

Hartest Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held in The Institute on Monday 20 March 2006 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs James Long (Chairman), Mary Gough (Vice-Chairman), Rachel Irvine, David Loxton, Jo Pask, John Schofield.

Apologies for absence: Cllr Robin Oaten – recovering from hospital treatment, PC Sally Smith, PC Den Mullett

Attending: Mr David Morbey (Clerk to the Council), County Councillor Richard Kemp,

15 members of the public.

06/25 Declarations of interest Cllr Pask and Schofield – Planning application B/06/362 Members of The Institute Committee – non prejudicial interest.

06/26 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2006

After the correction to Minute 06/18d: delete all after “householder” and insert “and was awaiting a reply.” the minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

proposed: Cllr Pask, seconded: Cllr Loxton **Approved**

06/27 Matters arising from the minutes of the meetings held on 16 January 2006 none

06/28 Public Forum Several members of the public spoke to Council regarding planning applications

06/29 Police report The Clerk had received a report which was read to Council:

1 vehicle crime – theft of diesel fuel

2 thefts – items from a farm and attempted theft of heating fuel from The Institute.

It was reported that a car had been repeatedly speeding up and down the Somerton Road. Police and Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator to be advised. **Action Clerk**

06/30 County Councillor's report

CCllr Kemp reported. The SCC Scrutiny Committee would be writing to Patricia Hewitt to oppose the closure of hospitals in West Suffolk. SCC has procedures in place should an outbreak of Avian Flu occur. A White Paper is to be issued in July on the future of Local Government. With possible Unitary Authorities for East Anglia and the abolition of SCC and District Councils, the District Council elections may be delayed. The future of Post Offices is uncertain again due to pressure on pensioners to receive pensions via a bank account rather than through a Post Office account. Primary Care Trust options are being reviewed with the likely outcome being one trust for the whole of Suffolk.

06/31 District Councillor's report

DCllr Long reported that only 10% of the Council tax went to Babergh DC. The rise this year had been only 2.7% The BDC consultation had shown a large majority favoured at least an inflation increase to preserve services.

BDC planning site meetings could now only be requested through a District Councillor.

Cllr Irvine asked about the 80 new homes planned for Glemsford which would produce more through traffic for Hartest even though the village roads were not suitable. She asked DCllr Long to raise this with Babergh. It would also be appropriate for HPC to send a letter of concern to SCC. Cllr Pask wondered if the sewage system at Glemsford could cope with the extra housing and also what the effect on Hartest School would be if Glemsford School could not cope with additional numbers of children. **Action DCllr Long and Clerk**

06/32 Finance

a. Halifax Account re-investment had been approved by two cheque signatories for a further 6 months

b. rate relief for cemetery. Babergh DC had announced rate relief for 2005/2006 in the sum of £26.82

c. VAT on internet purchases. In accordance with advice from HM Customs and Excise to regularise the reclaim of VAT on internet purchases where the only method of payment is by credit or debit card, the following resolution was passed: HPC authorises The Clerk to make necessary purchases on the internet and to pay for these by personal credit or debit card when this cannot be done in any other way.

Acceptance proposed: Cllr Irvine, seconded: Cllr Pask **Approved**

d. Web site domain name renewal. The renewal of the domain name hartest.com for a period of two years with Virtual Names at a cost of £21.15 inc VAT was approved.

proposed: Cllr Pask, seconded: Cllr Schofield **Approved**

e. review of current finance statement – balances, receipts and payments to be approved

Nat West Current: £ 180.14
Nat West Reserve: £5756.37
Halifax Guaranteed Reserve: £4353.05
Receipts for Cemetery fees £420.00
Babergh DC rate rebate £26.82
Bank interest £123.84

Payments to be approved as shown on Cash Flow for 20/3/2006:

D Morbey, Clerks wages and expenses £290.73
The Institute, hall hire 16/1/2006 £28.00
D Morbey, Web Domain name renewal £21.15
D Gotts, Grass cutting £241.50
Babergh DC rates due 1 April 2006 £26.62
Boughton Press cemetery receipt book previously agreed with Cllrs Long and Pask £32.00
Acceptance proposed: Cllr Irvine, seconded: Cllr Pask **Approved**

