The Chairman referred to the play inspection report undertaken by the Play Inspection Company employed by East Herts Council. The items of equipment inspected had been identified as low risk and very low risk and there was nothing in the report with regard to the safety of the equipment which required attention. However, a reference had been made to the oak seat being dislodged, to missing bolt cap covers and the fact that the lids on the litter bins were loose.

The Chairman stated that the equipment was inspected by Timberplay four times per year and it was this attention to the equipment which had resulted in a good report.

Mrs Lambie stated that she had had occasion recently to contact Timberplay with regard to some damage which had been caused to a piece of play equipment and the Company had responded remarkably quickly for which she was extremely grateful.

15. VILLAGE GREEN

(i) Extract of the minutes of Hertfordbury Parish Council meeting held on 11 6 14

The Chairman referred to the above minutes and, in particular, to the presentation which had been made by a Mr P Petchey, Legal Counsel on Village Green crossings. Whilst the information contained in the minutes was of interest it was felt that it did not apply to the situation regarding Brickendon Village Green or to the development proposed by the Golf Club.

(ii) Village Green fencing

RESOLVED that this matter be deferred to the next meeting.

(iii) Verges map

RESOLVED that this matter be deferred to the next meeting.

(iv) Electrical supply to Brickendon Green

Cllr Mrs Ashley stated that she had been in discussion with Power Network and she had obtained an application form to provide an electricity supply to the Village Green from the mains as opposed to taking a supply from the Village Hall, which would have to be undertaken by a private contractor.

It was agreed that the application form be completed and for a ball park figure to be obtained for a connection, although there was a feeling that it might be preferable to take the supply off the Village Hall.

Cllr Mrs Ashley stated that she had been informed that someone from UK Power Network would be prepared to come and discuss the matter on site. Members were happy for Cllr Mrs Ashley to pursue this matter.

16. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

As there had been no meeting for a number of months, there was nothing to raise on this matter.

17. CONFIRMATION OF RETENTION OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Clerk informed members that the External Auditor had not signed off the accounts for the financial year 2013/2014 because part of the enquiry on the accounts had been whether the Parish Council had reviewed the appointment of the Internal Auditor and whether, if they had, they were happy for his services to be continued.

The Clerk stated that he was very happy with the services provided by the Internal Auditor to the Council and he reminded members of the very comprehensive reports which had been provided at the end of each internal audit.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council confirm its continued approval of the services undertaken by the Internal Auditor.

18. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(i) Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the accounts as set out in the attached statement (see Appendix E) be duly authorised for payment.

(ii) Financial Statement

RESOLVED that the contents of the attached statement (see Appendix F) be received.

19. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- Governance Review.
- Village Green fencing.
- Verges map.

20. CONFIRMATION OF DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting would take place on Thursday, 27 November 2014, at 7.30 pm in the Fanshaws Room, Brickendon.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.