

ORFORD & GEDGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL
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Minutes of the 194th meeting of Orford & Gedgrave Parish Council
held on Wednesday 13th January 2016 at 7.00pm in the New Room of the Town Hall

Present: Cllr Anne Macro (Chairman) Cllr Derick Brenchley
 Cllr Jonnie Howard Cllr Michael Finney
 Cllr Ian Thornton Cllr Margaret Green
 Cllr Matthew Smy Cllr Michelle Golder
 Cllr Peter Smith Cllr Richard Mallett

In Attendance, Marie Backhouse (Clerk).

Opening remarks

Public Forum

J Golder read a statement, Cllr A Macro interrupted at the beginning and asked the Clerk to explain a phone call. The Clerk reported that she had contacted LCPAS about this, and it was not a matter for the Council, it was between the complainant and the Councillor concerned.

Please find a copy of the statement attached.

P Teale wished to know the update on the complaint against a Councillor and wondered why it had not been on any agenda since September.

Cllr A Macro commented that this would be discussed under correspondence.

Sir Edward Greenwell gave a report from the Alde & Ore Estuary Partnership.

Please find a copy of the report attached.

MINUTES

1. Reports from Representatives

1. County Councillor Andrew Reid.

Absent but a written report was handed out at the meeting.

2. District Councillor Ray Herring

Absent and no report was sent.

3. Suffolk Constabulary

Absent and no report was sent.

2. Apologies for absence:

Cllr J Robinson & Cllr M Iliff

3. Declarations of interest:

None

4. Applications for dispensation:

None

5. It was unanimously agreed that the minutes of the 193rd meeting held on Wednesday 11th November 2015 be accepted as a true record.

Cllr M Finney commented that he had been to see the owner of the brick wall near the knoll on his own and not with Cllr J Howard.

6. Matters arising from the 193rd Parish Council meeting held on 11th November 2015.

None

7. Finance

7.1 The Council received, noted and approved the cheques and balances from 1st November – 30th November 2015.

7.2 The Council received, noted and approved the cheques and balances from 1st December – 31st December 2015.

Cllr M Golder asked what the additional insurance cost was for.

The Clerk replied it was the additional fee when the zip wire was added to the insurance policy.

7.3 The Council received, noted and approved the quarterly accounts from October – December 2015.

Cllr a Macro informed the Council if anyone wished to contact the Treasurer, she would be available until the 17th January and then she is on holiday for a week.

8. Planning

DC/15/4826/FUL & 4827/LBC – Rose Cottage, 44 Daphne Road, Orford

This was a request to replace the existing rear single storey flat roof for a new pitched roof and replacement of existing external side door for a new timber stable door.

Cllr J Howard reported that this looks in keeping with the building, well designed and it will be an improvement.

The Councillors had no objection to this proposal.

DC/15/4674/FUL – Bright House, Rectory Road, Orford

This was a request for a change of use from agricultural to domestic garden.

Cllr J Howard reported that the bungalow next door had set a precedent as they had put in a similar request 25 years before and as they had no comments in that time it was used as a garden. Cllr J Howard was unsure if the Bright House falls into the same category.

Cllr I Thornton asked if this could be used as a stepping stone for building permission.

Cllr J Howard replied that it could be, if it stays as agricultural they cannot gain planning permission but if it changes to domestic, they could. For this particular property there is no access to that part of land.

The Clerk commented that the Brambles have still not been approved.

Cllr M Finney said if we comment the planners will decide regardless.

Cllr I Thornton commented that if we agreed with the Brambles then we must agree with this and wait for the planner's decision.

The council had no objection to this proposal.

DC/15/5203/VOC – Land fronting High Street and Burnt Lane, Orford

This was a request for the variation of conditions No, 2,5 & 8 of Planning Permission Consent DC/15/2088/FUL. Erection of one detached one and a half storey dwelling and construction of vehicular access and parking area.

Cllr J Howard reported that he had looked at the drawings and this seemed a better design.

Cllr M Finney commented that last time we objected but approval was still given.

