

## Parish of Hempstead

### **Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Hempstead Parish Council held at the Village Hall on Thursday August 1st 2019 at 8 pm**

**Present:** Mr Sean McCarthy (Chairman), Mr David Drane, Miss Diana Frost, Mrs Laura Saxel, Mr Alan Weedon, Mr Mark Welbourn, and the Clerk. District Councillor Alan Storah.

The meeting was preceded by a short presentation from the developers involved with the potential development of the derelict chicken farm at Bramley Hollow. The plan involved building four houses around a courtyard in the vernacular black barn style to fit in with the surroundings. Concerns were expressed about the shared amenity land on the plans in case it led to development in the future. The developers explained that it would be property of the four dwellings and could have some sort of covenant to prevent future development.

Other concerns were the increase in traffic on one of the most dangerous sections of road in the area and the preservation of existing vegetation.

The developers said that an outline planning application would be presented to Uttlesford planning in the next few weeks and the development would take about a year. They thanked the Council for their attention.

The Parish Council meeting started at 8.25pm

**34) Apologies for absence:** None had been received

#### **35) Reports from District or County Councillors:**

District Councillor Alan Storah had sent in a comprehensive report that had been circulated to councillors and had been very well received as it addressed all the issues raised by the Parish Council in previous discussions.

He asked about bus services serving the village. It was agreed that although the service was minimal it was adequate for the number of people using it.

He offered a grant towards a project in the village that we would confirm with him after further discussion

The Council emphasised that the Bramley Hollow area was still a priority in our Road Safety considerations though Anso Rd is still of concern.

He agreed that his reports could go onto the website for wider readership and he said that he was also writing a piece for the Ambo.

Difficulties of the degree of help he could offer with planning issues as he was now on the planning committee, so this limited his input.

The Chairman thanked him again for his report.

**36) Minutes of Previous Meeting held Thursday 13th June:** The Clerk explained some alterations he had made after discussion with Mrs Saxel. They were then signed as a correct record.

**37) Matters arising not covered elsewhere:** There were none

**38) Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June** were signed as a correct record

**39) Matters arising not covered elsewhere:** There were none

**40) Additional Matters raised by Internal Auditor:**

Checks and Inspections of Assets: The Internal Auditor reminded us that we not only need to have the risk assessments in place but to do and record the inspections etc. The Clerk said that he would amend the risk assessments to allow recording of any checks completed and due date of next check.

Mrs Saxel agreed to take over the role of tree warden and start to identify contractors who could carry out the biennial inspections. It was also agreed that the Clerk would supply suitable maps to her and Miss Frost to identify which areas should be covered for checking all the village assets. The trees on the area covered by the Village Hall/Glebe Charity were their responsibility

Contractors Checks: Checks had been carried out on the proposed contractor for the footpath cutting and in the past for Julian Basham who carries out grass cutting in the village. The latter should be updated and recorded. Refurbishment of the Village infrastructure and Tree Inspection will also have to be checked for insurance cover and appropriate risk assessments.

S137 expenditure: The issue of the £2000 grant to the Village Hall Management Committee had been discussed several times in the course of the last few years. It had been agreed that this would be a useful asset that would be used by residents, visitors and groups using the hall. However, the agreement that this would be a correct use of Section 137 grant was not recorded when it was finally approved Minute No 57 05/09/2017 and payment finally agreed (Minute 138 on 26/04/18). The meeting was unanimous that it was a correct use of Section 137 funds and confirmed this retrospectively

It was agreed that all S137 grants in the future, even though the majority were recurring items, should acknowledge that they were a valid use of this funding for the good of a significant number of the residents or general public or contributed to the efficient running of the Parish affairs.

Website services: This was being discussed later in the meeting.

**41) Defibrillator:** The clerk said that he had not yet contacted the two additional volunteers for first responder training but that he hoped to do so soon.

**42) Planning:**

Basil Cottage UTT/19/1298/FUL the new property to be named Bracken House.

Fairview Bungalow UTT/19/0687/HHF Retrospective Application. Opposing comments had been submitted by the Parish Council. Status: Awaiting decision

Boytons: is had been reported locally that the nursery seemed to be still in operation despite no planning permission having been granted. There were reports of 10/20 cars on site and an advert for a manager had been placed on Facebook.. The case is currently with the enforcement officer of the planning department.

Newlands: New Dwelling UTT/18/3513/ FUL Appeal to Secretary of State: awaiting decision.

