

**Draft until signed**

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting  
Monday 9 October 2017 at 7.30pm, Battsford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battsford**

**Present:** S Scarff (Chairman), D Thorpe (Councillor), C Todhunter (Councillor), T Whitehead (Councillor), J Crooks (Councillor), S Reynard (Councillor)

**Attending:** T Bamber (Clerk)

**1. Apologies for absence**

D Stephens-Row (Vice Chairman); Cllr A Whybrow (County Councillor) and Cllr D Whybrow (District Councillor)

**2. Declarations of interest**

Cllr Crooks – Item 9 a) i) –declaration of interest book signed

**3. Public Forum**

Two members of the public were present to discuss concerns over rights to install headstones on two cemetery plots. In the case of plot 14 a– D Laflin - it was confirmed by Mrs Smith that Mr Laflin's other daughter (Mrs Laflin) would write confirming that the headstone was to be in accordance with the wishes of Mr Laflin's son, Michael. In the case of Plot 14 the clerk confirmed that he would check the records to identify who owned the rights to this grave.

**4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

Minutes for 11 September signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting.

**5. Matter arising from the minutes**

- Item 12: the chairman has produced a list of speed signs in the village but this matter will be deferred due to the absence of the County Councillor.
- Item 15: Cllr Todhunter has been trying to obtain contact details of the firm that maintains Model Farm grounds, so that they may be considered as tenderers for the churchyard, but has had no success so far.
- Item 17 (3): Cllr Thorpe has obtained the necessary form from UK Power Network and once completed this will be passed to the chairman for signature.
- Item 17 (4): Cllr Thorpe reported that the dog bin by Adstone, Bildeston Rd has rusted through.

***ACTION: clerk to obtain prices for a replacement dog bin.***

**6. County Councillors Report**

None available

**7. District Councillors Report**

None available

## 8. Parish Council Chairman's Report

Nothing to report

## 9. Planning

### a. Applications received for consideration

- i. DC/17/04413 – Hilrose, Little London – Erection of two story detached dwelling (following demolition of existing dwelling) and erection of single static caravan for the duration of the construction. *Councillors would not support the idea of a sound bungalow being taken down and replaced by a two storey house when availability of bungalows is more relevant to the village.*
- ii. DC/17/03041 – Pot Kiln Farmhouse, Bildeston Road – proposed alterations comprising rear two storey and single storey extensions, porch and internal alterations and replacement windows. Revised fenestration to dining room. *No objection*
- iii. DC/17/04786 – Fen Stables, Combs Lane – Conversion of existing barn to form one dwelling. *Councillors have major concern over additional vehicles joining a dangerous bend with limited visibility. They also question whether the building is suitable for conversion and whether this is adding to flood risk.*

### b. Decision received from MSDC

- i. DC/17/03041 – Pot Kiln Farmhouse, Bildeston Road – proposed alterations comprising rear two storey and single storey extensions, porch and internal alterations and replacement windows. Revised fenestration to dining room. Amendments approved. *Noted*
- ii. DC/17/03824 Moats Tye Livery. Proposal refused. *Noted*

## 10. Finance

- a. **Account review to date** – Current Account balance as of 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017 is £8,050.32 and the savings account balance as of 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017 is £1,901.10

### b. Payments received

- i. Precept instalment £3,425.00
- ii. Memorial fee (additional) – T/L Daphne Green £25.00

### c. Payments to hand

- i. S Meech – Clerks Overtime & Expenses – £171.18 payment proposed by Cllr Crooks, seconded Cllr Whitehead, all agreed. Cheque number 022150 is written and signed by Cllr Scarff and Cllr Thorpe.
- ii. BDO – Review of annual return fee £120.00 payment proposed by Cllr Todhunter, seconded Cllr Reynard, all agreed. Cheque number 022151 is written and signed by Cllr Scarff and Cllr Thorpe.
- iii. Insurance premium - £336.20 payment proposed by Cllr Thorpe, seconded Cllr Todhunter, all agreed. Cheque number 022152 is written and signed by Cllr Scarff and Cllr Thorpe.

- d. It was noted that payments to Pearce & Kemp for street lighting maintenance continue to be made, despite the contract having terminated in June. The clerk will ensure payments cease and overpayments recovered.

***ACTION: Clerk to ensure payments cease and overpayments recovered.***

## 11. Locality Funding

To be raised with District Councillor at next meeting.

## **12. Babergh/MSCD Joint Local Plan**

Cllr Todhunter presented a detailed analysis of the proposed plan and noted the most glaring issue was the potential reclassification of Combs, from being a 'secondary' village to a 'core' village. A concern exists that the village could become absorbed into Stowmarket.

Attention was drawn to an email from Woolpit Parish Council, which sought to calculate the possible housing calls for various local villages, depending on the methodology eventually selected. The potential impact on Combs ranges from 32 – 108 new houses. It was agreed that the council should fight against this proposed classification of the village as 'core'; it was also agreed to oppose the suggestion of a settlement boundary in Moats Tye.

***Action – Cllr Todhunter to draw up an updated summary and proposed response and the clerk will circulate this for review and comment, with a formal response to be sent prior to the deadline (10 November).***

## **13. Change of Clerk**

Cllr Thorpe proposed that the contract be agreed, seconded Cllr Reynard and this was unanimously accepted. The Chairman asked the Clerk to draw up formal letters to the various regular contacts advising of the change, for signing at the next meeting.

***Action – Clerk to draw up letters noting new clerk***

## **14. Community Action Suffolk Membership**

The council has been invited to renew its membership of Community Action Suffolk, which would be at nil cost. It was agreed unanimously that membership be renewed.

***Action – Clerk to arrange renewal of membership***

## **15. Combs Cemetery**

Letters have been sent to owners of recent graves where minor infringements of the regulations have been noted.

Draft new regulations are being drawn up by Cllrs Reynard and Todhunter and these will be circulated. The suggestion was made that, once agreed, the forms for application for burials or headstones be made available on the village website.

Cllr Thorpe reported that he had cut the hedge by the roadway to the cemetery and also that the Durrant family had cut the hedge at the top. The chairman will arrange further hedge trimming.

***Action – Chairman to arrange further hedge trimming.***

## **16. St Mary's Churchyard**

It was noted that quotes for grass cutting will be needed at some time in the near future.

It was also noted that the decoration on some graves is in breach of regulations and the Chairman will speak to Rev. Childs in the first instance.

Cllr Thorpe confirmed he would put more topsoil on those graves that had been noted to be sunk

***Action – Chairman to speak to vicar regarding grave decorations  
Cllr Thorpe to dress sunken graves***

**17. Correspondence**

A letter has been received regarding the local electoral review and the Chairman will scan and distribute this.

***Action – Chairman to distribute letter***

**18. Any other business for inclusion on the next agenda**

1. Locality funding initiative to discuss next month – Cllr Todhunter suggested that it may be appropriate to seek funding for a WW1 Beacon, as an example. Cllr Whitehead will circulate some options.
2. Speed signs to be discussed next month (Chairman to add Moats Tye signs to list)
3. Cllr Thorpe has put up waymarkers on FP82 (footpath by Fir Tree Farm) to address a comment made by a villager that this was hard to find, and will raise the matter online with the footpath officer.
4. Cllr Crooks reported that he had been told of difficulties vehicles were having because of a tree at the top of Gilbert's Hill. Cllr Thorpe will investigate.

**19. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 7.30pm**

The Meeting closed at 9.40pm