Parish Plan finances The final claims for expenses to complete the Parish Plan had been submitted by the Chairman of the Parish Plan Group. These claims had been signed in an approved manner by the Chairman of the group and by the designated accounts overseer for the group:

£1885.00 Moreton Hall Press
£388.25 other expenses claims from 4 Plan group members
Acceptance proposed: Cllr Irvine, seconded: Cllr Gough **Approved**

f. auditors required

Mrs Dorothy Griggs, the Lawshall Clerk has agreed to be the local auditor and Council accepted her offer with gratitude. It was agreed that the two Parish Council auditors should be Cllrs Irvine and Schofield
proposed: Cllr Pask, seconded: Cllr Loxton **Approved**

g. to consider Clerks wages rise to £7.864 per hour. This was agreed.

06/33 Donations

Hartest Pre School £500.00 proposed: Cllr Schofield, seconded: Cllr Pask **Approved**
East Anglian Air Ambulance £40.00 proposed: Cllr Gough, seconded: Cllr Loxton **Approved**
Suffolk Accident Rescue £40.00 proposed: Cllr Irvine, seconded: Cllr Loxton **Approved**
Parish Plan Group request. Cllr Loxton said the Parish Plan was a very good thing for the village and although the group had promised to fund raise to cover the shortfall in grants over costs, fundraising would take place but that requesting a donation was one method of fundraising. Cllr Irvine suggested a donation of £250.00. Cllr Long expressed disappointment that the group had not so far done any fundraising but felt we should make a donation. Other Councillors agreed except for Cllr Schofield who opposed donating to the group. It was agreed to donate £250.00 to the Parish Pan Group. proposed: Cllr Irvine, seconded: Cllr Gough **Carried Approved**

06/34 Planning

a. Babergh decisions:

B/05/1938 Tan Office Farm, Cross Green, IP294ED Application for Listed Building Consent - Insertion of 2 no. windows and 1 no. door in north elevation; insertion of dormer window in west roofslope elevation; insertion of 1 no. window in south elevation, internal and external alterations. **granted**

b. to consider applications:

B/06/288 5 The Row, IP294DL Erection of summer house. **no objection**

B/06/305 The Hatch, Pilgrims Lane, IP294ED Application for Listed Building Consent - Internal and external alterations **no objection**

B/06/328 Part side garden of Spring Bank, Lawshall Road, IP294DR Erection of two-storey detached dwelling (following demolition of existing garage and workshop). Erection of detached garage to serve existing dwelling. A letter of objection from a neighbour was read out raising concerns about sewage disposal and drainage, possible subsidence if trees are removed and the dominating aspect of the new building. Council agreed that the size of the building was too large for the site and that a more modest structure (although not a bungalow), would be better. It was also agreed to raise the concern over the technical points from the neighbour. There was also concern that a footpath marked on old footpath maps runs through the site although this was not shown on the applicant's plans. It was agreed that the application would not be supported. It was also agreed that District Councillor Long would be asked to request a Babergh Site Meeting. Proposed Cllr Schofield, Seconded Cllr Loxton **Carried Action Clerk**

B/06/362 Hartest Primary School, The Row, IP294DL Application under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 - Erection of pre-school building. 2 letters of objection had been received from neighbours expressing concern over (amongst other things) the location of the building, the increase in noise from playing children, the extended hours of use that the new building would generate and the lack of sufficient car parking space. The letters had been previously circulated and so were not read out. Council also took note of those who had spoken at the public forum earlier in the meeting. There had been site visits by Councillors. There was general agreement that the application should be supported because of the importance of Pre School in keeping the primary school viable. It was felt that the new building would not be intrusive because of the low level of the building and it was felt that noise from the playground would be masked from neighbours by the new building. There was concern that if middle schools were abolished in the future, the size of the site would not be sufficient to support an increased size of primary school. The future of middle schools was apparently being discussed but was at present unknown. The was concern over the lack of parking at the site especially as there is no other public car parking in the village and because of the uncertainty of the availability of spaces at The Institute especially when other functions were taking place there. Subject to concerns about parking, traffic and road safety issues being addressed, the application was supported. Proposed Cllr Irvine, Seconded Cllr Loxton. **Carried**
Action Clerk

c. to consider any other applications received since date of agenda: none

06/35 Parish Plan

The Parish Plan had been published and the accounts and final claim for grant submitted. There was agreement that it was an excellent publication. There was discussion about a future meeting and the amount of interest it may have at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was suggested that the Parish Plan Group be asked to provide feedback about a possible parish meeting later in the year to discuss the plan.

