

## **Hartest Parish Council**

Minutes of the meeting held in The Institute on Monday 17 July 2006 at 7.00pm.

In attendance: Cllrs James Long (Chairman), David Loxton, Jo Pask, John Schofield, Rachel Irvine, Robin Oaten.

Absent: Cllr Mary Gough

Apologies for absence: County Councillor Richard Kemp

Attending: Marie Huggett (Clerk to the Council), 6 members of the public

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**06/70 Declarations of interest:** none

**06/71 Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2006** were approved as a true record and signed accordingly.

### **06/72 Matters arising from the minutes of 22 May 2006**

06/57 Cllr Loxton noted that no action had been taken to ascertain further information regarding the proposed local government reorganisation. **Action Chairman and Clerk**

06/61a It was noted that no action had been taken with regard to considering a policy for budgeting and giving donations. **Action Clerk**

### **06/73 Public Forum**

Comments were made from the public regarding Darney Lane and access/pedestrian safety at The Row.

### **06/74 Police Report – PC Sally Smith/PC Den Mullett**

The Clerk had received a report covering 1<sup>st</sup> April to 17<sup>th</sup> July 2006, which was read to Council:

4 crimes had been recorded within the parish compared to 1 for the same period last year.

1 burglary at a dwelling

1 vehicle crime

1 theft of heating oil from the Institute

1 theft of a large agricultural roller from a farmer's field

PC Mullett advised that Suffolk Police Force will remain as it is for the time being. There is a decision to be made in respect of a local base for the Police to be situated in Lavenham. PC Mullett is likely to be one of the beat officers and there will be 24/7 coverage of the area. A Drop In Centre has been secured in Long Melford where members of the public can go and meet local Police Officers at certain times during a week. A centre is also being considered for Hartest if suitable premises are found. The church and Pear Tree Farm were suggested. Cllr Schofield asked if traffic cones could be borrowed for the Hartest Fete on Bank Holiday Monday. PC Mullett advised that he is aware of the issues surrounding pedestrian access and safety at The Row and stated that he would help HPC with their approach to dealing with the issues. He stated that the current situation is totally unacceptable and would be happy to put his comments to SCC. He acknowledged that there are speeding issues within the village and advised that traffic officers can attend Hartest in the evenings and will help where they can. Cllr Pask advised PC Mullett that she would like to be involved in looking at the speeding issue and speed limit signs.

### **06/75 County Councillor's report – Cllr Richard Kemp**

The Clerk had received a report which was read to Council:

The white paper on the local government reorganisation has been delayed until after the summer recess, following the cabinet reshuffle.

Peter Worobec, assistant Chief Constable at Suffolk Police, has been appointed the new independent Chair of Suffolk's Safeguarding Children Board.

SCC has released details of how the shortfall in government funding is affecting day care services for older people. There will be a reduction in service levels for many elderly people across Suffolk. There could be an impact on organisations providing day care services. The authority is working to ensure that resources are allocated fairly to those vulnerable people in the greatest need.

The SCC's stand at the Suffolk Show has been hailed a success. The theme this year was 'A Better Way for Suffolk' and it was a chance for officers and Councillors to listen to what the public thought important.

SCC held its AGM on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2006. A new Chairman was appointed, Councillor Charles Michel and Vice-Chairman, Councillor Bill Sadler.

SCC has pledged support for local post offices through a motion which called for SCC to find ways in which it could support the local post office network especially in rural areas.

#### **06/76 District Councillor's report – Cllr James Long**

The proposal to merge Suffolk Police with Cambridgeshire Police has been shelved for foreseeable future.

There is a chance that Walnut Tree Hospital in Sudbury will be retained as funds have been found for cottage hospitals.

Babergh DC is looking at more information in respect of the proposed third runway at Stanstead. If the runway is approved much more noise would be heard, Cllr Long is to obtain more information regarding this matter. **Action Chairman**

#### **06/77 Finance**

**a. bank accounts** – change of contact details for the new Clerk are required for the Halifax and Natwest bank accounts which involve all signatories. The Halifax Guaranteed Reserve Account is due to mature on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2006. The capital invested was £4353.05, the interest payable is £94.98 giving a total of £4448.03. It was resolved that the Council would top up the account to bring the total balance to £5000 and reinvest this amount into the Halifax Guaranteed Reserve Account for a further six months. It was noted that the Natwest Reserve Account latest statement advised that tax was paid on the gross interest, it was felt that HPC should not be liable to pay tax. The Clerk is to query the matter with Natwest. Cllr Loxton is to research other investment products to ascertain if a better rate can be found for future investments. **Action Clerk and Cllr Loxton**

**b. current finance statements – balances, receipts and payments to be approved.**  
Review of current finance statement of balances, receipts and payments to be approved:

