Draft until signed

Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting
Monday 13th March 2017 at 7.30pm, Battisford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battisford

Present: S Scarff (Chairman), D Thorpe (Councillor), J Crooks (Councillor), T Whitehead (Councillor)

Attending: S Meech (Clerk), Mr C Todhunter (Public), Mr S Christmas (Public)

1. Apologises for absence

Cllr Truelove, Cllr Whybrow, Cllr Reynard and Cllr Stephens-Row

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Scarff – Item 22 – Fete Insurance – Declaration of interest book signed and dated by Cllr Scarff

3. Public Forum

Nothing to be discussed

4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 13th February 2017

Item 19 - Amendment made and signed by Cllr Scarff (Chairman) as it should read Cllr Crooks not Cllr Thorpe then the full minutes are signed and dated as a true copy of the meeting by Cllr Scarff (Chairman).

5. Matter arising from minutes

No matters arising from the minutes.

6. County Councillors Report

Cllr Truelove is not in attendance at the meeting, however, her report has been circulated and is read out by Cllr Scarff – see Appendix 1

7. District Councillors Report

Cllr Whybrow is not in attendance and no report has been issued

8. Parish Council Chairman's Report

Cllr Scarff advises that he does not have any additional items to report.

9. Planning

a. Applications received for consideration

i. 0656/17 – Sunrise, Bildeston Road, Combs IP14 2JZ – Erection of a garage extension, replacing originally approved garage and carport under planning permission 2277/16 – Cllrs are concerned that the plans for application 0656/17 are still showing the cart lodge from plans 2277/16 so clarification is needed from MSDC as to whether the cart lodge at the front of the property is still to be built as Combs Parish Council would not want to see both built. **Action –** Clerk to clarify the plans with MSDC

b. Decisions received

i. SCC/0244/16MS – School Bungalow, Lavenham Way, Combs, Stowmarket IP14 2BZ – Demolition of existing caretaker's bungalow and erection of a new preschool – Permission granted

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ii. 0283/17 - Walnut Tree Cottage, Moats Tye, Combs, IP14 2EX - Non-material amendment sought following grant of planning permission 1831/14 – Satisfactory amendment

10. Finance

a. Accounts review to date - Combs Parish Councils current account balance as of 27th February 2017, is £3,952.60 and the current balance of the savings account as of 2nd March 2017, is £12,020.57.

b. Payments received

i. Memorial – Cremation T/L John Rose - £80.00

ii. Full burial plot reservation for interment and EROB – H Earley - £340.00

c. Payments to hand

i. Battisford & District Cricket Club – Grant funding (net repairs) - £250.00 – Payment already agreed at Combs Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2017 – Cheque Number 022124 written and signed.

ii. S Meech – Clerks Overtime and Expenses - £34.76 – Cllr Crooks proposes payment, Cllr Thorpe seconds payment and all councillors agree payment. Cheque Number 022125 written and signed.

11. Change of bank

Cllr Scarff advises Combs Parish Council that it is not an easy process to pay in cheques, transfer monies between accounts or to add signatories with Santander bank.

Action – Cllr Scarff to enquire with TSB about opening a business account.

12. Change of address for bank account

As clerk is relocating outside of the county it is agreed by Combs Parish Council that the address for the council should be amended to Cllr Scarff's (Chairman) address. It is also discussed that the clerk will continue her role until a replacement is recruited.

13. Transfer from savings account to current account

Action – Clerk to produce a letter for the next meeting to be signed by two signatories to authorise a transfer from the savings account to the current account to cover the cheque issued earlier for Battisford and District Cricket Club for £250.00.

14. Audit/annual return/VAT refund

Clerk advises Combs Parish Council that she will have to start working on the audit/annual return and VAT refund now that we are nearly at the end of the tax year for 2016/2017.

15. Financial regulations and Standing Orders review

Up to date financial regulation and standing order documents have been forwarded to all councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Whitehead proposes the revised up to date financial regulations, Cllr Thorpe seconds and all councillors are in agreement – Cllr Scarff initials every page and signs and dates the end of the document. Cllr Crooks proposes the revised up to date standing orders, Cllr Whitehead seconds and all councillors are in agreement – Cllr Scarff initials every page and signs and dates the end of the document.

16. Councillor Vacancy

Cllr Scarff advises that Combs Parish Council still have a vacancy for one councillor. Mr Todhunter is in attendance to consider applying for the vacancy.

17. Speed Indicator Device

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Cllr Scarff has had a discussion with Cllr Truelove regarding the speed awareness sign near Fenns Farm that flashes 30 if a car is exceeding this speed limit. Cllr Scarff believes that a sign that shows the actual speed of the vehicle would be more beneficial and has made enquiries into many different types of signs and the basic price is around £1,800.00. Following enquiries with Cllr Truelove she has advised that highways have a lot of conditions for the erection of these signs and they would not be happy for the sign to be moved around the village and would rather carry out speed awareness in the village, Cllr Truelove to arrange this. All councillors are in agreement that this would be beneficial.

18. Straw movements from Sloe Farm, Battisford

Cllr Thorpe advises that he has noted that some areas have now been cleared between Battisford and Scotches Corner. Clerk advises Combs Parish Council that she sent a letter highlighting concerns from Battisford Parish Council and asking for the problem to be rectified.

19. Pearce & Kemp Contract Renewal

Pearce & Kemp have confirmed to the clerk that the deadline to decide whether to renew the contract with them is the end of June and not the end of March as was stated in their letter.

