

CHAPPEL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2011 IN THE VILLAGE HALL, AT 7.30 P.M.

IN THE CHAIR: CLLR. S. CHAMLEY.
PRESENT: CLLRS. A. LANGLEY, P. NEUBAUER, C. CORDINGLEY, R. BELCHAM AND R. JONES.
CLERK: MRS. V. BURROWS.
ALSO PRESENT: CLLR. P. CHILLINGWORTH AND NINE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

11/018: Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

Cllr. Chamley welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllr. H. Leftley

THE FORMAL COUNCIL MEETING WAS SUSPENDED AT 7.31 P.M. TO ALLOW:

11/019: Public Forum.

A member of the public asked if an e-mail, which had been sent to the Chairman and Clerk, could be discussed. The Chairman and Clerk advised that no e-mail had been received as far as they were aware. They asked if the e-mail could be sent again and the Parish Council would respond accordingly. The Chairman and Clerk also advised that they would e-mail Mrs. Underwood at the e-mail address provided to establish contact via e-mail. All other members of the public had attended to listen to Mr. Jennings and the Road Bridge Update.

11/020: Road Bridge Update.

Mr. Danny Jennings, HT Structures Engineer from Essex County Council (ECC), attended for this item and gave a very good update. He spoke about the Bridge Project and also the Broom House Culvert Project. He advised that the Bridge was on target to be completed within the original time scale of 27 weeks. Some of the public asked questions about the completion of the project and why the bridge had been closed for so long. Mr. Jennings explained about how contracts and contractors worked and if the project looked like it was going to over-run they would put extra resources in place. Cllr. Neubauer asked for it to be put on record that the Parish Council fully understands the implications of the project and that they continue to support Mr. Jennings and his team until such time as the project is completed.

A member of the public asked about weight restrictions and the procedure to have one placed on the new bridge. Mr. Jennings advised that in the first instance a request needed to be placed with his office and a consultation would then follow. Mr. Jennings went on to explain that Environmental Weight Restriction Orders make it an offence (subject to certain exemptions) to drive a vehicle through a restriction when the maximum weight of the vehicle exceeds that stated. Weight Restriction Orders are imposed to preserve either the character or amenities of an area, or to restrict access for heavy vehicles where they may pose a danger to pedestrians, buildings, bridges or the road infrastructure. There are limited exemptions to Weight Restriction Orders, in order to allow access to collect or deliver goods or carry out maintenance these include school buses, oil delivery tankers, gritting lorries etc. The members of the Council thought in the first instance they would write a letter to Danny asking for this process to be put in motion.

Mr. Jennings moved on to Broom House Culvert and advised the meeting that works were due to start around the 21st February for approximately 8 to 11 weeks. This would involve traffic lights which were set in time with the lights at Ford Street. Mr. Jennings explained that this culvert had failed its assessment and it was now in the top five dangerous structures in the County. A member of the

public asked if the works could be delayed until after the Bridge Project was completed as it was felt that enough inconvenience had been caused with the closure of the bridge. Mr. Jennings said he would consult his department and e-mail the Parish Office advising what could be done.

11/021: Borough and Ward Councillors Update.

Cllr. Chillingworth reported on the following issues:

Full Council Meeting on the 16th February – which includes the annual Budget for Colchester Borough Council. The Clerk has written on behalf of the Council asking for his attendance at the above mentioned meeting. Cllr. Chillingworth advised that a 3-line whip is applied by his political group for the meeting and would only miss it for a serious, unavoidable reason. He advised that he would formally write to the Council stating his intentions regarding the meeting. The political group that Cllr. Chillingworth belongs to is recommending a cut to the Revenue Grant to Parish Councils in Colchester Borough in line with central Government cuts, which is between 8 to 10%. Cllr. Chillingworth also advised that he was unsure if his group would be successful in overturning the current 50% proposed reduction as, they were in a minority.

