

**Minutes of Playford Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall at 7.30 pm
on Wednesday, 9th January 2013**

Present: Mr Simon Hanson, Mrs Veronica Bunbury, Mr Bob Coppillie, Mrs Joan Metcalfe,
Mr Stephen Hicks, Mr Peter Bellfield, Mr Steven Hudson

In attendance:

Ms Marian Rosling, Clerk

Also present: Mr Ted Herrington, Mr Eric Metcalfe

Apologies for Absence

Mrs Juanette Pettitt, Mrs June Gosling.

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

No members of the council declared any interest.

2. To approve the Minutes from the Meeting held on 7th November 2012

These were signed as a true record.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes.

- a. Mr Ted Herrington commented that the 5 members of the public who observed the previous meeting were not named in the minutes. Although names were not recorded at any previous meeting, it was agreed to begin the practice of recording names.
- b. Mr Ted Herrington also mentioned that the previous minutes did not record that Joan Metcalfe chaired the November 2012 meeting.

4. Action Point Review

A working party was suggested to finally clear the elm wood from the village playing field. Veronica Bunbury to arrange. The Council recorded thanks to Colin Snowden who volunteered to help along with Bob Coppillie and Steve Hicks - **AP14**.

The two potholes in Brook Lane will be reported. Weed clearing around the bridge area also needs to be chased up. Clerk will attend to this - **AP43**.

The question of luminous backed signs will be addressed in the Budget discussion - **AP44**

Steve Hicks will look at new designs for the website and provide options at the March Council meeting. It was confirmed that Phil Holmes will continue to host the website - **AP46**

Signed

The grass cutting issue was left for the Budget discussion – **AP48**.

Slippery footpath from Church Lane to Spring Meadow has still not been dealt with.
Clerk to chase this – **AP54**

5. District Councillor Steven Hudson

Steven Hudson had nothing to report as all had been quiet over the Christmas period.

6. Report by Police

There was no Police report but it was noted from the Kesgrave 12PT report that no crimes had been reported in Playford in December, no report was received for November.

7. Finance:-

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

Cheque No 672	£32.00	Tax on clerk's salary
Cheque No 673	£25.00	P Holmes – website costs
Cheque No 674	£7.73	S Cartwright – petrol for Community Payback Team
Cheque No 675	£380.02	Eastern Facilities Management Facilities
Cheque No 676	£50.00	M Rosling-4mths storage filing cabs, elec, comp.
SO	£128.39	Clerk's salary
Cheque No 677	£32.00	Tax on clerk's salary
Cheque No 678	£20.99	M Rosling – ink cartridge, postages
Cheque No 679	£27.99	Interflora –flowers for councillor June Gosling
Cheque No 680	£742.80	Norse Commercial Services Ltd- 2012 hedge-cutting and tree removal

The balance of the account is:-

Barclays	£1101.55 (estimated 4.1.13)
Barclays no. 2 a/c	£132.76
NS&I	£1,756.43

• **Budget discussion - to agree the 2013–2014 budget and precept: -**

During discussion, the 2012-2013 overspend was identified as due to one-off costs:

Hedge maintenance & tree stump removal	£743
Election of councillors	£751
Provision of Grit Bins	<u>£500</u>
Total	£1994

Signed

This has depleted the Council reserves and it was thought that future use of the reserve to pay for routine expenditure should be avoided. The Council discussed ways of reducing 2012-2013 expenditure and highlighted the donations that the Council make from the precept. It was suggested that these could be reduced or stopped to save money. Another area of discussion was the current maintenance of village field and hedges. It was agreed that the Community Payback Team had not delivered a good service and the grass cutting may be improved upon.

Following the receipt of quotes, the Council discussed the advantages of awarding a contract to a new contractor to maintain the key grass areas and hedges in the village. During this discussion, Ted Herrington volunteered that the Highways department cut the village verges once a year in May. He commented that another cut might be appropriate later in the year.

It was also mentioned that William Stennett had helped by cutting verges in the past and the Chairman agreed to contact Mr Stennett to explore the possibility of him doing something similar late in 2013 – **AP61**.

A quote from The Old Parsonage Garden Services (Tom Duchesne) for village hedge/grass maintenance was discussed and compared to current grass and hedge cutting arrangements. It was thought that although more expensive overall, the service would deliver a better product, giving the village better value for money.

However, engaging a new contractor would result in the Council overspending in 2013-2014. Various options were discussed, including economising on other priorities and increasing the precept.

It was agreed that luminous backed road signs, (total cost £1240) was not a priority and should be discarded to save money. In addition to this saving, stopping some of the donations would help to bring the draft budget down to an acceptable level.

Removing the £20 allowed for work done by the Community Payback Team, £250 Village Hall donation, together with removing the donations to the air ambulance and SARS and the costs of the council grass cutting, and adding in the new maintenance costs, the new budget fig is £4271, still higher than the current precept.

The Council agreed that keeping the village tidy was the highest priority and was a good reason for increasing the precept to pay for the new arrangements. This was echoed by Eric Metcalfe from the public domain.

Signed

A **VOTE** was taken as to whether donations should continue to SARS & EAAA and it was **unanimously decided not to do this**. It was resolved that precept money should not in general be used for donations, especially if the budget is tight.

A **VOTE** was taken on whether to accept the quote from The Old Parsonage Garden Services and this was **unanimously agreed** subject to the inclusion of the extra piece of grass cutting and the flexibility over the number of cuts per year.

