

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council and Annual Meeting
Monday 10 June 2019 at 7.10pm, Battsford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battsford**

(DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED)

Present: S Scarff (Chairman); C Todhunter (Vice Chairman); D Thorpe (Councillor); J Crooks (Councillor); T Chaplin (Councillor); K Oakes (County Councillor); J Matthissen (District Councillor); T Bamber (clerk).

1. Apologies for absence

V Whitehead (Councillor).

2. Declarations of interest

Cllrs Crooks in respect of 10 b (ii), Cllr Chaplin in respect of 11 c (iii)

3. Public Forum

No members of public attending.

4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 13 May 2019

Minutes for 13 May 2019 were reviewed and were signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by the Chairman.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising that are not covered elsewhere

6. County Councillor's Report

Cllr Oakes confirmed she has still been pursuing the council about stickers for faded speed signs. Following a complaint by Cllr Crooks Cllr Oakes showed a Highways representative a photograph of the litter left by a roadworks team. The litter was subsequently removed by a Highways team.

7. District Councillor's Report

The District Councillor's report had been circulated earlier as he had three meetings to attend and arrived later. On his arrival Cllr Matthissen summarised the details of his newsletter and invited questions.

8. Parish Council Chairman's Report

No matters not raised elsewhere.

9. Clerk's Report

No matters not raised elsewhere.

10. Planning

- a. Applications received for consideration
 - i. DC/19/02322 - 9 dwellings North of Bowl Road, Battisford – Landscaping, etc. It was AGREED to:
 - 1. Support all comments made by Battisford Parish Council;
 - 2. Emphasise concern over need direct access for Pub car parking (else the space may be considered for another house);
 - 3. Suggest a sewage holding tank be used during peak times, so that the mains is not overstrained.
 - ii. DC/19/02470 – Manor Cottage, Moats Tye – Listed Building consent – replacement of French doors. *No Objection*
 - iii. DC/19/012442 Star Cottage, Moats Tye – Annex to existing accommodation (Planning and Listed Building consent) *No Objection*

- b. Decisions received from MSDC
 - i. DC/19/01611 Garage Windows, Mill Lane – Listed Building Consent granted- *noted*
 - ii. DC/19/01741 – High View, Little London – Approval of conditions granted- *noted*
 - iii. DC/19/01724 - Mead Farmhouse, Jacks Lane – Erection of a summerhouse granted- *noted*

11. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – Current Account balance as of 27 May 2019 was £15,781.20 and the savings account balance as of 1 June 2019 was £1,914.07.

The Budget analysis and financial summary were reviewed and accepted.

- b. **Payments received**

- i. T/L Roy Flatman –inscription - £ 100.00

- c. **Payments to hand**

- i. SALC Internal Audit fee - £ 225.60 Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22203 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Local Government Act 1972, s111*).
 - ii. EON (Direct debit) - £ 73.93 Approved by all councillors (*Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980 S.301*)
 - iii. Village survey/ newsletter printing -£ 147.50. All councillors agreed to reimburse Cllr Chaplin for these costs. Cheque number 22204 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Local Government Act 1972, s142*).
 - iv. Village survey forms – supplemental printing- £ 60.00. All councillors agreed to reimburse the clerk for these costs. . Cheque number 22205 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Local Government Act 1972, s142*).
 - v. Battisford Village Hall hire (Oct 2018-March 2019) - £120.00. Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22206 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Local Government Act 1972, s133*).
 - vi. Folley Electrical Services – streetlight improvements -£2,399.50. Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22207 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980 S.301*).

d. **Donation request from EACH**

It was noted that there are two other hospices in Suffolk, both of which, unlike EACH, have ended the past years with a deficit. As EACH has had a comfortable surplus for the past few years, it was agreed that while the charity is an extremely good one, it was not considered appropriate to donate from the Council's limited funds.

e. **Review Approval of Internal audit report**

The details of the internal audit report and AGAR returns had been circulated previously for review and the clerk summarised the impact of these. It was noted that some minor changes were required to comply with the auditors' recommendations, particularly:

- (i) Standing Orders should refer to procurement procedures
- (ii) Data Protection Policy should cover breaches of policy

It was AGREED that these changes be implemented. It was also agreed that the internal audit comments were accepted by the Council and the clerk will work to implement the remaining recommendations over the year.

f. **Approval of Governance Statement, Accounting Statement and Publication Period**

It was AGREED that the formal AGAR documents previously seen and reviewed by the Council be accepted and published.

