

PARISH OF RADNAGE

A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th DECEMBER 2017 AT 8 PM IN RADNAGE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Councillors: Chairman Mr Robert Nikiel, Mrs Sue Jones, Mr Graham Wass, Mr Everton Merchant, Cllr Mrs Alex Ryan, and Clerk Mrs Lin Freeth.
There were 2 members of the public present.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Ms Tamsin Addison, Cllr Turner, County Cllr Carl Etholen and District Cllrs Shade Adoh and Saeed Saddique.

MEETING CLOSED FOR PUBLIC SESSION

The matter of the debris from fallen tree branches etc due to the snowfall, and who to contact to deal with this, was raised. Could a contractor be appointed to clear the highways in these circumstances? There are currently branches on the road at Church Lane/Radnage Lane, City Road and Andridge Hill. It is noted that it is the landowners responsibility to clear material from their hedgerows but that Transport for Bucks can be contacted directly via their online portal to report any obstructions. The Clerk would be happy to assist anyone wishing to make a report. Information will be published via Radnage.net

ACTION: CLERK

MEETING REOPENED

2. To receive any disclosure of pecuniary interests by Members relating to items on the agenda.

Cllr Merchant declared an interest in the planning application (Boundary Farm) to be discussed at Item 6 and did not take part in the planning considerations at this meeting. No other declarations were made.

3. Acceptance and signing of minutes of Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 8th November 2017.

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2017 were approved as proposed by Cllr Wass and seconded by Cllr Nikiel and agreed by all as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed and dated the minutes.

4. Report on progress on items in the previous minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council not otherwise included in this agenda.

i) The Clerk reports that there is not currently a specific site utilised by our contractor for the disposal of compostable waste material. Any material from pruning and from the planters will not be able to be disposed of within the 'rough' boundary area to the NE of the village hall as this is being cleared and reinstated. An area needs to be defined, perhaps near to the 'mound'/rough area? To be discussed at a future meeting.

ii) The Clerk reports that the complaint received regarding the large sign placed at the entrance to Home Farm and operation of a livestock / food business was referred to WDC Planning Enforcement Dept. The case officer reported that the sign has now been reduced in size and is now acceptable. The small business venture was also not thought to be a concern.

iii) The Clerk reports that the complaint received regarding the increase in size of the access gate to The Barn, Green End Road, and multiple businesses being in operation was referred to WDC Planning Enforcement Dept. Investigations by the appointed case officer are ongoing with nothing to report at this time.

iv) The Clerk reports that the meter reading from Castle Water, marked as 'estimated' was in fact an 'actual' reading which was taken on October 24th. The invoice details were therefore correct. At the time of the next scheduled meter reading on January 28th the council will also carry out a reading to ensure that they correlate.

ACTION: CLERK

5. Planning Applications.

To note planning decisions:

- Case Ref: 17/07464/FUL – Batt Hall, Sprigs Holly Lane - Application Permitted
- Case Ref: 17/07465/FUL – Batt Hall, Sprigs Holly Lane - Application Permitted
- 17/07612/FUL – Guelder Barn, City Road – Application Permitted

Under Appeal:

Appeal Ref: APP/K0425/D/17/3184870 - 2 Green End Cottages Green End Road – there is nothing further to report at this time.

To consider planning applications:

- a) 17/08008/FUL – Boundary Farm, Sprigs Holly Lane – *Application for conversion of existing single storey building to form a self-contained two bedroom dwelling with parking, access and amenity space.*

Councillors agreed that this application seems to be within policy for development but would expect that any resulting permissions carry restrictions on any future development of the building such that a larger dwelling is not created, either by existing or future owners. It is also expected that restrictions are imposed on any future applications for stabling etc if the existing ones are no longer needed. The Parish Council requests that should permission be granted any HGV's and site traffic wishing to access the property should use a route approaching the property from the Chinnor end of Sprigs Holly Lane only, as the village lanes and other routes of access are not suitable for such vehicles.

