

~ WICKHAM SKEITH PARISH COUNCIL ~

MINUTES of PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held **MONDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2013** at **WICKHAM SKEITH VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllrs N Merriam (Chairman), B Bloor, H Bowes, B Kemp, K Knights, M Appleby, T Goodacre (Clerk), and 3 members of the public

Apologies: Received from Cllr Erett, noted for Cllr Stringer (MSDC and SCC) and Suffolk Police

1. Chairman's Welcome: The Chairman opened the meeting and paid tribute to Mr Michael McCarthy who recently passed away. Mr McCarthy had served as a Councillor on the Parish Council before becoming Vice-Chairman, then Chairman and his work on behalf of the Parish Council was to be noted.
2. Declaration of Interest: None received.
3. Minutes of Meeting held 9 September 2013: The Minutes were approved by all Councillors and signed by the Chairman.
4. Village Forum:
 - The Chair mentioned that Peter Davidson, History Recorder, would like to follow the Bardardo's Story held in May 2013 with a weekend display and visit in 2014, and was enquiring about the possibility of funding. It was agreed that the Clerk would raise with Cllr Stringer.
 - Cllr Bowes had been advised that the footpath sign was missing at Willow Lodge, Footpath No 21 (Willow Lodge to Daisy Green Lane). Cllr Appleby to primarily inspect surrounding area.
5. Reports:
 - 5.1. SCC: Cllr Stringer (report received following meeting)
 - Education Report: The Education Scrutiny Committee has now been formed (which includes Cllr Stringer) and will look into how best to improve educational standards. The recent report into education in Suffolk was carried out by the RSA Action & Resource Centre which highlights the current situation and how we can best improve. Federation is also recommended which could, however, lead to a lack of accountability. The report acknowledges this and suggests that each school has a school council made up of parents, teachers and pupils.
 - A14 Toll Road, Cambridge: SCC is proposing to spend £1 million over 25 years to bring about a toll road between Cambridge and Huntingdon. This is to alleviate the congestion around Cambridge of lorries coming from Felixstowe Port which affects businesses in Suffolk. However, the A14 concrete section at Haughley New Street is in imminent danger of complete collapse as the concrete has worn so thin that movement of heavy traffic is now seriously deteriorating this section.
 - 5.2. MSDC: Cllr Stringer (report received following meeting)
 - Revenue Support Grant: As part of 2013/14 Budget Consultation, parishes were asked to consider accepting a small Government Grant. Over the next few years this grant will be phased out and, by 2017, the only revenue that MSDC will gain from Government will be New Homes Bonus and any extra Business Rates generated by expanding existing/encouraging new businesses.
 - 5 Year Land Supply Challenge: An Appeal Hearing is currently underway regarding planning application for 51 homes, with associated parking on commercial site in Mendlesham (outside settlement boundary). There is no offering of Affordable Housing or Community Infrastructure Payment, and it is argued that de-contaminating the site will cost more than any level of normal expected contributions. The applicant is arguing that MSDC does not have a 5 year land supply for new housing (District Councils are expected to bring forward approximately 200 new homes per annum). This Hearing has attracted observers from other District Councils as, if successful, this challenge could affect the whole region, as well as meaning that new development, anywhere, may be hard to resist.
 - 5.3. Suffolk Police: (report received and read by Clerk)
 - Reported Crimes: There have been no crimes in the parish since last report. In general, latest statistics show that overall crime is down by more than 5% compared to last year.
 - Ongoing Advice: Take pictures of valuable items/record identification numbers or register on national database, Immobilise. Valuable mobiles can also be fitted with tracking devices.
 - Community Priority Setting Meeting: The next meeting is on 6 January 2014 at Creeting St Mary Village Hall at 7.00 pm – all welcome.
 - 5.4. Parish Clerk:
 - Suffolk Wildlife Trust Community Conference: The Clerk attended the Conference at Thornham Walks on 21/09/13 and gained information/contacts should Wickham Skeith consider a future wildlife project. Literature pack included in Circulation File.
 - Newsletter of the Year 2013: Cllr Appleby has entered by forwarding copies of the newsletter.

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5.5. Parish Councillors:

- Cllr Appleby advised that the bins located on village green are now being lined with plastic bin liners which tend to fill with water.
- Cllr Knights advised that Stoke Ash Primary School went into Special Measures in September and now has only 17 children enrolled. As the school cannot become an Academy, due to the lack of a sponsor, the local authority will carry out a consultation with parents.

6. Correspondence Received:

- Standing Orders: NALC have produced new model Standing Orders (which are not compulsory) but recommend a review is conducted. It was agreed that the Clerk would carry out an initial review.
- All other correspondence included in Agenda items or in Circulation File.

7. Finance:

7.1. The accounts as at 31 October 2013 were presented by Cllr Kemp and showed a balance of £3,277.37.

7.2. Parish Precept: The 2014/15 Budget was presented by Cllr Kemp. The Clerk advised that a new Minute Book would be required during the next year – Clerk to obtain cost for purchase in current financial year. It was generally felt that the Precept could be maintained at £2,200, with final confirmation to be agreed at January's meeting.

7.3. The following invoices were approved for payment, proposed by Cllr Knights and seconded by Cllr Bowes:

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| ▪ | BDO LLP (Additional Audit Fee) | £36.00 inc VAT |
| ▪ | Village Hall Hire (Sep meeting) | £7.50 |

1. Planning Matters:

1. Application No 2145/13 (previously 0348/13): Hazelwood, The Street – Erection of detached bunglalow with integral garage and detached outbuildings after demolition of existing dwelling. The Chairman will attend MSDC Planning Meeting being held 20/11/2013.
2. Application No 2131/13: Kisumu, The Street – Permission has been GRANTED for the demolition of existing garage and erection of open cart-shed style garage.

2. Grimmer Working Party: The Chairman commented on willow debris following St Jude's storm on 04/11/2013. It was agreed that a working party would be held on 30/11/2013 at 10.00 am to clear debris and remove ash saplings on south side of the Grimmer.

3. Village Signs: The Clerk has emailed John Simpson, SSC Highways, requesting consideration for the proposed signage. As yet, there has been no response. Clerk to follow up via Cllr Stringer.

4. Emergency Plan: There was no further update available in the absence of Cllr Erett regarding consultation with the Care Group.

5. Clerk's Review: The Treasurer had pre-circulated to Councillors proposed increase from SCP19 to SCP21. This proposal, seconded by Cllr Appleby, amounts to a monthly gross pay of £90.36. All councillors were in agreement for this increase which will be backdated to April 2013.

6. Matters for next Agenda and Any Other Business: Village Signs, Emergency Plan, Parish Precept.

7. Next Meeting: 13 January 2014
