

# PARISH OF RADNAGE

## A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2014 AT 8 PM IN RADNAGE VILLAGE HALL

**Present:** Councillors: Chairman Mr Robin Fawell, Vice-Chairman Ms Elizabeth Fynn, Mrs Sue Jones, Mrs Helen Orchard, Mr Lew Perring, Mr Roy Pitcher and Clerk Mrs Gill MacKenzie.

### **1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. District Councillors Mr John Gibbs and Ms Michelle Neudecker and 2 members of the public were present – Mr Neil Raven prospective councillor, and Mr Andrew Salmon. County Councillor Carl Etholen had tendered his apologies for absence.

### **MEETING CLOSED FOR PUBLIC SESSION**

Mr Salmon representing the Solar Park Action Group gave an overview on the proposed Solar Park for Forty Green Farm, Bledlow and asked that the council assist with publicising their opposition to the location of this planning application.

Cllr Neudecker formally presented a donation of £255 from her Ward budget towards the cost of the village hall redecoration. Cllr Gibbs advised that the waste contract was settling down with the provision of smaller rubbish bins being the next action to take for those who requested them. He reported that a nil increase was being proposed for the council tax for the next financial year.

Mr Raven gave a brief presentation to the council explaining why he wished to be considered for the role of councillor currently available by casual vacancy.

The Clerk advised that Cllr Etholen had asked if the council would accept a small donation from his budget and that she had accepted this on council's behalf to put towards the hall redecoration.

### **MEETING REOPENED**

### **2. To receive any disclosure of pecuniary interests by Members relating to items on the agenda and to advise any updates to existing disclosures.**

No declarations were received and all councillors confirmed that their previous written declarations had not changed. The Clerk was tasked with advising WDC of this declaration. **ACTION: Clerk**

### **3. Acceptance and signing of minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2014.**

It was proposed by Cllr Pitcher, seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour that the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2014 be accepted as a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed and dated the minutes.

### **4. Report on progress on items in the previous minutes not otherwise included in this agenda.**

There were no items to report.

### **5. Casual Vacancy update.**

Two people had expressed an interest in taking on the role of councillor to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Cllr Blakstad. The Chairman had invited both to attend a council meeting to give a short presentation and a decision would then be made to invite one to join the council. It was hoped that the other applicant would take an interest in assisting existing councillors in the remaining electoral period with a view to standing at the next election.

### **6. Planning.**

The following planning decision from WDC was noted:

Householder application for erection of single storey side/rear extension incorporating raising of part of roof, conversion of garage to habitable accommodation with new pitched roof over - 67 Green Lane Radnage Buckinghamshire HP14 4DJ - Permitted.

The council decided on the following response to planning applications:

- Cairns, Green End Road: Householder application for construction of single storey timber shed/outbuilding to side of existing house. No objection.
- Radnage House Riding School, Green End Road: Demolition of the existing indoor and outdoor riding arenas, 24 existing run down stables and mobile home and erection of a new indoor riding arena, 24 stables, 1 x 1 bed and 1 x 3 bed flats for grooms accommodation and an outdoor riding arena. No objection.

## **7. Finance**

- a) The RFO reported as at 31 January the treasurer's account stood at £17,539.17 and the business account held a balance of £22,091.72 representing interest of 94p. The monthly budget sheet had been distributed in advance of the meeting and no questions were raised.
- b) It was proposed by Cllr Fawell, seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour that the payments for January be approved and Cllrs Fynn and Orchard signed the cheques.

The next three items were taken at a closed meeting following the public meeting:

- c) Council agreed to pay the Clerks Working from Home Allowance of £500.
- d) Council agreed to retain the clerks hours as 10 per week over an annual average and a revised salary at SCP27 (currently £12.052 per hour) with effect from 1 Jan 2014.
- e) Council agreed an annual allowance of £100 for telephone usage and internet provision for the Clerk during the past year with the proviso that the Clerk should advise the council if she feels this level is unrealistic or insufficient.

These decisions were proposed by Cllr Fawell, seconded by Cllr Jones with all in agreement.

- f) It was proposed by Cllr Perring, seconded by Cllr Pitcher with all in favour that Miss P Kimber be appointed as Internal Auditor for year-end Mar 2014.

