

COTTENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Held in the Village Hall, Lambs Lane, Cottenham on Tuesday 14th January at 7.15pm

Present: Cllrs Burton (Chair), Beckford, Berenger, Bolitho, Bristow, Brown, Collier, Collinson, Heydon, Leeks, Mudd, Nicholas, Richards, Rowley, Wotherspoon, Clerk Jo Brook, RFO Debbie Seabright, SCDC Cllr Harford and CCC Cllr Jenkins

In attendance: 19 members of the public

14/001. Any Questions from the Public or Press – Standing Orders to be suspended – A resident, Frank Morris, spoke to reiterate concerns he had raised with the Council via email prior to the meeting. He was horrified at the proposed precept and by how much it had risen over the past few years. The costs for the changing rooms looked excessive and he wanted to know if there were features of the project that could be taken out. Additionally was it necessary to do all of the proposed exceptional projects at the same time? Cllr Burton responded to say that a lot of what had been debated had been going on over a long period and had involved numerous sports clubs. The ideas changed when the FA said that they would award us a significant grant towards the new changing rooms. Therefore the cost to the village is only in the region of £200k and not nearly £700k. The grant opportunity was too good to miss. The grants work in that they are paid back to us over a 14-21 day period once stages of the project are signed off. The PWLB loan is to aid cashflow during this period – we would need to reclaim VAT for example and this would take a while. With the £150k we have saved up and the £400k loan we have the working capital to get the project off the ground. When the grant money comes back we can decide to either repay the loan or use it on other projects e.g. village hall refurbishment. The borrowing rates are approximately 3.75% fixed rate for the duration of the 15 years. If we repay the loan early there is a charge of 1%. There is talk of relocating the parish office to the new village hall. It cost us £10k for building works to the existing office but the rent is only £500 for 3 years. This figure is a huge saving on what we had been paying previously in rent and part of that saving has been put towards the changing rooms. Regarding the loan we don't have a choice where we get it from, it has to come from the PWLD. In terms of the budget there is only £36k budgeted for the loan repayments. Cllr Mudd stated that all of the grants except the Amey Cespa £40k had been confirmed in writing. The figure on the draft budget for the changing rooms has already been reduced by the builders to £560k. Cllr Mudd is negotiating to try to get this reduced further. Once the contract with the building is signed Cllr Mudd's involvement (he has been spearheading the project) will be less and the project will be overseen by the Council as a whole, with the architect project managing.

Another resident spoke to say that in times of austerity if residents felt that the projects were worthwhile they would still support them. She also felt the Council had become more visible and open in the past couple of years and fully backed the idea of hall refurbishment.

Traffic – Mr Morris spoke regarding safety concerns around the Co-op. He thought that the Council should think more carefully about this rather than the village hall refurbishment. Cllr Rowley agreed that it needs doing but that it would take several years to get the money together for such a project. However Cllr Bolitho disagreed that it was possible to do anything on that particular corner. Cllr Burton stated that we would try to do smaller traffic projects asap and accumulate money towards the larger projects. He disagreed with Mr Morris' comment that the Council had 'maxed out' on our precept. Of the 5 largest parishes in the area we have got a lot of catching up to do in terms of infrastructure. By putting the suggested projects off it means that current children in the village would miss out on valuable facilities. Cllr Leeks suggested that more pressure should be put on County for road improvements.

14/002. Standing Orders to be re-instated – Chairman’s Introduction and Apologies – apologies received from SCDC Cllr Edwards and CCC Cllr Mason.

14/003. To accept Declarations of Interest - To receive disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting – none.

14/004. Minutes - Minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd December (Ordinary meeting) Cllr Berenger proposed a true and accurate account, seconded by Cllr Richards, all agreed. 19th December (Planning) Cllr Nicholas proposed a true and accurate account, seconded by Cllr Collinson, all agreed.

14/005. Reports

- **SCDC** – report circulated prior to the meeting. SCDC Cllr Harford highlighted some consultations that were coming up i.e. A14. There will also be a community consultation on how SCDC communicates to the public.
- **CCC** – report circulated prior to the meeting. CCC Cllr Jenkins met with Stagecoach. The 106 bus service will probably be lost although it was acknowledged that it would affect Rampton more than Cottenham. The 110 service will be doubled. In the meeting they tried to look at other options on how the Citi8 service could be increased further up the village. Stagecoach are quite keen on this and there may be money within the City Deal to progress this idea. Pressure would be needed from the village to progress this further. Cllr Bristow asked when work would be done to the roads on Smithy Fen because some of them were now impassable even in agricultural vehicles. Cllr Jenkins to get an answer from Highways and will revert.
- **Police** – no report received.
- **Clerk** – report circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk updated the report to say that the blinds had now been installed in the hall, much to the delight of users. Cllr Richards was thanked for doing this work. Clerk had also met with a potential new user who was interested in booking the hall for 3 hours per week which would equate to approx. £1k income per year

