

BRICKENDON LIBERTY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Brickendon Liberty Annual Parish Council meeting held on Thursday, 21 May 2015, in the Fanshaws Room, Brickendon, following the close of the Annual Parish meeting.

*Cllr Ms J Camp

Cllr J C Lambie

*Cllr Ms A Downes

Cllr A C Roberts

*Cllr L J Kotting

* denotes present.

In attendance: 24 members of the public.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Cllr Lambie be duly elected to serve as Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing civic year.

2. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN

The Chairman duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office as Chairman of the Parish Council.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Cllr Kotting be duly elected to serve as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing civic year.

4. WELCOME TO NEW COUNCILLORS AND RECOGNITION OF PAST COUNCILLORS' SERVICE

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council had no affiliation to any political party and its members gave freely of their time for the good of the community. In this regard he paid tribute to former Councillors Mrs Linda Ashley and Ms Michele Laybourn who, he stated, had contributed greatly to the smooth running of the Council. The Chairman further extended a warm welcome to the new members, Cllr Ms Camp and Cllr Roberts and he looked forward to working with them throughout the duration of the new Council.

5. COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORMS AND INFORMATION SHEETS

Members duly signed their declarations of acceptance of office forms and completed their Councillors' information sheets.

6. REGISTERS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS FORMS

Members duly signed their registers of interests forms.

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from District Cllr A McNeece.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FORMS

None.

9. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 March 2015 be accepted as a correct record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

10. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Wood End Farm – Wormley West End

Cllr Mrs Downes stated that no communication had been received from the Enforcement Officer, East Herts Council.

(ii) Junction Safety meeting with Highways and Police

Cllr Mrs Downes stated that arrangements would be made to secure a meeting with the owners of numbers 10 and 10A Brickendon Green.

(iii) Provision of dog bin

The Chairman stated that the dog bin situated on the Village Green had yet to be re-sited and further discussions would take place with a view to ascertaining whether to purchase an additional bin.

11. PARISHIONERS' COMMENTS

(i) Blocked drain outside Brickendon Church

It was reported that, despite calls to Hertfordshire County Council to undertake remedial work, no action had been taken to unblock the drain. In inclement weather this resulted in water flooding the entrance to the church, crossing the road and flooding the entrance to the properties opposite.

Cllr Ms Camp agreed to take this matter up with Hertfordshire Highways.

(ii) Missing Sign

It was reported that the 7.5 ton weight restriction sign at the Hertford end of Brickendon Lane was missing. Consequently, vehicles were accessing the village in contravention of the restriction.

This matter would be taken up with Hertfordshire Highways.

(iii) General fault reporting/action

Cllr Mrs Downes stated that in the initial stage of the transition when Ringway first took over all responsibility for highway maintenance, the level of service had been high and the response to reported incidents extremely good. However, over the last two years the level of service had deteriorated to the point where very little remedial work would appear to be carried out, the fault reporting system was not working and requests for the missing signs at Wormley West End had still not been actioned.

Cllr Mrs Downes felt that the Council should request a meeting with Ringway to bring these concerns to their attention.

(iv) Water leak

It was reported that there was a water leak near the Baker's Arms in Bayford. The Chairman stated that the area in question was in the Parish of Bayford and, therefore, the matter would be reported to Bayford Parish Council.

(v) Litter Bin

It was reported that the litter bin situated opposite the Village Hall in the car park was damaged and a replacement bin was required.

(vi) New District Councillor

A resident referred to the election of the new District Councillor for Brickendon and Hertford Heath, Mr Adrian McNeece, and she hoped that the Parish Council would be able to work with him for the benefit of the parish.

Another resident wished that it be recorded the gratitude of the residents of the parish to the former District Councillor, William Ashley, who she stated had worked tirelessly for the Parish of Brickendon and who had been very supportive of every initiative undertaken by the Parish Council.

(vii) Paradise Park

The owner of the Park gave details of the draft plan for the car park for the information of the Parish Council. Ms Lynn Whitnall stated that, as the coming weekend was the Bank Holiday, it was hoped that as many people as possible would take the trouble to visit the Park.

(viii) Golf Club developments

A question was raised as to whether there was any new information with regard to gaining access over the Village Green to service the new development.

The Chairman confirmed that this matter would be taken up with the Golf Club.

(ix) Broxbourne Woods

A resident reported that a large section of the wood had been cleared of vegetation and fencing had been erected to restrict walkers gaining access. It had been learned that the owners were allowing the wood to be used by youths (7 yrs to 17 yrs) to practice their bush-craft skills. Concerns were expressed regarding the number of youths who would be visiting the wood which could be in excess of 150 at any one time during the summer months and the potential increase in the volume of traffic on the country roads.

