

Melchet Park & Plaitford Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held at Plaitford Village Hall on 18th November 2013

Present

K Curtis (Chairman)
CS Stacey

N Curtis
BW Trimmer

JPA Robson

39/13 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Porter. In recognition of the seriousness of the cause of Cllr Porter's absence Cllr Trimmer proposed and Cllr Stacey seconded that this should be noted as an "approved reason": this was resolved.

40/13 The minutes of the 16th September 2013 meeting were agreed and signed.

Interests

41/13 No interests were declared.

42/13 Matters Arising

The Clerk reported that she had sent photographs of the sign to which the Parish Council wished to attach the parish name to the Highways Agency.

43/13 National Trust on Plaitford Common – Ms Laura Baker

- a) Ms Baker said that the NT was concentrating on gorse-cutting this year, especially degenerate gorse which would not burn well. She was intending to work on Plaitford Common on 24th November and 23rd February. The NT has done some clearance around Clayford Pond and would like to dam the outflow somewhat, possibly with some brush as the ground was so very boggy.
- b) Cllr Robson reported that the gate on to Plaitford Common was very difficult to open and it was agreed that NT would send someone to adjust the gate.

44/13 Clerk's Report

- a) i) The Council had received correspondence from two residents in the vicinity of The Shoe complaining about the vibration caused by HGVs. The residents were present to explain their concerns and to describe what they had done so far to try to get the situation remedied. It was recognised that living on a trunk road would be associated with traffic noise but this was exacerbated by HGVs exceeding the 40mph speed limit, the rumble strips which were on the approaches to the pedestrian crossing and the disintegration of the road surface. It was recognised that with the speed limit being 50mph down Partridge Hill most vehicles would still be well above 40mph by the time they were passing The Shoe as it was so close to the county boundary where the speed limit changed. It was stated that HGVs frequently exceeded the speed limit especially in the early hours of the morning when there was no other traffic about.
- ii) One resident stated that the Highways Agency, Skanska (the current contractor) and Balfour Beatty (the previous contractor) were all blaming each other, but there was no funding to do anything about it. Another resident said that the Police had agreed to monitor the speed and traffic outside The Shoe.
- iii) It was agreed that ideally the speed limit down Partridge Hill should be reduced to 40mph, that there should be a speed camera by The Shoe, and that the rumble strips should be removed and replaced by a "braking surface", and that there should be some enforcement of the 40mph speed limit by Hampshire Police. Another suggestion was the installation of another vehicle actuated speed indicator on the A36 and an "average speed" measuring system between The Shoe and Whinwhistle. It was agreed that Landford Parish Council should be approached to gain support for reducing the speed limit down Partridge Hill to 40mph. It was suggested that the residents should contact Caroline Nokes MP and John

Glen MP regarding the inaction by the Highways Agency, and should also write to the Police Commissioners in Wiltshire and Hampshire.

- b) It was reported that an ambulance had failed to negotiate the new traffic arrangements at Melchet Park Farm: after discussion it was agreed that rights of access to properties across privately-owned land was a matter between the land-owner and the person who was claiming the rights.

45/13 Consultations

It was agreed that the HCC Groundwater Management Plan was only applicable to those areas on chalk.

46/13 Risk Assessment

It was agreed that the draft was acceptable and should be kept on file.

47/13 Finance

- a) The Budget Control had been sent with the Agenda.
- b) It was proposed by Cllr K Curtis and seconded by Cllr N Curtis that Cllr Robson should be added to the list of bank signatories: this was resolved.
- c) Cheques number 151 to 153 were approved and signed: £75.00 to Plaitford Village Hall (room hire); £247.20 to J Wright (Clerk's salary); £61.80 to Post Office Ltd (PAYE payment).
- d) Income of £1500.00 from TVBC (precept) was noted.
- e) The draft 2014-15 Budget was considered. As always the biggest financial risk was a forced election, although history shows that this is quite unlikely. Considering the uncertainties in the budgeting process it was agreed that the figures were reasonable and that the precept should remain at £3000.00. TVBC has as yet provided no information to indicate if it will pass on any of the grant from central government, however, as the impact on individual Council Tax bills is very small it was decided that this could be ignored. Cllr Trimmer proposed and Cllr Stacey seconded the motion that the precept for 2014-15 should be set at £3000.00: this was resolved.

48/13 Planning Application

Gardeners Farm, Flowers Lane (TVBC ref: 13/02059) – the conversion of 4 sheds to holiday accommodation. It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council objected to the proposal: it would put the accommodation too close to a listed building (Sweet Briar Cottage); it would result in over-looking of the front garden of Sweet Briar Cottage and would impact on the amenities of the occupants; the access is off a long, narrow, winding single track road; some of the buildings would need to be built up from the ground, especially where there were currently no walls. The Clerk was instructed to respond accordingly.

49/13 AOB

It was reported that the business at Border Garage is still permitting car transporters to unload whilst parked on the A36 and this should be raised with TVBC Enforcement team.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm

Date of Next Meeting

20th January 2014