

MINUTES OF THE BROMPTON REGIS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT BROMPTON REGIS VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 5th APRIL 2017

24 PRESENT

Miss S. Newton (Chairman), Mr. I. Abel, Mr. S. Coates, Mrs. T. Jones, Mr. P. Page, Mrs J. Scott. Cllr. Nicholson and Mrs. S. Buchanan (Clerk).

Thirteen members of the public (Tania Davies, Su Elsdon, Daisy Headley, Matthew Headley, Ian Joyce, Pauli Joyce, Jenny Pattenden, Claire Pounder, Charlie Philips, Jenny Philips, Kevin Steer, Jennifer Stringer, Pete Stringer).

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr J. Andrews.

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

27 HISTORIC SIGNPOSTS PROJECT

Charlotte Thomas, the newly appointed project officer, outlined the aims of this Heritage Lottery funded project and noted the significant work undertaken by Brompton Regis in mapping signposts and by Kingsbrompton YFC in undertaking remedial works and the YFC own insurance cover was noted. The project will address historic signposts in Exmoor national park and immediately adjacent parishes, with activity starting in the summer of 2017. The project will supply and fund health and safety training for volunteers, paint and newly cast elements of broken posts.

Charlotte reported that the Exmoor Society is looking at historical aspects of the local signage, and welcomes volunteer contributions to that.

Questions were raised regarding:

- correction or not of spelling and place name errors
- the role of the Parish Council in considering amendments to errors
- the value of alternative materials on sites where breakages are frequent
- the potential for local agricultural colleges to provide new elements of the cast iron posts
- the use of rust inhibitor
- the lack of county council funding for directional signposts.

The project officer may be contacted at ENPA, tel number: 01398 323 665.

ACTION: Clerk to alert Kingsbrompton YFC to health and safety training. Chairman to ascertain if the YFC insurance is affected by use of project supplies.

28 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1st MARCH 2017

Members of the public raised questions about the draft minutes which had been shared via the parish website. The Clerk explained that there is no requirement to share draft minutes, apologised for the confusion caused by sharing drafts, and noted that this practice will not continue. A member of the public handed to the Clerk a piece of paper setting out the public's record of the order of discussion at the meeting. The Clerk noted that minutes are a record but not a verbatim record and that members of the public do not have a statutory right to speak at Parish Council meetings.

The draft minutes, having been previously circulated to Councillors, were considered. Mr Page proposed, and Mrs Jones seconded, a motion that the following additions be made to the minutes:

- minute 19.3, line 10 of text. the addition of: 'A large number of ...'
- minute 19.3, line 1 16 of text, the addition of a new line: There was a considerable amount of discontent regarding the application.

With those two additions accepted by Councillors, it was resolved that the minutes be AGREED and signed by the Chairman as a correct and accurate record.

29 MATTERS ARISING

29.1 Mobile phone coverage in the parish

Cllr Nicholson reported that the Emergency Services coverage currently provided by two sites will end with the current contract in two years and that a replacement services will be provided by EE. The EE emergency services network will provide domestic coverage where there is line of sight to another EE mast. Cllr Nicholson is chasing up Home Office surveys to ensure that masts will cover the Brompton Regis area. The area is not deemed commercially viable for mobile phone operators. On behalf of National Parks in England Cllr Nicholson is meeting network operators and will raise gaps such as the local area.

29.2 Meeting re planning application 6/3/17/105

Members of the public voiced concern that they had not seen notes of the meeting.

Mr Page noted that members of the public had addressed this application at the BRPC meeting held on 1st March 2017 and apologised that the subsequent working party had not given members of the public the opportunity to hear Councillors discuss the application. Councillors apologised for any concerns that this had raised among residents.

The Chairman asked Councillors if the notes of the working party meeting held on 8th March 2017 were correct.

Mr Page proposed that a sentence be added to the notes to strengthen the Council's view that the proposal for an agricultural workers' dwelling be integrated with agricultural activity on the site, and it was agreed that the following sentence be added to the notes:

“Any approval of this application must be clearly and distinctly linked to the agricultural activity on the site.”

With that addition, councillors AGREED that the notes were correct and discussed the outcome of the meeting.

Mr Page remarked that, in discussing the notes of that meeting, there was now the opportunity to have a discussion in public of the issues regarding the planning application, and a full discussion followed.

