

Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting
Monday 10 September 2018 at 7.30pm, Battsford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battsford

Present: S Scarff (Chairman); C Todhunter (Vice Chairman); T Whitehead (Councillor); D Thorpe (Councillor); J Crooks (Councillor); S Reynard (Councillor).

Attending: (No additional people present)

Absent: Cllr D Whybrow (District Councillor)

1. Apologies for absence

T Bamber (Clerk)

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr J Crooks in respect of item 22. Cemetery gate post

3. Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 7 July 2018

Minutes for 7 July 2018 were reviewed and were signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by Cllr Scarff (Chairman).

5. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising that are not covered elsewhere.

6. County Councillor's Report

It was noted Cllr A Whybrow has sadly passed away following a long illness, a letter of condolence had been sent to her family by the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Clerk has received correspondence from SCC regarding the consequent vacancy.

7. District Councillor's Report

Cllr D Whybrow was not present.

8. Parish Council Chairman's Report

Nothing to report that is not covered elsewhere.

9. Clerk's Report

Following query at last meeting regarding overgrown verges (18.ii.), Clerk contacted the County Council and was informed Combs' verges due for cutting last week August/first week September. At time of meeting this had not been witnessed by any Cllrs present.

Following query at last meeting regarding overgrown hedges (18.v.), Clerk ascertained that only the District Council have authority to enforce a requirement for owners to cut back. All the Parish Council

can do is to ask owners to comply and failing that to refer the matter to the District Council. Cllrs Scarff and Thorpe will speak with owners of current overgrown hedges.

All other items covered elsewhere.

10. Planning

- a. Applications received for consideration
 - i. DC/18/03215 – Land adjacent to Dot’s Cottage, Little London – Application for Erection of a traditional Barn for storage use. Deadline 9 August (agreed no objection by email).
- b. Decisions received from MSDC
 - i. DC/18/02636 – Ash Tree House, Bildeston Road- Erection of single storey rear extension. *Planning permission granted.* Noted
 - ii. DC/17/03824 – Moats Tye Livery – erection of two detached dwellings. *Rejected on appeal.* Noted
 - iii. DC/18/02797 – Middle Cottage, Post Office Cottages North, Tannery Road – New lean to extension – *planning permission and listed building consent granted.* Noted

11. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – Current Account balance as of 27 August 2018 is £8,318.20 and the savings account balance as of 3 September 2018 is £1,909.79.
- b. **Payments received**
 - i. Interment fee – T/L M Theobald - £340.00
It was noted this was being queried and the Clerk would confirm details
- c. **Payments to hand**
 - i. David Windle – Cemetery (£350) and churchyard (£147.50) - £597.50
(agreed by email and cheque sent already)

12. To consider and if appropriate to confirm approval of monthly Direct Debit for street lighting electricity.

It was unanimously agreed to approve the above. September 2018 DD: £87.07.

13. To consider renewal of PC insurance on same terms as last year and to include beacon when installed.

Clerk researched topic and Zurich offered best deal, including reduced premium (and to include beacon) on 5-year contract with ability to cease should premium increase above inflation rate. It was unanimously agreed to renew the insurance as recommended.

14. To consider a request for a donation from Save Mill Mount Field group

It was discussed and agreed it was not appropriate for PC to donate to requests of this nature. The Parish Council can only make charitable donations in accordance with the powers conveyed under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 and this section specifically excludes payments related to publicity.

The decision meeting for the development was understood to be 26th September 2018 but as yet no further information has been forthcoming. The Clerk and Cllrs Todhunter and Whitehead will be in attendance when details confirmed. Cllr S Scarff advised there would be limited speakers at the meeting as per official guidance at these events, which includes one speaker to act on behalf of for and one against.

Action:

- Clerk to reply to Save Mill Mount Field group declining request with reasons for that decision

15. Speed indicator devices – to discuss the possibility of procuring a SID for the village

It was discussed and agreed funding would be set aside in the next financial year to accommodate the purchase of a SID subject to confirmation of cost and approval from SCC along with their installing relevant posts around the village to move and attach it to (as had occurred with Hitcham). It was agreed not to purchase the basic model as this had proven ineffective in other areas. Funds of £2.5-3k were the current estimate required.

It was noted SCC had been contacted regarding replacement of faded and missing signs around the village, to which their reply had been they had no plans to do this due to lack of funding. Cllr S Scarff reiterated his worry that without correct signage speeding drivers would be unlikely to be prosecuted. Cllr C Todhunter had requested full results of speed survey undertaken on Poplar Hill and recent figures show 3,300 vehicles using the road (both directions) on average each day. Cllr T Whitehead noted there were rubber traffic monitors across the road in Verneuil Avenue and Church Road at the top of Poplar Hill, although not one on Poplar Hill itself, and that these had appeared in the last few days.

