

DEDHAM PARISH COUNCIL
www.dedhamparishcouncil.org.uk

Clerk to the Council:
Mrs Emma Cansdale
Tel: 01255 871483
clerk@dedhamparishcouncil.org.uk

2 Goose Green Cottages
Colchester Road
Wix, Manningtree, Essex
CO11 2PD

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at The Duchy Barn on Monday 9th December 2013

Meeting open at 19.30

Present:

Chair: Cllr S Beeton
Councillors: Cllr P Gibbins, Cllr N Baker, Cllr J Hughes, Cllr K Taylor, Cllr T Regan, Cllr S Vinter, Cllr C Clark
Clerk: Mrs Emma Cansdale

1. Apologies for absence

CBC Cllr Mark Cable

2. Declaration of interest

Cllr Clark as chair of the sports committee.

3. Minutes

IT WAS RESOLVED that Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 11th November 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Update on items from last meeting

The clerk gave a brief update stating she had attended the Council Finance course run by the EALC in the last month, and has completed her final CiLCA session. The clerk hopes to submit her portfolio in the new year.

5. Have Your Say part 1 (items not relating to the PCSO)

None

6. Accounts

a) Cheques approved and then signed by Cllr Regan and Cllr Beeton

Clerks Salary December- £249.48

Dedham PCC- Duchy Barn hire November £15.00

E Cansdale travel exp- finance course £36.00

EALC-finance course- £67.00

Bland Landscapes-removal of a tree in the Drift- £60.00

Accent stationers- £19.15

b) Cllr Regan gave a verbal report on behalf of the finance committee who have met and had a preliminary look at the 1214/15 budget. Confirmation of the LCTSS grant and base rate has been received from CBC. There will be a 14% reduction in the LCTSS grant, but an additional £500 is being paid, and the council tax base rate has gone up. The full budget proposal will be considered on January 13th 2014, to meet the February 3rd deadline.

7. Report from PCSO

PCSO was not in attendance, but advised there had been 3 assaults in Dedham during November.

8. Report from County Councillor

County Cllr Anne Brown was not in attendance for report on this item (she did join the meeting later).

9. Reports from representatives *For full reports, please see appendix (b)

Sports field -Cllr Hughes*

Hedges at the top of the playing field- Bland Landscapes have looked at them and will probably need planning permission to carry out the work. Will meet Cllr Clark to discuss further. The Clerk to obtain a copy of the lease and sub-lease for the land to determine who is responsible.

Communications Group - Cllr Taylor

No further development on broadband.

Media and Public Relations - Cllr Hughes

Cllr Hughes gave a report on the possibility of continuing using the Parish Magazine as the main source of communication to the village. The Parish Magazine has agreed to give DPC a full page each month, but it must fill it. Cllr Hughes to write the articles. The council were in favour of continuing with the Parish Magazine, and also to move the date of the parish council meeting to the first Monday of the month in order to meet the deadline. Effective from May/June 2014 (May will always pose a problem as the first Monday is a BH)

Community Safety Group-Cllr Vinter*

Police Neighbourhood Watch, Highways & Transportation, NAP

The clerk has received a complaint about the condition of Prince Lane. Will look at and report to ECC Highways.

Footpath and Tree Group- Cllr Beeton:

Further update to the proposed ECC diversion, additional DPC response on the website.

Tree Warden- Cllr Baker:

Nothing to report

Dedham Primary School- Cllr Regan

Nothing to report

Emergency Co-ordinator- Cllr Clark

Cllr Clark has received one volunteer to be a first responder but is looking into the possibility of 2 more.

Car Park working party update and report- Cllr Beeton

Awaiting responses from CBC. Substantive item on the agenda in February. Questionnaires have been delivered to all businesses in the High Street.

CALC- Cllr Hughes

Cllr Hughes attended the CALC meeting on the 5th December and will circulate minutes to all councillors once they have been sent out.

Dickensian Evening

Some concerns were raised about the Dickensian evening with regard to safety and access, particularly across Royal Square. The clerk to follow up to ensure DPC see all risk assessments and insurance before next year's event.

10. Planning Group

132119: West Gate House, High Street.

Retrospective permission for replacement of lead flashing

Recommendation- no objection

132167: Blackbrook House, Gun Hill

Single storey extension

Recommendation- no objection

132266: Beechleigh, East Lane

Convert existing bungalow to a two storey house with rear and side extensions

Recommendation-Dedham Parish Council asks for strong and enforceable conditions to ensure safe use of East Lane, to provide useable access to the site and to avoid damage to the verges beside and opposite the site.

