

PRESTON CANDOVER AND NUTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Date: Monday 16th November 2015. **Time:** 7:30pm
Venue: Preston Candover Village Hall

Present: Alex Taylor Chairman
Charles Bradshaw Vice-Chairman
Ruth Chattell
Tish Owencroft
Adam Alexander
Daphne Prosser
Arnout Van Der Veer
Wendy Simson Clerk
PC Reid
7 members of the Community

Apologies: Rob Marks

573 Apologies

Councillor Marks was not able to attend the meeting and sent apologies. Councillor Van Der Veer did try to use Skype to allow Councillor Marks to be included but the internet signal wasn't strong enough.

574 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the last meeting dated 19th October 2015 were discussed. The Chairman and Councillor Prosser stated that they were not prepared to have the minutes signed as a true record of the meeting as item 565 did not include a full record of the issues with the emails from Bob Woods of the Store Committee and the Chairman. The Vice Chairman asked what the Chairman felt was missing from the meetings and the Chairman explained that he was unhappy about the accusations made that emails from Bob Woods were received by the Chairman giving information about the Community Store plans. The Chairman explained that the email address used by Bob Woods was for an Alex Taylor in the USA and had a .com address where the Chairman's email address ends with .co.uk. The Vice Chairman agreed to look into this and agreed that he would apologise if the claims were found to be correct. Councillor Van Der Veer suggested that all Councillors who had any comments or amendments should send them to the Clerk in order that a full record of the meeting could be agreed and a copy signed at the next meeting.

Action: Any comments to be sent to the Clerk

The Vice Chairman stated that, regardless of whether the Chairman received the emails, the Parish Council had been made aware of the Community Store project and that these updates had been included within the minutes. The Chairman said that he believed that as Chairman of the Parish Council that he should have had a copy of plans prior to the exhibition. The Vice Chairman stated that he hadn't been given a copy in advance and so had attended the exhibition with the rest of the community to see them.

Councillor Van Der Veer asked why the Chairman hadn't contacted Bob Woods and asked for a copy of the plans, as it was his responsibility to keep himself and the Parish Council up to date with this project. Councillor Van Der Veer also raised the visit made by the Chairman to the landowner and that it was his view that this was a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Chairman explained that he visited to get an understanding from the landowner of the lease which the Parish Council holds on the proposed site. The Chairman also stated that when HALC (Hampshire Association of Local Councils) were asked that they confirmed that the Chairman had no case to answer. The Vice Chairman stated that HALCs response was actually that they would not get involved in the disagreement but should go through the Parish Council's own process. The Vice Chairman asked if the Clerk had a copy of the response but this was not available, however HALCs answer from Vendy Treagust was as follows:-

"I have discussed this with Steven Lugg. Hampshire ALC does not have a view re these matters and we do not believe it would be right for us to have one because the council has adopted a Code of Conduct which it should follow. If a complaint is made an investigation should be made in line with the council's policy. The council may also decide to refer the matter to the Monitoring Officer for comment."

The Vice Chairman stated that the Chairman should not be taking sides in this issue and should remain neutral; as should the whole of the Parish Council and that this was agreed at the meeting on 19th January 2015. Councillor Prosser raised that the Vice Chairman had not remained neutral and had made his personal support of the project clear.

Councillor Owencroft asked why the Vice Chairman believed the Chairman had broken the Code of Conduct by visiting the landowner to discuss the lease. The Vice Chairman explained that he believed that the Chairman had influenced the landowner and had misrepresented the views of the community. The feedback from the exhibition had shown that the majority of the community supported the plans and that having had this feedback that the landowner had given his support for the project. The Parish Council were now suffering the humiliation of having the lease on the field next the Village Hall terminated. Given this, the Vice Chairman read out a statement prepared and signed by himself along with Councillors Van Der Veer, Chattell and Marks.

Action: A copy of the statement to be requested by the Clerk and added to the minutes as an appendix.

The Vice Chairman informed the Parish Council that he had spoken to the Chairman following the September meeting and on 26th September he wrote to the Chairman suggesting that the Chairman should write to the landowner about the visit. The Vice Chairman explained that while initially the Chairman had agreed to write that he had not done this.

