

**Minutes of Playford Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall
at 7.30pm on Wednesday, 8th January 2014**

Present: Mrs Joan Metcalfe - Chairman
Mrs Veronica Bunbury - Councillor
Mr Stephen Hicks - Councillor
Mr Bob Coppillie - Councillor
Mr Tim Llewellyn - Councillor
Mr Peter Bellfield – County Councillor
Mr Steven Hudson – District Councillor

In attendance:
Ms Marian Rosling - Clerk

Also present:
Mr Eric Metcalfe
Mr Jeremy Gray
Mr Ted Herrington,
Mrs Sally Herrington
Mr Paul Bruce
Mrs Sue Bruce

Apologies for Absence.
PCSO Sally Thomas

1. Declarations of Members' Interests in any items on this Agenda.

Joan Metcalfe declared an interest as a member of Playford Village Hall committee.
Tim Llewellyn declared an interest as a member of Playford Village Hall committee and also as a member of the Benefice Magazine team. This information was duly recorded.

2. Statement by the Chairman

As the present chairman of the Parish Council it falls to me to make an apology on behalf of the then chairman and parish councillors for the mistaken misuse of Parish council funds. In December 2012 a long standing member of the parish council and invaluable resident of the village, June Gosling, was taken into hospital and as a get well message from the village, the Council sent her a bouquet of flowers costing £27.99. Subsequently, after the 2012/2013 accounts had been published a parishioner made a complaint to Marian about misuse of council funds. Marian spoke to SALC about this and was told that the money should not have been spent in this way but as it was only a small sum and the accounts had been audited then it should be noted that it was a mistake not to be repeated. Unfortunately, this was done over the phone with no written follow up. In November, the same Parishioner made the same complaint to me threatening to inform the monitoring officer and the ombudsman if the mistake was not rectified.

Signed

Since then I have sought advice over the matter, contacting SALC and both the internal and external auditors, the BDO.

The BDO replied saying that they would not reopen the accounts as they had been audited, more or less echoing the initial SALC response which was it shouldn't have happened but make note and don't do it again. This seems to put the matter to rest.

However, to draw a line under the matter once and for all, the money has now been repaid to the council and I now regard the matter closed.

3. To approve the Minutes from the meeting held on 6th November 2013, and the planning application meetings on 2nd 11th & 18th December 2013.

These were all approved – Veronica Bunbury proposed acceptance and this was seconded by Tim Llewellyn. The Chairman signed the Minutes as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

5. Action Log Review:

AP-46 – Website issues. It was decided to defer this matter until the next meeting.

AP71 – Two sand bins were smashed by a SCC vehicle when the roadside verges were trimmed back in June last year and are to be replaced free of charge. Despite chasing this on several occasions, the Clerk is still awaiting a report from Highways dept. Peter Bellfield made a note to investigate.

AP75- The question of recycling bins at the Village hall is still on-going and will be further discussed by the Village Hall committee at their meeting on 9th January 2014.

AP77 & AP78- Footpaths no/s 1 & 20 have still not been cleared of weeds despite being reported on 20th August 2013. The weeds have now mostly died back for the winter – the Clerk is awaiting a report from Highways and will ask for a regular cutting schedule to be maintained in future.

AP-80 A letter was received from a resident of Lt Bealings in December asking when Footpath no. 9 (alongside railway line crossing Butts Road) would be re-opened. Network Rail reported that work on the steps down to the footpath was completed on 22nd Dec 2013 and an email was received from SCC Highways stating that clearance of the undergrowth was on their winter schedule – the path cannot be opened until this has been done.

NB - for more information please see copy of the Action Log appended.

Signed

6. County Councillor Peter Bellfield's report.

Peter Bellfield said that he has asked David Chenery (SCC Road Safety Group Manager) to look at the trees in Butts Road to the North of the village, as these are thought to be unsafe. It is unclear who owns these trees and therefore who is responsible for them. He will report any feedback.