06/36 Environment

a. highways repairs

Most reported potholes were due to be repaired shortly as was a temporary repair to The Street. The bridge was being repaired.

b. footpath problems

The poor state of Parsons Walk beyond the bridge was raised. It was considered that money in the Footpath budget could be used to make improvements perhaps jointly with SCC and with the help of the offenders community sentencing programme. **Action Clerk**

c. The Row – pedestrian safety and accessibility

The Clerk had written to SCC requesting an action plan and was awaiting a reply. **Action Clerk**
Car parking by parent's cars outside the School was a continuing problem with verges damaged and road safety compromised. It was suggested the police should become involved. **Action Clerk**

d. locked gate between The Church and Parsons Walk

A letter had been received from the householder who expressed no interest to re-open the gate. There was a discussion on action required. It was agreed that but would not make a formal request for the path to be registered, but if members of the public wished to take the matter up with SCC, HPC would give assistance to them. **NFA**

e. neighbourhood watch

It was agreed that any necessary new signs should be ordered and placed at the entrances to the village.
Action Clerk

f. notification of any new environment matters none

g. The Suffolk hedgerow survey Cllr Pask agreed to deal with this matter **Action Cllr Pask**

h. Spring Clean Suffolk week This was noted.

i Street name signing It was agreed that SCC would be asked for the cost of and types of street name available.
Action Clerk

06/37 The Green and Cemetery

a. The Green conservation

The working group reported on a meeting with Anita Seymour and that costings were now being done on the scheme plans circulated to Councillors. A new place direction sign had been ordered for the top of The Green
Action WG

b. BT reinstatement of damaged areas nothing to report

c. shortage of cemetery spaces The situation was becoming critical due to expected spaces no longer being available near the top of the bank due to tree roots and by the steady encroachment on land at the top of the cemetery due to excessive space being left between graves over the years. It was agreed that a working group of Cllrs Pask, Irvine and Schofield would consider the options for the provision of new grave spaces. **Action WG and Clerk**

d. cemetery lower gates Cllr Loxton had not yet inspected the old main gate posts **Action Cllr Loxton**

e. headstone stability The WG assigned to cemetery spaces would try to track the 19 owners of unsteady gravestones and consider options. **Action WG**

06/38 Emergency Planning Cllr Irvine had produced a report and draft questionnaire for possible circulation to the village. It was decided that for the present this would not be carried out and that further thought was required. It was noted that a seminar on emergency planning was to be held on 11 April.

06/39 Correspondence requiring comment or action

West Suffolk Consortium of voluntary organisations lunch invitation. noted
Buckingham Palace garden party invite for Chairman of Parish Councils. It was agreed to nominate the Chairman.
Action Clerk

Blind Lane fire access. A recent fire had highlighted the impossibility for fire engines to reach remote properties beyond Blind Lane. The householders affected had been given information by The Clerk on who to contact and how to deal with the problem.

Avian flu posters and info. It was agreed that this information should be made available on the notice board and through Contact magazine. **Action Clerk**

Planning workshops for Parish Councillors. Dates for these meetings had been circulated. **Action Cllrs**

SALC Practical problem solving and decision making for Parish Councils. To be circulated.

Mobile library survey and feedback. Cllr Long agreed to comment. **Action Cllr Long**

Babergh economic development programme. Cllr Loxton agreed to consider this document. **Action Cllr Loxton**

06/40 Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed that as reports can legally be annexed to the minutes, the minutes would be short and that it would be inappropriate to read the full annexed reports from last year. The Clerk was asked to request that current year reports be concise and it is hoped that the shorter time scale of the meeting would allow more focus on the future of the village groups rather than the past achievements and also allow more time for questions to speakers.

Action Clerk

06/41 Matters for future consideration none

06/42 Dates of next meetings

Annual Parish Meeting Monday 15 May 2006 at 7.00 pm for 7.30pm in The Institute.

Annual Council Meeting Monday 22 May at 7.00pm in The Institute

The meeting closed at 10.40pm.