Cllr J Howard said that the owners must have realised that people did not like it, therefore they have had it redesigned.

The Council had no objections to this proposal.

Other Notifications:-

9. Parish Council Business:-

(1) Dates of the meetings.

The Council agreed the dates of the meetings;

10th February, 9th March, 13th April, 11th May (Annual Council), 27th May (Annual Parish Meeting), 8th June, 13th July, 14th September, 12th October, 9th November and the 14th December.

(2) Bench on the village green

Cllr A Macro informed the Council that an email had been received concerning the bench at the corner of Broad Street and Quay Street, in memory of the Patersons; one weekend it was badly damaged on one end. Mark Thacker was asked to take a look to see if it could be repaired, he reported that he could not mend it as it was in a dangerous state. He asked if it should be removed and was told yes. He kept the brass plaques and the bench was disposed of.

Cllr I Thornton commented that it was initially thought the damage was caused by the felling of the tree nearby; this is the impression that Annette Paterson was given and why she wrote to the Parish Council. It transpires that the felling of the tree did not cause the damage.

Cllr A Macro said when the people whom felled the tree were asked they informed us that they have insurance so if they had damaged the bench in any way, it would have been replaced.

Cllr M Finney asked if it was vandalised and did we report it to the Police.

Cllr I Thornton said it was first thought the damage was caused by the tree fellers, by the time we received their response, it was too late to notify the Police.

Cllr J Howard wondered what the age of the bench was.

Cllr A Macro thought it was around 10 years old. It was not of the style that is recommended now; the Parish Council gives permission for the benches but does not supply them, we recommend a supplier which we will inform Annette Paterson of.

Clerk to contact A Paterson

(3) Policies

Grants policy, Financial Regulations, Gritting Policy, Publication Scheme and Financial Risk assessment were all approved by the Councillors.

These are to be reviewed January 2017.

(4) Approval for Clerks training

Cllr a Macro informed the Council that the Clerk would like to undertake a finance training course. The cost is £120. It would enable the Clerk to have a better understanding of the accounts.

All the Councillors agreed with this training.

Clerk to contact LCPAS

(5) A-boards

The Clerk reported that initially this concerned the A-board in Bakers Lane.

Cllr I Thornton reported that this had now been rectified as the large board is at the top of the lane and the smaller one is near the shop allowing more space for people to pass.

(6) Parking within the village.

Cllr A Macro read out an email from A Smith regarding the lack of parking in Town Farm Estate; people are parking on the verges which cause damage; those with driveways should be encouraged to use them; he suggests that solutions should include increasing the number of parking bays in that area.

A copy of the email was sent onto Robin Warne at the Highways department for his comments.

Robin Warne replied that he had visited the site and the damage to the grass verges was minimal; the verges are part of the highways may be used for parking providing they are not causing an obstruction of other road users; there are no resources to supply additional parking bays or security lighting; SCC does not provide residents parking.

Cllr I Thornton suggested that A Smith should be sent a copy of the reply from Robin Warne. This was agreed by all.

Clerk to contact A Smith.

(7) Meeting with A Golder and J Cheney

The Clerk reported that she had two meetings, one with Jonathan and one with Anthony.

Jonathan (street cleaner and car park attendant) – everything is going well, no problems; he requires new boots, which he is to purchase and us to reimburse; grit bins need refilling, which has been organised; some discussion about splitting wages had taken place as he is currently paid by the Parish Council and the NOTT reimburse their portion; a copy of the gritting policy was also given to Jonathan and discussed with him.

Anthony (groundsman) – everything is going well, no problems; we discussed a whole list of equipment that he requires, spade, fork etc; if the Parish Council was not in a position to purchase the equipment Anthony would use his own and charge by the hour; I spoke to the Treasurer who would not advise this but agreed we should buy the equipment; again with the safety boots we suggested he buys his own and we reimburse.

The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Chris Green about spraying as Anthony had mentioned that the paths occasionally need spraying; he does not have a spraying certificate, training courses are expensive and he would also need record sheets, chemsafe etc; Anthony felt the best option was to ask SCS to complete this when needed.