Councillors AGREED that the notes be made available to the public.

29.3 Small works

Mr Page reported the need for small works to be undertaken in the parish on an economic basis and suggested that an advert. Be posted inviting providers to express an interest in a flexible programme of works that would include drain clearances and care for the Millennium Green hedge.

Mr Page invited Councillors and members of the public to advise him of small works required.

ACTION: Clerk to draft an advert for Mr Page’s approval and subsequent display on the parish noticeboard and website.

29.4 Ironman

The Chairman reported that funds from 2017 are awaited and estimated to amount to £1,100 and that there will no Ironman in the area after 2017.

30 CORRESPONDENCE

30.1 Somerset West Lottery

Information has been received and will be displayed on the parish noticeboard.

30.2 Letter from Mrs J Stringer

A copy of this letter having been circulated to Councillors the Chairman reported that Mrs Stinger had written to the Council on two issues relating to the Combeland planning application 6/3/17/105. The Chairman asked the Clerk to address the procedural issues and the Clerk explained that the agenda for the meeting held on 1st March 2017 had been displayed on the Parish Noticeboard, which is usual practice, that members of the public were invited to express their issues and concerns and the question the applicant and that it was made clear in the meeting that Councillors would consider the application in full at a subsequent meeting so that the views expressed, planning guidance, the local plan and other issues affecting the parish could be considered in full. The subsequent meeting followed external advice and made recommendations for the Council’s response to the consultation on the planning application. Because the consultation period ended before the date

of the next Parish Council meeting the Chairman sought councillors' agreement on the submission as an urgent matter and it was unanimously agreed that the submission as recommended should be made and reported and discussed at the next meeting as a retrospective decision.

The Clerk noted that in light of Mrs Stringer's letter agenda for Parish Council meetings will also be posted on the parish website.

The Chairman introduced the second issue questioning the Councillors' integrity and apologised to Council and the meeting for any concerns which the procedural matters had generated. The Chairman assured Councillors and the meeting that the intention had been to ensure that the application was considered in full and in good time and firmly stated that the code of conduct had not been breached. She invited Councillors to comment.

Mr Page rebutted the suggestion that the Council had breached the code of conduct but agreed that the process could have raised concerns.

Mrs Stringer commented that the context of her letter was concerns about pre-application advice.

Mr Coates, Mrs Jones and Mr Abell apologised for any upset caused.

Mrs Scott suggested that as the ENPA, not the Parish Council, is the planning authority it is to be hoped that members of the public raise their concerns there.

Mr Coates proposed and Mr Abell seconded the motion that the Clerk write to Mrs Stringer, and this was unanimously agreed.

ACTION: Clerk to write a letter of response to Mrs Stringer.

From the floor a member of the public asked the Chairman if councillors were not happy with the submission made. Cllr Nicholson noted that the Parish Council could submit an addendum to its submission, including the amendment to the notes that any approval of the application should clearly and distinctly link the dwelling with agricultural activity on the site. It was agreed to send an addendum to the response submitted.

30.3 Anonymous letters

The Chairman reported receipt by all councillors of one anonymous letter and by two councillors of a further anonymous letter, both of which were unpleasant and very personal.

30.4 Copy correspondence

The Chairman thanked Mr Collins, Mr and Mrs Joyce and Mr Steer for sending to the Council copies of their correspondence with ENPA.

30.5 Letter from Mr K Steer

The Chairman introduced Mr Steer's letter, it having been received by the Clerk on 4th March and circulated to Councillors, by noting the concerns regarding draft minutes and procedural issues and asked the Clerk to respond. The Clerk apologised for any confusion she had caused by sharing draft minutes and noted that, while these were clearly marked as drafts, in future and to avoid creating undue confusion or concern drafts would not be shared. Procedural issues had been addressed at agenda item 30.2.

The Chairman stated that Councillors had neither prejudicial nor personal interests in planning application 6/3/17/105 and invited Mr Page to respond to the suggestion that he declare an interest as a neighbour and he stated that he did not have prejudicial or personal interests to declare.

The Chairman noted that the Parish Council cannot comment on the veracity of the applicant nor the planners and that it is the responsibility of the ENPA to notify consultees of an application.

