Draft until signed

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

Present: S Scarff (Chairman), D Stephens-Row (Vice Chairman), D Thorpe (Councillor), C Todhunter (Councillor), T Whitehead (Councillor), J Crooks (Councillor), S Reynard (Councillor), Cllr A Whybrow (County Councillor) and four members of the public.

Attending: T Bamber (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence**

   Cllr D Whybrow (District Councillor)

2. **Declarations of interest**

   None

3. **Public Forum**

   Two members of the public were present to discuss item 9(a) (ii), one to discuss item 17 and one to discuss items 11, 12 and 19. It was agreed that these points be brought forward.

4. **Minutes of meeting held on Monday 9th October 2017**

   Minutes for 9 October were signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting.

5. **Matter arising from the minutes**

   - Item 5 (17- 3): Cllr Thorpe has sent the requisite form to UK Power Network.
   - Item 5(17 -4): There was some recollection that a spare dog bin may be available. This will be investigated and if found will be used to replace the rusted one by Adstone.
   - Item 18.2: the list of speed signs in need of work has been updated by Cllr Crooks and the complete list will be passed to the County Councillor.

6. (agenda item 11) **Church Magazine rebranding**

   Rev. Childs suggested that the Parish Council may wish to participate in a new form of village magazine that involved but was not predominantly about the Church. An editor has kindly volunteered to take on the role, and it is anticipated that this may follow the style used in other local villages, involving a small contribution from each councillor with a responsibility for a particular area, this being co-ordinated by the Parish Clerk. The cost is estimated at 30p per copy with delivery through an established network each month. District Councillor Whybrow has indicated he would try to support costs for the first year and County Councillor Whybrow may be able to support costs for the second year. It is expected that after two years there should be useful advertising income to assist with costs.

   ACTION: Chairman will ascertain number of houses involved; councillors to consider if willing to contribute each month.

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7. (agenda item 12) **Coffee Caravan**

Rev. Childs explained the function of the Coffee Caravan. It visits outlying villages roughly once a month outside of Winter and while being a source of various useful information about local matters it provides an informal meeting place for people who may not have many opportunities for socialising. What would be required was a suitable location for parking in the village. Various possible venues were mentioned and it was agreed that this be given further consideration.

ACTION: Cllr Stephens-Row will investigate the possibility of the Cricket Club as a location; councillors to consider if willing to support the project.

8. (agenda item 19) **Venue for future meetings**

Following further investigation it was ascertained that the Church Hall would not be available for Parish Council meetings as all likely evenings are already booked.

9. Planning

a. **Applications received for consideration**

i. DC/17/04545 – Ebbs House, Bildeston Road – Erection of a three bay cart lodge including loft space and home office in one of the garage bays. *Councillors unanimously agreed to raise no objection.*

ii. DC/17/05032 – Pole Barn, Holy Oak Farm, Church Lane – Notification for Prior Approval for change of use from premises in light industrial use and any land within its curtilage to dwelling houses. *It was noted that this barn has been the subject of consideration three times and that little is materially different. Cllr Scarff produced a copy of past objections raised by the Council and it was agreed by all who voted (one abstention) that the Council's view is unchanged.*

ACTION: Clerk to submit the Council's objection.

b. **Decision received from MSDC**

i. DC/17/03425 and 03247 – Stable Cottage, Bildeston Road – Planning permission approved for Erection of front and side extensions. Listed Building Consent granted. *Noted*

10. (agenda item 17) **Tree on grass triangle – Gilbert Hill**

Resident Mr T Durrant enquired what could be done about the tree that is growing on the triangle at Gilbert Hill. It is beginning to obstruct the view for agricultural vehicles wanting to pull out from there. He has trimmed some of it but the main branches are becoming a problem. It was observed that the tree was planted originally to discourage lorries from driving over the triangle. It was proposed (Cllr Thorpe) that the tree should remain. This was seconded by Cllr Whitehead and supported by all but Cllrs Crooks and Todhunter, who abstained. It was agreed that the matter be looked into further to improve pruning.

ACTION: Cllr Thorpe to look into further pruning of the tree.

The remaining members of the public departed at 8.15 PM.

11. (agenda item 6) **County Councillor's Report**

Cllr A Whybrow reported there was nothing specific to comment on, although she hopes to be able to provide financial help in the course of the next few months.

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Cllr Scarff mentioned the condition of some of the village speed signs that were unreadable because they were either dirty, missing or faded. Cllr Whybrow explained that the council is currently focused on 'A' roads but that after this the issue should be addressed. She will pass the list to the Highways department. Cllr Whybrow also confirmed that she would enquire what Highways propose to do about the speeding, of which they are aware, in the Slough.

12. (agenda item 7) **District Councillor's Report**

None available

13. (agenda item 8) **Parish Council Chairman's Report**

Nothing to report that is not addressed elswhere.