## **8. Village Hall**

- a) As Village Hall Manager Cllr Jones reported that 5 quotes had been obtained for the redecoration of the hall. These are all in excess of the funding so far approved by Council of £1500. As the hall had not been redecorated since 2000, there is a considerable amount of repair and maintenance needed. After consideration, local decorator Simon Mullett's estimate had been accepted and work had begun. Packing frames to fit above the air vents to blend in with the ceiling were now in place thanks to the efforts of Robin Fawell and Lew Perring.

The loft insulation has been purchased and stowed in the loft. The installation would be done as soon as possible. In these extreme wet conditions, water was still coming in under the front door and Cllr Perring was in contact with Premier Windows seeking a solution. **ACTION: LP**

Cllr Fynn and Mr Channer had cleared gutters helping to solve overflowing problems and one area in the corner of the patio had been identified as needing a longer length of guttering installed to prevent ongoing overflow. This would be attended to as soon as possible.

The donated Parish Map had been framed and was being stored ready for hanging after the completion of the redecoration.

Cllr Jones reported that the Lettings Administrator, Michelle, was not able to carry on with the role due to family circumstances and therefore it was intended to advertise the position in the next edition of

Contact magazine. Cllrs were also asked to spread the word in an attempt to find a suitable replacement quickly. Michelle had agreed to continue in the short term whilst a replacement was being sought.

b) It was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Fawell with all in favour that the Village Hall hire charge would be waived for this year for the Mothering Sunday Church Service on 30 March.

c) It was agreed by all councillors that the donation of the PA system offered by the church, now redundant in the church as a new system had recently been installed there, be accepted and stored within the village hall. **ACTION: SJ**

d) It was proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Pitcher with all in favour that additional expenditure of a sum not to exceed £3,500 be agreed to cover the cost of redecoration.

## **9. Open Spaces**

a) Councillor Pitcher advised that the work to trim the 4 lime trees around the recreation ground and the survey of the walnut tree on the common was to take place on 4<sup>th</sup> March at a cost of £380.

b) A report on the condition of the seats and benches on the playing field was deferred until the continual wet weather improves. **ACTION: RP**

c) The Clerk provided an update on the responses to the proposals for the future of the Black Barn on Radnage Common. Following the mailshot to all residents of Common Road, and an entry in Contact magazine, only 4 replies had been received by the deadline of 31 January 2014. One response asked for permission to salvage timber if the barn was to be demolished, one response asked if the building was suitable for barn conversion to provide family living accommodation. The Clerk was to advise the first that his interest would be retained on file, and to advise the second that this was not a viable option. Of the remaining 2 replies, one recommended demolition, the second sought permission to buy the barn to use for personal storage. It was agreed that more information on the legalities of common land and buildings therein would need further investigation however, in the meantime the Clerk was asked to contact the resident to obtain further details of his proposals before a further discussion on the future of the black barn could take place. It was suggested that a separate meeting be held outside of a formal meeting of the council, to discuss findings and options so that a sound proposal/s could be brought back to council for consideration.

d) The need to dredge Wards Pond within the next 6 months was briefly discussed and it was agreed that the pond should be surveyed in the dry months of the year to ascertain if it required dredging at this time.

e) The Chairman asked the Clerk to give a report on a meeting he and the Clerk had attended with the new Local Area Technician (LAT) on 6<sup>th</sup> February. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss options to improve the drainage and reduce water ingress into Wards Pond and to seek guidance on viable options to improve safety on the road alongside the school during drop off and pick up times – whilst surveying the area insitu.

The Clerk had provided the new LAT with a resume of the history of Wards Pond and surrounding area, together with schematics of the drainage and photographic evidence of the water on the road even during the hot summer of the previous year. The Chairman, the Clerk and Mrs Busby owner of Wards Farm met the LAT outside of Wards Farm and took a tour of the road, the pond itself and the area and explained the councils concerns and asked for his guidance and advice on the following specific points:

- The gullies from City Road into Wards Pond require more regular maintenance from BCC to prevent the build-up and blocking of the gulleys in the carriageway, catchpits in the verge and pipe work that outfalls into the pond.

