

**LITTLE BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY 13th MARCH 2017 AT 7.30 PM IN LITTLE BLAKENHAM  
VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Wally Binder (Chairman), Stephen Wright, Stephen Clark, Mary Whurr, Barry Palmer Sanjay Mehra, John Latham.  
Janet Gobey (Clerk).  
Two members of the public.

The Chairman opened the Meeting at 7.30 pm with a welcome to those attending.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**2. Declarations of any pecuniary and non pecuniary interests.**

a. Councillors declaration of interest appropriate to any item on the Agenda.

Cllr Wright declared a non pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9.

b. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interest (if any).

None

c. To grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate.

None.

**3. Open Forum**

A member of the public felt it was important that Councillors were familiar with the properties involved in planning applications before they reached a decision and queried whether Councillors should go and view the area before an application was considered.

He also asked why the Council were not considering all the current planning applications.

**ACTION: CLERK TO INVESTIGATE.**

A member of the public said that there was a current application relating to his property and he had come to speak about it if required. Councillors discussed this application, but were unable to comment as there appeared to be no official notification of it.

**ACTION: CLERK TO INVESTIGATE.**

Cllr. Latham said that he had been contacted by a resident who was very concerned about cars speeding on Valley Road, especially near Little Box Meadow. Councillors agreed that this was an ongoing problem and posed a particular risk to children living in the area.

Councillors discussed possible actions, but felt that it would be difficult to get the police involved given the current pressure on police resources. It was agreed that there were several individuals who seemed to be the main offenders and the Chairman volunteered to speak to those individuals personally.

**ACTION: CHAIRMAN.**

**4. To approve the Minutes of the last Meeting.**

The Minutes of the Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

**5. To note the update on Action Points.**

The Clerk had contacted UK Power Networks about the partially dead tree near the Village Hall, but, as it was not touching the power lines, UKPN would not arrange for it to be felled.

The Clerk had not been able to find a named contact in Highways to speak to about the mud on the road outside the JT Few site, but had emailed Highways asking to be given a contact. As the situation had improved recently, she had not followed this up.

The Clerk had checked the pattern of other Parish Councils' and confirmed that at least two local Councils had theirs on Mondays that clashed with Little Blakenham's dates. Councillors agreed to move to Tuesdays after the last date booked (May Meeting) to enable District and County Councillors to attend.

The Clerk confirmed that other outstanding Action Points were covered in the Agenda for this Meeting.

## 6. Planning

### a. Consultation on Planning Application 4906/16

Location: Broomvale Farm, Bramford Road, Little Blakenham IP8 4JU.

Proposal: First floor addition to detached garage / workshop,

Councillors considered this application and unanimously agreed that they had no objection.

### b. None.

### c. None.

### d. SnOasis Reserved Matters

The Chairman gave a report on the SnOasis Parish Alliance. The SPA are going to release a Statement expressing their dismay at the failure of the developer to provide the required detailed information and also querying whether the application is of such regional significance that it should be dealt with at a higher level than MSDC. This will be sent to local media and a wide range of organisations. Councillors recorded their support for this approach.

### e. EAW construction work.

The Clerk had circulated an email from Scottish Power about the programme of archaeological survey work.

Councillors noted that the promised changes had been made to the B113/Bullen lane junction had been made and that there were now markers in place for the entrances and exits from the fields the cables would be going through.

## 7. To note progress on the refurbishment of the Beeches play area.

The Chairman explained that it had been too wet to get the digger etc. on site, but as soon as the ground has dried out he will organise a working party one weekend for the clearance of everything in the play area except the swing. He has arranged to hire a digger that will be small enough to get through the gate into the play area without needing any fencing to be removed.

The refurbishment of the swing will take place once the weather has improved.

## 8. To note progress regarding the request for a longer term rental agreement for the Glebeland.

The Chairman said that there had been no response from the Diocese. He had spoken to the Rev. Seggar and she had agreed to speak to the Diocese on the matter. As a result, the Diocese had supplied a copy of an old lease that had expired a number of years ago, but had not entered negotiations about a new one.

## 9. Churchyard Maintenance

Cllr. Wright said that the PCC was requesting that the Council to take over the contract with Community Payback for churchyard maintenance. It is free for this financial year and one visit has already taken place. The Chairman said that he thought it was important that the churchyard is maintained, as it is for the use of anybody in the village and visitors to the village.

