

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council and Annual Meeting  
Monday 14 May 2019 at 7.10pm, Battisford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battisford**

(DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED)

**Present:** S Scarff (Chairman); C Todhunter (Vice Chairman); V Whitehead (Councillor); D Thorpe (Councillor); J Crooks (Councillor); T Chaplin (Councillor); K Oakes (County Councillor); T Bamber (clerk); three members of the public.

**1. Election of Chairman and Declaration of Office as Chairman**

Cllr Scarff confirmed that he was willing to stand for chairman and, there being no other nominations, Cllr Todhunter proposed that Cllr Scarff be elected chairman for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr Thorpe and AGREED unanimously. Cllr Scarff signed the Declaration of Office with clerk signing as the Proper Officer of Combs Parish Council.

**2. Election of Vice-Chairman**

Cllr Scarff (Chairman) asked for nominations for vice-chairman. Cllr Thorpe proposed Cllr Todhunter, who confirmed he was willing to stand. The motion was seconded by Cllr Crooks and AGREED unanimously. There were no other nominations.

**3. Apologies for absence**

District Councillor John Matthissen sent his apologies but provided the clerk with a copy of his report.

**4. Declarations of interest**

Cllrs Crooks in respect of 12 a (ii), 12 b (iii) and 13 c (iii)

**5. Public Forum**

The only members of public attending were in respect of planning applications.

**6. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 8 April 2019**

Minutes for 8 April 2019 were reviewed and were signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by the Chairman.

**7. Matters arising from the minutes**

(Item 15) Cllr Thorpe reported that the problem with the timer for the streetlight in Tannery Road was being addressed. The street light opposite Combs Green was on at 3AM and this will be investigated. It was agreed that Folley Electrical Services be asked to update the lamp at the same time.

(item 21) The tree in Webb Close is in poor condition. The Clerk was instructed to make contact with the residents' maintenance manager regarding the removal of the dead limb.

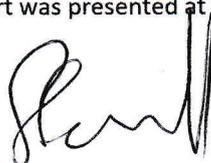
**Action: Clerk to contact Webbs Close maintenance manager**

**8. County Councillor's Report**

The County Councillor's report was presented at the preceding Parish meeting. Cllr Oakes confirmed she has been pursuing the council about stickers for faded speed signs.

**9. District Councillor's Report**

The District Councillor's report was presented at the preceding Parish meeting.



## 10. Parish Council Chairman's Report

No matters not raised elsewhere.

## 11. Clerk's Report

The clerk reported that, following a report from a resident, Anglian Water are attending to a damaged water hydrant pillar by Scotches Corner.

## 12. Planning

### a. Applications received for consideration

- i. DC/19/01724 - Mead Farmhouse, Jacks Lane – Erection of a summerhouse -  
*Supported*
- ii. DC/19/01837 – The Barn, Holy Oak Farm, Church Road – conversion of agricultural building to a dwelling -*Supported*
- iii. DC/19/01794 – 8 Dwellings to the North of Straight Road, Battisford (deadline 15 May) - comments to be lodged:
  1. There are concerns that this would put additional strain on local infrastructure, particularly sewage.
  2. Traffic would increase further, particularly through Poplar Hill, which is the main route to the area (and is also subject to further loading by other planning applications)
  3. The proposed area is outside the settlement boundary, and is currently agricultural land.
- iv. DC/19/01826- Jockeys Hall, Jockeys Lane – Change in use –
  1. There is a question over the availability of a reliable water supply to accommodate these additional homes.
  2. It is probable that three additional dwellings would add considerably to traffic on Jack's Lane which, as local knowledge confirms, is a very narrow and easily congested lane that is already overused.
  3. The existing buildings are not suitable for conversion into dwellings.
  4. While recognising that possible future plans cannot be part of planning considerations it would be remiss of the Council if they did not express concern that, were these houses to be approved, this should not be taken as a precedent for further building in the immediate area.
- v. DC/19/02077 – Fen Stables, Combs Lane – erection of one dwelling. The Council objects:
  1. The area is in a flood plain
  2. Access is onto a dangerous bend
  3. Further development would add stress to an already busy minor road, which stands to be impacted by other applications in the area

### b. Decisions received from MSDC

- i. DC/19/01102 – Kestrel Barn, Church Road. *Application withdrawn- noted*
- ii. DC/19/00790 Battisford Cricket Club – *granted - noted*
- iii. DC/19/01168 – High View, Little London – change of use – *granted - noted*



### 13. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – Current Account balance as of 26 April 2019 was £16,415.89 and the savings account balance as of 1 May 2019 was £1,914.07.

