

11-May-2009

ICKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11th May 2009 at 7.15pm at the Icklesham Memorial Hall

Present: Councillors Mrs F Bates, C Bronsdon, B Chishick, R Comotto, J Horsman, Mrs S Lyward, Mrs C Merricks, T Moore, Mrs J Stanford, H Sutton, M Terry, B Thompson.

In Attendance: Cllr N Ramus (RDC), D Rosewell (Clerk). Members of the public were also present.

09/087 The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting at 7.15pm.

09/088 The Chairman will invite members of the public to comment or ask questions on any matters they wish to raise, relating to today's business of the Council (15 minutes).

There were none.

09/089 To receive reports and ask questions of Cllrs. K Glazier, N Ramus and P Osborne concerning County Council and Rother District Council matters.

Cllr. Ramus brought apologies from Cllrs. Osborne and Glazier. He then reported that he had provided information to a parish councillor, and the Clerk, in respect of Council Tax and 'No Parking' signs in Winchelsea. He mentioned the issue of a recent case at Winchelsea Beach where the owner of a local café is awaiting sentence in respect of hygiene regulation breaches.

09/090 The meeting was formally opened at 7.30p.m.

The outgoing Chairman stated that from this point the meeting would be recorded. He then retired from the chairmanship.

09/091 The election of a Chairman for the following year.

The Clerk informed the meeting that they were now required to elect a Chairman for the coming year. He asked for nominations for the post. Cllr. Mrs Merricks proposed Cllr. Horsman. This was seconded by Cllr. Thompson. Cllr. Horsman confirmed that he was willing to stand. There were no other nominations, and Cllr. Horsman was duly elected.

09/092 Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the elected Chairman.

This was completed before the Clerk, as proper officer. Cllr. Horsman now took the chair. Cllr. Mrs Merricks thanked Cllr. Bronsdon on behalf of the council for his hard work and contribution as Chairman over the last two years.

09/093 To appoint a Vice Chairman for the Council for the forthcoming year.

Cllr. Mrs Bates nominated Cllr. Mrs Stanford. This was seconded by Cllr.

Sutton. Cllr. Mrs Stanford confirmed that she was willing to stand. There were no other nominations and Cllr. Mrs Stanford was duly elected.

09/094 To receive and record any apologies for absence.

All serving members of the parish council were present. Apologies were received from Cllrs. Glazier (ESCC) and Osborne (RDC).

09/095 Disclosure of interests.

Cllr. Comotto declared a personal interest in items 16, 25(b) and 25(c).

Cllr. Mrs Merricks declared a personal interest in items 20, 25(b), 25(c) and 25(d) and a personal and prejudicial interest in item 26.

Cllr. Sutton declared a personal interest in items 24 and 25(a).

09/096 To make appointments to the Planning Committee.

The following appointments were made for the coming year:

Rye Harbour - Cllr. Bronsdon

Winchelsea Beach - Cllr. Mrs Lyward

Winchelsea - Cllrs. Comotto and Terry

Icklesham - Cllrs. Thompson and Mrs Bates

Cllrs. Horsman and Mrs Stanford were appointed ex-officio.

Cllr. Mrs Merricks asked that if the new representative for Winchelsea Beach, when elected or co-opted, was interested in serving on the planning committee that the council would be willing to invite them to do so.

09/097 To appoint representatives to outside bodies for 2009-2010.

Rye Partnership - Cllr. Terry.

RALC. There were 3 nominations for the two representatives; a vote was taken and Cllrs. Horsman and Mrs Stanford were duly elected.

Rye Bay Young People's Services (was Rye Youth Forum) - Cllr. Moore.

Elizabeth Cheney Alms Houses - Cllr. Thompson.

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve - Cllr. Mrs Merricks.

09/098 To consider and approve the signing of the minutes by the chairman of the meeting of the 14th April 2009.

Approval was proposed by Cllr. Thompson, seconded by Cllr. Bronsdon. Approved.

09/099 Matters arising.

a) Current Activity & Programme of Works. The Clerk went through the circulated list. Cllr. Mrs Stanford asked about the progress of the dog bins for Rye Harbour. The Clerk will pursue this. Cllr. Terry asked for a copy of the letter from RDC in respect of DDA requirements at Icklesham Memorial Hall. The Clerk said he would provide this.

