

SUTTON-CUM-LOUND PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 9th March, 2011

Present: Councillor M. Rees, Chairman. Councillors Beare, Close, Cody, Foster and Gough.

1 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted by County/District Councillor Yates. Apologies were also submitted by P.c. Glover and Mr. H. Hopkins (Neighborhood Watch).

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Acting Clerk reported that he had recently offered to advise any member on the requirements of the Code of Conduct (copies of which he had furnished to all members, together with copies of the registration of interests form). He now advised in particular that membership of the Parish Plan Steering Group and Village Hall Committee were both registrable personal interests that might also become prejudicial interests where finance or regulation was involved. He also advised of the possible consequences of failure to declare an interest.

Councillor Close informed the meeting that she had received the advice from the Acting Clerk and researched the matter fully and concluded that she did not believe that her involvement with the Village Hall Committee to be either a personal or a prejudicial interest. Councillor Close stated that with regards agenda item 7 (Village Hall – Request for financial assistance towards refurbishment of the bar/server area), which she had requested be included on the agenda, she would be happy to answer questions associated with the proposal, but she would not vote on it.

Councillors Gough and Rees each declared a personal interest at agenda item 6 (Parish Plan Implementation), being members of the Parish Plan Steering Group.

3 MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

The Minutes of a meeting of the Council, held on 9th February, 2011 were approved as a correct record.

4 MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Rees referred to Minute No. 12(b) (Risk Review), and reported that the Acting Clerk had submitted an official request for the lorry weight limit in the

village to be reduced to 7.5 tonnes. Members agreed that, if successful, the matter would be publicised locally.

Councillor Rees also referred to Minute No. 22 (Allotment Provision), and asked whether the Acting Clerk had pursued the matter of the possible site near Portland Place, owned by NCC, and currently farmed under lease to Tiln Farms. The Acting Clerk reported that he would do so once he had retrieved the file from the home of the former Clerk.

5 PUBLIC DISCUSSION

There were no members of the public present.

6 PARISH PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Mr. Brian Seddons, Chairman of the Parish Plan Steering Group, presented details of Parish Plan priorities. During the discussion, the following were raised in particular:

- Village Newsletter – Mr. Seddons to liaise with Councillor Beare and the Acting Clerk regarding production arrangements
- Classes – particularly Cookery and Language – Funding required
- Interactive Signage – the Acting Clerk would make enquiries with the County Council
- Local Improvement Scheme – Update on the current funding bid by the Steering Group
- School and Community Links

Resolved: That consideration be deferred until the April meeting, by which time the Steering Group would have further developed details of its priorities.

7 VILLAGE HALL

Consideration was given to a letter from Councillor Close, Chair, Sutton cum Lound Village Hall Charity, requesting the Parish Council to consider making a commitment to donate £2,000, or thereabouts, towards the cost (estimated at £5,000) of refurbishing the bar/server area. Remaining funds required (£3,000) would be sourced from current Village Hall funds.

Councillor Close answered questions relating to the situation regarding funds currently held by the Committee, and the relationship/priority of this particular project to the pressing need for a new heating system, referred to at Minute No. 16 (Budget 2001-12) of February, 2011.

Resolved: That consideration be deferred until the April meeting, when the request would be discussed in conjunction with the Parish Plan implementation priorities.

8 ACCOUNTS

Resolved: That the March Accounts, totaling £517.96, be approved for payment.

9 BUDGET MONITORING

The Acting Clerk submitted the March budget monitoring statement.

10 SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS GROUP

PCSO Catherine Phillips attended the meeting, and discussed various matters with members, including Neighbourhood Watch. She reported that there was little reported crime in February, although there was a current spate of motorcycle thefts in nearby villages.

Councillor Rees referred to Minute No. 10 of February, 2011, and reported that the District Council was now able (in accordance with new Government advice) to issue advisory stickers for affixing to vehicles parked on pavements. PCSO Phillips stated that she would be willing to affix these stickers subject to supply, and authority to do so from the forces senior officers. A discussion ensued, when the matter of parking at Brownies nights was raised by PCSO Phillips.

Resolved:

- (a) That PCSO Phillips be asked to (i) research the legal position regarding parking near to a road junction and (ii) enquire as to whether Inspector Madin would allow her to affix stickers to offending vehicles.
- (b) That a joint letter be sent from the Parish Council and Police to the parents of Brownies advising regarding correct parking.

11 RISK REVIEW

- (a) Confirmation was given that, pursuant to Minute No. 19 of February, 2011, the Parish Council would participate in the Bassetlaw Spring Clean/Big Tidy Up on Saturday 14th May, 2011. Councillor Rees would produce a risk assessment, and all necessary equipment and clothing would be provided. An article had been included in *By The Way*, encouraging public participation, and the Acting Clerk would write similarly to the school. Councillor Close would ask the Village Hall Committee if refreshments could be provided.
- (b) An inspection of the Parish Council container in the Village Hall grounds would take place shortly.
- (c) The meeting was informed of a recent increase in the number of Tarmac tippers travelling through the village. Councillor Rees would furnish the Acting Clerk with the necessary contact details to enable him to write to the company.