Mr Coates proposed and Mr Abell seconded the motion that the Clerk write to Mr Steer, and this was unanimously agreed.

ACTION: Clerk to write a letter of response to Mr Steer.

31 UPDATES FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

The Chairman had invited Cllr Nicholson to provide this update immediately after agenda item 29.1, and the following information was shared at that point in the meeting.

- Councillor elections will take place in May
- ENPA has provided its Members with training on planning considerations
- The Opportunity Area declared in West Somerset by the Department for Education is to be hoped will help improve schools, education and training in the area but will not address wider needs for work opportunities.

Cllr Nicholson invited the BRPC to contact her on any matters of concern related to the County Council or ENPA.

32 PLANNING

32.1 Application 6/3/17/106

The Clerk noted that this application was new and similar to that considered by the parish Council in 2016. Councillors agreed that no comment be made.

33 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

33.1 Roborough Gate signage

It was AGREED to wait for the signposts project to become active before addressing this post.

33.2 Roborough Gate: reflectors

The Clerk reported that the Highways Authority had been notified but no update had been received.

ACTION: Clerk to chase up a response.

33.3 Street lighting:

The Clerk reported that the costs of an additional street light would depend on the availability of a power supply and could be between £1,000 and £3,600. It was AGREED that a letter to this effect be sent to the residents who had voiced concerns at inadequate lighting and asking them to contact the Clerk if their concerns continue and that the Parish Notice Board contain information regarding reporting street lighting problems.

ACTION: Clerk to write letter and display information.

33.4 Wimbleball blocked drains:

The Clerk reported that the Highways Authority had been contacted and had reported jetting that alleviated the problem but noted that mud being washed down from Higher and Lower Woolcotts towards Bessom bridge gullies are soon blocked. The Highway Superintendent and Assistant Manager have spent time trying to locate the outfalls into the lake but are not sure if all have been located and therefore a CCTV Survey will be carried out in the new financial year to try once and for all to see where the drainage goes.

Mr Coates offered to assist in locating the drains.

ACTION: Clerk to put Mr Coates and the Highways Assistant Manager in touch with each other.

33.5 Pot holes:

The Clerk reported that the Highways Authority had been notified but no update had been received. The issue at Beech Tree Cross appears to have been resolved

ACTION: Clerk to chase up a response.

From the floor Mrs Stringer reported that ongoing problems on Sanctuary Lane remain a cause of concern,

ACTION: Clerk to report and seek a response.

33.6 Hedge / tree overhang, approach to Bryants Bridge

The Clerk reported that the landowner was happy for works to be carried out. Mr Coates agreed to contact him and agree works.

ACTION: Clerk to provide Mr Coates with the landowner's contact details.

34 FINANCE

34.1 Village hall invoice

Payment of £75 was AGREED.

34.2 Village Hall user groups' notice board

The Parish Council had been canvassed as one of the groups using the hall regarding purchase of a notice board to extend the space for public information and in response had suggested that the Council might consider funding a second board. From the floor, Mrs Stringer, secretary of the village hall committee, noted that a donation from the Parish Council was not required and that user groups would fund the purchase.

34.3 Intermediate Audit

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council has been selected as one of the 5% of Local Councils to have an intermediate audit and that paperwork would be brought to the next meeting.

35 ANY OTHER MATTERS

35.1 Mrs Jones asked for an update on repair to Bury Bridge.

ACTION: Clerk to chase this up.

35.2 Mr Coates asked that recycling lorries be firmly requested to shut their doors to prevent the outflow of plastic bottles.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the recycling officers.

35.3 Mr Page noted that while Council Tax bills indicate a fall in the proportion of tax going to the parish precept the amount is the same.

35.4 The Chairman noted that the West Somerset Free Press had reported that the appeal at Bessom Bridge had been lost, but that refuse containers were again being left out for collection.

ACTION: Clerk to inform Cllr Turner re refuse and council tax.

35.6 Mrs Jones welcomed the interest among residents in the work of the parish Council and hoped that this would lead to new councillors. Councillors endorsed this and looked forward to elections in 2019.

36 DATE AND TIME OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Wednesday 3RD May 2017, preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting

Wednesday 7th June 2017

Starting at 7.30.pm at Brompton Regis Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

Signed:.....Chairman, Brompton Regis Parish Council

Date:.....