SCC's Finances:

£36m to be saved from SCC's budget for the forthcoming year has been identified without the need to cut frontline services. Savings of £8m-£9m will be made by the new Energy from Waste plant at Gt Blakenham but there will be no savings made from:

- Highways
- Education
- School crossing patrols
- Bus services
- Concessionary travel
- Home to school transport
- Trading Standards

There is a campaign by Waveney District Council for a new river crossing at Lowestoft to improve transport links and relieve congestion in the area.

Money is still being spent on improving Broadband coverage and it is hoped that by 2015 over 85% of households and businesses will have speeds of 24 Mbps or more.

Applications for Primary School places need to be in by 15th January 2014.

Free school meals: Many of these are not being claimed for eligible children, meaning that schools are missing out on available funding.

7. District Councillor Steven Hudson's report.

Steven Hudson apologised for being out of touch recently, due to a burglary at his home and having had to replace his computer and documents. He reported that the auditors for SCDC have said that a wonderful job had been made of the finances for last year and that all was well. The District Council are proposing to expand into new offices opposite the station at Melton, but this is in the early stages.

8. Report by Police

12PT report was received stating that there were no crimes reported in Playford during December.

Signed

9. Finance

- **Reporting & authorisation of cheques:-**

Cheques were signed for:

Cheque No 712	HMRC	£32.00	Tax on Clerk's salary –Dec
Cheque No 713	M J Rosling	£10.45	Clerk's expenses
Cheque No 714	Bealings Benefice	£100.00	Benefice Mag. donation

The balance of the account is:-

Barclays	£2476.81	as at 31.12.13
NS&I	£1,765.88	

- **Budget for 2014/2015**

It is estimated that £800 needs to be set aside for grass cutting and hedge maintenance for the next year if we continue with the Old Parsonage Garden Services (they have confirmed that their charges for 2014/15 will remain the same). This is discussed later on as a separate issue.

The £100 donation to the Benefice Magazine has been continued but the annual donation to the Village Hall has been put on hold for the time being. A request for a donation to the charity, Homestart, was received by the Clerk but the council felt that the precept money should be spent for the benefit of Playford residents, for the moment.

It was resolved to keep the Precept request at the same level as last year i.e. £4500 and there will be a grant of £310.42 forthcoming from SCDC's Council Tax Support fund to supplement this.

- **Discuss Clerk's hours and salary**

The Clerk is currently working more than her contracted hours (4 hours per week) in order to fulfil her duties and has submitted timesheets for the last 3 months to the Chairman, showing an average of over 6 hours per week worked from September to December 2013. A discussion ensued during which the Clerk left the room and it was resolved to increase her paid hours from 4 to 5 hours per week from 1st April 2014. This can be accommodated from within the present budget.

Peter Bellfield left the meeting at 7.50pm.

10. East Anglian Offshore Windfarm

In response to Veronica Bunbury's representation at the Planning Inspectorate on 12th September 2013, an in-depth report from Scottish Power Renewables (the applicant) has been received by the Clerk, assuring the council that all aspects of concerns raised at the meeting, will be addressed.

Signed

The final deadline for responses to questions and submission of comments to the Planning Inspectorate was Friday 13th December 2013 and a website address is available to view these submissions. The council will be made aware of their findings in due course.

11. Highways

Joan Metcalfe expressed thanks to William Stennett for arranging for the hedges lining Butts Road to be cut recently. This has greatly improved the tidiness of the village. Joan has also drafted letters to be sent to other local farmers and landowners asking them to cut back hedges and trees on their land, which overhang onto roadways. Tim Llewellyn proposed this should be done and it was seconded by Veronica Bunbury.

12. Update of Standing Orders, including Code of Conduct and Financial Regulations and Complaints procedure.

Details of changes to Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the instigation of a Complaints procedure have been circulated to councillors for their perusal. It was resolved to adopt these changes and the revised statements will appear on the village website.