09/100 Financial Matters.

a) Receipts and payments report for year to 30th April 2009. Proposed by Cllr. Comotto, seconded by Cllr. Thompson, that the report be approved. Agreed.

b) To approve items of payment for May 2009. The Clerk tabled items of expenditure totalling £7,898.14 for May which concerned cheques numbered

2086 to 2101 sequentially plus £730.00 Standing Orders. Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Lyward, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanford, that the payments be approved. Agreed.

c) The Clerk seeks approval to purchase an updated edition of the Arnold-Baker Guide to Local Council Administration at a maximum cost of £67.

Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Stanford, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Merricks. Agreed.

d) The Clerk seeks approval to proceed with repairs to Smeatons Lane.

Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Merricks, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanford, that the quotation from Hailsham Roadway be accepted. Agreed.

09/101 Council Vacancy.

Cllr. Hurrell's resignation was noted; the council instructed the Clerk to write to him expressing their thanks and appreciation for his contribution to the work of the council.

09/102 Correspondence.

Letter from the Town Clerk of Winchelsea Corporation. Council noted the Corporation's request to set up a joint meeting with the parish and the ESCC Rights of Way Officer, Matthew Harper. Cllr. Comotto requested that Winchelsea Corporation be asked to state the precise location of land owned by them in the vicinity of Spring Steps, but agreed that a meeting should take place. The Clerk will reply and set the meeting up.

09/103 Risk Assessment and Risk Register arrangements (deferred from April meeting).

Deferred.

09/104 Cllr. Comotto submits the following resolutions (deferred from previous 3 meetings):

i) "The Council will in future record the dates on which the trees on its properties have been inspected and archive tree inspection reports in a readily accessible file. A schedule of future work and inspection will be drawn up. The Clerk will report to the Council each September, in advance of budget discussions, on tree work completed during the preceding 12 months and work scheduled for the next 12 months."

Withdrawn as work already in progress.

ii) "The Council will note its decisions of 9 June 2008 that no expenditure shall be made on re-designing the Council's website until its precise purpose has been clearly defined by the Council, and that Councillors should be actively involved in the design and production of content of newsletter, the website, etc."

Withdrawn until further notice.

09/105 Pear Tree Marsh allotment site (deferred from April meeting).

Update on request to Highways to reinstate the topsoil taken away by them from Plot 1 after making use of the site during retaining work on Ferry Hill.

The Clerk stated that the meeting within the Highways Agency to authorise the work has yet to take place, although it is understood that it is scheduled during May.

09/106 Un-used land at the Cricket Field allotments (deferred from April meeting). Cllr. Comotto submits, for consideration, a proposal that the bottom section of the allotment site, unsuitable to rent out for cultivation, is returned to grazing for cattle and sheep. This would require some change to part of the boundary fencing but may be more economic in the long term as it is costly to pay our grounds maintenance contractor to keep the area clear of weeds. The site is leased from The National Trust and their local warden is in agreement with the proposal. Proposed by Cllr. Comotto, seconded by Cllr. Bronsdon. Agreed subject to discussions between the Clerk, the National Trust and the tenant farmer.

09/107 Audit Report (deferred from April meeting). The interim report was circulated with the meeting papers. Council expressed its satisfaction with the outcome.

09/108 Parish Tree Survey - update (deferred from April meeting). The Clerk reported that this project has begun with an initial tour of all parish land with a tree surgeon so that an estimate can be obtained for a tree survey. The data obtained during the tour will be used to provide a specification for all competitive quotes.

09/109 Letter from RDC re covenant on land at Pear Tree Marsh (deferred from March meeting). This matter is being pursued with RDC but the Clerk will write again.

09/110 The Winchelsea Beach Community Association asks whether the council would approve of the holding of a boot fair at Harbour Field for fund raising purposes. After discussion, the Clerk was instructed to write to the WBCA to establish their intentions with regard to parking arrangements, litter control and potential nuisance to local residents.

09/111 Cllr. Comotto proposes the following:

j) "The Council will write to the Local Planning Authority urging them to take decisive enforcement action against the illegal occupation of private land near Camber Castle."