Councillor Prosser challenged Councillor Chattell about her involvement in the statement read by the Vice Chairman, stating that Councillor Chattell had only recently joined the Parish Council. Councillor Chattell explained that prior to joining the Parish Council that she had attended a number of meetings and had also read the minutes for the last two years of meetings and the New Councillors Guide from HALC. Councillor Chattell felt that the Parish Councillors including the Chairman should act in an honest and open way which she did not believe was what the Chairman had done. Councillor Owencroft asked Councillor Chattell why she believed the Chairman would lie about the meeting with the landowner.

The Chairman stated that he had no intension of standing down despite the Vice Chairman's statement asking for him to do the honourable thing and remove himself from the Chairman role.

Councillor Alexander asked why the Vice Chairman hadn't taken on the Chairman role in December 2014 when it became vacant. The Vice Chairman said that he had not wanted the role but had fully support the Chairman and felt that he has done a fantastic job with the

projects the Parish Council have undertaken in the last year. He was no longer able to give this support because of the visit made by the Chairman to the landowner.

Councillor Prosser asked about the Vice Chairman role in the signing of the lease on the field next to the Village Hall and that the previous Chairman had negotiated that without informing the Parish Council until the paperwork had been drawn up.

Councillor Van Der Veer said that he didn't believe the Parish Council was going to be able to agree on what happened but that they needed to act in the best interests of the community. The planning application would be submitted at some point and the Parish Council would be asked for their comments and the Parish Council needed to act in a responsible way.

The Chairman addressed the community request for a Parish Meeting and possibility of a Poll. The Clerk shared with the Parish Councillors a suggested agenda for the meeting, which is as follows:-

- Opening statement by Host
- Presentation by Shop Committee (30 mins)
- Presentation by Representative of the Community Concerns (30 mins)
- Questions from the public
 - These are to be pre-prepared and sent to both groups to allow full answers to be researched
- Next stages
 - Community Poll
 - Planning application dates
- Closing statement from Shop Committee
- Closing statement from Representative of the Community Concerns
- Closing statement from Host

The Councillors agreed that 15 mins for the presentations would be sufficient and a suggested date of 2pm on Saturday 12th December was made which would allow people to attend in daylight. It was suggested that Ron Darley be asked to host the event and that the Clerk write minutes.

Action: Clerk to ask Bob Woods if he could attend on the proposed date and if not to suggest an alternative.

The Parish Council agreed that the Parish Meeting should take place before the planning application was submitted. The Clerk read out the update from Bob Woods about the plans:-
"We would be pleased to receive feedback from the PC on the exhibition results.

To keep you up to date with progress on the community store; in response to the feedback from our public exhibition in September and the formal reply to our pre planning application we received from BDBC , we are now working with our architect to refine the store design and site plan in order to apply for full planning permission.

We have now clarified with Preston Estates that the remainder of the field, not occupied by the proposed building and its parking, will continue to be used for recreation/village events as is current."

Action: Clerk to confirm timeframes for planning application

575 Public Forum

A member of the public explained that she had attended the October meeting and was appalled that her questions were not fully answered. The survey carried out at the exhibition was not carried out properly and the question asked was bias. The exhibition survey did not state where the shop was to be located and most people were in support of a shop but it was the location they objected to. A survey was being carried out asked if people wanted

the Community Shop on the field next to the Village Hall and that they had more than 100 signatures of those who are against this site.

Councillor Van Der Veer thanked the public for their feedback and that it is important that the community view is heard. This feedback needed to be reported back to the Shop Committee.

A member of the Community said that the proposed site for the shop should have been discussed much earlier in the process along with other options as this could have saved the bad feeling within the community. The Vice Chairman explained that the Shop Committee had attended the Parish Council meetings and that the feedback had been minuted and published.

A member of the public asked why the Shop Committee had agreed on the field next to the Village Hall as this was within the conservation area and a village amenity. It was not clear why the other sites had been discounted and questions about full due diligence being carried out on all locations. The Vice Chairman explained that the business case showed why the field next to the Village Hall was the only viable site.

It was asked why the Village Hall hadn't been approached to put the Post Office in the old Doctor's Surgery. Councillor Alexander explained that the Shop Committee had been offered the annex of the hall but this was not large enough to make the shop a viable option. The BT Building was also discussed but Councillor Chattell informed the public that some of the equipment in the building would need to be retained.