- b) 17/08061/FUL - Bella Vista, City Road – *Application for the creation of a new access and entrance gate following closure of existing access & erection of bin store adjacent.*

Councillors agreed that the argument for this application (improved access and security) can be equally obtained by changing the existing entrance. There is no argument set out in the application for a change of location of the entrance. The independent highways report does not take into account that twice a day the area opposite the proposed new entrance is extremely busy with school traffic and parking, making it impractical and unsafe to have caravans and campervans accessing at this point. It is requested that further comment is made by Highways. The argument for moving it further away from the national speed limit sign does not take into account actual traffic speeds which, due to the bend at the top of Bowers Lane, is low at the point of transition from 30mph to national speed limit. It is expected that restrictions are imposed to prevent the new access being used to open up the land behind Bella Vista for possible future development. The Parish Council requests that should permission be granted any HGV's and site traffic wishing to access the property should use a route from the A40, via Mudds Bank only, as the village lanes and other routes of access are not suitable for such vehicles.

6. Finance

- a) The Clerk had circulated the latest budget summary and no questions arose from this. The Clerk advised that as at 30th November 2017 the Business Account held a balance of £31,052.30 representing interest of £1.32 for the last month and the Treasurers Account a balance of £27,625.32
- b) Expected expenses have been received for the Village Hall planters and have been included for payment. The payments for November 2017 were approved as proposed by Cllr Nikiel, seconded by Cllr Wass and agreed by all. Cllr Ryan and Cllr Merchant undertook the signing of the invoices and cheques.
- c) The Clerk had circulated the Action Plan report arising from the working group meeting held on November 29th. Radnage Parish Council publish an action plan annually in December which assists with setting the budget. This includes maintenance and project expenditure for the forthcoming year; any matters raised by members of the public during the Annual Parish Meeting; and from matters identified by the Parish Council. The Action plan is not exhaustive and there may be the addition of further appropriate actions identified as required, throughout the year. It is requested that an additional item for emergency measures in the event of adverse weather etc for such things as fallen branches / trees. To agree and adopt the Action Plan is proposed by Cllr Ryan, seconded by Cllr Nikiel, and agreed by all. **ACTION: CLERK**
- d) The Clerk had circulated the report arising from the Annual Budget and Precept working group meeting held on December 6th to make preparations for deciding upon the Precept request for the financial year 2018-19. To agree and adopt this report was proposed by Cllr Nikiel, seconded by Cllr Merchant and agreed by all.
- e) Councillors discussed and approved the annual budget and Precept for 2018/2019
Councillors went through the details of the income and expenditure for the current financial year and made justified statements, as necessary, against each budgeted line. This process was done outside of the council meeting to ensure that the figures were well understood and challenged if necessary. The strategic plans for the forthcoming year, which form the Council's Action Plan, were also taken into consideration. The Parish Council always aims to calculate the Precept request by the December council meeting so that the precept request can be submitted to WDC in the January of the following year. It is the task of the council to agree the Precept request at their December meeting annually. Precept is then agreed by the District Council during the spring and implemented at the start of the financial year beginning in April. It is then paid in 2 equal parts – during April and September of that year.
Precept for the current financial year had been set at £26,460 against known income, anticipated income and anticipated expenditure. This level of Precept had been an increase of 5% to allow the council to continue to provide and maintain services to the village. It was noted that apart from the Clerk who was employed as the Proper Officer of the Council, all councillors were unpaid volunteers.
Councillors recognised that in the year to date (30 November 2017) they had spent £23,865.07 and anticipated that expenditure at the year-end to be in the order of £43,500.
As at 30 Nov 2017 the Treasurers Account had a balance of £27,625 and the Business account £31,050 – which included the dedicated 'reserves' of £15,842.
For the Financial Year 2018/2019 a calculated income of approx £42,300 was estimated and requirements for expenditure (to include projects relating to the village hall, common land, communications, road safety, tree work etc) and reserves was estimated at £71,600 - so a shortfall of £29,300 additional income is required to meet the Council's needs. This represents a reduction in anticipated income and the addition of larger projects and expenditure. It was noted that Council Tax Support would become zero by 2020 when the full cost would need to be met locally. The forecast of the final expenditure for the current financial year is in line with the current budget and the actual amount may be less which will assist with the shortfall for next year. The further shortfall for the larger, more expensive, planned projects will be met with fundraising, grant applications and other funding initiatives.
It is therefore the belief of the council that a small increase to the Precept is necessary to allow them to continue to provide services to the village and to continue to meet with legislation.
It is proposed to request a Precept of £27,650.00 for the year 2018-19 which represents a 4.5% increase to that of the current financial year.
It was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Wass, and unanimously agreed to request a Precept of £27,650 which represents a 4.5% increase to that of the current financial year. **ACTION: CLERK**

- f) Discussions to consider the additional hours and annual payment of working from home allowances to the Clerk was deferred to a Closed Meeting held following the Parish Council Meeting.