D Morbey (previous Clerk) wages and expenses - £181.82

M Huggett (Clerk) wages and expenses - £513.59

Hire of the Insitute - £38.50

Contact Magazine annual advertising - £44.00

Babergh DC litter bin emptying - £8.55

Proposed: Cllr Pask Seconded: Cllr Irvine

#### **06/78 Planning**

##### **a. Babergh DC Decisions received:**

B/06/583 Pear Tree Farm, Brockley Road Erection of cartlodge/store building to be used for existing pet food sales **granted**

##### **b. to consider planning applications received:**

B/06/1031 Mile End Farm Barn, Somerton Road - Variation of condition 10 of planning permission B/05/1431 to allow stable block to be retained. **No objection**

B/06/1032 Mile End Farm Barn, Somerton Road – Variation of condition 02 of planning permission B/05/1431 to allow eastern access within site frontage to be retained. **No objection**

B/06/1033 Mile End Farm Barn, Somerton Road – Erection of single-storey front extension. **No objection**

B/06/1048 Mill Hill Farm House, Somerton Road – Listed Building Consent – internal/external alterations. **No objection**

**c. to consider any other planning applications received since the date of this notice:**  
none

**d. tree preservation orders:** none

#### **06/79 Parish Plan Update**

It was agreed that a Parish Plan public meeting would be held on 11 September 2006 in the Institute. Cllrs Long, Irvine and Loxton will arrange to meet with Parish Plan representatives

before this date in order to plan an agenda for the public meeting after which a public notice will be displayed inviting Hartest residents to attend. **Action Cllrs Long, Irvine, Loxton**

#### **06/80 Environment**

**a. highway repairs** – A small hole opposite Cooks Farm Cottage was reported. **Action Clerk**

**b. Parsons Walk** – Cllr Schofield advised Council that he had met with Kevin Verlander from SCC and representatives from Crime Concern. Crime Concern is very willing to undertake the required work; cutting earth and rearranging levels followed by the covering of the surface with a deep layer of bark chippings and hardcore where necessary. Some stepping work will also be undertaken at the beginning of the route. There is no expense required for the labour but funds are required for tools and surface material. It was agreed that the cost would be shared with Suffolk County Council and HPC could offer up to £350. It was resolved that the Council would meet the cost up to £350. A notice will be placed in the Contact Magazine and on the noticeboard advising of the works. Proposed: Cllr Pask Seconded: Cllr Oaten. **Action Cllr Schofield**

#### **c. The Row – pedestrian safety, accessibility and speed limits**

Two letters were read to Council from Mr R Cutler and Mr K Hitchman advising of their concerns regarding The Row issues. The Clerk advised that Cllr Richard Kemp had:

- asked the local Police to carry out speed checks in the village. Cllr Kemp was awaiting a strong worded letter from HPC to take forward to SCC.
- contacted the Disability Rights Commission with regard to the steps who advised that footpaths are derived as a public function which is currently beyond the DRC's remit but there will be amendments to the Disability Discrimination Act in December 2006 after which the DRC maybe able to assist with the access matter.
- advised that he will arrange for the press to be involved once strong worded letter received from HPC
- suggested that HPC consider forming a pressure group

A discussion took place and HPC acknowledged that the public were in danger starting at Blind Lane until they reach the Doctors Surgery if they are unable to access The Row footpath. HPC had received reports of two residents being clipped by vehicles. It was resolved that a strong worded letter be sent to County Cllr Richard Kemp advising of HPC's concerns with regard to:

- Danger for pedestrians from Blind Lane onwards
- Steps at The Row being totally impractical and discriminative against the elderly, disabled and parents with pushchairs and means these residents have to take to the road
- The delay in SCC dealing with these safety issues

Cllr Pask asked the Clerk to contact SCC to arrange for the road markings outside the school to be repainted as they are somewhat faded which may help with the parking congestion at school drop off and pick up times. **Action Cllr Long, Clerk**

A matter of some 'new steps' that have been established in the bank at The Row was raised and it was resolved to refer this issue to SCC. **Action Clerk**

#### **d. Footpaths**

**Spring Bank** – Babergh DC had confirmed that the property at Spring Bank is located in the built up area according to the 1995 guidance. The Clerk had contacted the Planning Dept advising that HPC was concerned that the planning permission conditions for the new property to be built at Spring Bank did not include clarification of the existence of a footpath. Richard Watson, Head of Planning had replied advising that there was, in law, no footpath at the site and therefore the planning permission did not need to take account of it. Cllr Pask produced a map of 1884 from the Records Office showing the existence of the footpath at that time. Discussion took place regarding making a formal claim to SCC which required substantial evidence of usage. Whilst HPC acknowledged that there had been a footpath, unfortunately the Council would be unable to substantiate usage in recent years due to the fact that the footpath has not be signed. It was therefore resolved that the Council would take no further action on this matter and agreed that a letter be sent to Mr Steward who had contacted HPC regarding this. **Action Clerk**