Action:

- **Clerk to complete and return forms to SCC regarding SID**
- **Clerk to research further prices for SID**
- **Cllr C Todhunter to confirm cost of Hitcham village SID purchased with PC funds**

16. To consider proposal from Battisford Parish Council to amend Parish boundary.

It was discussed and parish boundary maps looked at. No decision taken PC not officially been informed or consulted in this issue to date. Views were offered on both sides - For: it abuts houses in Battisford on the main street and anyone living in them would think they are Battisford residents. Against: we have surrendered land already at various points around the village boundary and at what point do we stop it, and an extra 10 houses will bring in extra precept. To be followed up with SCC if nothing forthcoming in next few weeks.

Action:

- **Clerk to contact SCC to request consultation/opinion of PC if nothing forthcoming in next few weeks**

17. Invitation from Battisford Village Hall Management Committee to participate in their proposed open day.

It was discussed and decided it wasn't relevant for Combs to have a 'stand' at this event as it was assumed Battisford Parish Council will be attending and the presence of Combs would therefore duplicate. Councillors agreed they would be happy to support with an attendee as appropriate.

Action:

- **Clerk to respond to BVHMC with Council view**

18. Street Lighting

Quote for three of final six replacements at Moats Tye has been received - £1,151.38 plus VAT. It was agreed, as the funding had been allocated, to go ahead.

19. WW1 Memorial beacon

Barking Forge is currently manufacturing the fire basket and it has been requested for delivery at the end of September.

The quote for the burner has increased and is now £690.00 plus VAT. Cllr S Scarff had communicated with the supplier in an attempt to reduce this, with no reply to date. It was agreed to go ahead with the purchase on the burner whatever the outcome.

It was noted that the cost of the oak post had increased to around £830 including VAT but it was agreed that this was acceptable given the increase in the cost of oak lately.

Cllr J Crooks raised issue of 1800mm hole borer required for the beacon post and currently available one was only 900mm.

Action:

- **Clerk to order burner when price confirmed**
- **Cllr J Crooks to investigate availability of 1800mm hole borer**

20. Neighbourhood Plan

It was agreed the PC needed to encourage assistance from the village to share responsibility for the plan as it was a detailed project requiring a mix of skills and a large amount of time to complete properly..

If the proposed parish magazine (see item 21. below) was not likely to occur relatively soon, Cllr C Todhunter suggested a double-sided A4 flier to go to all residence in the village explaining what the plan is, what it will mean to the village and including a request for assistance in producing it. This could then be repeated over a time to maintain interest and offers of assistance, along with being good publicity.

21. Parish Magazine – a proposal by Rev Childs

Unfortunately Rev Childs was unable to attend the meeting. It was agreed he be invited to attend the next PC meeting, along with Mr Mudd (current editor of the parish Magazine), and give a full presentation regarding their vision of joining of the current church magazine with a village magazine, specifically outlining the costs and proposed benefits.

Action:

- **Clerk to invite Rev Childs and Mr Mudd to the next meeting and to request a full presentation.**

22. Combs Cemetery including repairs to gatepost

Cemetery currently looking neat and tidy, and good feedback along these lines has been received from family members of grave owners.

Following the gatepost being struck and broken by a car, the driver's insurance have requested quotes for repair. Two have been received (JE Crooks and S Diaper) and will be sent to the insurer. Cllr J Crooks suggested not replacing the post in its current position as it had proven vulnerable to damage before, but to put in one big gate across the space currently occupied with a long and short one. He had brought to the meeting a quote for the larger gate to be considered – Clarkes of Walsham £337.50 plus VAT. It was decided to wait until the funds had been received before deciding on any changes.

Action:

- **Clerk to negotiate with insurer**

23. St Mary's Churchyard

Grass cutting was continuing and good reports had been received as to how well the churchyard was looking.

Cllr S Scarff mentioned the grave where the stone had been removed recently due to its being unsafe had had a new stone put in its place.

24. Correspondence

Correspondence had been received from:

- The Licensing Team which did not require any action
- The Local Government Boundary Commission which it was noted Combs did not get a specific mention and appeared in the maps provided that Combs had been included in the Onehouse area. There was an assumption it was part of an action to create rural areas of similar resident number size. This will have to be watched to ensure Combs doesn't lose its identity.

25. Any other business – potentially for inclusion on the next agenda

Cllr S Reynard asked if there was any update regarding additional members of the PC. Cllr T Whitehead mentioned recently been approached by a resident enquiring joining the PC. Cllr S Scarff updated the PC regarding Combs church bells including applying for grants for the last two bells required and there being a meeting at Combs Church on 12th October at 7pm giving the opportunity to update attendees on current position and what next, etc.

Action:

- **Cllr T Whitehead to invite potential new member of PC to next PC meeting**

26. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 8 October 2018 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.31pm