The Budget analysis and financial summary were reviewed and accepted and it was noted that S.137 expenditure was within statutory limits (and, in any event, was largely reimbursed by donations).

b. **Payments received**

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| i. T/L Lisa May Pelham - interment         | £530.00 |
| ii. T/L Gertrude May Stammers -inscription | £ 90.00 |

c. **Payments to hand**

- i. SALC membership - £320.57. Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22200 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Local Government Act 1972, s133*).
- ii. Suffolk Preservation Society membership renewal - £ 30.00. Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22201 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff (*Public Health Act 1875,s.164*).
- iii. J E Crooks -- cemetery gate & post -£680.76- Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22202 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff (*Local Government Act 1972, s214(2)*)

d. **Charitable donations policy**

A draft policy, having been previously circulated by Cllr Todhunter, was discussed. It was AGREED that, with a notional annual limit of £1,000, this be accepted as council policy on charitable donations

**ACTION: Clerk to file on website**

e. **Approval of annual figures**

The Clerk presented the figures being reported to the internal auditors. These were approved and it was AGREED that the 'exemption from Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR)' certificate be approved.

### 14. Grants and fundraising

Cllr Whitehead outlined the questionnaire that is to be included with the forthcoming newsletter, in order to gauge the wishes of villagers.

### 15.

a. **Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

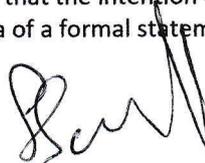
Draft new standing orders and financial regulations were reviewed and amended slightly. It was then AGREED that these be adopted by the Council.

b. **Review of Asset Register and risk assessment**

The Risk assessment was discussed and amended slightly, and the Asset Register was reviewed and confirmed correct. It was the AGREED that these be adopted.

c. **Formalisation of Internal Control Statement.**

It had been noted that the Council does not have a formal Internal Control Statement. Councillors were of the view that the intention of such a document was met by current procedures and that the idea of a formal statement was, for a small parish council, an



unnecessary additional burden. However as it is easier to comply than to challenge bureaucracy, a model statement was reviewed, amended to best suit the specific situation and it was AGREED that this be adopted.

#### **16. Speed Signs**

An update was provided by Cllr Todhunter. Highways are processing the applications for poles and quotations are to be sought in time for the next meeting. Cllr Oakes informed the Council that she would contribute £2,000 towards the cost.

The clerk was instructed to write to those residents who had previously expressed their concerns, to update them.

**Action: Clerk to write to residents.**

#### **17. Parish Newsletter**

Cllr Chaplin presented a draft of the next newsletter. As this is to be accompanied by a questionnaire it will involve more pages than previously and the increased cost was accepted. When complete the draft questionnaire will be circulated to councillors prior to distribution.

#### **18. Combs Cemetery / St Mary's Churchyard**

Nothing to report in respect of the cemetery.

It was noted that a table top tomb in St Mary's churchyard is in a bad state and the owners had agreed that it be collapsed for safety reasons. To do this it would be necessary to seek a faculty from the diocese and it was AGREED that this be sought. The chairman will take this up.

#### **19. Correspondence**

A request for a donation has been received from EACH and it was agreed that this be included on the next agenda.

#### **20. Any other business – potentially for inclusion on the next agenda**

- Cllr Crooks reported that a pothole had been very badly repaired in Moats Tye. He will share details with Cllr Oakes, who will take this up with Highways.
- Cllr Crooks also mentioned that the original plans for Battisford Village Hall had included a ramp for disabled access where the steps currently are. He will investigate why this plan was not followed.
- Cllr Crooks also reported that there had been a spate of thefts from farms, and that police response had been disappointing.
- Cllr Todhunter invited a vote of thanks to the Chairman for all that he has done for both the council and for the whole village. This was enthusiastically supported.

#### **21. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 10 June 2019 at 7.30pm**

The Meeting closed at 9.30pm