The budget was formally accepted by all members of the council.

• **Setting Precept: -**

Joan Metcalfe explained the new Council Tax changes and that because the Tax Base has changed and the number of households contributing to the precept has reduced, the shortfall may be made up by a government grant which we need to apply for. This grant is for 2013-2014 only and may not be available in subsequent years.

Simon Hanson outlined the choices regarding setting the precept for next year:

- a) We can keep the precept at the same level with the result that we will receive less as the Tax Base has been reduced
- b) We can increase the precept and not accept the grant
- c) We can increase the precept and also apply for the grant

An increase of £500 to the precept would result in an average Council Tax increase of £5.49 per annum per household.

Peter Bellfield mentioned that while there was no cap on spending for the forthcoming year, this might not be the case in subsequent years, commenting that it may be more difficult to increase the precept next time.

A **VOTE** was taken and all councillors agreed to **increase the Precept by £500 for the year 2013-2014 and to apply for the grant**.

8. County Councillor Peter Bellfield

Peter Bellfield arrived at 8.15pm and reported:

- a) SCC had been short-listed to be voted the most improved council in the country – this was possibly due to overcoming the problems experienced with the Chief Executive 18 months ago.
- b) Money has been saved on libraries but this has not meant any closures at all.

Signed

- c) £11million has been spent on improving Broadband facilities in the area.
- d) Education. Mr Bellfield reported that Suffolk is the 3rd worst county in the country at Keystage II level and as a result, education will be a key priority for Suffolk in the coming years.

The Chair thanked Peter Bellfield for his contribution and Mr Bellfield left the meeting at 8.50pm

9. East Anglian Offshore Windfarm –

A meeting of Gt & Lt Bealings, Grundisburgh & Culpho and Playford parish councils to discuss consultation issues was held at Little Bealings Village Hall on 12th December 2012 - this was attended by Veronica Bunbury and Bob Coppillie.

It was agreed that the subsequent notes submitted by Lt Bealings' clerk, Carol Ramsden summed up the situation. Gt & Lt Bealings are now comfortable about the cable route but Grundisburgh has expressed doubts over the extra traffic involved. Bob Chamberlain from SCC wondered if the statutory time had been allowed for the programme. Sites had been agreed before details have been sorted out and it was felt this was the wrong way round. Concerns were also expressed over drainage of the proposed site and the impact of run-off water, if a significant amount of hard surfaces were put on the site, huge soakaways may be needed to accommodate this. Also there is the question of how long these hard surfaces would remain there and the long term issue of drainage.

A cabinet meeting is to be held at SCC on 29th January and any queries on the above may be addressed to Peter Bellfield.

The Council agreed that it is still concerned about the siting of the depot, the access routes and the fact that traffic will have to use minor roads. It was also thought that the Council would like to see clarification of plans and an idea of what the depot will look like.

Veronica Bunbury reported that Bob Chamberlain had said at the meeting we should submit approx. 500 words to PINS – this should be drafted by 29th January and sent to Peter Bellfield –**AP 62** Simon Hanson will draft a note.

10. Highways – any new issues

See action log

11. Change of Signatories

Joan Metcalfe volunteered to be an additional signatory to the bank accounts. Barclays Bank and NS&I mandates were completed to this effect.

Signed

12. Bottle bank issues

It was mentioned that dirty bottles have been dumped in and around the vicinity of the bottle bank and this was felt to be users of the village hall and not parishioners. It was resolved that anyone seen doing this should be approached and asked not to leave them unwashed. It was suggested that the Council ask the Village Hall to place a notice requesting that dirty bottles be taken home - **AP63** VB to talk to Village Hall committee.

13. Correspondence

- Letters of acknowledgement were received from SARS & East Anglian Air Ambulance thanking us for the donations of £50.00 & £100.00 respectively. A letter will be sent to both of the above explaining that unfortunately we will no longer be able to support them.
- An email from Nidhi Arora of Kesgrave SNT requesting we host a public meeting for them at 6.30–7.15pm on Wednesday 6th November 2013 prior to our council meeting. It was resolved to agree to this but to ask that they contact the Village Hall's booking secretary to confirm the booking.
- Letter has been received from Ipswich Borough Council giving notice of its consultation on the Northern Fringe Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) issues and Options document and inviting the council to visit their exhibitions. This letter will be scanned and e-mailed to all councillors.
- Letter from Treasurer of the Village Hall committee to confirm that the charge for the use of the hall during the recent election of Parish Councillors would be waived.
- Letter received from Norfolk & Suffolk Probation Trust, Community Payback Unit to say that from 1st January 2013 the NSPT will be asking £75.00 per day for all projects, to cover the cost of transport to and from sites and for supervising offenders whilst carrying out their work. This is because their budget from central government is to be reduced.
- **AP64** – Clerk to draft letter to Council telling them of our decision to cancel their contract for grass cutting and a letter to the Community Payback Team telling them of our decision to stop using them.

Signed

14. AOB

Bob Coppillie showed the finished map of the village drawn by his partner, Jenny Nix – this is to be used on the greetings brochure given to new residents of the village. It was agreed that the map looked fantastic and the Council discussed whether reproductions could be offered for sale for Parish or Church funds, with Jenny Nix’s permission. The Council agreed to send a sincere thank you letter to Jenny for this excellent piece of artwork.

15. Date of next meeting: 6th March 2013

The meeting ended at 9.15pm

Signed