12 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT

A brief discussion took place about the Act. Members noted that the District Council had not responded to the Government consultation.

13 SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LINKS

Letter was submitted from Mrs. Marion Strange, Chair, Sutton-cum-Lound C. of E. Primary School Governing Body, regarding the governors' wish to strengthen the school's links within the local community. Members' views were requested on:

- What could the school do to become a better resource in the local area, either by offering greater facilities to the wider community or being more actively involved in local events?
- What opportunities would the Parish Council like to see for members of local groups to play a more active role in the life of the school?

Members welcomed this approach, which they considered was a positive step forward.

Resolved:

- (a) That Mrs. Strange, or a representative of the governors, be invited to attend the Annual Parish Meeting, when the above matters could be discussed, and a report on the school's year could be given.
- (b) That Mrs. Strange be asked to publicise the forthcoming litter pick in the school, hopefully resulting in participation by pupils.

14 CONSERVATION AREAS

Councillor Rees submitted a report on the Acting Clerk's recent dialogue with the District Council Planning Department, when the Conservation Officer welcomed the possibility of examining the case for a conservation area in the village.

Resolved: That it be agreed in principle to examine the possibility, in partnership with the Parish Plan Steering Group, and that the Conservation Officer be invited to attend a future meeting once a provisional conservation area boundary had been agreed on.

15 ALLOTMENT PROVISION

Pursuant to Minute No. 22 of February, 2011, Councillor Rees confirmed that a formal request for utilisation of land rear Nos. 25, 27 and 31 Portland Place had been submitted.

16 QUALITY COUNCILS

The Acting Clerk submitted a report outlining the benefits of Quality accreditation, and some of the essential requirements.

Resolved: That the process of working towards an application for Quality accreditation be started.

17 STANDARDS

Letter was submitted from the District Council, giving details of the abolition of the current Standards regime, and providing the results of a recent consultation exercise regarding relationships between parish councils and the District Council.

18 TREE REPLACEMENT

Councillor Rees reported that he had requested the Acting Clerk to write to the Parochial Church Council regarding the need and desirability of replacing lost trees in the Churchyard and adding further to the tree stock. The letter was submitted to the meeting of the Parochial Church Council the previous evening, and a reply was awaited, particularly with regards to any necessary approach to the Diocese.

19 THE PARISH COUNCIL'S ADMINISTRATION

Pursuant to Minute No. 21 of February, 2011, the Acting Clerk submitted a comprehensive report on various aspects of the Parish Council's administration.

Accounting

Resolved:

- (a) The Receipts & Payments Account be computerised as from 1st April, 2011.
- (b) Receipts & Payments year-end accounting be introduced in substitution for Income & Expenditure accounting for 2010/11 and future years.

Agendas

Resolved: That, for any member wishing to participate, a list of standing personal interests be included on future agendas, such interests to be minuted where relevant.

Banking

Resolved:

- (a) The bank mandate be changed after the next Parish Council election to

require cheques to be signed by two members and the Clerk to the Council.

- (b) Bank Statements be requested from NatWest on a monthly basis.

Communications and Delegated Powers

Resolved: That the draft Protocol now submitted be adopted, as amended.

Financial Regulations

Resolved: That the draft set of Financial Regulations now submitted be adopted.

Insurance

Resolved: That consideration be given to obtaining lower cost insurance.

Audit, Etc.

Resolved:

- (a) A bank reconciliation statement be submitted to all members with each Parish Council meeting agenda.
- (b) A budget monitoring report be submitted to all members with each Parish Council meeting agenda.
- (c) A schedule of payments be submitted to all members with each Parish Council meeting agenda.
- (d) The Clerk to the Council be required periodically to bring the bank statements to a meeting, where two members would verify the bank balance against the bank reconciliation statement, and initial accordingly.
- (e) At each annual budget meeting, the following be reviewed:
- Risk Assessment Policy
 - Internal controls (including Internal Audit), financial systems, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders
 - Compliance with legislative requirements
 - Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
 - Clerk's Contract of Employment
 - Clerk's Salary
 - Clerk's Annual Appraisal
- (f) An Audit Committee be established, comprising Councillors Beare, Cody and Foster, to produce terms of reference for the Internal Auditor, and to review the Parish Council's internal audit arrangements annually.

- (g) The Internal Auditor be required to submit an annual internal audit report for consideration by the Parish Council.

Meetings

Resolved:

- (a) The Chairman's annual report should in future be delivered to the Annual Parish Meeting, as opposed to the Annual Parish Council Meeting.
- (b) At the next meeting of the Parish Council, consideration be given to make the Annual Parish Meeting more of an event, by inviting representatives of village organisations to attend and report on their year.
- (c) That the current practice of suspending business at Parish Council meetings when a non-member is invited to speak cease.