14/006. Finance

Income	Description	Net	Gross
Histon Early years	Use of village hall in April 2013	330	330
Michelle Plowman	Rent September	739	739
Jane Williams	Rent November	150	150
Debbie Prince	Rent November	32	32
Cottenham Day Centre	Rent November	240.00	240.00
Online Playgrounds	Returned item (re swings)	6.60	7.92
Ladybirds Preschool	Recouped utilities Ladybirds	121.93	121.93
Allotments	Recouped utilities Allotments	125.19	125.19
CF Gawthrop	Town Ground Rent	245.00	245.00
Village hall	Casual rent of village hall on two occasions	60.00	60.00
HMRC	Remittance re Vat return	5,647.54	5,647.54
		7,697.26	7,698.58
Expenses	Description		
The B C Group	December Invoice	273.00	327.60
HMRC	January Tax/NI	1,179.69	1,179.69
Salaries	Salaries January 14	3505.81	3505.81
Nick West	Cleaning Services and Expenses (Nov and Dec)	1125.38	1125.38
N. Rice	Holiday cover for A. King	60	60
Thurdow Nunn Standen	Pressure Washer	349.98	419.98
Ernest Doe and Sons Ltd	Rec equipment purchased for use by the groundsman	2249.66	2699.62
A.J & R Scambler & Sons	Equipment service	91.1	109.32
Mark Weatherhead	Security tracker for rec equipment	309	369
Cambridge Water	For Bowls club/Allotment/Rec ground (DD)	284.91	284.91

Open Spaces Society	Annual Subscription	45	45
Staples	Ink cartridges	30.82	36.98
Travis Perkins	Paint and rollers	176.82	212.18
Travis Perkins	Paint	74.00	88.80
Cambridge Water	Water rates: Sports and Social Club	601.77	601.77
Camline Cambridge Ltd	Disabled car bay marking at rec	250.00	300.00
EON	Electricity Recreation ground and Green (DD)	605.47	713.32
Online Playgrounds	Parts for the playground	14.40	17.28
Online Playgrounds	Parts for the playground	7.70	9.24
British Legion	Wreath for war memorial	35.00	35.00
Came and Company	Vehicle insurance	156.75	166.16
PPL	Public Performance License	191.30	229.56
Debbie Seabright	Expenses re Stamps	12.00	12.00
Alan Leeks	Expenses re Sweets for carol concert	26.36	31.63
A Mappedoram	Lights on the green	423.99	508.78
Ernest Doe and Sons Ltd	Equipment for rec	70.83	85.00
Acacia Tree Surgery	Reduce canopy & raise crown – willow tree BGW	330	396
Clerk Expenses	Direct Blinds - New blinds for the village hall	165.65	198.78
Clerk Expenses	Tescos - Printer toner	15.50	15.50
Talk mobile	Clerk mobile phone bill (D/D)	13.80	13.80
Connections	Connections Bus project Sept - Dec 13	3,220.00	3,220.00
		15,895.69	17,018.09

Cllr Mudd asked why Kids Only were behind with their rent again. RFO is chasing this.

Additional 'incentive' clauses will be put into their new contract. Cllr Leeks queried the amount of casual rent which he thought was quite low. The amounts received related to two 1 ½ hour bookings so the income was never going to be huge. Resolution to pay these invoices proposed by Cllr Nicholas and seconded by Cllr Mudd. 13 votes for and 1 abstention. Resolved.

14/007. Budget setting and Precept 2014/15 – Resolution to set precept of £249,941. Cllr Burton stated that there had been some discussions over the past couple of weeks within the Council. Following these discussions the £4k equipment hire cost will be removed. The £20,300 for changing rooms running costs was reduced to £12k – the original figure was for a full 12 months and the building wouldn't be ready until the autumn. This brought the total figure down to £237,641. Cllr Mudd wanted assurances that the extra money for traffic would be spent within the current financial year. Cllr Rowley said that he couldn't guarantee this but we should ringfence the money to increase the overall traffic 'pot' so that larger projects could be budgeted for. Cllr Collinson's feeling was that CPC shouldn't be having a conversation re. traffic because the legal obligation should be with County and County should be lobbied. Cllr Leeks hoped that the village would create the necessity for an election in May. The current Council will have no mandate after April and we were unable to presume their priorities. Cllr Rowley countered that by not budgeting towards traffic projects now could hinder the new Council. Cllr Richards raised the point that residents last year specifically asked for the traffic budget to be raised so that issues could be fixed. Standing Orders suspended to ask residents present for their further comments on this matter. Cllr Burton outlined how the budget came about and the process behind it. Andy Ward asked what CPC would do that County should be doing i.e. the zebra crossing by the college which is inadequate, likewise the lack of other crossings in the village. In response, the Beach Road development could pay for these crossings or CPC put some money in and County could match. Christine Ward asked why there was no mention in the budget regarding the S106 money from the Beach Road development. Cllr Burton responded that we couldn't budget for it because we didn't know when the development would be completed and it was only then that the money would be received. Frank Morris thought it should be a capital project similar to the exceptional projects and that the precept should be as low as possible. Paul Dixon thought that the traffic budget was out of proportion with the rest of