- ❖ A member of the Council asked if the refuse freighters would still be coming into the Village this year. Cllr. Chillingworth advised that a new scheme is being implemented but details had yet to be announced.
- ❖ The Clerk asked about the litter pick / spring clean that was planned for April, suggesting that both Councils ask for the A1124 through both Villages to be litter picked as currently there is a lot of litter. Cllr. Chillingworth suggested that we contact Street Services and ask if it is possible. Cllr. Chamley suggested that details of the litter pick are published in the Village Reporter and ask for volunteers.

THE FORMAL COUNCIL MEETING WAS RE-OPENED AT 8.10 P.M. TO ALLOW:

11/022: Declarations of Interests.

None

11/023: Confirmation of Minutes – meeting held 12th January 2011.

Draft minutes of the meeting held on the 12th January 2011 had been circulated prior to the meeting. All agreed that these were a true record of the meeting with the following amendment - page 2 agenda item 11/003 main paragraph after bullet points 2nd line towards the endthere had **been** a major re-organisation..... the word **been** had been missed out.

Resolution: 11/004. That the draft minutes that had been circulated prior to the meeting be approved as being a true record with the above amendment of the meeting held on 12th January 2011.

Proposed: Cllr. Belcham. Seconded: Cllr. Jones. For: All.

11/024: Chairman's Briefing.

Cllr. Chamley had circulated a briefing this month and she spoke briefly on some of the topics, all other matters were discussed under the agenda items.

Village Green. Cllr. Chamley had met with Essex County Cllr. Anne Brown and Jacqueline Millward of Essex Legal Services at Essex County Hall yesterday. Ms Millward has been asked that if work was undertaken to protect the Village Green was carried out, what complaint could be made. Unfortunately, there was no definitive answer. However, there would be a door open for legal action if anyone thought fit to take it. It was strongly suggested that a public consultation should take place requesting ideas from the residents and involving the school, church and pub. There are various ways of conducting a public consultation but primarily best results are achieved by leaflet dropping, public meetings, questionnaires, surveys etc. Once the initial process has taken place and the Parish Council are clear on what the residents want, it can move forward.

Mobile Police Van. Cllr. Chamley advised that the Police Van that used to visit the Village on a fortnightly basis had been stopped due to the cutbacks.

Community Speed Watch. Following an e-mail from Cllr. Taylor at Wakes Colne, Cllr. Chamley confirmed that the Community Speed Watch programme was on hold. This came about after a meeting in Dunmow. Cllr. Taylor, who co-ordinates the programme will advise if anything changes.

Library Services. Cllr. Chamley reported on the recently received e-mail about the Library Services in the County and it was considered good news that the service would remain largely the same

despite the cutbacks. The Clerk also asked if the Mobile Library dates and times were on the website and agreed to e-mail to Cllr. Belcham.

Flood Warning. Cllr. Chamley advised that she receives a text on her phone to advise if a flood warning is imminent and it would seem sensible if we had a Councillor on the other side of the river to also receive an alert via text. Cllr. Neubauer agreed to be the contact.

Road Bridge Opening. Cllr. Chamley asked all Councillors to e-mail thoughts for the bridge opening ceremony.

Queens Diamond Jubilee 2012. All agreed that something should be organised and it was considered that all the local organisations should jointly be involved.

11/025: Correspondence.

All mail received was on public display and the Clerk had e-mailed information throughout the month.

11/026: Consideration and update of Financial Regulations for the Council.

The Clerk advised that she had spoken to John Turner (Internal Auditor) during the previous month to clarify the situation on BACS payments and internet transfers for paying the Council's bills. It would seem that the current system is under review and new guidelines would be issued soon. The Clerk had been sent a lot of literature regarding the consultation would read all the documentation as soon as possible.

11/027: Financial Matters.

1) **Funds Received:** None.

2) **5 invoices were for consideration:**

- ❖ V Burrows: Clerk's January salary at the normal rate.
- ❖ Admin2u Office Expenses for January: £14.20
- ❖ Village Ranger: 17 hours at usual rate for January.
- ❖ A & J Lighting: Quarterly Maintenance £92.99
- ❖ Guildhall Services: £47.00

Resolution: 11/005. That all of the invoices as detailed above be approved for immediate payment.

