

A Meeting of the Parish Council at The Parish Hall, Great Baddow on Monday 16th February 2015

The Council met at 7.30 pm on **Monday 16th February 2015** in The Parish Hall, Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs J Sosin chaired the meeting.

Present: Councillors Mrs J Sosin, A Sosin, Mrs C Shaw, K Liley, Mrs S Young, K Ronaldson, Mrs D Ronaldson, T Miller, Mrs M Miller, J Fuller and Mrs V Sadowsky.

In Attendance: The Assistant Clerk of the Council

642/14 Public Announcements

There were no public announcements.

643/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs G Jarvis and T Hatcher.

644/14 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registered Non Pecuniary Interests.

645/14 Minutes of the Council Meeting – 19th January 2015

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 9th January 2015 were signed as a true statement. Proposed by Cllr Mrs J Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young.

646/14 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

647/14 Clerk's Report

1. Dog Waste Bins

The replacement dog waste bins at Readers Court, and in the footpath alongside the Church, have now been installed. An invoice has not yet been received from Chelmsford City Council. Cllr J Fuller reported that the 'No cycling' notice was now missing from the church office end of the footpath and this will be reported.

2. New Play Equipment

The grant funding from Chelmsford City Council has now been received. A representative from Play and Leisure has viewed the equipment and given assurances that the installation as it stands is within safety regulations. Play and Leisure have now confirmed this in writing.

3. Banking Arrangements

1. The Chairman and the Administrative Assistant have now been added as signatories on the Nat West Imprest account.
2. An application was made to Unity Trust for a deposit account to be set up to run alongside the current account. This has now been put in place and will be activated in the next few days.

4 Rural Community Council of Essex

A letter of support, to prevent the withdrawal of funding, was sent to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with a

copy to Simon Burns MP. Replies have been received to confirm that DEFRA will maintain investment in the ACRE network for 2015/16.

5. **Purchase of Dennis mower**
As part of the Grounds budget for 2015/16, the sum of £4600 was included under the heading of new machinery, for the purchase of a Dennis mower. The Grounds Manager has obtained a quotation for the purchase of the new machine, which includes a discount for the trade-in of the existing machine, and amounts to £4150 plus VAT. The supplier has now requested that a written order be submitted for the purchase of the machine, which will be invoiced and delivered at the beginning of April 2015. It was agreed that the order should be confirmed in writing. Proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.
6. **Renewal of Corridor and Bar flooring**
Following the decision of the Council at its meeting on 1st December 2014, to accept the quotation from Wickford Flooring Solutions Ltd to replace the corridor and bar flooring, the office have now received a method statement and risk assessments from the contractor, as requested at the meeting. Cllr Mrs S Young confirmed that the paperwork was satisfactory and it was agreed that arrangements should be made for the work to be carried out, with funding to be taken from reserves ring fenced from 2012/13.
7. **Presentation prior to Council meeting on 16th March 2015**
A presentation will be made by the Emergency Planning and Community Safety Officer at 7pm on 16th March, and will be followed by the Council meeting at the usual time of 7.30pm.
8. **Parking Arrangements in the Vineyards Car Park**
Cllr Mrs C Shaw enquired whether a response had been received from Clem Dobson Associates regarding the termination of the car parking arrangements in the Vineyards car park. The Assistant Clerk replied that no reply had been received.
9. **Takeaway Van – Sandford Mill Lane**
Cllr A Sosin confirmed that he had spoken to Chelmsford City Council and had been informed that the trading was permitted.
10. **Sky Lanterns**
Cllr A Sosin confirmed that, whilst it is not intended to post notices, the hire regulations of Chelmsford City Council do include a condition prohibiting the use of sky lanterns on their land.

648/14 Correspondence

1. Mrs C Chung – Request to reserve a plot in the Lawn Cemetery
Following some discussion it was agreed, by majority, that the cemetery regulations should be adhered to, and it would not be possible for the applicant, as a non-parishioner, to pre-purchase a plot in the cemetery. Proposed by Cllr A Sosin and seconded by Cllr K Ronaldson. A vote was taken showing 9 in agreement, 1 against and 1 abstention.
2. S Miners – Letter regarding the road surface in Avenue Road.
Cllr Mrs S Young had taken photographs of the potholes at the entrance to Avenue Road, between 42 and 44a Beehive Lane, and had estimated the depth of the largest to be at least 4". This will be reported to the Highways Department with a further request that the road be resurfaced for a length of 20 feet from the entrance, to prevent loose chippings and stones from being thrown into Beehive Lane.
3. Correspondence concerning the rerouting of the No.31 bus.

