

**HAWSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL  
ON 15<sup>th</sup> November 2012.**

**Present:** Cllrs Clive Robinson (Acting Chair), Christabel Carr, Jayne Robertson, & Ros Alexander. Catherine Hibbert (Clerk). County Cllr Terry Clements (arrived 7.40 p.m.), Borough Cllr Angela Rushen and 7 members of the public.

**1. APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Michael Harrison and Henry Brewis. Cllr John West- absent.

*The meeting recessed for Public Forum at 7.30pm.*

The following items were raised under Public Forum:  
Fly tipping around Bell Lane, Lawshall Road and Pinford End;  
Speeding cars along the Whepstead Road;  
Letter re Highways Act 1980 licence (see item 5);  
Alms-houses ditch (see item 5);  
Car park lighting (see item 5);  
Christmas Trees for the village hall.

*The meeting reconvened at 7.38pm.*

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - None.

**3. MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATED 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 were approved as a true and accurate record and signed accordingly. Proposed by Cllr Jayne Robertson and seconded by Cllr Ros Alexander – all in favour.

*The meeting recessed to hear the following reports.*

**4. REPORTS**

**C Cllr T Clements-** C Cllr Clements tabled his October 2012 report. C Cllr Clements explained that an experimental trial is underway in the locality involving one mobile 30mph warning sign, shared between 4-5 villages. This type of scheme has been effective in Norfolk and relies on the ability to move the signage from time to time; if well received, it is hoped to extend this scheme. Some discussion followed about the advisability of the Parish Council purchasing such a sign itself for use within the Parish. Reservations were expressed about anyone other than the highways department moving the signs around. C Cllr Clements acknowledged the Parish Council's interest in this scheme. C Cllr Clements also referred to the proposed £60m investment in Suffolk care homes and tabled a press release on this topic. Finally he mentioned the 'get in gear' initiative for young drivers which **Cllr J Robertson will refer to in the next Hawstead Journal, if appropriate.**

*C Cllr Clements left the meeting at 8.00pm*

**Borough Cllr Rushen** –B Cllr Rushen tabled her November 2012 Report and highlighted the following:-

- The current restructuring of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury District Councils with the consequent savings implications;

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- Rural Vision 2031. Responses to the public consultation are currently being analysed;
- The Apex/Theatre Royal is the subject of current review by the Arts Council with the aim of raising the profile creative arts in Bury St Edmunds.
- Parish Conference 22 November 2012. Cllr J Robertson confirmed receipt of the agenda.
- Emptying of bins; Parish Councils will be notified of the proposed introduction in April 2013 of charges for emptying dog waste bins, of which there are two in Hawstead. The rationale behind these charges is to ensure a consistent approach across the Borough. Options to minimise charges rely on dog waste being treated as non-hazardous and could include the Parish Council choosing to either (1) remove the dog waste bins and ask dog owners to use the general waste bins instead or (2) take responsibility itself for emptying out the dog waste bins into the general waste. Some discussion followed and it was noted that the dog waste bins are well used; continued use of the dog waste bins after April 2013 will give rise to charges (£2.65 per bin per empty) which will impact on the precept; useful contacts include Andrew Harvey (Borough Council –Waste Department) and Tony Couzins (the Parish clerk at Chedburgh).

**It was AGREED that Cllr J Robertson would contact the Borough Council on this issue and report into the next meeting.**

