

Brampton Ash Parish Council

Approved Minutes of Parish Council Meeting Held 27 August 2014 At Dingley Village Hall, Church Lane, Dingley, 7.30pm

Present

Cllr Steve Power (Chair) Cllr Nick Bevan Cllr Teresa Hilliard Cllr Heather Shuttleworth
Liz Evans (Clerk)

Also Present

County Councillor Allan Matthews was welcomed to the meeting and introduced to members.

| | Action by: |
|---|------------|
| <p>1. Declarations of Interest <i>To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting</i> There were no declarations of interest.</p> | |
| <p>2. Apologies for Absence Shortly before the meeting Cllr Stewart had informed the Clerk that he would not attend. The reason given was not considered to be a valid one so no apology was recorded. The Clerk was asked to consult Sue Lyons, Monitoring Officer at Kettering Borough Council (KBC), with regard to Cllr Stewart's poor attendance record at parish council meetings.</p> | LE |
| <p>3. Minutes of Meeting Held 13 May 2014 The minutes were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p> | |
| <p>4. Matters Arising from the Above Meeting <i>Item 4.2 Article 4 Directions</i> The Clerk had requested an update on the situation from KBC and would report back to councillors. <i>Item 4 (10.1) Highways Warden</i> NB had met with Ian Boyes, Northants County Council (NCC) and reported that the main duties of the role are to keep a check on the state of the roads, verges, etc. and report any problems.</p> | LE |
| <p>5. Financial Matters <i>.1 To review the parish council's current financial position</i> The Clerk circulated a statement showing a balance as at 27 August 2014 of £1,995.57. This was accepted by councillors and it was signed by the Chair. <i>.2 Annual audit: update</i> The parish council's annual accounts had been approved by the auditors and a Notice posted on the parish noticeboard, as required by law. <i>.3 New banking arrangements</i> The parish council's bank account was in the process of being transferred from Barclays Bank to Unity Bank in order to facilitate triple authority on-line banking, which Barclays could not provide.</p> | |

6. **Planning Matters:**

To consider matters relating to planning applications within the parish

KET/2013/0666: Communication from the applicant

The Chair gave councillors details of an email he had received from the applicant: it contained a criticism of the conduct of the meeting held to discuss his planning application. This was discussed and councillors felt that they had done their duty in examining the various plans provided to them and reporting their views to KBC. Problems had arisen because this application necessitated two extra parish council meetings due to the number of inaccuracies and omissions contained in the plans at each of these two meetings. Whilst this was not an official complaint it was, nonetheless, necessary to record it and bring it to the attention of councillors.

KET/2013/0790: Barn conversion, Mr Singlehurst: approved

KET/2014/0314: Driveway, Mr Singlehurst: withdrawn

7. **Highway Matters**

.1 Replacement of grit bin, Hermitage Road (A6)

As previously reported, the grit bin at the A6 end of Hermitage Road had been removed by NCC as it did not meet their new criteria. A new one could be purchased privately from them for £290.00, to include installation, first fill of sand/salt mix and the issue of a Section 185 licence (mandatory). Implications of the cost and the siting of a private bin were discussed. C. Cllr Matthews advised that a grant may be available. He would forward application details to the Clerk and, if it is approved, councillors agreed that a bin and first fill would be ordered from NCC. Additional sand/salt mix can be ordered in 25kg bags and Cllr Shuttleworth agreed that they could be stored on her land.

LE
HS

8. **Openness in Local Government Regulations 2014**

The above document had been circulated to councillors to read prior to the meeting. The parish council must now, by law, facilitate the recording of its meetings. There was concern that recordings may be selectively edited and broadcast but anyone doing so would be subject to the appropriate legislation. Members of the public may not record items deemed to be confidential, nor may they cause any disruption to proceedings when recording. Recording activities must be open and transparent, and carried out with due regard for the needs of vulnerable people. SP proposed the motion that the parish council henceforth records all of its meetings for a trial period until local elections in May 2015. It was seconded by TH and carried unanimously. C. Cllr Matthews suggested that the parish council may like to consider following the protocol of Desborough Town Council in destroying recordings after minutes of the relevant meeting had been accepted and signed off. KBC had advised that they were in the process of drawing up a protocol and this would be forwarded when available.