It was agreed that the petition, and additional correspondence, should be forwarded to First Bus. It was noted that the next Passenger Transport Meeting is scheduled for 3rd March, and Cllr K Liley agreed to attend the meeting if he was available. Cllr A Sosin noted that the First Bus App was difficult to use.

4. RCCE Essex Village of the Year and Best Kept Village Competition.
It was agreed that it was now too late to consider an application for this year's competition, and in addition, enquires would need be made about the Parish Council's eligibility. The matter will be referred to the Grounds Committee meeting in September if the eligibility criteria can be met.
5. Grant application from St Paul's Church.
Cllr Mrs S Young informed the meeting that she had recently spoken to a representative from St Paul's, and proposed that a grant should be made towards the building repairs needed, in view of the community work that is being carried out in the church. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw that a grant of £300 should be made from the funds remaining in the budget for 2014/15, and that the church should be encouraged to make a further application for 2015/16 funds if this is necessary. This was agreed. The church will also be given information about the Great Baddow Times, and encouraged to use the magazine to support their fundraising activities.

649/14 Reports of the Planning Committee 26th January and 9th February 2015

The reports of the Planning Committee of 26th January and 9th February 2015 were presented to the Council by Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson and signed as a true statement by Cllr Mrs J Sosin.

650/14 Report of the Organisation Methods and Personnel Committee 2nd February 2015

The report of the Organisation Methods and Personnel Committee of 2nd February 2015 was presented to the Council by Cllr Mrs J Sosin, proposed by Cllr Mrs J Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young, with the following amendment: the words 'Staffing matters were considered' to be inserted between 'The Assistant Clerk left the meeting at 9.30pm' and 'the meeting was adjourned at 9.45pm..'.

651/14 Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee 9th February 2015

The report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 9th February 2015 was presented to the Council by Cllr Mrs C Shaw, proposed by Cllr Mrs C Shaw and seconded by Cllr Mrs M Miller.

652/14 Essex County Council – Scoping Request relating to application for Sandon Quarry

The meeting considered the Scoping, and Screening, Requests for Sandon Quarry and were in agreement with the proposed items for inclusion in the assessment. It was agreed that there were no additions, or comments, to be made.

653/14 Report from the Business Continuity and Risk Management Working Group

It was agreed that the Risk Register and Action Plan for the Business Risk Assessments and Internal Controls, and the Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit should be accepted, as proposed by the Working Group, and recommended for acceptance by the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 9th February 2015.

The following items were noted for future consideration:

1. To establish whether a training policy is in place and whether any updating is required
2. To confirm whether any risk assessments have been provided by the Community Association
3. To facilitate a review of lone working with Line Managers

It was agreed that a review of progress on the Action Plan would be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee in September 2015.

654/14 Essex County Council – Getting Around in Essex consultation

It was agreed that the consultation was geared towards individual responses, and councillors were encouraged to make their own online replies.

655/14 Recreation Ground/Noakes Place

Cllr Mrs S Young outlined the proposal to install bollards in the Recreation Ground/Noakes Place to prevent unauthorised vehicular entry onto the grass areas. The total cost is £2134 plus VAT, for the purchase and installation of:

1. 41 wooden bollards for driveway alongside football pitches, at a total cost of £656 plus VAT
2. 50 wooden bollards and 3 lockable bollards for the area around the car park and overspill carpark, at a total cost of £1265 plus VAT
3. 3 wooden bollards and 1 lockable bollard to prevent vehicles entering the Recreation Ground from Noakes Place, at a cost of £213 plus VAT.

A contribution to these costs will be requested from the Community Association. The work will be carried out by Chelmsford City Council who have indicated that it may be possible to fit this in to their current winter schedule. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr K Liley that the work should proceed as soon as possible, with funds to be taken from the 2014/15 Council Projects budget that had been set aside for lawn cemetery fencing, but will not be required this year. This was agreed. The Grounds Manager will be asked to contact the City Council to progress the matter.