**Police** – Nothing to report.

*The meeting reconvened.*

**Communications** – Nothing to report in the absence of Cllr Brewis.

**Environment** – Cllr C Carr referred to the following:-

- Mole control. Quotes were tabled from Command Pest Control (used satisfactorily for the last four years) and Prokill Suffolk West. **Acceptance of the cheaper of the quotes (Command Pest Control @ £412 plus VAT) was proposed by Cllr Carr and seconded by Cllr R Alexander –all in favour. It was AGREED that Cllr Carr would action this item.**
- Rabbit Control. The meeting heard that Darren Barnaby who has dealt with ferrets on behalf of the Parish Council has offered to carry out rabbit control for free. **This proposal was unanimously AGREED.**
- Ash Trees. The report 'Ash Trees on PC land – a summary (forward planning for financial and safety liability for the future)' by James Carr- Parish tree warden was tabled. The ash trees on parish land have been surveyed with no problems noted to date. The report concludes that no action should be taken in the short term to remove trees but that a contingency of £2-3K should be made in the precept to deal with tree removal, should it become necessary. The Acting Chair thanked Mr Carr for his report on behalf of the Parish Council.

**Highways & Safety** –Nothing to report in the absence of Cllr Harrison.

**Achieving excellence** - Cllr J Robertson reported that Cllr Harrison has attended an Emergency Management for Councillors course.

**It was AGREED that Cllr J Robertson would announce the appointment of the new parish clerk in the Hawstead Journal.**

**Planning & Legal matters** -It was AGREED to deal with items relevant to this report at item 5 below.

## **5. TO CONSIDER**

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- **Village Hall car parking resurfacing.** The Parish Council had resolved in September 2012 to undertake some car park resurfacing; quotes had been obtained and approved. This strategy was suspended whilst investigation was made as to the possibility of carrying out these works (1) in conjunction with the Community Council's proposed external lighting works on the village hall and (2) with the benefit of grant funding. Research has confirmed that grant funding is not available for the car park resurfacing; there is no particular benefit in delaying the car park works (with winter approaching) until the lighting proposals are ready. **It was therefore UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the original strategy of proceeding with the car park resurfacing works should now be progressed.** Councillors did express some concerns about the Community Council's proposals for car park lighting, given the impact excessive lighting might have on biodiversity (bats etc.), properties adjoining the green and highways. **It was AGREED that the Community Council should present any detailed proposals for lighting the village hall car park at the next meeting for consideration by the Parish Council.**
- **Planning application adjacent to the Firs, Pinford End.** The proposals were discussed. Whilst the view was expressed by one Councillor that the proposals were aesthetically unobjectionable, other Councillors objected on the grounds that the proposals (1) are contrary to the presumption against development on land subject to open countryside designation in planning terms and (2) might set a precedent for development on previously undeveloped land.  
*The meeting went into recess.*  
 A member of the public noted that road access to the development site was compromised by the high incidence of speeding.  
 B Cllr Rushen was invited to comment and noted that this application was still being formally considered by the Planning Department  
*The meeting reconvened.*  
**The Parish Council RESOLVED to object to the planning application. Three votes against. One abstention. Clerk to write letter of objection.**
- **Storage facility increase/adjacent to hall** An email from Cllr M Harrison was tabled and read out in which he proposes the amelioration of the storage facilities at the village hall either by extension to the hall/ erection of a shed adjacent to the hall /infill of canopy area in order to facilitate easy movement of equipment in and out of storage and to enable storage of bulkier items. These ideas were fully discussed, but reservations were expressed about any external alterations to the hall and /or erection of sheds/canopy infill due in part to the prominent location of the hall on the village green.  
*The meeting went into recess.*  
 Mrs S Monk on behalf of the Community Council indicated that many of the difficulties highlighted by Cllr Harrison could be resolved by a thorough tidy up of existing storage; access to tables in the loft could be improved through widening of the loft hatch if necessary.  
*The meeting reconvened.*  
**It was GENERALLY AGREED that, whilst sympathetic to the principle of improved (access to) storage, the Parish Council was not supportive of external alterations to the village hall nor the erection of additional outside storage. If necessary the Parish Council would consider any formal proposal for alterations to the village hall for storage presented by the Community Council.**
- **Village green registration update**  
 Cllr Carr reported that she has researched (1) the registration of established areas of village green with the Land Registry to evidence ownership and (2) the registration of new areas of Parish Council land as village green to establish its status as such. In the latter case, it is necessary to provide evidence of 20 years uninterrupted use as such. Whilst

there are some areas around the village which potentially fall into this category, it was reported that there is insufficient evidence to support any application in this respect. **It was NOTED that no further action would be taken as regards new areas of village green and that Cllr Carr would submit a formal report summarising the outcome of her investigations. It was AGREED that Cllr Carr and the clerk would progress registering the established areas of village green with the Land Registry and report to the next meeting.**

