

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF COTTERED PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN COTTERED VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 8 November 2011 AT 7.30 PM

Present	Bryan Pitman (Chair)	Terry McGrath
	David Charles	Brian Murchie
	John Harwood-Bee	Francis Ridley

Officer attending	Joan Diales (acting Clerk)
Present:	12 members of the public

APOLOGIES

11.57. Apologies were received from Marty Kilby, Parish Clerk.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

11.58. None.

MINUTES OF MEETING

11.59. The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 September 2011 were before the meeting. The minutes were signed as a correct record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

11.60. **15th September:** The Clerk the Vice Chairman and the Chairman all attended the Rural Parish Conference run by ECDC. One piece of information gained, which was a surprise to most Parish Cllrs, was that the proposed changes to the planning system could result in communities being effectively paid, to allow new houses to be built in their area. In this East Herts most of this money would go to District Council, but some would go to the Parishes. A presentation by BT showed that the Cottered telephone exchange was on a list with other rural areas to have their broadband speeds increased at some future date.

12th October: The Clerk and Chairman met the Parish Solicitor to discuss the matter of the growing problem of the Recreation Ground boundary. The Solicitor impressed upon them that although the case appear to be sound if the other party continued to dispute the matter, then legal fees were likely to rocket.

7th November: The Chairman receives message from the Clerk saying that she had fallen over and fractured her hip and will be in hospital. Previous Clerk is contacted and kindly agrees to support PC Meeting on 8th November.

PLANNING

- 11.61. **Notification of planning application**
The updated planning schedule is an appendix to these minutes.
- 11.62. **Mayville, Stevenage Road, Cottered:**
After reporting to Planning that it is believed the "barn" on site was being lived in, when pursued, Planning Enforcement had been unable to locate the site. A map has been sent to Planning who are now able to find it but too late for any feedback at this meeting. To be pursued.
- 11.63. **East Herts Local Development Framework** invitation to briefing session has been received, Bryan Pitman will attend.

HIGHWAYS

- 11.64. **Blocked drains:** Cllr Ridley reported blocked drains near Magpie Farm, Hunters Mead and the corner by the church which have been reported on the Highways web site.
- 11.65. **Entrance to Girl Guides** junction A507 Baldock Road had potholes and ruts in the pavement. This has also been reported on the Highways web site as a potential trip hazard.

RIGHTS OF WAY

- 11.66. **Footpath 45** – Parish Clerk was trying for a meeting with OS map people.
- 11.67. **Parish Paths Partnership** the Chairman asked Roger Gomm to give an update:
(i) Footpaths 2, 3 & 4 were upgraded to Bridleway, now a RUMP. Roger to look into.
(ii) PPP moving to Groundwork Hertfordshire, meeting to be arranged.

FINANCE

11.68. The finance report was not available but an estimation of payments were approved, the following being the actual figures for payments:

613	Clerk	£328.00	Clerk's salary for October/November 2011
614	Cottered Village Hall	£30.00	Village Hall hire (Sept & Nov)
615	EHDC	£55.86	Playground inspection fee
616	BDO Stoy Hayward	£204.00	Audit fee (£170 plus VAT)
617	N Bentley	£90.00	Diesel for tractor/mowing playing field

11.69. **Conclusion of audit:** The conclusion of the audit for 2010-2011 was noted.

11.70. **Budget for 2012-2013** – After discussion, it was agreed by a unanimous vote that the precept for 2012-2013 be kept at £6,000 and for the budget to be set around this figure.

11.71. **Mower maintenance:** Cllr Brian Murchie had obtained several quotes for the mower to be serviced/sharpened and it was agreed that the quote from Ernest Doe at £400 plus VAT be accepted but to await confirmation from the Clerk that there were sufficient funds available before proceeding, preferably before the January meeting.

11.72. **Playground repairs:** Cllr John Harwood-Bee reported that £400 was available from Mr and Mrs Rowan, via the Appreciation Society, towards the cost of repairs which had been estimated by the Inspector at approximately £500.

HERTS DISTRICT SCOUT AND GUIDES NIGHT HIKE 2012

11.73. A request was received from Peter Knight to hold a Hertfordshire District Scouts & Guides night walk from Cottered Guide Centre on September 29th 2012. No objections were raised.

CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

11.74. The Clerk's report was before the Council and the correspondence noted. The report is an appendix to the minutes.

RECREATION GROUND FENCE

11.75. The Chairman gave a presentation which included information received when the Clerk and Chairman visited the Parish Council's Solicitors and the Chairman's visit and discussions with the Land Registry in Peterborough to justify the request made by the Parish Council that the fence erected to the East of 1 Home Close was on land owned by the Parish. A request was made that copies of the presentation be shared with other Cllrs and Cllrs. Ridley & Harwood-Bee offered to speak with the owners of 1 Home Close who bought the strip of land to the east of 1 Home Close from the Pitcher Trust with the assurance that the ditch was included in the sale.

A request was also made for copies of any plan contained in the Conveyance of the Playing field from the Church to the Parish Council in the early 1950s. The Acting Clerk undertook to obtain this.

A request was also made by Cllr Ridley to convene a meeting before the end of November to further discuss this topic. It was pointed out that any such meeting if not advertised and not held in public, could explore options and make recommendations to the next PC meeting but could not make any decisions.

11.76. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 10 January 2012 at 7.30 pm in Cottered Village Hall

The meeting closed at 9:30 pm and was followed by an open session.

Signed _____

Date _____

COTTERED PARISH COUNCIL

OPEN SESSION

1. Cllr John Harwood-Bee made a request, on behalf of a parishioner that further consideration be made regarding the funding of a 2nd bus shelter outside Cottered village hall. Cllr Ridley asked on behalf of the residents in Throcking that a bus shelter be considered for those living in that area of the Parish which is often forgotten about. To be included on the Agenda for the January meeting.
2. Colin Bayles asked if a cost comparison had been made between owning mowing equipment and cutting the Playing Field by a volunteer versus paying a contractor to do the work. It was felt that having made the capital outlay that mowing the Playing Field by a volunteer was considerably less expensive.
3. The uncut hedge to No. 39 The Crescent was still an issue. Cllr Harwood-Bee suggested that the Appreciation Society could arrange to have the hedge cut back. Nigel Bentley offered to speak with the residents of the property.
4. Tracey Thompson said that travellers had appeared around his property on a number of occasions but he had found that dialling 999 was a very slow process and asked if there was a better number for him to ring as the number on the parish magazine was out of date. It was suggested that 08455330072 could be a better number to ring.
5. It was noted that the returning caravan had re-appeared in the layby just outside the village.
6. While the Parish Litter Picker is still unwell, Parish Councillors and others were keeping the village tidy but Lesley Greensmith was unsure which bin to use? The black wheelie bin in the village hall car park.

COTTERED PARISH COUNCIL