7. Village Hall

- a) Cllr Turner had previously circulated his report advising the Council that the Village Hall had been checked today to ensure that all was well in the snow and freezing temperatures. It was noted that the oil level indicator was at 3 which is the trigger for an oil order. Cllr Jones reports that this has now been done with a delivery by Certas Energy scheduled for Tuesday December 19th. The gates will be opened and the tank unlocked for this.
ACTION: CLERK
The Parish Council keyholder list needs to be updated and additional keys cut as necessary - any for which only one key is currently held and those to enable each councillor to have a set for the front door, gate and key cupboard. Cllr Nikiel has kindly agreed to do this.
ACTION: RN
Cllr Nikiel reports that the cracks noticed in the cleaning cupboard area are thought to be historic and involve just the plasterwork. There is a gauge present which has not shown any movement.
- b) The matter of photographing the debris exposed during the first phase of clearing the overgrowth of the NE boundary of the Village Hall and obtaining quotes for its removal and levelling of the ground to assist with future maintenance of the area is deferred to the next meeting.
ACTION: RN
- c) Some dates previously booked for rental of the kitchen space were ultimately cancelled for various reasons. The company are catering for the Radnage School Christmas Lunch on Tuesday December 19th.
- d) Cllr Nikiel reports that some quotations have been received as part of the re-negotiation for alternative telephone contracts to include unlimited Wi-Fi. The Village Hall number is used by whoever is dealing with the village hall bookings with calls forwarded as needed. Any new contract will be for a limited time to properly ascertain its value and benefit of Wi-Fi to bookings. Grants will be investigated as it is a community asset.
ACTION: RN
- e) The tea towels used by hirers of the Village Hall need to be laundered weekly and Cllr Jones proposes that she approaches the Bookings Clerk to see whether this would be something that could be undertaken as an additional job. The quantity is estimated at 12 tea towels per week. Some of the existing ones were not found to be in a usable condition and have been disposed of. Cllr Jones used her discretionary fund of £50 to approve the purchase of new ones which is agreed by all. The invoice for this will be forwarded to the Clerk in due course.
- f) Following the Rugged Radnage 10k event UK Mats in Lane End very kindly collected, cleaned and delivered back the mats from the Village Hall. The Parish Council are pleased to be able to supply a testimonial in support of their business and service offered for use on their website. "A number of years ago UK Mats supplied the Radnage Parish Council with mats for our village hall. Subsequently, UK Mats have provided us with a mat cleaning service each year. We have been extremely happy with the quality of mats supplied and the ongoing cleaning service. UK Mats have proved to be an efficient and conscientious supplier, as well as being a friendly and caring local company." Robert Nikiel, Chairman, Radnage Parish Council. It is proposed by Cllr Wass, seconded by Cllr Nikiel, and agreed by all that a box of biscuits be given to them as a Thank You.
ACTION: RN

8. SSE

Cllr Nikiel reports that works by SSE are complete. The damage caused to the drain cover during the undergrounding of cables to the rear of the village hall remains unresolved. Cllr Nikiel is due to contact them and the solicitor to ensure that this matter is dealt with without any further delay.
ACTION: RN

9. Risk Assessment/Open Spaces

- a) The Clerk confirmed that the monthly playground inspection report had been received. Cllr Ryan reported that the bins are okay and that inspection of the deterrent spikes is due to take place as soon as a suitable time can be arranged. It is reported that the benches are being moved and used to climb up onto the basketball hoops. As this is a potential danger using anchors to fix the benches to the ground is discussed. It is suggested that one bench remains in the playground area and is fixed into position with the other 2 benches being used to replace those in the recreation field that need to be removed – one in the NE corner and one alongside the bank adjacent to the car park. Grass anchors will be required and details will be sent to Cllr Ryan so that quotes can be obtained. The grass cutting contractor will be asked for advice as to the best position for the benches for ease of cutting/strimming.
ACTION: CLERK/AR
- b) Cllr Nikiel reported that due to the snow and ice the burial ground has not been assessed but that this will take place to check for fallen branches etc as a result of the adverse weather.
ACTION: RN
- c) An update on the bus shelters and noticeboards will be received at a future meeting.
- d) It has been reported that the ivy needs to be cut back from the roof of the bus shelters. As we are unable to say that the roofing material is not asbestos it is suggested that a weedkiller will be used to control the ivy growth rather than cutting and stripping back. The contractor to the Parish Council will be approached with regard to this.
ACTION: CLERK