It was further AGREED that publication period for the Council's annual figures be 17 June to 26 July.

Action: Clerk to publicise and publish figures

12. Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer

It was AGREED that the clerk, Tony Bamber, be appointed Responsible Financial Officer.

13. Grants & Fundraising

The Chairman reported that a suggestion had been made that the Council consider acquiring its own village hall and invited councillors to give thought to this. In the absence of Cllr Whitehead further discussion was deferred.

14. Speed Signs

Cllr Todhunter presented a proposal to purchase a Vario Speed Indicator Device. The quotation provided included essential accessories, with a total cost of £3,414 (£2,845 excluding VAT). It was AGREED to instruct the clerk to arrange the purchase of this.

Cllr Todhunter had held a meeting with concerned residents who live on Scotches corner, from which it became clear that some car drivers approaching the corner from Stowmarket were capable of thinking they could negotiate the bend at speeds in excess of 30 MPH. Accordingly it was AGREED that Cllr. Todhunter seek permission (from Highways and the landowner) to install another pole for SID placement in the field entrance at the bottom of the Slough.

Action: Clerk to arrange purchase of SID; Cllr Todhunter to seek approval for installation of additional pole.

15. Street Lights

Cllr Thorpe reported that the timer on the light in Tannery Road has been rectified, and a new LED has been installed in the lamp outside Queen's Close.

Cllr Whitehead, in submitting her apologies, had also made some comments about the lights and it was agreed that these would be best left until the councillor was present to discuss the matter.

16. Parish Newsletter

Cllr Chaplin reported that all newsletters and surveys had been distributed. The Chairman congratulated the councillor for a job well done and all agreed.

For the record, a total of 350 newsletters were printed.

17. Combs Cemetery

Cllr Thorpe reported that some more topsoil would be needed soon and Cllr Crooks confirmed he would arrange this.

18. Diseased Tree

The clerk reported that he had written to the builders, Landlink Estates, who are believed to be responsible for the common land in Webb's Close. It was agreed that they should be required to attend to the tree themselves, rather than allow them to reimburse the Council after work is done.

19. St Mary's Churchyard

- (i) Tree survey: Cllr Matthissen offered to make enquiries regarding tree surveyors on the District Council's payroll
- (ii) Grass cutting: It had been reported that a vase sitting in a horizontal memorial stone had been damaged, presumably when mowing. Cllr Thorpe offered to raise the stone a little so that it would be clear of mowing activities in future, provided the owner acknowledged that the Council would not be responsible for any damage and it was AGREED that the Council would replace the damaged vase and rose. **Action: Clerk to write to the grave owner and also to inform the maintenance firm of the incident.**
- (iii) Table tomb: It was AGREED that the clerk write to the appropriate diocese for a faculty in order to proceed with dismantling the tomb.

20. Correspondence

The clerk reported that the cost of hiring the hall was being held at the existing price.

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

- Cllr Thorpe reported that the verge cutting had been done to a very good standard and it was AGREED that the clerk be instructed to write a note of appreciation..
- A complaint had been received that footpath no.82 (From Bildeston Road through Fir Tree Farm) was blocked at its entrance. The clerk was instructed to write to the owners asking that they cut back the hedge that is blocking the stile.
- A resident has expressed interest in joining the council. As the time limit before advertising is required will expire 35 days after the election It was AGREED that, subject to acceptable CV and references, the Council would co-opt this person.

22. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 8 July 2019 at 7.30pm

The Meeting closed at 9.20pm