Cllr A Sosin informed the meeting that there had been a car accident on Tabors Hill last Friday evening with consequent damage to a tree and fencing in the Noakes Place sensory garden. A resident reported that debris and glass had been left on the pavement, and the groundstaff had assisted in removing this.

656/14 Consultation on Essex County Council Equalities Strategy

A number of councillors reported that they had been unable to access the survey online. The office will contact the County Council to enquire whether the survey should be live, or had been taken down.

657/14 Essex County Council – Guide to Infrastructure Contributions

It was agreed that the Parish Council could not make any appropriate response to this consultation.

658/14 Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Committee

It was agreed that the councillor representatives would be Cllrs K Liley and K Ronaldson. The Assistant Clerk reported that the staff representatives would be Alan Coleman and Michele Dixon. The office will email the representatives to arrange the first meeting of the Committee.

659/14 Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure

Cllr Mrs S Young outlined the recommendation of the Organisation Methods and Personnel Committee that a consultation should now be carried out with all staff members. This may require meetings with the staff to familiarise them with the policy. The policy will be recommended for adoption once this has taken place. Cllr Mrs S Young will liaise with the Assistant Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

660/14 Website

Cllrs Mrs J Sosin informed the meeting that the new site was progressing well and should be ready to go live by the end of the month, as originally intended. Cllr K Ronaldson outlined a number of matters that may need addressing or amending before the site was uploaded, and it was proposed that these should be reported in an email for further attention. Any final unresolved problems will be addressed to Mike Letch before going live. It was agreed that authority should be given to the Chairman and the Vice Chairman to launch the site once the final changes have been made. Proposed by Cllr A Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs S Young.

661/14 Matters for Information

- Cllr Mrs V Sadowsky informed the meeting of a Funding Surgery for CVS members on 27th February
- Cllr Mrs S Young reported that the EALC had issued a legal update on the filming, photographing and recording at Council meetings, and this may require a change to Standing Orders. It was agreed to discuss the matter at the next Council meeting. In addition, changes to the Power of Competence were also noted, and this will be placed on the agenda for the June Council meeting.

It was resolved that the meeting would be closed to the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in the following item

662/14 Bell Centre Lease

Cllr K Ronaldson updated the meeting on the progress of the feasibility study. The Finance and General Purposes Committee on 9th February 2015 had agreed that Phase 1 of the investigations, encompassing the paper study, should be authorised, but Phase 2, the excavation work,

should not proceed at this time, as it is an outline budgetary cost for the project that is required at this stage. It is understood that further costs may be incurred, in addition to the final figure from the feasibility study, as a result of this decision not to proceed with Phase 2. Hurley Porte & Duell are now progressing on this basis and a further update is awaited. The Assistant Clerk has not received any further correspondence from the Parish Council's solicitor with regard to the lease negotiations.

663/14 Office Staffing

1. Cllr Mrs S Young outlined the Organisational Review Report Phase 2 from Vine HR, and circulated a revised structure plan. It was agreed that consultation should now take place on the revised structure.
2. Cllr Mrs S Young circulated a note concerning holiday pay for contractual overtime which had been provided by Vine HR. It was agreed that a review of holidays taken by grounds staff over the past three months should be carried out and reported to the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 9th March 2015.
3. The Assistant Clerk reported that following the discussion at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 9th February 2015, a breakdown had been requested from Acumen Wages Service, regarding the incorrect salary payments made to two members of staff. This paperwork had not yet been received. It was agreed that a part payment should be made in February and any correction can be made prior to the final payment.
4. Cllr Mrs J Sosin updated the Council on the long term absence of the Clerk and the recent communication between herself and the Clerk. Council fully endorsed the actions Cllr Mrs J Sosin had taken to ensure that the Council is acting appropriately, and is fully briefed by Occupational Health before the Clerk returns to work. Until the report from Occupational Health is received and a meeting can be held with the Clerk and her representative, the Council agreed that the Clerk will remain on paid leave.
The Council also endorsed the role that Vine HR are taking in advising the Chair and Council on the steps that the Council should be taking. Cllr Mrs J Sosin expressed gratitude for the support she had received from Vine HR. The Council agreed that the Chairman had its authority to seek further advice as she thought necessary.
Cllr Mrs J Sosin agreed to keep the Council informed of progress.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 9.50 pm.

Signed.....Chairman.....Date