The Chairman stated that he had taken up the matter with Gascoyne Cecil Estates who confirmed that the owners of the wood close to both Mangrove Lane and Brickendon Lane had licensed Bushcraft Ltd to section off part of the wood for a wilderness camp to operate until October 2015. Countryside Management had been made aware of the situation, but there was nothing that they could do as the activity was taking place on private land.

Members expressed concern at the lack of courtesy shown to the Parish Council in that the Council had not been notified in advance of the proposed activity and members requested that a letter be forwarded to the owners registering the Parish Council's concerns.

12. PLANNING

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

13. FANSHAWS ROOM COMMITTEE

(i) Minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the above meeting be received. (See Appendix B)

(ii) Minutes of the AGM held on 22 April 2015

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

(iii) Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2015

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

14. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

The Chairman referred to the notes which had been compiled by former Cllr Mrs M Laybourn resulting from her attendance at the Highways Liaison meeting held on 9 April 2015 (see attached Appendix E).

The Chairman thanked Mrs Laybourn for her very comprehensive report.

15. PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP

The Chairman gave the following report:

Path from Brickendon Green to Bayford Station

“HCC Highways has been making an audit of the path details, which I am told will be with Groundwork Hertfordshire and HCC’s Rights of Way (RoW) department by the end of May 2015.

Following that RoW will create a final budget allocation for the work to be commissioned. The contractor that originally quoted on the project did already clear the bushes and level the ground back in March, will be able to start work in June to enable invoices for verified work to be raised and submitted to East Herts Council by BLPC to claim the £8000.00 Large Project Capital Grant awarded to the BLPC for the Path Project last year, and in time to beat the expiry date in July this year.

Prior to work commencing a meeting with Brickendon Liberty Parish Councillors will be held to run through the final details of the specifications to ensure that what is built is most suitable to the needs of walkers and residents, and in respect of the budget. Further information will be published on the Council’s website.”

16. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH/POLICE REPORT

Mr Downes informed the meeting that he had had no report from the Police and no crime statistics were available. Should the figures be made available he would notify the Clerk accordingly. Mr Downes expressed his disappointment and he felt that it would have been useful to have had an update on the indiscriminate parking at the station.

17. TRANSPARENCY OBLIGATIONS FOR PARISH COUNCILS

Members had been circulated with details concerning the transparency obligations for small Local Authorities which had come into force on 1 April 2015. Parish Councils with a turnover of less than £25,000 were now subject to the Transparency Code which made it mandatory for Parish Councils to publish specific information relative to its statutory functions. The information specified under the Code must be published on an available free of charge website.

The Clerk stated that the information required under the Code could be included on the Brickendon Liberty Parish Council website and he would liaise with Mr Irwin with regard to this matter.

18. VILLAGE GREEN – UPDATE

(i) Land dispute

The Chairman informed members that the Council's Solicitor had written to state that the Wallace family had withdrawn their objection to the registration of the part of the Village Green claimed by Brickendon Grange Golf Club. Discussions were now taking place with the Solicitors acting for the Golf Club with regard to the Club entering into a lease with the Parish Council on the previously disputed land.

A question was raised as to whether the Parish Council wished to pursue a lease of the land, as the presence of the pond did pose a potential risk to the public. However, on balance it was agreed that the land was an environmental feature and should remain under the control of the Parish Council.

Cllr Mrs Downes stated that the Council had been offered by the Golf Club a lease of the land and the offer should be pursued.

(ii) Electricity Supply

Cllr Kotting stated that this matter was moving forward slowly and currently the Parish Council was awaiting the commencement of the ground work, which would start shortly. Once completed the Electricity Company would undertake to carry out the electrical supply. Cllr Kotting stated that there would be a degree of disruption to the village once the work commenced, which hopefully would be kept to a minimum.

The Chairman requested that an article be placed in the newsletter with regard to the work to be undertaken. A further request was made for details of how to access the defibrillator to be included, ie when ringing the Emergency Services for an ambulance the caller would be given the location of the equipment and the code to access.

19. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS 2014/2015, ANNUAL RETURN AND AUDITOR'S REPORT

Members had been circulated with a copy of the above documents.

(i) Financial Accounts and Annual Return

RESOLVED that the above document be approved.

(ii) Auditor's Report

Members noted the recommendations contained in the report which required action by the Clerk.

The Clerk confirmed that the recommendations would be implemented and a report on the actions taken would be referred to the next meeting of the Council.

20. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

(i) Accounts for payment

RESOLVED that the accounts as set out on the attached schedule (see Appendix F) be duly authorised for payment.

(ii) Financial Statement

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

21. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- Governance Review.
- Wormley West End notice board.
- Action taken on Auditor's recommendations.

22. CONFIRMATION OF DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 23 July 2015, at 7.30 pm in the Fanshaws Room, Brickendon.

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