

Minutes of Little Bealings Parish Council meeting held with members in remote attendance (via Zoom) at 7.15pm on Monday 9 November 2020

Present:

Mr I Ransome (Chairman), Mr M Garnham, Ms D Head, Dr C Hopkins, Mr D Hunter, Ms H Saagi and Mrs M Wilson

In attendance:

Mrs C Ramsden, Clerk to the Council

Also present:

The Chairman of the Friends of the Admiral's Head (FoTAH) and five residents/members of the public (for all/part of the meeting)

No one advised that they were recording the meeting.

1. Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Requests

Declarations of a personal interest in item 8 on the Agenda, The Admiral's Head, were made by Mr Garnham, Ms Head, Dr Hopkins, Mr Hunter, Mr Ransome, Ms Saagi and Mrs Wilson, as they had all pledged to buy community shares in the pub.

Declarations of a personal interest in item 8 on the Agenda, The Admiral's Head, were also made by Mr Hunter and Mr Ransome as members of the joint Parish Council/FoTAH Admiral's Head Working Group (AHWG).

Declarations of a personal interest in item 8 on the Agenda, The Admiral's Head, were also made Ms Saagi as a member of FoTAH and of AHWG.

Declarations of a personal interest in item 8 on the Agenda, The Admiral's Head, were also made Ms Head as a member of FoTAH and Chairman of AHWG.

2. Minutes of the Meetings held on 7 and 21 September and 5 October 2020

It was **RESOLVED**:

- To approve the minutes of these meetings.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

3.1 Review of Website Pages

It was **RESOLVED**:

- that Mr Hunter and Ms Saagi would undertake the 'sense' review of the website pages recommended by the Webmaster at the meeting on 7 September 2020, and report on their work to the scheduled meeting of the Council to be held in January 2021.

3.2 Any Other Raised by Councillors

No other matters were raised.

4. Public Participation Session

The Admiral's Head

The Chairman of FoTAH reported that East Suffolk Council (ESC) had refused the application for change of use of the pub to a dwelling. The owners had refused commercial and FoTAH's offers to buy while it had been on the market and ESC had suggested that it broker mediation with the owners for a sale to the community. FoTAH had agreed to this but the owners had refused mediation. As there was no agreement to sell the pub, FoTAH was now taking legal advice on the implications of asking ESC to use its powers of compulsory purchase. Preparation of a consultation with residents on an application for a Public Works Board Loan (PBWL) to buy the pub had been deferred until this advice had been obtained.

Public Sewer for The Street

A resident stated that this matter could not wait until 2025 to be resolved. He alleged:

- that, from documents he had received, ROPETH knew the sewer system at the Angela Cobbold Hall was inadequate when it bought the Hall
- ROPETH had been advised by ESC that the current system was in breach of the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 and it would be prosecuted if the Hall was re-opened without adequate facilities
- land could be polluted as a result, the extent of which was not known and should be investigated

He considered it strange that funds had been spent on facilities at the Hall such as IT, curtains and a large mirror when the Village Hall was available. He did not know how funding was to be found to resolve the sewer problem and enable the Hall to be used by up to 100 people. He asked that the full extent of the problem be established and questioned why it was taking so long to resolve.

Finance – Budget for 2021/22

A resident stated that he agreed the Council should have funds to enhance facilities in the parish but questioned whether it was right to raise the precept as proposed in the draft budget in the middle of a global pandemic.

In response to the comments made, the Chairman and the Clerk advised that the installation of a new sewer for The Street was being investigated by the Environment Agency, to resolve the delay by Anglian Water. Any residents who considered that they were affected by an alleged breach of the Regulations should take action themselves; this was not a matter for the Council. However, the Council had advised the Environment Agency of the resident's concern and had passed on its invitation to the resident to contact it directly. The Environment Agency had advised that it hoped to turn its attention to the dispute next month, once one other dispute had been concluded.

In respect of the proposed increase in the precept, the Chairman advised that a decision on the Council's budget for 2021/22 would be made at a meeting in January, but that the increase was proposed because the Council was recommended to hold reserves which equated to one year's expenditure. To achieve that would require a doubling of the precept. The draft budget did propose a 30% increase but for a Band A property this was a rise of 18p per week and of only 40p a week for a Band F property. The budget would

be decided when ESC had confirmed the Council Tax base figure in early January, but the intention was to create a buffer of one year's expenditure.

5. Reports from Local District and County Councillors

County Councillor Reid's report had been received just before the meeting and would be circulated to Councillors.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- To delay consideration of District Councillor Hedgley's report, as he hoped to attend later in the evening.

6. Planning

6.1 DC/20/4219/VOC: Variation of Condition 2 of DC/20/3387/FUL (Erection of two-storey dwelling and formation of vehicular access to Martlesham Road).Bealings Holt Martlesham Road

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That there was no objection to this application.

