

Melchet Park & Plaitford Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held at Plaitford Village Hall on 21st January 2013

Present

K Curtis (Chairman)
AW Porter

S Bowles
CS Stacey

N Curtis
BW Trimmer

01/13 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr JA Bowles

02/13 *The minutes of the November 2012 meeting were agreed and signed.*

03/13 Interests

Cllrs S Bowles, K Curtis, N Curtis, AW Porter, CS Stacey, BW Trimmer each declared a pecuniary interest in item 09/13 d). They had each applied for dispensation to the Clerk who had granted dispensation to each of them.

04/13 PC V Gook

Crime levels in the area were remaining fairly static, although there had been two incidences of theft in Flowers Lane.

05/13 Clerk's Report

A letter had been received from Damien Green in reply to the Council's concerns over the way the Police & Crime Commissioners elections had been managed.

06/13 Clerk's Reports

The Clerk had received a complaint about outgrowing hedges in Sherfield English Lane but had failed to contact the land-owner so the matter has been referred to Hampshire Highways Dept.

07/13 Consultations

- a) The Parish Council had no comments to make regarding the "High-level Planning of Highways Maintenance".
- b) Plaitford has no ongoing Public Open Space Projects, nor is it likely to start any. If the parish ever became eligible for Developer's s.106 funding then it would wish the funds to be transferred to Sherfield English Parish Council.
- c) Speaking at NPA Planning Committee Meetings was discussed. Cllr Trimmer proposed and Cllr Stacey seconded that the current system should be changed to one with a limit of 3 minutes for the initial input but with a right of reply: this was unanimously resolved.

08/13 Plaitford Common

Cllr Trimmer and Stacey both observed that Plaitford Common was in a very poor state following the work on the electricity pylons where boards had been put down to gain access, and that the bridges at the northern edge of the mire were disintegrating. It was recognised that nothing could be done in the immediate but the Clerk was asked to remind the National Trust that they had promised some more heather bales.

09/13 Finance

- a) Cheque number 131 for £59.60 to the Post Office (PAYE payment) which had been signed earlier was approved.
- b) Cheque numbers 132 and 133: £238.43 to J Wright (Clerk's salary) and £140.93 to J Wright (Clerk's expenses + re-imburement) were approved and signed.
- c) The Budget Report was received. It was noted that some of the contingency had been spent on buying a part-share in a printer.
- d) The Precept and the impact on the Council Tax for a Band D property were considered. It was noted that if the precept was left at £3000 then although the increase in the parish element would be 13% this was only £3 per year in cash terms. Reducing the precept by the amount of the grant would give a zero increase for 2013-14 but that would leave the Parish Council with too little income in 2014-15 unless there was a corresponding increase in the precept back to the current level. As there is total uncertainty of arrangements or constraints for 2014-15 the Parish Council felt unable to take this option. Cllr S Bowles proposed and Cllr N Curtis seconded that the precept should be left at £3000 and the grant should be treated as a windfall.

10/13 Planning Applications

Refurbishment of the Education Block at St Edward's School, Melchet Court (TVBC refs: 12/02380/LBWS and 12/02742/FULLS) was considered: it was agreed that this proposal should be supported.

11/13 AOB

- a) Cllr K Curtis suggested that the large Landford Van Sales sign as one immediately entered Plaitford the Council could cause confusion to anyone looking for Plaitford, especially as the Plaitford sign on the A36 was small: it was agreed that the Council should ask for the sign to be more prominent, perhaps "Welcome to Plaitford". This was agreed. It was also requested that if the sign was replaced it should be sited correctly.
- b) Cllr Porter reported the inconvenience being caused by the repeated closing of Giles Lane at the ford. He asked that if the road is to be closed then signs to that effect should be placed at the junction of Church Lane and Sherfield English Road and the junction of Giles Lane with the A36. At present it is not apparent that the road is closed until one is at the ford and being a single track road there is nowhere for HGV traffic to turn round safely.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Date of Next Meeting

18th March 2013