Minutes

Resolved:

- (a) Old official minutes should be deposited in County Archives at Nottingham
- (b) As from May, 2011, minutes be kept in loose leaf form, periodically bound, and deposited in County Archives.
- (c) As from May, 2011, minutes be numbered consecutively throughout the civic year, beginning at 11/12/1.
- (d) Each volume of current minutes, including the approved schedule of payments, should have each page numbered consecutively on a monthly basis. After approval, each page of the minutes (other than the final page) should be initialled by the Chairman at the bottom of the page. The final page of each month's minutes should be signed by the Chairman, as should the schedule of accounts. Any alterations should be initialled by the Chairman.
- (e) Draft minutes be removed from the website once approved, and be replaced with approved minutes.

Planning

- (a) An annual register (spreadsheet) of planning applications be kept, with effect from January, 2011, showing reference number, date received, details of the application, date considered by the Parish Council,

observations made by the Parish Council, date of decision notice, decision (approved or refused) and details of any appeal.

- (b) In cases where it was necessary to submit observations on a planning application outside the normal meeting cycle, a power be delegated to the Clerk to make such observations, in consultation with members, other than in cases where a member requested that an extraordinary meeting be called.

Risk Assessment

Resolved: That the draft Risk Assessment Policy now submitted be adopted, to be used in conjunction with any specific assessments such as agency grass cutting.

Standing Orders

Resolved: That the draft set of Standing Orders now submitted be adopted.

Urgent Business

Resolved: That an Urgent Business Committee be established, comprising the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council, with delegated powers to exercise any functions of the Parish Council where urgency dictated, subject to statutory requirements.

Village Hall

The Acting Clerk reported that the Parish Council needed to locate the title documents to the freehold. He had, however, studied the lease, which was an 80-year lease on a fully repairing and insurance basis, commencing on 1st April, 2005. The recreation ground was included in the lease.

The Village Hall Committee had an option to purchase at any time during the duration of the lease. The purchase price would be the greater of £5 or the amount outstanding on the PWLB loan, plus all legal costs, professional costs and disbursements relating to the purchase of the freehold. If the option was not exercised, the property reverted to the Parish Council at the end of the lease. In summary, management of the Village Hall and recreation ground was legally vested in the Village Hall Committee until 2085, and could be made permanent at any time through exercise of the option to purchase.

Possibly the main conclusion to draw was that any funding bid relating to the property would have to be made by the Village Hall Committee. Furthermore, if, for example, there was a wish to provide play equipment on the recreation ground, it was likely that the Village Hall Committee would have to enter into a binding agreement with the Parish Council regarding future maintenance in order to satisfy any funder.

Resolved: That every effort be made to locate the title documents to the freehold.

Other Possibilities

Consideration would be given in due course to adopting the following:

Complaints Procedure
Disciplinary Procedure
Environmental Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Grievance Procedure

20 ANNUAL AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

Members were satisfied as follows:

- (a) The new Risk Assessment Policy would fully comply with audit requirements.
- (b) Internal controls (as agreed earlier in the meeting), financial systems, financial regulations and standing orders would fully comply with audit requirements.
- (c) The Parish Council always endeavoured to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.
- (d) The new Protocol on Communications and Delegated Powers would provide for satisfactory administration as regards the matters concerned
- (e) The Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and Guide to Proactively Published Information was working satisfactorily

21 RECYCLING

Councillor Close referred to an email from the District Council, which stated that the District Council was keen to engage with local communities regarding recycling and the Twin Bin Scheme, in order to reduce the amount of contamination within the blue bin and encourage local residents to recycle as much of their waste as possible.

An officer would be happy to attend a summer fayre, fete or similar in order to promote recycling, home composting and waste minimisation.

Resolved: That Councillor Close's suggestion that she invite an Officer to attend a Village Hall coffee morning be approved.

22 VILLAGE GREEN (VG 85) – JUNCTION OF LOW ROAD AND MATTERSEY ROAD

The Clerk would write the annual letter to the occupiers of No. 2 Sutton Lane regarding access, after reference to the Parish Council files.

23 CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence, arriving after the agenda was printed, was noted:

- HM Revenue & Customs – PAYE for Clerks
- Nottinghamshire County Council – Grass Cutting 2011. The Acting Clerk had replied, requesting necessary documentation.

24 PUBLICATIONS, INFORMATION, ETC.

The following were submitted:

- NALC booklets on Parish and Town Council membership and functions
- Came & Co. – Insurance newsletter
- Advertising material regarding play equipment

25 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications.

26 PLANNING DETERMINATION

47/10/00020

Mr. M. Francis

Erect single-storey rear extension to dwelling at 21 Town Street,
Sutton-cum-Lound

Permission Granted

27 APPOINTMENT OF A NEW CLERK TO THE COUNCIL/RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

Resolved: That, pursuant to Minute No. 30 of February, 2011, it be a condition of service of the post holder that he or she passed the CiLCA qualification within a timescale to be agreed between the Appointment Panel and the successful candidate.