A member of the public asked if the conservation department at Basingstoke & Deane had been consulted as the decking which had been erected outside the Village Hall required approval. There was also a question about if the fete and bonfire party would still be able to go ahead. Councillor Alexander confirmed that the fete would still be possible but that feedback was that the bonfire wouldn't be because of the fireworks.

A member of public suggested that an impartial process needs to take place to gain an independent view as both sides had not got survey data which give conflicting views. The public needed the Parish Council to gain back the public confidence.

576 Police update

PC Reid gave an update of the incidents since his last report in October, these were:-

- 28/10 – concern for welfare of female in Preston Candover
- 28/10 – a deer was involved in a road traffic accident on B3046 by Moundsmere Lodges
- 3/11 – Attended Preston Candover Primary School re parking issues
- 16/11 – Damage road traffic incident where a car hit the railing outside the school at 04:45.

The Chairman asked for an update on rural policing and PC Reid explained that discussions were still being had.

577 Matter arising from previous meeting

Tree felling prices – Councillor Prosser presented a third quote for having the two trees by the telephone box removed. These trees have been inspected by the tree specialist at B&D and it was confirmed that they need to be removed. One of the trees is owned by the Village Hall who is happy to pay 50% of the costs but the other is on land held in trust and it is difficult to identify who owns it. Councillor Prosser suggested that as the trees are hazardous that they need to be removed as a matter of urgency and so the Parish Council should pay the other 50% of the costs.

The Councillors looked at the budget for 2014/15 and agreed the £3,600 allocated for grass cutting was high and that sufficient funds could be liberated from this line to pay the costs. The Chairman therefore authorised Councillor Prosser to proceed with the project and that the Parish Council and Village Hall would split the costs equally.

Action: Councillor Prosser to get tree work carried out during the school Christmas break

578 Financial statement

The Clerk Presented the following payment for approval:-

- £312.00 – grass cutting
- £6.00 – New Councillor Guide
- £235.60 – PAYE (Oct – Dec)
- £354.30 – Clerk’s salary (Oct – Dec)
- £78.00 – Meeting room hire

These were all agreed and signed off.

A total of 51p had been received as interest into the account.

The Clerk had circulated an outline budget for 2016/17 in order that the Parish Council could complete this process at the January meeting and meet the deadline of 31st January to get the paperwork to Basingstoke and Deane. Councillor Van Der Veer explained that the budget was not workable as it would take the Parish Council balance down to £77. This would mean that if there was an unexpected cost like the tree felling that the Parish Council would not have sufficient funds to pay. It was agreed that a reserve of £1,500 - £2,000 should be budgeted for. It was agreed that all Councillors would spend some time looking at the budget before the next meeting so an agreement could be made about allocation of funds.

Action: Councillors to look at budget

Councillor Alexander had gained 3 quotes for replacing the bollards on the drive up the tennis courts with removable posts. The 3 quotes are:-

- £35.98 – Timber merchants
- £33.98 – Wickes
- £27.96 – Scats

The Councillors agreed on the highest quote as the posts would be the correct size and would therefore reduce the fitting time.

Action: Councillor Alexander to purchase the posts and get them fitted.

Councillor Chattell asked that her thanks be recorded for the work done by Councillor Alexander.

579 Planning

None

580 Flooding

Councillor Van Der Veer informed the Parish Council that another meeting was planned with Basingstoke & Deane and Hampshire County Council for an update on the plans. As soon as a date is agreed Councillor Van Der Veer agreed to circulate it so anyone could attend.

581 Children’s play areas

Councillor Owencroft reported that she has now spoken to Lappet about the invoice and this should be sent to the Parish Council.

582 War Memorial

The Vice Chairman informed the Parish Council that he has now got a third quote for the stonework required on the War Memorial, so the application for funds could be progressed.

583 Website

Councillor Van Der Veer gave all the Councillors a copy of the proposed protocols for the website and it was agreed that they would be discussed at the next meeting.

584 Date of next meeting

Monday 18th January 2016, at Preston Candover Village Hall at 7:30pm.

The Clerk also circulated a copy of the meeting dates for 2016.