**Darney Lane** – SCC had advised that work was due to commence the previous week at the Whepstead part. There had been concern expressed from Whepstead PC and residents, local farmer Roger Bird regarding damage to the byway, the environment and crops by four wheel drive vehicles and motorcycles, making the byway difficult for walkers. Cllr Pask and

the Clerk inspected the Hartest part of Darney Lane and found tree roots broken, very rutted ground and damage to a bank. The Chairman invited Roger Bird to speak to the Council regarding the problems he experiences with these vehicles. Mr Bird advised that these vehicles tend to use the byway mostly in the winter and wet times at weekends, as this provides sportier conditions that the drivers prefer. He has had situations where crops have been damaged by these vehicles and even been asked to assist with retrieving vehicles that have got stuck in the mud. It was resolved that HPC would send a strong worded letter to SCC advising that it supported a continued closure to vehicular traffic (other than essential vehicular traffic) due to these problems. A copy would be passed to Mike Feather, Whepstead PC, Cllr Richard Kemp and Roger Bird. **Action Chairman, Clerk**

**Rogers Lane** – Cllr Pask asked the Clerk if she can contact SCC to negotiate two cuts per year. **Action Clerk**

**e. neighbourhood watch** – nothing to report

**f. Suffolk Hedgerow Survey** - Cllr Pask advised that Erica Clark, Michael Feather and herself will take the initiative with this survey and will report back at the next meeting.

**g. Street Name Signing** - for The Row. The Clerk advised that she was waiting for costings from Babergh DC and an engineer may have to visit the site to check suitability. It was resolved that this matter be deferred to the next HPC meeting. **Action Clerk**

#### **06/81 The Green and Cemetery**

**a. The Green conservation** Cllr Schofield reported to the Council. It was agreed that a meeting at The Green with the map of works was required. The Clerk was to check with SALC if the Council was able to do this under Local Council legislation and arrange a meeting accordingly. In the meantime SCC would be contacted to advise that the project might be delayed slightly due to this. **Action Clerk**

**b. Insurance of village assets** The Clerk advised that the HPC Insurance policy was due for renewal 30 September 2006 and currently only 2 litter bins are insured. The Clerk asked the Council if they would like to consider insuring the Village Sign valued at £4000, particularly as these are often targeted by thieves and sold on. The additional annual premium was approximately £49.98 for All Risks cover. It was resolved that the Clerk would obtain a quote for an annual premium for all assets in readiness for discussion at the next HPC Meeting.

**Action Clerk**

**c. Review of Cemetery spaces** – it was resolved to defer this item to the next HPC meeting.

**d. Cemetery Lower Gates** – it was resolved to defer this item to the next HPC meeting.

**e. Headstone Stability** – it was resolved to defer this item to the next HPC meeting.

**f. Review of burial regulations for tablets** – The regulations do not stipulate acceptable measurements for tablets. The Clerk was asked to investigate standard sizes for tablets.

**Action Clerk**

**06/82 Emergency Planning** – it was resolved to defer this item to the next HPC meeting.

#### **06/83 Correspondence received requiring comment or action**

**a.** Letter from Mr P Tebbit advising that he regretfully is unable to continue looking after the Hartest War Memorial. It was resolved that Cllr Long would write to Mr Tebbit thanking him for his good work and place a note in the Contact Magazine asking for a volunteer to continue with the upkeep. **Action Chairman, Clerk**

**b.** Invitation to attend Havebury Housing Partnership Conference – no action

**c.** Invitation to attend SuffolkAcre AGM – no action

Cllr Long advised at this point that he had recently presented a framed letter of thanks on behalf of HPC Mr Bill Basham. A copy was passed to the Councillors.

#### **06/84 Minute Book**

The Clerk had obtained costings from Shaw & Sons for a traditional mounted book taking 200 sheets in green and red cloth - £18.00 plus VAT with "Minute Book" in Gold on the front. An Emerald Green Ring Binder is another option with "Minute Book " on spine at a cost of £65.95 plus VAT. The Clerk had contacted a few printers who could offer a much cheaper modern style binding similar to the Parish Plan document. Council asked for a sample to be considered at the next HPC meeting. **Action Clerk**

#### **06/85 Matters for future consideration**

- a. **Parsons Walk Bridge** – Handrail has come away from the Bridge **Action Cllr Loxton**
- b. **Hedges at Lawshall Road** - require trimming **Action Clerk**
- c. **Bus shelters**
- d. **Future of Local Government Reorganisation** **Action Chairman**

**06/86 Date of next meeting** HPC meeting Monday 18 September 2006 in the Institute.