

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 13TH MARCH 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Chapman [in the Chair], Bulley, Merryweather, Smith P, Smith R, Thompson, Foskett, Parsons, Read Unitary Councillor Brown, 45 members of the public and The Clerk.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Thomason

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised the meeting that the Finance Working Group had appointed a new Parish Clerk to replace the retiring Clerk Chris Waghorn. The new Clerk, Alessandra Marabese was introduced by the Chairman.

The retiring Clerk's wife addressed the meeting on his behalf and thanked Councillors and Parishioners for their support during the last 20 years. She said he had very much enjoyed representing Meppershall as its Clerk.

The Chairman read out an invitation from Bedfordshire Police inviting a Councillor to attend a Policing Priority Setting Meeting. Councillor Thompson offered to attend on behalf of the Council.

2 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none notified.

3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Monday 13th February 2017 at the Village Hall had been distributed to Councillors. There were two wording amendments.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and they were signed by the Chairman

At this point the Chairman suspended the Meeting to receive report(s) from our Unitary Councillors and to allow a period of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or to raise matters of concern.

Unitary Councillor Tony Brown advised the meeting that CBC (Central Bedfordshire Council) are currently carrying out a Leisure Strategy Review. He also thanked the Village Forum Group for their presentation of the Village Plan last week and offered the services of a CBC Officer to attend a meeting to guide the Council in turning this into a Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Brown also spoke about the formation of seven Local Participation Groups throughout the CBC area. This will be led by a CBC Officer and be made up from Town and Parish Councillors. The objective is to make stronger communities. At present there is a trial running in one area and the project is hoped to be launched in eight months time.

Councillor Brown advised the meeting that the Sugar Loaf planning application will not be on the agenda of the March Development Management Committee and is expected to be heard at the April meeting.

Parishioners expressed concern over future proposed developments in Meppershall and asked when CBC would have sufficient development proposals to meet the Central Government requirements. Councillor Brown advised the meeting that CBC had sufficient proposed developments but they are experiencing problems where following Grant of a

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Planning Application the developer chooses not to start construction. He believes that CBC will have sufficient commitments from developers within four months to meet the Central Government target.

A Parishioner asked Councillor Brown about the progress of the anti speeding petition compiled in the village. He advised that this had been presented to the relevant CBC committee for review. He was also asked if CBC could have an initiative similar to North Herts. where speed activated signs indicate a vehicle speed as a number in MPH. He advised the meeting that discussions are being held with Bedfordshire Police with a view to joining the North Herts. scheme.

A Parishioner asked the Chairman what was being done about Potholes in the village Roads. This will be discussed in the formal part of the meeting.

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THIS AGENDA

There were none

5 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

5A PLANNING AND HOUSING WORKING GROUP

i] Planning Applications pending

- a) CB/17/00738/OUT – 100 High Street – Up to 38 dwellings.
- b) CB/17/00063/FULL – 79 Shefford Road – demolition of existing chalet/bungalow and erection of two 4 bedroom dwellings.
- c) CB/17/00454/FULL – 79A Shefford Road, conversion of garage.
- d) CB/17/00478/FULL – The Sugar Loaf ph, 25 High Street – documents distributed to working group

ii] Approvals/Refusals/Withdrawals received

- a) CB/16/05397/FULL – 87 High Street – first floor side extension
Approval
- b) CB/16/01769/FULL – The Village Hall, High Street. **Approval**

iii] Appeals Pending - none

iv] Applications since last Council meeting for consideration –

- a) CB/17/00738/OUT – 100 High Street – Up to 38 dwellings.
- b) Landmark Ltd land at Shefford Road – proposal for 150 new properties
Copies of the original documents received by the Clerk have been distributed to Councillor

v) Enforcement / Other Planning Matters

- a) There were no enforcement issues.
- b) Councillor Foskett reported that the development behind the High Street was planned to commence on 27th March 2017. He also reported that a condition of the Grant of Planning Application was that the developer is not allowed to occupy the 60th house or any others until the new village hall is completed and handed over. He also advised the meeting that the Interim Village hall will have a snooker

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table and confirmation about the playing of music had been satisfactorily received from the CBC Planning Department.