- **Byelaws review**

It was reported that draft byelaws have been previously agreed by the Parish Council but are yet to be formally ratified. **It was GENERALLY AGREED that the clerk and Cllr Carr would endeavour to review the procedures for ratification before the next meeting.** It was noted that consideration needs to be given to the definition of vehicle to ensure it does not exclude wheelchairs or mobility scooters. **The clerk agreed to check whether there is any discretion on the part of the police/Parish Council as to the enforcement of such byelaws.**

- **Appointment of parish clerk.** See item 4 above.

- **Alms-houses ditch maintenance**

It was reported that the Trustees of the Alms-houses have met with Cllr Carr to discuss their proposal that the Parish Council, whose land abuts a ditch within the ownership of the Alms-houses, undertake the maintenance of that ditch as part of its own maintenance programme, with costs being split equally. Full discussion followed about; whether the ditch was in need of any maintenance; the need to encourage biodiversity; whether it was appropriate to expect the PC to cover any costs for maintenance on land outside its ownership; the pitfalls of over-tidying open areas; the possibility of voluntary assistance to undertake maintenance. **The Parish Council RESOLVED not to enter into the proposed maintenance agreement with the Alms-houses trustees. Three votes against. One abstention.**

- **SALC payroll for clerk**

**Cllr C Robinson proposed and Cllr R Alexander seconded the PROPOSAL that the parish clerk's payroll be administrated by SALC-AGREED.**

- **Stopping up order 2 the Pound and Licence matters**

The meeting heard that the owners of 2 the Pound have apparently been granted a licence to plant on and landscape part of the highway verge outside their curtilage. No notification was issued to neighbours or the Parish Council prior to the grant of the licence. Works have commenced to landscape the area, which works include the in-fill of a pond. Concerns were expressed as to how the licence conditions as to height of planting would be managed/enforced; the impact the in-fill of the pond might have on any adjoining watercourse or on the highway, in case of overflow. Cllr Robinson reported that he had investigated this issue with the highways department and had a number of concerns, namely that there was no consultation with the PC/ neighbours prior to the grant of the licence; if the pond is attached to other land drainage (it had apparently been piped at one stage) then EA consent for the pond in-fill might be required; the grant of a licence may herald an application for a highways stopping up, which would lead to the permanent loss of the open verge which is a feature of this village. **It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the clerk/ Cllr Robinson should write appropriate letters of protest to the Environment Agency, the Environment Department of St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Suffolk County Council highways department.**

## 6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None.

## 7. FINANCE

Issue of a cheque in settlement of a petrol invoice remains pending. **Clerk to progress.**  
Hawstead Community Council has submitted its invoice for room hire for 2012 which needs to be processed. **Clerk to progress.**

**It was AGREED that the Finance Sub Committee (Cllr Robinson, Cllr R Alexander and the Parish Clerk) should meet in order to review the Precept for approval at the next meeting.**

## 8. CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

Cllr Robinson noted that this was his last meeting as Acting Chair and thanked his fellow Councillors for the support they had extended to him in this interim role.

## 9. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

## 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**17<sup>th</sup> January 2013 7.30pm**

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Councillors and members of the public for attending.

*The meeting closed at 9.40pm*

Distribution  
Cllr C Robinson  
Cllr R Alexander  
Cllr J West  
Cllr C Carr  
Cllr Jayne Robertson  
Cllr H Brewis  
Cllr M Harrison

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