After some discussion, Councillors agreed to accept the contract. As a member of the PCC, Cllr Wright abstained.

The Chairman asked what progress had been made by the PCC in applying for a grant to replace the portacabin, as it's condition was continuing to deteriorate. Cllr. Wright said that this had not been actioned yet.

## 10. Finance

### a. To receive the Clerk's Financial Report.

The Clerk issued the report. The Council retains a healthy financial balance, but costs are rising.

The Clerk circulated the Statement of Accounts, showing the bank balances at 21/2/17:

Treasurers Account: £8082.24      Deposit Account: £2930.38

The bank balances in the Statement of Accounts were verified against the paper statements provided by Lloyds Bank and signed off on the Statement of Accounts by Cllr. Mehra. The Chairman signed the Statement of Accounts.

### b. Payments to be approved and cheques to be signed.

The following payments were approved and cheques were signed.

#### MARCH MEETING - PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED

13/3/17	Renewal of Microsoft Office 365 Personal subscription for the Council's laptop.	£59.99	LGA 1972, S.111
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#### MARCH MEETING - PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED & CHEQUES TO BE SIGNED

13/3/17	Janet Gobey- Expenses (printer toner and paper)	£95.98	LGA 1972, S.111
13/3/17	Information Commissioner (Annual Registration Fee	£35.00	LGA 1972, S.111
13/3/17	Suffolk County Council Street Lighting (Electricity and maintenance for 16/17)	£391.73	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3. Highways Act 1980.s.301

Councillors also noted the following payments made by direct debit:

#### PAYMENTS MADE BY DIRECT DEBIT 1/1/17 to 28/2/17

30/1/17	EON Village Hall electricity	£27.99	LGA 1972, s.133
27/2/17	EON Village Hall electricity	£24.61	LGA 1972, s.133

### c. To consider any donations under Section 137.

It was agreed that this would be deferred until the May Meeting.

## 11. Governance

### a. To approve the revised Standing Orders.

Councillors agreed unanimously to approve the Standing Orders.

### b. To approve the revised Financial Regulations.

Councillors agreed unanimously to approve the Financial Regulations.

### c. To approve the Risk Assessments

Councillors agreed unanimously to approve the Risk Assessments.

### d. To consider and approve the Council's Financial controls.

The Clerk circulated her report on the Council's current system of Financial Controls.

Councillors discussed this and agreed that the current system outlined in the paper was satisfactory and that the possible changes outlined in the paper were not necessary at this stage.

### e. To note the new NJC pay rate for the Clerk from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.

The Clerk explained that it was necessary for the Council to approve the new rate of pay resulting from the national pay rise. This would mean her hourly rate would rise from £8.92 an hour to £9.05. Councillors approved this.

Cllr. Wright proposed that the Clerk's pay rate be raised to a higher point on the scale in the region of £10.00 per hour. This was seconded by Cllr. Mehra. It was agreed that the exact point be agreed at the next Meeting when the Clerk would have the full pay scale available.  
ACTION: CLERK

#### 12. Parish Council communication strategy.

The Clerk said that she had sent in an article for InTouch, mostly focusing on the Village Hall and the problem of dog waste bags. Councillors agreed that there should be an article supplied on alternate months.

The Clerk said that, apart from the website and the noticeboards, the only other methods of communication that seemed possible to adopt were social media – Twitter and Facebook. Cllr. Mehra felt that these were an important tool for the Council to use, especially to engage with younger people. Councillors agreed to set up Twitter. Cllr. Mehra offered to work with the Clerk on this.

ACTION: CLERK.

#### 13. Correspondence

To note and consider a response to the following correspondence.

a. Letter regarding Pitstop Farm (formerly Mr. Marland's land).

Councillors discussed this and agreed that the landowner is maintaining the footpath across the land at more than the required width and that there are no apparent irregularities in the notices that have been put up. Councillors agreed that no action was called for at present, but that the situation would be monitored.

b. Email regarding the Council's position on the Northern Bypass.

Councillors agreed that they supported in principle the idea of the Northern Bypass, but that it was not possible to comment further until the preferred route was announced.

c. Email from SALC regarding Section 137 expenditure limits for 2017/18.

Councillors noted this.

d. LAIS1396 on Housing White Paper.

Councillors noted this.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.48 pm with thanks to all concerned.