- c) Councillor Smith P reported that the Sugar Loaf application has been delayed at CBC and the consultation period has been extended until 29th March 2017. He also reported that the appeal by Hawthorn Leisure about the granting of an ACV was still with the first tier appeal body.
- d) Councillor Smith P reported on behalf of Councillor Thomason in his absence that the Meppershall Campaign Group had held its first meeting on 25th February. The meeting was attended by 27 Parishioners and they had discussed the planning process, the Planning Portal on the CBC website and how to use it to record their views. The meeting also discussed the Central Government Planning White Paper. The group are seeking support from the Council to pay for meeting rooms and publicity where the expected cost in 2017/18 is £500.

Resolved – Approved.

vii) North Hertfordshire Homes

No further information has been received.

5B FINANCE MATTERS

The new Clerk will be attending training in her new post and the initial course fees were presented to the Council for £275.

Resolved – Approved

5C HIGHWAYS WORKING GROUP

Working Group Highways Report

- 1) Councillor Smith R reported that the Rural Matched Funding project introducing a 20 mph speed limit outside the school has been approved and will go ahead in the new financial year. The Planning Application for 100 High Street will need to take this into account.
- 2) CBC Highways had promised to deal with the potholes in Fildyke Road and Shefford Road last week, this had not happened and he will be chasing them up. Parishioners and Councillors were requested to log any potholes they see, even if they believe they have already been reported. He also advised the meeting that reporting is very easy on the CBC website and is not just restricted to potholes; this can be any highways issues such as blocked drains or dangerous trees.

5D ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE WORKING GROUP

Councillor Foscett asked the meeting if new sites could be found for the four planters outside the village hall, he would like proposals for the next meeting.

5E OLD ROAD MEADOW

Direction Signs – Councillor Foscett presented a quotation for £261.00.

Resolved – Approved

6 OTHER MEETINGS

There were no meetings to report.

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7 ALLOTMENT FIELD

There have been no new lettings this month. The Chairman will advertise allotments in his Messenger report.

8. PARISH PLAN REVIEW GROUP

Councillor Parson proposed a vote of thanks to the Forum Working group for their work on the draft Parish Plan. On behalf of the group Councillor Bulley reported that Councillors met on 9th March to review the draft report. He also said that an Executive Summary document was being prepared and they were seeking assistance from anyone with PRO or Marketing experience to assist them in the writing of a summarised document for general distribution. He reported that all the groups' information will be reported on the village website in due course. The next step will be another dedicated Councillors meeting to plan the next steps, this will be before the next Council meeting.

9. COMMUNITY ASSET – THE SUGARLOAF PH

Reported under Planning and Housing item.

10. HOO ROAD RESURFACING

Councillor Smith R had been in contact with CBC about the condition of the Hoo Road Bridle Way following the resurfacing work. It was believed that improvements had been made and he will be inspecting this.

At this point the public were asked to leave the meeting as it was continuing as a closed session. Councillor Read left the meeting at this point.

12. Parish Clerks Gratuity Fund.

- 1) On retirement of the Clerk he is entitled to payment of his Gratuity Fund. Councillors Thompson, Foscett, Parsons and Chapman have investigated the complicated rules and regulations governing this issue. A document detailing the financial calculations was distributed to the Councillors and they recommended payment of the amount. Full details are attached to these minutes.

Resolved – Approved

11. ORDERS FOR THE PAYMENT OF MONEY

A schedule of payments will be distributed at the meeting for approval and authorisation.

RESOLVED that the schedule be approved and the payments authorised

Peter Chapman – Chairman

Monday, 10th April 2017