10. Locally Focused Village Projects

Cllr Wass reports that there is nothing further to report at this time.
ACTION: GW
The Clerk reports that thanks to the efforts of the Radnage.net administrator new email addresses have been assigned for each of the councillors. Updated contact details will be included on the website page and in any future correspondence.

11. Speeding Traffic

Cllr Nikiel reports that conversations have taken place with many of the surrounding parish council offices to see if the sharing of any existing MVAS devices may be possible. It seems that they are in full use and so not something which can be considered at this time. The funding applications previously made to Buckinghamshire County Council and the LAF will be followed up for a progress report. This project has been considered as part of the Action Plan and funds have been allocated to it within the budget set for 2018-19 **ACTION: RN**

12. Hedges

The Clerk reports that information has been published in Contact Magazine, and included on the radnage.net website, informing owners and occupiers of any property of their legal responsibility under the Highways Act 1980 to ensure that the public highway (defined by law as consisting of any verge, footway, carriageway, bridleway or footpath) is not obstructed by vegetation from their property. Cutting back should be done to a minimum of 1.2m, or to the boundary - being the central growth line – and to a height of 5.2m (roads) or 2.5m (verge/path). As many hedges around the village are becoming an increasing safety concern and a danger on our roads and pavements this matter will be followed up with letters to property owners / occupiers in the new year. **ACTION: CLERK**

13. Introduction of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in May 2018

Cllr Nikiel and the Clerk attended a very good, valuable and informative training day which highlighted the actions needed, what data we hold and the reasons for it, the length held and the right to be forgotten. The day covered data protection, FOI and Environmental issues. Various policy documents will need to be produced before the introduction of GDPR in May. Some template documents have already been supplied for our use. **ACTION: RN/CLERK**

14. Clerk's Matters – including late received correspondence.

- a) Thames Valley Police have issued their latest Rural Crime Update which has now been published on the Radnage.net website and will be included in Contact magazine next month. **ACTION: CLERK**
- b) Jo Dudley has completed the planters to the front of the village hall and they look very good indeed. Our grateful thanks are extended to her for her efforts and for agreeing to their ongoing maintenance. Our thanks also to the local resident who collected and delivered the planters and to Cllr Wass for installing them. A budget for the ongoing maintenance, replacement plants etc will be agreed at the January meeting. **ACTION: CLERK**

15. Forthcoming Meetings and attendees.

- a) To hear a report from recently attended meetings.
 - Data Protection & FOI – November 22nd – Cllr Nikiel & the Clerk attended as mentioned at item 13 above.
 - BRAG (Buckinghamshire Rural Affairs Group) Conference – November 24th – attended by our Clerk who reported that this was a very well attended and interesting gathering with 6 speakers including David Liddington, the Police & Crime Commissioner, the Head of Government/Rural Affairs Campaign to Protect Rural England and a representative from Affordable Housing & Urban Growth.
 - WDLAC Meeting - 7th December WDC Committee Room 1 – Cllr Nikiel was unable to attend but has received the minutes.
- b) To agree attendance at any forthcoming meetings.
 - South West Chilterns & Marlow LAF - 6th February 2018 – Hambleden Village Hall - Cllr Nikiel will attend.

16. Date of Next Meeting:

The next **Ordinary Meeting** of the Parish Council is scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 10th January 2018 at 8pm**, to be held in the Village Hall.

The formal meeting closed at 21.20 hours

PUBLIC SESSION

Residents attending the meeting remarked upon the hedge between the junction of Green Lane and City Road and extending up towards the postbox opposite The Crown pub. With local knowledge we are informed that there is in fact a footpath / pavement at the base of this hedge which has become completely covered over time. This needs to be cleared and both the landowner and Transport for Bucks will be contacted in an attempt to remedy this situation.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.30 hours.

Chairman's Signature: R. Nikiel

Date: 10th January 2018