the budget. Matt Bradney said that Cottenham needed to do it ourselves but also more pressure was needed on County. Cottenham need to make more 'noise' as in his previous experience as a County Cllr we had been very quiet in terms of our traffic needs. Cllr Berenger believed that it was a case of what was needed rather than waiting for County to do any work. Another resident felt that we needed to plan the projects and then raise the money, however Cllr Bristow pointed out that if we did that then we would suddenly need to find a large amount of money and it was better to be putting smaller amounts aside. Cllr Burton said that the last 2 budgets were about trying to get Cottenham to catch up with our village infrastructure. Christine Ward spoke in favour of keeping the additional £20k. Andy Ward also pointed out that if residents were that bothered by the precept rise then they should have come to the meeting or even stand for election. Standing Orders were reinstated. Cllr Bolitho thought it was ill advised to keep the extra £20k for traffic when we haven't got any specific projects on the table. Cllr Rowley asked how much County had done in Cottenham since the traffic report which was carried out in 2007 investigating our needs. The answer was nothing. Cllr Brown asked if there was any money in the primary school budget for safer routes to school; CCC Cllr Jenkins didn't think that there was but would check. Cllr Burton said that if we raise the precept then the money would be specifically spent in the village; if County put the tax up the money could go anywhere. Cllr Burton thought that the only people able to raise money at local level was the Parish itself.

Resolution that the precept for 2014/15 be set at £217,641 – proposed by Cllr Collinson and seconded by Cllr Bolitho. Cllr Rowley proposed an amendment to £237,641 which was seconded by Cllr Collier. 9 votes for and 5 votes against. Amendment resolved. Resolution that the precept for 2014/15 be set at £237,641. 9 votes for and 5 votes against. Resolved. CCC Cllr Jenkins left the meeting at 8.45pm.

- 14/008. Smithy Fen policing** – to receive report from meeting between SCDC and South Cambridgeshire Police – Cllr Wotherspoon gave an update on the meeting he had attended with Cllrs Harford and Edwards. The three SCDC Cllrs gave Cl Darren Alderson a grilling regarding recent assaults on the Fen. The police were at pains to stress that they acted as per guidelines by assessing the situation (threat/risk/harm). They also pointed out that they needed to work within the law and that all members of the community are treated the same. They said there are people who cross their paths regularly and they are monitored. There was a wide ranging discussion which included the problems involved in policing some areas of the village. Going forward there will be multi-agency approach. Cllrs Wotherspoon and Harford felt that although no answers were given they were positive that something would be done. It was also felt that the situation on the Fen had got worse recently. Cllr Mudd asked if anyone had been arrested following the incident on the bridge just before Christmas but Cllr Wotherspoon stated that he was unable to answer that in the public forum; he was however happy to take private questions. Cllr Leeks asked why 'arrest' wasn't taken into account when the police assess a situation. Cllr Harford responded that there must be proof and that it was part of the assessment as to whether the police were able to get a conviction.
- 14/009. Website** – to consider replacing the current CMS site with a custom-designed WordPress site – Clerk outlined issues with the current CMS site and previously circulated details of the new Histon & Impington site which had been done using WordPress. Resolution that we replace the existing site with a custom-designed WordPress site proposed by Cllr Collier and seconded by Cllr Beckford. Resolved unanimously.
- 14/010. Inspired Facilities Signage** – to receive and consider ordering a sign for new changing rooms (in accordance with grant requirements) - Cllr Mudd proposed that we order the sign at the time of signing the building contract. Seconded by Cllr Richards. Resolved unanimously.
- 14/011. Business Rates** – to receive and consider report following legal advice - Cllr Mudd gave a brief update following his meeting with King & Co solicitors. We need to clarify the trustee situation but there is an 80% relief for charities. Cllr Burton went on to say that he believed that SCDC were quite lenient on giving the remaining 20% discretionary part back and Cllr Wotherspoon

will check this with SCDC Cllr Edwards. Cllr Wotherspoon was hesitant on whether the City Deal would have an affect on this.

14/012. Matters for consideration at the next meeting – First draft of the recreation ground vision plan (Cllr Beckford), Skate park (Cllr Berenger). Standing orders were suspended again.

Representatives from the Toy Library, junior cricket and the bowls club thanked the Council for their S137 grants. Cllr Burton repeated that 2014 was an election year and there was a need for residents to stand. Standing orders reinstated.

14/013. Dates of next meetings – Planning Meeting 23rd January (P2), Ordinary Meeting 4th February, Planning Meeting 6th February 2014 (P1).

14/014. Close of Meeting – 9.10pm

Signed _____ (Chair) Date _____