

Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting
Monday 10 November 2014 at 7.30pm, Battisford Community Centre

Present: Cllr I Clark (Chair), Cllr S Reynard, Cllr J. Henson, Cllr S. Scarff; Cllr J. Crooks, Cllr T Durrant
Also present: District Cllr P Godden, Mrs A New (Clerk)

1. **Apologies** – Cllr D Eade, Community Police Team, and County Councillor Truelove had sent apologies.

2. **Declarations of Interest** – None.

3. **Public Forum**

3 members of the public attended with concerns regarding the cemetery. The public attendees inquired as to the Parish Council responsibility for maintaining the upkeep and adherence to cemetery regulations. The main concern focussed on an increased amount of memorabilia which was causing distress to some families who visited the cemetery, specifically those finding it difficult to tend graves where memorabilia had spilt over on to neighbouring plots. Cllr Clark confirmed it was the Parish Council responsibility to oversee regulations within the cemetery, explaining that the St Mary's Church graveyard was the direct responsibility of the Church. Cllr Clark explained that the increased additions to grave and cremation plots had resulted in many complaints and that a strategy to address the situation had been discussed at length within Parish Council Meetings. Cllr Clark reported that at the last meeting the Parish Council had agreed to write to all grave holders requesting that plots be brought back in line with regulations. A copy of the current regulations will be enclosed with the letter for clarity and a reasonable timescale indicated to allow for modifications to be made. Disregard of the regulations may lead to possible further correspondence dealing with specific issues as it is necessary for the Parish Council to meet Health & Safety standards. The public attendees thanked the Councillors for their attention to this matter and for their understanding of the distress felt by some relatives/visitors to the cemetery.

4. **Community Police Team Report**

Cllr Clark read the Community Police Team Report in the absence of Matt Brown.

Cllr Clark explained that a revised agenda format to separate reporting from Police, District and County Councillors would allow issues relating to each area greater transparency.

The issue of speeding in the village was discussed. Cllr Clark reiterated that any incidents be reported as previously circulated. The Councillors proposed potential speed checks to capture areas of specific concern, namely Tannery Road and Mill Lane. Matt Brown to be contacted with request for speed checks.

5. **County Councillor**

Cllr Tuelove's was circulated.

(i) VAS - Cllr Scarf proposed the Parish Council purchase a speed sign (self powered/solar energy). Regulations and costs to be sought and a formal request to Highways/County Council for permission.

(ii) Cllr Clark had provided Cllr Eade with contact details for speeding incidents to be reported.

6. **District Councillor**

Cllr Godden reported on an Audit standards meeting she had attended where all Suffolk Councils had submitted a full complement of returns and also an MSDC Audit meeting where fraud had been an agenda item. Cllr Godden relayed concern received from residents that healthcare and transport issues would be impacted with the proposed new build at Edgecombe Road end of Combs Ford.

(i) Meadow View – Cllr Clark requested further information regarding the planning issues surrounding Meadow View. Drainage issues previously raised will be reviewed.

(ii) Right to Buy – Cllr Henson requested further information on the proposal to install solar panels on council houses and how this would affect right to buy i.e. are the panels included in the purchase. Cllr Godden to feedback at a future meeting.

7. **Approve Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 9 June 2014**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

8. **Matters arising from previous minutes**

Mill Lane repairs still awaited. Highways to be contacted particularly with a view to the divert due 02/12/2014.

Hedge cutting at The Rectory and footpath issues outstanding.

Highways to be contacted regarding parking of contractor/building vehicles restricting road access at Scotch's Corner.

9. **Reports from Councillors**

a. Visits and meetings b. Matters raised for information and attention:

Cllr Clark gave feedback from a 'Filming and Media' Seminar he had attended where NALC legal representatives gave a presentation on a regulation which took effect on 6 August 2014. The regulation is an amendment to Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 which gives the public the right to film, photograph, record or report on full council and committee meetings. The requirement of Parish Councils relating to this regulation require them to amend their Standing Orders to reflect the numerous mandatory statutory provisions that apply and establish other rules to regulate their procedures. Documents will be circulated to the Councillors when received from SALC.

10. **Report from the Parish Clerk – Nothing to report.**

11. **Correspondence received: (a) Post; (b) e-mails**

Correspondence received was noted.

Cllr Clark had received a complaint from a resident regarding the footpath from the Slough towards Stowmarket. The path is difficult to walk due to overgrowth of grass/verge making it dangerous for wheelchair users and people with prams. Highways to be informed with a request to clear the debris and make safe for pedestrians.

12. **Planning**

(a) Consider applications received:

(i) 2829/14 – The Thatches, Moats Tye, Combs

Revisited due to an additional letter submitted by the Society for Protection of Ancient Building who objected to the proposed reconstruction. [This application has since been withdrawn by the applicant].

(b) Decisions made by MSDC – none.

(c) MSDC Call for sites – Potentially this does not apply to small villages such as Combs when considering short term sustainability for increased building. It was agreed that this initiative is a step towards identifying strategic sites for potential development in the future and that a revision of the Parish Plan would need to include an assessment of local housing needs.

13. **Finance**

a. Current balance - Reports were circulated and discussed.

b. Payments received - £200.00 Cemetery fees.

c. Approve payment of invoices received.

(i) Clerks Salary and expenses of £209.66 was due. Cllr Clark proposed this be paid, seconded by Cllr Henson. All Cllrs were in favour. Chq no. 022012 was written and signed.

(ii) HMRC clerks tax was due - £48.60. Cllr Clark proposed this be paid, seconded by Cllr Henson. All Cllrs were in favour. Chq no. 022013 was written and signed.

(iii) Cemetery Maintenance – invoice for £125.00 was due. Cllr Clark proposed this be paid, seconded by Cllr Henson. All Cllrs were in favour. Chq no. 022014 was written and signed.

(iv) SALC Seminar invoice for £36.00 was due. Cllr Clark proposed this be paid, seconded by Cllr Henson. All Cllrs were in favour. Chq no. 022015 was written and signed.

(v) MSDC invoice for grass cutting was due - £360.00. Cllr Clark proposed this be paid, seconded by Cllr Henson. All Cllrs were in favour. Chq no. 022016 was written and signed.

d. Budget

Cllr Clark suggested extraordinary items to be included at the start of the process of identifying next years costings. Cllr Scarf proposed an increase in street lighting funding.

e. Renewal of cemetery grass/hedge cutting contract

Cllr Clark proposed agreement to the renewal of the 2015 contract for Mr D Windle to continue cemetery Maintenance and hedge cutting. A proposal to negotiate cutting of grass at Moats Tye as additional work was made and it was agreed this will be requested when confirming the renewal with Mr Windle.

14. Internal Audit Review

No detrimental issues were raised. Cllr Clark will circulate the report electronically for discussion and agreement at the next meeting.

15. External Audit

Cllr Clark reported on the return.

16. Standing Orders and Financial regulations

Cllr Clark proposed a revision of the Standing Orders and financial regulations as an agenda item at the next meeting. Standing Orders to include the revised media regulation as discussed under item 9 of this meeting.

17. Burial Grounds: (a) Combs Cemetery (i) Cemetery Regulations (b) St Mary's Churchyard

Following the recent circulation of a first draft of the letter to grave holders (as discussed under item 3 of this meeting) it was agreed that the final letter will be mailed within the next two weeks.

18. Any other items for inclusion on the next Agenda - None.

19. Date of next meeting - Monday 2 December 2014, at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.55pm