Cllr D Brenchley asked if a shed would be required to keep all the equipment in.

The Clerk reported that she had looked into the purchase of a flat pack container rather than a shed; a shed could be broken into, vandalised or set fire to.

Cllr J Howard asked where this would be placed.

Cllr A Macro replied that it may be sited where the other sheds are on the recreation ground.

Cllr M Iliff arrived at 7.50pm.

Cllr I Thornton asked who uses or owns the shed up at the recreation ground now, and why can Anthony not have the use of this.

Cllr R Mallett said that he was not sure who owned it but it used to be where Anthony kept his equipment.

The Clerk reported that this had been used for a while but it was shared with the Football Club, it was locked and both had a key but the Football club constantly asked Anthony to unlock the shed for them.

Cllr M Golder commented that we need to consider if we purchase the equipment we need to have somewhere secure to store it.

Cllr I Thornton asked what storage was up there already.

Cllr R Mallett said that the shed is half owned by the Football Club and the Flower Show, the other shed has half the side missing.

Cllr J Howard asked if we should ask about placing a shed up there as it is a registered piece of land.

Cllr M Finney said that it did not apply to a shed.

The Clerk reported that a flat pack container would cost about £1,350 + VAT.

Cllr I Thornton said we should consider what is up there already and try to repair it.

Cllr A Macro said if we are to have the tools it needs to be secure.

The Clerk reported that a rough estimate of the equipment left to purchase is £200, and you would also have the strimmer and the mower; it is a large outlay for everything but having spoken to the Treasurer the Parish Council is able to afford it; also if Anthony was to leave at some time the Parish Council is in a position to employ another local person.

Cllr I Thornton asked if there is enough space to place a container.

Cllr A Macro said that they stored a lot of materials round there when the Hut was being refurbished so there should be plenty of room.

Cllr M Finney suggested that we should involve Anthony in the purchase of the tools.

The Clerk commented that the cost of all the equipment, shed and servicing the strimmer and mower would be about £2,000.

This expense was agreed by all the Councillors.

(8) Update on multiplay

The Clerk reported that she had met with a rep from Sovereign Play who gave a couple of quotes for a new piece of multiplay to place on the existing wet pour; the first is £12,351 and the second is £10,476; a grant from Tesco has been applied for but we will not receive the response until the end of January. We already have £4,000 towards this from donations; again having spoken to the Treasurer, she suggests that if we have enough money at the end of the financial year we could purchase it ourselves.

Cllr I Thornton asked what the problem was with the existing multiplay.

The Clerk replied that various comments in the annual play equipment inspection suggest that it either needs repairing or replacing; having it repaired is not easy as it needs welding.

Cllr I Thornton asked if we had any quotes to repair it.

Cllr A Macro asked where we should go for welding.

RC Engineering was suggested.

Cllr A Macro said that due to the age of it a lot of the gaps and spaces have changed, for example the steps have spaces that are too wide and we have had to place wood on the back of them.

Cllr I Thornton suggested we ask the inspector to return and inform us how we should bring this multiplay up to specification; if it is to cost us £8,000 - £10,000 to repair then we should purchase a new one.

Cllr M Golder asked how much is the applied for grant worth.

The Clerk replied £8,000.

Cllr I Thornton said we should wait for the answer of the grant and if we are unlucky use the £4,000 and to have the old multiplay refurbished.

This was agreed by all the Council.

10. Correspondence

- **P Hamilton-Jones – Request for a donation to the Royal British Legion**

Cllr A Macro read out a letter requesting a donation for the Royal British Legion, which is usually £50.

Cllr M Finney wondered how long it had been £50.

Cllr I Thornton suggested we should give a slightly larger donation if it has been the same for a considerable time.

The Clerk said £100 was in the budget for donations.

It was agreed by all Councillors to give a donation of £75.