Anso Farm, New dwelling. UTT/19/1140/FUL Re-application after refusal: awaiting decision.

Brookmead, Anso Road, UTT/19/1605/HHF. A query about water discharge was noted on comments to UDC, though not opposing overall.

### **43) Correspondence**

It was noted that the Village had received a merit award in the Village of the Year competition. Mr Weedon was thanked for putting in the entry.

It was decided the Council would not be organising any events for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Parish Councils but would be concentrating on VE day 2020. This would be celebrated on Friday May 8<sup>th</sup>. Mis Frost would put an advance notice in the Newsletter. If any events for children were needed it was hoped that parents could organise them.

Telephone kiosk: The Clerk had replied to the Local Planning Department stressing that the Council wanted to keep the telephone kiosk in use as there is still some usage and the mobile 'phone signal in the middle of the village is poor. This request would go forward to BT in September.

### **44) Highways and Rights of Way**

Rissa Long had promised that our village would receive attention from the Highway Rangers after their current work elsewhere. It was hoped that the finger posts, Wellyard posts and footpath bridges were among the tasks that they would undertake from the list given to Rissa Long.

#### Public Rights of Way

Still no footpaths had been cut. The Chairman had written to Councillor Bentley at ECC and still no definite date was forthcoming. There were some strong reactions to the fact that he had mentioned the P3 scheme of which this Council was one of the exemplars in the past. However, the ECC had taken back the cutting because they could do it more economically. This had led to no cutting in two years which has obviously saved them money.

Local Highway Panel: Final details of 40 mph zone are still awaited. Though a sign had been erected at Bramley Hollow saying '40 mph coming'. The legality of it was mentioned as there is no clear indication where it had come from.

### **45) Environment**

Trees at Chase End: Mrs Saxell had been in contact with the resident concerned about the tree. The latter had now been pollarded. Other trees still of concern were on another resident's land Mrs Saxel agreed to contact the resident again and advise her to contact the owner of the land.

Rosemary Cottage damage to drive: Mr Welbourn's had not yet made contact with Mr Sladen about previous contact on this issue but would in the near future.

### **46) Finance**

The Council had received an invoice for the costs of administering Uncontested Parish Election £115.35 and this would be put on the website for payment

Miss Frost had mastered the authorisation protocol on the Unity Trust Bank account for which the clerk was grateful.

#### **47) Communications:**

Miss Frost informed the meeting of her deliberations with Mr Kitchen regarding plans for the website. The website was created in April 2005 and its many pages are hand-written by Mr Kitchen. The site has 10 visits per day. The website fees are up to date to March 2020. However, it needs to be modernised. Its appearance looks old, it needs calendar improvement, search boxes and reforming the history section.

New calendar section, fonts and menu dropdowns would be about £120 and we may need to buy search box software in the future.

Some of this is needed for compliance with www guidance to improve accessibility and to operate on the range of devices now used.

Mr Kitchen has not had an increase in payment since February 2011 and if he agrees to take on the modernisation it would be a year's work and it was suggested that his payment should increase to £120 per month from the current £80 per month.

The council asked some questions about this plan. Mr Midgley in his position as internal auditor had indicated that we should look at the costs involved and that he may be able to suggest some ways forward. Miss Frost agreed to contact him so that we may have alternatives to look at. This whole issue would be re-visited at the next meeting.

**48) Councillor Vacancy:** The Chairman was in touch with a possible candidate who had some more checking to do before commitment.

#### **49) Neighbourhood watch**

Mrs Saxel reported that she had received a list of email contacts from Sara Scott, the previous Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. However, the number of addresses and therefore the scope was far less far-reaching than the village email/newsletter system.

She had contacted the County Neighbourhood watch Co-ordinator, Derrick Giffin, and set up a scheme on Our Watch (Neighbourhood Watch website) which has been advertised to village residents via the newsletter. This invites people to sign up for direct communication. So far nobody has. Mrs Saxel asked if it would be more sensible to write a short segment to be emailed separately or as a section in the Village Newsletter. The latter was agreed upon. Mrs Saxel also reiterated the point that Neighbourhood Watch can serve other purposes, as well as crime prevention, such as alleviating social isolation.

The Chairman thanked her for making a good start on getting all this up and running.

The meeting ended at 10.05pm

**Future Meetings: Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September at 8pm, Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 8.15 and Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November at 8pm Village Hall**