9. **Community Fund: Kettering Borough Council**

Details of the KBC Community Fund had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting for their consideration. KBC has a £40,000 fund available for commercial and environmental projects in the parishes and Brampton Ash Parish Council could apply for a maximum of £2,500.00 but any amount sought would need to be match-funded by them. C. Cllr Matthews advised that this was intended to be an ongoing scheme but, in the event of a change of administration it could not be guaranteed. Councillors felt that there was currently no viable project so they would not seek any funding at this stage.

C. Cllr Matthews said that he has funding available for some anti-speeding apparatus which could be fixed with brackets to an appropriate post and it was intended that it would be shared between the villages that he represents. A Section 50 licence costing £200.00 approx. would be required but there may be some assistance available to meet the cost. When further details become available he will contact all parish clerks in his constituency.

LE

10. Any Other Business

.1 Changes to electoral registration procedures

KBC advised that it was now the responsibility of all electors to ensure that they were registered to vote, whereas previously this had devolved to the head of the household. They asked parish councils to raise awareness among residents and they had sent posters to display on the village notice board.

SP

.2 Protocol for calling extra parish council meetings

The Chair advised that a councillor had requested an extraordinary parish council meeting but had offered no reason for doing so and had provided no agenda. The Chair said that, whilst he was willing, in principle, to call an extraordinary meeting, he should be provided with an agenda giving a clear reason for doing so. Please refer to Brampton Ash Parish Council Standing Orders for details of the correct procedure for calling parish council meetings.

.3 Written queries from Cllr Stewart

Cllr Stewart did not attend the meeting but he submitted the following questions shortly before the meeting. These were considered and councillors' responses are shown in red. *Please note that names of members of the public are shown with asterisks to preserve their privacy for legal reasons. Please also note that all of the following assertions/allegations are the writer's own and are not necessarily endorsed by Brampton Ash Parish Council.*

1. Why did Mr Power vote on application KET/2010/0790? He was M ***** adjacent neighbour at the time and why was the meeting held in the Chairman's house? (Parish Council Meeting on 17 Jan 2011)*

a) The application did not apply to the adjacent property.

b) In the past, parish council meetings were rotated between councillors' homes: this no longer happens.

2. Why did Mr Power ask for my decision on planning app KET/2013/0372 with the applicant, M *****, sitting next to me? (PC Meeting on Monday 8 July 2013)*

Cllr Power has already made three apologies for this incident and he hereby offers a fourth one.

3. Why did Mr Bevan and Mrs Hilliard vote in favour of planning app KET/2013/0372 with the applicant, M *****, present? (PC Meeting on Monday 8 July 2013)*

As minuted (item 3), the applicant had already left the meeting by this point.

4. Why did Mr Power ask for Mr Bevan and Mrs Hilliard's vote with M ***** Present? (PC Meeting on Monday 8 July 2013)*

See answer to question 3 (above)

*5. Why are there 4 pages of notes for * ***** planning application (regeneration of an existing cattle barn to offices) and none for M* ***** new build cattle barns on green belt? And how can the PC 'express concern at excessive speed and damage to verges in the village by tractors...' when in the same meeting they approve M* ***** application; which has seen traffic movements from HGV to domestic increase by 4-5000 trips a year?*

Historically, the minutes of Brampton Ash Parish Council were recorded in a précised form (often known as Action Minutes), without detail, and this was the case at the meeting held 17 January 2011. Thereafter the Clerk, who took on her role in December 2010, felt that a more detailed format was appropriate and adopted Summary Minutes as they are more factually informative for those readers who are not present at a meeting.

6. Councillor Stewart was told by the other Cllr's that he should make himself "more likeable". Can they explain why and how he should do so?

Please refer to minutes dated 9 January 2014, item 10 regarding discussions that took place, after which parish councillors, including Cllr Stewart, shook hands and agreed that it was time for all concerned to move on in everybody's best interests.