- **Football Club – grass cutting**

Cllr A Macro read out an email from the NOTT Clerk to say that the Football Club had contacted her concerning the long grass on the Recreation Ground. The NOTT Clerk contacted Suffolk Coastal Services who said this was a problem with many fields as normally the grass would not require cutting until March.

The Clerk agreed that an extra cut should take place as a one off, but they may just do the pitch. Apparently the Football Club cut the grass at the weekend therefore we do not need Suffolk Coastal Services to cut the grass.

- **Complaint against a Councillor**

Please find an attached statement that was read out by the Clerk.

Cllr I Thornton asked when the complaint against a Councillor was first discussed.

The Clerk replied that it was in September.

Cllr I Thornton said from that point forward it was an issue between the complainant and the Councillor concerned, not the Council; which is why Mr Golder did not receive an apology from the Council because the Councillors had no idea what was going on; if there was any blame anywhere etc; which is why there has been no apology.

Cllr M Golder commented that she was under the impression that the council is a body as a whole; there is no one individual, so when one person goes off and does something it reflects on us as a whole; it should be right that the whole Council is aware of what is going on as it affects us all.

Cllr D Brenchley said that it would be a different situation if the complaint was against the Council.

The Chair closed the meeting 8.14pm

J Golder said she had a couple of things to say; firstly if you look at the forms from SCDC you have to have a named person; secondly the Clerk read out a statement saying it is not a matter for the Council but the Council has just been debating a quote for £2,000 to purchase equipment which would have occurred if this complaint had not have been necessary and the Council had of followed the correct procedure in the first place; not to mention the amount of legal fees, therefore how can it not be a Council matter.

The Chair re-opened the meeting 8.15pm

Cllr A Macro commented that the point is, everyone assumed Mr Golder was self-employed, then as it progressed he stated he was an employee; we then needed to determine if he was an employee or self-employed.

Cllr M Golder stated that was not the reason that the complaint was made.

Cllr I Thornton said there seemed to have been a lot of legal expenses paid to discover legally whether Mr Golder was an employee or self-employed.

Cllr M Golder said we are currently talking about the complaint.

Cllr A Macro said that everyone was under the impression the Mr Golder was self-employed, if he had not stated he was employed the situation would not have been like it was.

Cllr I Thornton commented that the Council has never seen the letter from the monitoring officer.

Cllr M Golder said she could email everyone the full letter.

Cllr I Thornton asked who was sent the full letter.

Cllr M Golder said the Clerk, Mr Golder and Cllr A Macro.

The Clerk informed the Council that the only letter the office had received via email was a copy of the letter sent to Cllr A Macro; the monitoring officer had been contacted three times and Cllr A Macro had also contacted them but nothing appeared. An email was received in the office on the 11th December 2015, which was the copy of Cllr A Macro's letter.

Cllr M Golder said a copy of that email should be sent to everyone.

Cllr I Thornton said he was aware that there had been a lot of chasing up to gain a copy of the letter so this situation can be finished; the probable reason for all of this is because it is not a Council matter.

Cllr P Smith commented that he has sat on many Committees and Chaired them; what is the practical end point to our discussion; and what is it to the benefit of the community; otherwise it should be handled outside Council.

Cllr M Golder said the whole principal is the Council should be open, honest and have integrity; the local community does not come to the Council because things are covered up.

Cllr I Thornton asked if the Councillors are being accused of covering things up.

Cllr M Golder said not this Council, in the past.

Cllr P Smith said why are we discussing this now; how is it benefitting the community; this has taken a long time; all this is an admin process, whether people need apologies; what affects the community is if this Council is honest and

efficient; he has no evidence as a new member of the Council that this is not the case.

Cllr M Golder said that they would have to agree to disagree with this item.

Cllr P Smith felt that this kind of thing can be overcome without spending a lot of valuable time; if he had been Chair he would have dealt with it in the office.

11. Items for next meeting:

None

12. Date of next meeting: 10/02/16

Meeting closed at 8.20pm. Cllr M Smy left the meeting.

Signed _____ (Chairman)

Date _____