If these conditions are applied, then Dedham Parish Council has no objection to the application

132268: 12, Dedham Meade

Two storey front and single storey rear extensions

Recommendation- objection

132341: Lecture House Cottage, Colchester Road

Renewal of permission to replace dwelling house

Recommendation- no objection

132738: Park View, Boxhouse Lane

Single storey rear and side extensions

Recommendation- no objection

All recommendations agreed unanimously (except 132268 as Cllr V realized she had an interest and did not participate)

11. Review of PCSO contract

Report from Sgt Lou Middleton- Sgt Lou Middleton gave a brief explanation of the current situation within Essex Police, covering staffing and financial pressures. He also stated that **Essex Police will be asking for the full cost of the PCSO, not just 50%** from April next year, approximately £34,00.000.

There are currently a team of three PCSO's for the area, and if DPC were not to renew the contract, Dave Jones would be absorbed back into the team, and Dedham would receive cover from all three PCSO's in the same way the other villages in the area do.

Report from Cllr Vinter –Cllr Vinter summarized her report (which is available in full on the website). She indicated that a decision on the full funding of the PCSO now required from April 2014 reported by Sgt.Middleton had not been made when her report was compiled.

Cllr questions on the report - the councillors had the opportunity to ask questions of both the working party and Sgt Middleton.

Two distinct views emerged as to whether the decision on full funding altered the tenor and conclusions of the report leading to the recommendation not to renew the contract. A minority view believed that it did but the majority view was that the value for money argument that was the substantive conclusion of the report was of greater significance in the event of the revised funding position. In this context there was general concern as to whether DPC/the village could now afford the full cost of the PCSO.

It was questioned as to whether, if a suitable volunteer came forward from within the village, Dedham could have a dedicated Special? The Police would try to accommodate someone who wanted to volunteer to be a Special on the condition they policed a particular area but no guarantees could be made on this. It was also questioned whether DPC could share a PCSO with another village. (This matter had already been previously investigated with approaches to both Langham and Manningtree/Mistley/Lawford without success).

Open session- The public raised a number of queries and points. The discussion with the public consisted of three key opinions. There were people who felt safer with the presence of the PCSO, and were happy to pay an additional 50% on the precept. (The cost of the PCSO alone would now be more than last year's entire precept). The second camp of people felt that the PCSO (at the current 50% funding level), was not good value for money for the village, some with some specific comments about the lack of support from the PCSO when issues arose compared to excellent support from the main policing team, available on 101. The third camp simply felt a 50% rise in the precept, particularly when you consider the other living cost increases was just not acceptable, and showed considerable concern on how it would affect them financially.

The question was asked 'What to do with the savings?' Technically there are no savings, as the precept for next year has not yet been set. This will be done in January. The precept is set based on the budget requirement for the year. This means that because £X was asked for in one year, it will not follow the same amount will be precepted the following year. The Council cannot guarantee a full £17000 reduction in the budget next year, as there are other budget pressures that need to be considered, but what it doesn't mean, is that the £17000 will be added again regardless and 'put in the pot'.

Another notable point raised was how much say DPC have over the contact and terms of the PCSO contract. As it is a standard Essex police contract, DPC have virtually no say in the terms.

The Chair then moved to take a vote on the recommendation 'To resolve to give notice to Essex Police and not renew the PCSO contract when it expires in March 2014.'

Proposed by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr.Hughes. 5 voted in favour, 2 voted against, 1 abstention.

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT DPC do not renew the PCSO contract when it expires in March 2014.

There was a brief break to allow the members of public attending only for the PCSO item to leave.

12. Report from Borough Councillor

The clerk read out Cllr Mark Cable's report on his behalf.

13. Transfer of toilets from CBC to DPC offer.

The clerk gave a verbal report on an offer received from CBC for the ownership of the toilets in The Drift. It would be at a nil cost transfer, but DPC would take on the running costs, which total approximately £10,000.00

per annum. At this stage there is no Cabinet decision as to what will happen to the toilets if DPC do not take them on.

Following a discussion DPC agreed to write to CBC saying it was not minded to take on ownership of the toilets at this stage, and the decision would be ratified at January's meeting.

14. Correspondence

Complaint received about the island at the junction of Manningtree Rd o/s Stour House.

The clerk has reported the issue to ECC Highways and the council decided to also write to the owner asking them to reinstate the area once the work is completed.

15. Matters for information - none

16. Date and Time of next meeting 13th January 2014, 7.30pm

17. Clerk's salary

It was agreed:

(a) to resolve to apply the 1% increase to the clerk's salary in accordance with the national award

(b) to resolve to pay the clerk's basic salary by standing order rather than cheque.

Proposed by Cllr.Beeton, seconded by Cllr. Hughes