6.2 Update on Previous Applications and Enforcement Matters

DC/20/3340/FUL Extension to create single storey garden room with minor internal alterations plus roof lights: Beacon Ridge, 24 Beacon Lane
ESC had approved this application.

ENF/2019/0303/USE: Enforcement Action at The Chestnuts, Martlesham Road
It was **RESOLVED**:

- To delay consideration of the making of a formal complaint to ESC about the delay in taking enforcement action until District Councillor Hedgley joined the meeting.

DC/20/3514/FUL: Change of Use of a Vacant Public House to Residential Use - Admiral's Head, Sandy Lane

ESC had refused this application and The Admiral's Head would be considered further under item 8.

7. Highways

7.1 Installation of Poles for SAVID SID

It was noted that SCC had approved two of the Council's proposed three locations for the erection of poles. It was **RESOLVED**:

- To accept the SCC decision and ask it to proceed.

7.2 Spreading of Sand in The Street

Mr Finch had confirmed that he was able to do this again this winter for the Council, as required by the weather.

8. The Admiral's Head

Ms Head, as Chairman of the AHWG, reported that work on the remit of the Group to prepare the residents' consultation on a PWBL would be delayed until FoTAH had obtained legal advice on pursuing compulsory purchase and the costs involved. The intention was then to update residents, including on the outcome of the planning application and the owners' refusal of mediation, in an article in the Fynn Lark News.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- That the Council supported the publication of the article to update residents.

9. Public Sewer for The Street

The update from the Environment Agency was noted and it was **RESOLVED**:

- That the Council's notes in the Fynn Lark News include information as to how residents could contact the Environment Agency direct on this matter.

10. Woodbridge and District Anti-Social Behaviour Meetings

Dr Hopkins reported on his attendance at the last meeting and that incidents had decreased with the return to school and darker evenings. Speeding traffic remained a concern. A new website was available to report any rough sleepers. It was **RESOLVED**:

- That Dr Hopkins would attend the next meeting on behalf of the Council on 3 December.

11. Boundary Commission Proposals for Suffolk County Council Wards

It was noted that, of the other rural parishes affected by the Commission's proposals to include them in a Woodbridge ward, only Great Bealings had responded to the Council's suggestion that a joint, as well as individual, response be sent to the Boundary Commission. There was concern at the level of representation proposed and that the proposals did not reflect natural boundaries. It was **RESOLVED**:

- To advise the Boundary Commission that the Council objected to the proposed inclusion of the parish in a more urban Woodbridge and to provide the Commission with figures to show that their electoral representation targets could still be met if the Little Bealings and the other rural parishes were included in the proposed Wickham Market and Grundisburgh ward
- To prepare a joint response for Great Bealings Parish Council to consider at its forthcoming meeting and advise the other rural parishes affected of the proposed joint response.

12. Finance

12.1 Budget for 2021/22

A draft budget had been circulated and would be subject to further changes. As ESC, had advised that it could not determine the Council Tax base figure until January, it was **RESOLVED**:

- To alter the date of the Council's scheduled January 2021 meeting from 4 to 11 January.

12.2 Income and Expenditure

The donation of £25 made to AGE UK Suffolk had been returned by the charity's administrators as it had ceased trading and it was **RESOLVED**:

- That, as Headway had recently confirmed that it was helping residents in the parish, the donation of £25 be made to Headway instead

The bank statement/cheque book reconciliation for the first and second quarters had been completed by Mr Hunter and no issues had arisen.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following expenditure be incurred:

S111 and S112 LGA 1972:

- Clerk's net salary and expenses for October: £511.26
- Pay As You Earn (PAYE) for October: £82.20
- Clerk's net salary for November: £329.38
- PAYE for November: £82.20
- Clerk's net salary for December: £329.38
- PAYE for December: £82.20

Arrangements were in place for the signing of the schedule of the above payments by the Chairman and the cheques.

13. Any Matters Arising from Circulated Items

ESC had consulted on three Planning documents: a Statement of Community Involvement, a Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Supplementary Planning Document and a Cycling and Walking Strategy.

It was noted that District Councillor Hedgley's report had included the allocation of government funding to ESC to tackle homelessness.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- As District Councillor Hedgley had been unable to join the meeting, and the Council had recently received a planning application which necessitated another meeting, consideration of the Planning documents and his report be deferred to a meeting to be held on Thursday 26 November
- Further consideration of ESC's enforcement work in respect of The Chestnuts, Martlesham Road, also be deferred to that meeting, to enable Mr Hedgley's advice to be included.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Council would be on 11 January 2021 by zoom, and an additional meeting would be held on 26 November by zoom.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 7.52pm.