- What could be done to stop the additional water runoff from the pipe leaving Pophleys? The seemingly continual flow of water from the pipe leaving Pophleys could cause a serious accident on a dangerous part of City Road, during times of freezing temperatures.
- What could be done to curtail the amount of water running into Wards Pond from surrounding farmland and properties?
- What can be done to improve the safety along a potentially dangerous stretch of road during freezing weather?

The LAT had advised that as this was not a major road this would not be maintained as regularly as others however, he would put in a request to ensure that gully clearance was done more regularly. He was of the opinion that several ditches which used to capture rainwater runoff from the surrounding area were no longer in existence. He agreed to give this whole matter his attention and see what could be done to assist. The Clerk had asked that she be kept apprised of any discussions, decisions or actions following this meeting.

In addition, the Chairman had asked the LAT for his advice on improving traffic management outside of the school. His response was that it would not be viable to increase the length of footpath as a minimum width would be required, which was not being met by existing paths as they had been put in place prior to the new regulations. His suggestion was that the parish council consider arranging for additional speed restriction signage on the road with other BCC departments.

#### **10. Risk Management**

It was proposed by Cllr Orchard, seconded by Cllr Jones with all in favour that the revised Risk Assessment dated January 2014 be adopted.

#### **11. Report from LAF Community Transport subgroup**

The latest meeting of the LAF Community Transport subgroup reported that they were making progress on the local transport issue and findings from the recent survey suggested that where local bus services or car share schemes were in place it appeared that local people were often unaware of them. Each parish had been offered up to £100 towards the cost of promoting and publishing the services which do exist. All councillors agreed to accept the offer of funding to help offset the job of publicising the limited choices available to Radnage residents.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### **12. Clerks Matters.** - To provide councillors with updated documentation and information.

a) The Clerk provided an update on the impending changes to BMKALC personnel.

b) A scheme to allow Parish Councils to take control of managing the timing and frequency of the clearance of paths and bridleways in their area was on offer from the County Council, with a grant available to cover the costs, based on the total length of specific public rights of way (not all). No advance payments would be made following receipted claims. Councillors considered that the county council would have greater 'buying power' and that the parish would not wish to be included in this scheme. The clerk was asked to respond accordingly.

**ACTION: Clerk**

c) A request for a memorial with the parish burial ground had been received, copies of the detail were distributed for councillors to see, and the clerk was asked to place this on next month's agenda for consideration.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### **13. Forthcoming Meetings and Attendees.**

There were no known meetings to be discussed.

#### **14. Date of Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014** commencing at 8pm in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21:52 hours.

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

There was no further public session

The meeting was followed by a short closed meeting without the Clerk present, to discuss items 7 (c), (d) and (e).

During the closed meeting, councillors agreed to consider both applicants for the casual vacancy and it was agreed to invite Mr Coggrave to give a presentation prior to the next meeting, and then decide who they would like to invite onto the council.

Chairman's Signature:

Date:

## **Appendix 1**

To note amounts for payment previously authorised:

Cheque number 2624	Contact magazine annual subscription £195
Cheque number 2625	Pace fuelcare oil delivery 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2014 £656.76

Payments to be approved:

Electronic transfer	Debbie White – Village Hall cleaning – January 2014 12.75 hrs £153
Cheque number 2628	G MacKenzie clerks salary £391.69 plus expenses £36.02
Cheque number 2629	R Fawell – Wickes Loft insulation for village hall £639.60 incl VAT
Cheque number 2630	Kent Murray Building Services – repairs to village hall £65 + VAT and work on black barn to install hasp £50+VAT
Cheque number 2631	Thames Water outstanding charges 12 Jul – 29 Jan £208.39
Cheque number 2632	C Strange – return village hall deposit £50
Cheque number 2633	S Jones £29.76 for specialist floor cleaner and cupboard handles
Cheque number 2634	Woodridge Cleaning Supplies £8.94 + VAT
Cheque number 2635	L Perring – for pots to cover the lights within the roof of the hall £41.73
Cheque number 2636	G MacKenzie – working from home and phone/internet allowance £600
Standing Order	M Skidmore – Village Hall Administrator £292
Direct Debit	Southern Electric December £90 – (in process of review)
Direct Debit	Sita UK - £16.17 +VAT