20. Street Lighting

Cllr Thorpe advises Combs Parish Council that Carl Folley of Folley Electrical Services has provided him with a quote to replace 15 street lights within Combs. He has quoted £5,470.50 + VAT for 15 street lights, however, if there is no isolator fitted and the unit is fed via a metal REC cut out, an isolator will be required for the sum of £116.87 + VAT per unit. In April 2016, Pearce & Kemp quoted Combs Parish Council £5,157.50 + VAT to upgrade 15 lamps to LED. With regards to the ongoing maintenance, Carl Folley is happy to carry this out on an as needed basis.

Cllr Thorpe proposes going ahead with Folley Electrical Services quote for upgrading 15 lamps at £5,470.50 and Cllr Crooks seconds the proposal. All councillors agree and Cllr Scarff calculates that with the isolators being fitted also the total will come to £7,223.55 + £1,444.71 (VAT) - £8,668.26 in total. All councillors are in favour.

Action – Cllr Thorpe to liaise with Carl Folley to advise that Combs Parish Council would like to go ahead with his quotation.

21. Poplar Hill Parking

Clerk advises that she attended a meeting at Stowmarket Police Station with the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) and raised the issue of parking on Poplar Hill and she was advised that this is a low priority now with all cutbacks that have been made and the enforcement of parking is due to be passed over to MSDC.

Action – Clerk to contact SNT to request clarification of the transferring to MSDC and to liaise with Cllr Whybrow to ask whom at MSDC will be enforcing parking issues.

22. Fete Insurance

Cllr Scarff advises Combs Parish Council that the insurance for the fete has previously been added to Combs Parish Council's insurance following completion of a form by the fete committee.

Action – Clerk to check the additional amount that was paid through the councils insurance for last year and to contact Community Action Suffolk to confirm if there are any difference to the price for 2017 and add to the next agenda

23. Combs cemetery including plot reservations and revised plans

Cllr Scarff advises Combs Parish Council that he has forwarded the revised plans from the architect to all councillors and clerk, the original plan was drawn up from the road and it was in the wrong place creating the plans to not match the actual cemetery. Cllr Scarff has asked the architects to redraw the main plans showing the current plots.

Clerk advises Combs Parish Council that there has been an increase in reserving plots within the cemetery and these appear to be increasing lately as our fees are very low compared to other cemeteries in the area. If plots are to be reserved then they must be marked out and a plot number must be allocated. As Cllr Stephens-Row and Cllr Reynard whom assist in management of the cemetery are absent from tonight's meeting it is agreed that this item should be forwarded to the next agenda. Cllr Scarff has also started researching fees for other cemeteries to review the current fees at Combs cemetery.

24. St Marys Churchyard

Cllr Scarff and Cllr Thorpe have dug three new rose beds at the churchyard and it is agreed this item should be forwarded to the next agenda for Cllr Stephens-Row to be in discussions.

Action – Cllr Scarff to check Stowmarket Town Councils renewal for grass cutting at the churchyard for a decision to be made whether to carry on using Stowmarket Town Council or change to D Windle.

25. Correspondence

Cllr Scarff advises that the white lines at Scotches Corner have now been repainted. Cllr Crooks notes that rooks have now returned and built nests at White House Farm.

26. Any other business for inclusion on the next agenda

Cllr Thorpe would like the Anglian Water works that are being carried out down Jacks Lane added as the lane is getting into a bad state of repair.

27. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 10th April 2017 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.47pm

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Appendix 1

BOSMERE DIVISION REPORT MARCH 2017
County Councillor Julia Truelove

Children's Special Educational Needs Not Met

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission report that the special educational needs of many children in Suffolk are 'not effectively met'. Reforms introduced nationally in 2014 are intended to make it easier for children and young people with special educational needs, and those with mental and physical disabilities, to be given the support they need.

The report requires S.C.C., and other clinical commissioning groups, to tackle areas of 'significant weaknesses', including ineffective leadership, and delays in handling cases.

The reforms were meant to bring teams from education, health, and social care together. However, inspectors found that those leading the process have not been rigorous or effective in developing a cross-service approach.

S.C.C.'s Cabinet Member for Children's Services welcomed the report, and said: "We need to do a lot more".

Civil Parking Enforcement

C.P.E. is where local authorities take over responsibility for enforcing 'on street' parking restrictions from the police. Anyone parking illegally on the public highway can expect a higher level of enforcement than currently exists. There has been little or no enforcement following the loss of our P.C.S.O.s.

S.C.C., with District Councils, now intend to implement C.P.E. across the County. However, Mid-Suffolk and Babergh District Councils do not wish to undertake the C.P.E., so Ipswich Borough Council East, and West Suffolk, will extend their activities to cover this area.

Because the scheme will cost to operate, and a deficit is anticipated, I quote "The suitability of some on-street paid parking which supports wider transport objectives will be considered for the area which could be used to offset this figure.".

The above may well mean that the free parking facilities presently existing in Needham Market may have to be paid for.

It would seem that implementation of C.P.E. will take 2 to 3 years to introduce.

Suffolk Libraries to Stay Open

Despite the reduction of £200,000 from S.C.C.'s grant, all libraries will now stay open as will all mobile libraries. The grant is less than originally proposed. "A reduction of this level is going to be challenging" a spokesperson for the Suffolk Libraries Board has commented.

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Rogue Fish Sellers in our Bosmere Division

S.C.C. Trading Standards had earlier reported the activities of rogue fish sellers in Felixstowe and Ipswich. They very recently targeted Combs and Battisford. I quote: “The fish is generally of poor quality, unrefrigerated, and short weight”. Suffolk Trading Standards advise residents to be cautious if approached by unfamiliar traders. Please telephone 0345 040506 to report any suspicious traders.

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