14. (agenda item 10) **Finance**

a. **Account review to date –** Current Account balance as of 26th October 2017 is £8,098.05 and the savings account balance as of 2nd November 2017 is £1,901.10

b. **Payments received**

i. Interment fee – T/L Muriel Howard £370.00
ii. Interment fee (non resident additional) – T/L Dean Martin £185.00
iii. Interment fee T/L Donald Laflin £40.00
iv. Interment fee T/L Steven Cooper £180.00
v. Interment Fee T/L Cecil Tricker £200.00
vi. Interment fee T/L Beryl Hurst £300.00
vii. Interment fee & Memorial fee T/L Patricia Mary Parfitt £370.00 & £100.00
viii. Memorial fee T/L Christopher Vecchi ((non resident additional) £125.00
ix. Refund of overpayment Pearce & Kemp £255.40

c. Payments to hand

i. Website subscription renewal - £36.00 payment proposed by Cllr Stephens-Row, seconded Cllr Reynard, all agreed. Cheque number 022154 was written and signed by Cllr Scarff and Cllr Thorpe.
ii. Refund of overpayment re (b)(vi) above (EROB paid) – T/L Beryl Hurst £50.00. Payment proposed by Cllr Todhunter, seconded Cllr Whitehead, all agreed. Cheque number 022153 was written and signed by Cllr Scarff and Cllr Thorpe.

15. (agenda item 13) **Locality Funding**

Cllr Whitehead referred to the report from Councillor D Whybrow that she had emailed to council members. Cllr Scarff invited ideas and proposals that the funding might be used for and it was agreed that all councillors would give this some thought before the next meeting.

ACTION: Councillors to consider projects that may benefit from locality funding.

16. (agenda item 14) **Babergh/MSCD Joint Local Plan**

Cllr Todhunter reported that the responses, which had been discussed and agreed by email between all councillors, have now been submitted and uploaded onto the Plan website.

17. (agenda item 15) **Street Sign – Ropers Row**

A letter had been received from the District Council (Street Naming and Numbering Department) advising that a request had been received to provide a new street sign for Ropers Row. They

explained that there had been confusion with postal deliveries between Ropers Row and the equivalent numbers in Park Road. An application form was provided and it was explained that the cost of any such sign would be invoiced to the Parish Council. Following a discussion in which it was pointed out that no other street signs are paid for by the Parish Council it was agreed unanimously that this request should not be approved.

Action – Clerk to write to the District Council declining to apply

18. (agenda item 16) **Speed Signs**

This was discussed under item 11 – County Councillor's report above. Cllr Scarff confirmed he would send details of the problem speed signs to Cllr A Whybrow.

19. (agenda item 18) **New dog bin – top of footpath Kimberley Hall/Gardeners Arms**

Cllr Crooks noted that there was no dog waste bin at the top of this footpath, despite it being a well used route for dog walkers. A discussion followed on the additional cost for each bin that has to be emptied and it was agreed not to proceed at this point but to monitor the situation.

20. (and agenda item 20) **Combs Cemetery**

Cllr Stephens-Row reported that the plan of the cemetery shows 941 graves for burial of bodies, with 2 areas for cremated remains: 64 plots in one area and a further 231 in another. There was a discussion over the possibility that the demand for cremation plots may be greater than currently anticipated and it was accepted that while these figures give a clear indication of the capacity of the cemetery there was no reason why the split between burial and cremation need not be changed as needed.

i. Regulations:

a. Cllr Scarff observed that the new draft regulations are much clearer. There was a discussion over the green burial area: if only wooden crosses mark a plot then these would quite soon rot away, but if plaques were to be used the 'green' aspect may be compromised. There was a preference to avoid plaques but then the question arose of how to identify a plot. It was agreed that datum posts be installed from which the location of a plot could be known.
Action – Cllrs Stephens-Row and Crooks to install datum posts in green burial area.

b. Scattering of Ashes: following discussion, and an observation that scattering of ashes is often banned in cemeteries, it was agreed to prohibit the scattering of ashes in Combs Cemetery.
Action – Cllr Stephens-Row to remove the signs indicating that ashes may be scattered.

c. Exclusive Right of Burial: It was unanimously agreed that the purchase of a grave should include the exclusive right of burial – there will be no lower cost option. A discussion ensued on the duration of the exclusive right. Some authorities provide a standard 25 year term with an option to pay for more. It was unanimously agreed to leave the term at 100 years.

d. Reservations: It was unanimously agreed that no more reservations be accepted but that where appropriate existing requests will be honored.
Action –Clerk to talk to those who have requested reservations.

e. It was proposed by D Stephens-Row that the new regulations be adopted with the amendments as discussed. This was seconded by Cllr Todhunter and agreed unanimously.

ii. Fees: There was a discussion regarding the fee for double depth graves and the question raised whether it was right to charge extra for double depth as well as a further fee for a second burial. Cllr Scarff proposed that the fees be frozen for now at the current rates and that they be re-addressed in May 2018. This was agreed unanimously with a note that it should be ensured Combs fees meet or exceed those of Stowmarket cemetery for non-residents of Combs.

21. St Mary's Churchyard

Cllr Stephens-Row will contact the current maintenance contractors to ascertain the quote for next year.

Cllr Scarff will provide details of the work required to the clerk so that other tenders may be sought.

22. Correspondence

A resident reported fly tipping of tyres in Mill Lane and Cllr Scarff reported that these had already been removed.

23. Any other business for inclusion on the next agenda

1. Clerk to book hall and note dates for next year's meetings.

24. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 11 December 2017 at 7.30pm

The Meeting closed at 10.15pm.

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