7. Chairman Power complained that my emails to 'a member of the parish' (name removed to provide anonymity) were "pernicious and Atrocious", therefore can he show the PC these emails. The parish council has no knowledge of emails sent to members of the public by Cllr Stewart. A personal email is not a parish council issue.

8. The PC have complained that my responses to Mr Power's actions are abusive and offensive, therefore will Liz supply the PC with copies of my emails for the entire Parish to view on the notice board. Is this acceptable to the PC?

No, it is not acceptable and it is an entirely inappropriate request.

9. The text of Statement 9 has been removed as it is the subject of Confidential Minutes 8 July 2013 and cannot, therefore be included here.

During discussions between Fr. Mark and the Chair after the meeting held 8 July 2013 it was agreed that, following Cllr Stewart's outburst after that meeting, it was not appropriate to hold further meetings in the church and the venue was switched to Dingley Village Hall for that reason.

10. Why have the Chairman and Cllr Hilliard applied for a footpath application through *
***** field?

This is a private matter and is not parish council business. However, Cllr Hilliard advises that she has declared, to those concerned, her membership of the parish council. Please note that Cllr Power is not an applicant for this footpath.

11. At the meeting on 16 May 2013 at 20 Hermitage rd, Mrs Kirby (representing S Guinness) asked the PC to talk to S Guinness rather than go behind his back and apply for a footpath application; Why did Cllr Hilliard say "Why should we"?

This would have been a perfectly valid question for Cllr Hilliard to ask.

12. From the meeting on 13 May 2014, how can the PC make a decision on the new route for the footpath in my field without having walked it? Only the Chairman and *** ***** have walked the new route, which confirms my suspicions that there is no independent thought in the PC. The Chairman runs this Parish Council.

Please refer to the minutes of the meeting dated 13 May 2014, item 4.3

13. The PC knows full well my reason for moving the footpath is for the safety of my children and the chance to put in a stable yard. How can they ignore two facts that support the diversion; The murderer using the footpath to kill his wife at Manor Farm 5 years ago and (text has been removed as it is an unsubstantiated allegation made against a member of the public).

a) Plans hitherto submitted by Cllr Stewart have not shown any reference to a stable yard.

b) Other matters referred to are not parish council business.

14. Why did the PC (excluding Cllr Stewart and Shuttleworth) choose to paint a disused phone box at the same time the rest of the Parish were welcoming Father Mark to the community? And why was Father Mark not invited to the unveiling of Ronald Coulson's bench plaque?

a) Arrangements for painting the village phone box were agreed at the meeting 13 September 2012 when Cllr Stewart was present. Cllr Stewart appears to have known of the arrangement to welcome Fr Mark but, unfortunately, he failed to inform the parish council of this: as a parish councillor he could reasonably have been expected to do so.

b) All parish councillors were emailed on 31 March 2013 with a request to 'spread the word' regarding this event. It is unfortunate that Cllr Stewart failed to invite Fr Mark.

15. Why are the Chairman, Cllr Bevan and Cllr Hilliard prejudiced against Cllr Stewart, M* and M*
***** at ***** **, M* and M* ***** at No * and M* and M* ***** at No *.

The councillors concerned do not recognise this assertion as a valid one.

Cllr Stewart separately submitted the following question to the parish council on behalf of S Guinness:

When S Guinness wrote to the council asking for help to address the trespassing on his property with the email titled "Trespassing in Brampton Ash", why did Chairman Power change the item on the agenda to "closure of footpath", thereby forcing the community to fear they would lose their permission to use the field?

This query was dealt with by the Chair in his email to Sheridan Guinness dated 13 May 2013 when he explained that, since a footpath exists between the village and the church there cannot be an issue of trespass so it was more accurate to discuss the closure of that footpath rather than a matter of trespass. It should be noted that trespass is a private matter and the parish council has no powers to act on such allegations. Accusing walkers of trespassing, however, effectively denied them the use of the path and therefore was deemed to have closed it to them.

11. **Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 10 December 2014, Dingley Village Hall, 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.30pm