Cllr. Comotto explained that, due to action by other agencies, this was not required.

ii) "On Saturday, 18 April 2009, Cllr Charles Bronsdon attended the AGM of the Winchelsea Little Shop Association Ltd and falsely claimed to be the representative of Icklesham Parish Council, on whose behalf, he cast votes in the election of the new Management Committee. He therefore brought the Council into disrepute with the WLSA Ltd, which is a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Council censures Councillor Bronsdon for misrepresenting himself as an authorised representative of the Council and thereby acting beyond his legal powers, and bringing the Council into disrepute by breaking the rules of a body of which the Council is a corporate member. Councillor Bronsdon should reveal to the Council and to the WLSA Ltd how he voted."
Withdrawn.

iii) "On Saturday, 18 April 2009, Cllr Bronsdon attended the AGM of the Winchelsea Little Shop Association Ltd and falsely claimed to be the representative of Icklesham Parish Council. When asked, by an officer of the WLSA Ltd, if he had the written authority required of representatives of corporate members under the rules of the WLSA Ltd, Councillor Bronsdon refused to produce such authority. He falsely accused the Association of not sending notification of the AGM to the Council, and complained angrily and repeatedly to an officer of the WLSA Ltd that the Association had been "very discourteous" in not doing so. Councillor Bronsdon is guilty of treating the WLSA Ltd Management Committee and an officer of that Committee with disrespect, which is a breach of the Code of Conduct, by falsely accusing the Committee of failing in their legal duty to send notification of the AGM to the Council, and of making an accusation of discourtesy to the officer in an intemperate manner. He should apologise in writing to the Chairman of the Association and the officer concerned."

Withdrawn.

iv) "Once a decision has been made on shortening the perimeter of the Cricket Field allotment in Winchelsea, the Council will erect a rabbit-proof fence around the external perimeter, and along the internal boundaries between plots and the footpaths, and will ensure the gates into the allotment are properly rabbit-proofed with mesh. To the extent that the funds for such work have not been carried over from the last financial year, the cost of this work will be charged to the Allotment Maintenance budget and, if necessary, the Small Works budget."

There was a discussion about the effectiveness, or otherwise, of rabbit proof fencing. Ultimately, this was deferred until the final location of the perimeter has been established.

v) "Given that it was the installation by a parish council contractor which damaged the brick pavement around the footlight at the corner of High Street and Rookery Lane in Winchelsea, the parish council will organise and repair the pavement, with appropriate consent from the Highways Authority."

The Clerk will seek estimates for the repair of the pavement.

09/112 The Icklesham Trust Committee seeks permission to erect a notice board at the Recreation Ground.

Proposed by Cllr. Mrs Merricks, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanford. Approved.

09/113 Emergency Plan - Rye Harbour.

Cllr. Mrs Stanford reports that the Emergency Planning Officer at RDC, Charles Sharrod, has approached her in connection with the drawing up of a Plan for the village. (Winchelsea councillors offered the Winchelsea Emergency Plan as a template). Cllr. Mrs Stanford seeks the council's approval to proceed with assisting in this task. Agreed.

09/114 Annual Return

The Internal Audit for the year 2008/09 has been completed without qualification. The Annual Return to be forwarded to the external auditors will

be submitted for council's approval at the June meeting. This was noted.

09/115 Icklesham Horticultural Society seeks permission to erect a marquee on July 31st, and to hold their summer show on August 1st, at Icklesham Recreation Ground. This was approved.

09/116 Icklesham Boot Sales - traffic issues. Cllr. Mrs Merricks wishes to discuss the recent problems caused by traffic build up in the village due to boot sale activities. A discussion took place but no action by the council was deemed practicable. Cllr. Mrs Merricks advised the meeting that the landowner who holds boot sales at the eastern end of the village had agreed to put up a "free parking in the field" sign. This might relieve some of the problems of cars parking on the verges.

09/117 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Clerk reported that he was in the process of reviewing these documents as they were last reviewed in 2004. He stated that he would welcome any comments councillors may wish to make.

09/118 Reports from Council Representatives.

Cllr. Mrs Merricks reported on a recent Rye Harbour Nature Reserve meeting. She went on to suggest that councillors may wish to take a tour of the reserve with the warden, Dr Yates. There was considerable interest expressed; the Clerk will write to Dr Yates.

09/119 Matters to be referred to the next agenda.

09/120 Date and venue for the next meeting.

The date of the meeting was confirmed as Monday 8th June at Rye Harbour Village Hall, commencing at 7.15p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.28p.m.

Approved