Proposed: Cllr. Belcham. Seconded: Cllr. Langley. For: All.

3) **Monthly budget review:** The Clerk explained that currently the Council was running below budget, all agreed in the current climate this was an excellent achievement.

11/028: Planning Matters.

None

11/029: Member's Questions.

No questions were received.

TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS / CLERK:

11/030: Street Lighting.

Cllr. Chamley advised that she had received some information from CBC on the number of lights currently owned by them. It would seem that the Parish Council does not own the six lights in Swan Grove and they are owned and maintained by CBC. Following this information being received, the Clerk had been in touch with A & J Lighting to amend the monthly maintenance contract so they only maintain the remaining twelve lights owned by the Parish Council. The Clerk advised that the Insurance policy would require amending as well as the Asset register. The twelve lights comprise five in Colchester Road, three in Spring Gardens Road and four in The Street.

11/031: Play Equipment.

Cllr. Langley advised that the play equipment should have a maintenance inspection each year. As this has not been done since the equipment was installed Cllr. Langley had approached a company to get a quote. Some of the equipment is in need of repair and this would be included in the call out and maintenance inspection. The cost is £250.00 plus parts. The Council discussed the options but agreed that the equipment should be maintained on a yearly contract. Cllr. Langley was instructed to

obtain details of a maintenance contract to be put in place for the future and to have the equipment inspected and fixed as soon as possible.

Resolution: 11/006. That Cllr. Langley obtains details of a maintenance contract to be put in place for the future and to have the equipment inspected and fixed as soon as possible.

Proposed: Cllr. Langley. Seconded: Cllr. Chamley. For: All.

11/032: Village Reporter.

It was discussed that the Parish Council should only put information in the Village Reporter if it has something worth reporting. For example for the March/April edition we could report that the Library facilities had being retained and that the Police Mobile Van support had been withdrawn etc. It was a concern that some of the information printed in the magazine was not appropriate and that the Parish Council did not want to be seen to be supporting this inappropriate material. The Clerk read out a letter, which had been written on behalf of Wakes Colne Parish Council who also felt that some of the articles were inappropriate. The members agreed with the contents of the letter and proposed that a similar letter was also sent from Chappel Parish Council. In addition, it was discussed that the agreed minutes of the meeting should also be displayed in the notice board as some of the residents did not have internet access. All members agreed that this was an excellent idea and this would be done by the Friday following the meeting.

Resolution: 11/007. That the Parish Council writes a letter voicing its concerns over contentious articles in the Village Reporter.

Proposed: Cllr. Jones. Seconded: Cllr. Cordingley. For: All.

Resolution: 11/008. That the Parish Council displays the approved minutes from the previous meeting on the notice board for three weeks as well as the website no later than the Friday following the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. Chamley. Seconded: Cllr. Neubauer. For: All.

11/033: Grass Cutting Service.

Following last months' meeting, Cllrs. Chamley and Neubauer were asked to look into the grass cutting requirements for the Village and report back. It was discussed that a more detailed description of what was required of the contractor was needed for this essential service to be completed properly. A grass-cutting schedule had been produced and it was agreed that the next stage was to draw up a specification, which was transparent and adequate for the Council to administer. In addition, it was agreed that further quotes were obtained so the Council could get the best possible service for the best possible price. Cost was of paramount importance in the current climate however, the Council needed to consider the standard of service that was currently being provided.

Resolution: 11/009. That Cllrs. Chamley and Neubauer continue to work on this project obtaining further quotes and producing a transparent specification of what the Councils' requirements were for grass cutting in the village.

Proposed: Cllr. Chamley. Seconded: Cllr. Belcham. For: All.

11/034: Future Agenda Items / Speaker.

Village Green Public Consultation.

Grass Cutting.

Play Equipment.

The meeting closed at 9.08 p.m.

Date of next meeting – 9th March 2011

Signed Chairman:

Date: 9th March 2011