13. Whether Action Log should be published on the website.

Although any action taken by the council with regard to highways issues or problems reported by parishioners is always recorded in the Minutes, it was decided to publish a copy of the Action Log as an appendix to the Minutes.

14. Pocock paintings

Joan Metcalfe has approached SALC and been told that the Parish Council is not at liberty to buy these paintings and then sell them on for profit. However, Joan has already bought the paintings and can sell them herself and donate the surplus to the Parish Council. They need to be accurately priced, a total of 5 having been bought for £250. Paul Bruce as a friend of Ipswich Museum has said that the Museum may be interested in buying one or two of them for local interest. Steven Hudson suggested contacting Anthony Coe of the Russell Gallery in Ipswich for a valuation and Paul Bruce will contact a Mr John Day from Eastbourne to do likewise. It can then be discussed at the next meeting.

15. Planning Issues for the new house at Sevenoaks

The new plans for this dwelling are now on SCDC's website and approval has been recommended by Planning dept. The date for public comments has now expired. Mr Jeremy Gray (neighbour) has said that the measurements are not accurate and that the garden space is too small in relation to the plot. There is no provision for sewerage, surface water or drainage and as these need by law to be situated at a certain distance from the dwelling, there appears to be insufficient space available. The height of the proposed dwelling is also of some concern as it will dwarf the neighbouring Sonnet House and overlook it. The boundary hedge of Leylandii will be only 3 feet away

Signed

from the dwelling and will almost certainly affect the foundations and drainage. There has been no tree report. SCC Highways dept. are waiting to hear if there have been any significant changes in traffic reported in the last few years, before making a decision relating to the safety of the access road.

Steven Hudson agreed that there is a lot that does not add up in the plans and that the application appears to be contrary to the Development Plan. Steve Hicks commented that if it's based on the plans granted in 2004, it should not go through as rules have changed since then and it would now contravene current policy. Steven Hudson will speak at the Planning meeting on 9th January and will oppose approval very strongly. Tim Llewellyn will speak at the meeting as Playford's representative and will also bring up the drainage/sewerage issues. Ted Herrington felt that a site visit ought to be arranged.

16. Outdoor Playspace funds

It was suggested that the proposed purchase of an outdoor table tennis table would have limited use due to weather conditions. Other options need to be reconsidered, e.g. a basket ball net. Steve Hicks offered to look into this and the Clerk will check with the Outdoor Playspace Development officer at SCDC that funds are still available and whether there is a deadline for claiming them.

17. Grass cutting contract for 2014/2015

It was generally agreed that The Old Parsonage Garden Services had done a good job of keeping the village tidy over that last year. However, it was decided to obtain two other estimates to compare prices for the coming season and to discuss this at the next meeting. Joan Metcalfe will seek out other contactors.

18. Correspondence received:

- a) A letter was received from the Chairman of Playford Parish Hall apologising for the fact that the ante room was unavailable on 2nd December, despite the council having booked it to discuss a Planning application. The meeting was held in the committee room and the council will not be charged for this.
- b) A letter was received by the Local Government Boundary Commission, explaining that an Electoral Review was necessary because of electoral inequality.
- c) Confirmation has been received from NS&I that Mrs Veronica Bunbury has been accepted as a signatory to the savings account.
- d) SCDC Planning dept. have confirmed that permission has been granted for the alterations at Copyhold, subject to work commencing within 3 years of the date of permission.
- e) AON Insurance wrote to explain their policy on snow clearing, salting and gritting procedures on public spaces other than highways.
- f) Ipswich Borough Council wrote regarding their Community Levy and Local Plan consultations to say that they were publishing a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule for public consultations.

Signed
2013/14-43

19. AOB

Ted Herrington asked what had become of the illustrated footpath map that Jenny Nix had created last year. Joan Metcalfe replied that it is displayed on the village website (under History) and that it had also been used in the Welcome leaflet.

20. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 5th March 2014 at 7pm

The meeting ended at 8.50pm

Signed