

MINUTES OF THE KINGSDON BI-MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14th NOVEMBER 2013 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00pm

Present: Mr. A Masters (Chairman); Mrs. A Saunders (Vice-Chairman); D. Morris, M. Clode and Mrs. E Owen (Parish Councillors); Mr. J. Calvert (District Councillor); Mr D. Ruddle (County Councillor); Mrs. K Hatt (Parish Clerk) plus 19 parishioners.

1. Apologies: A.Colton.

2. Declarations of Interest: None received.

3. Minutes:

The minutes having been previously circulated were approved and agreed.

4. Kingsdon Community Centre and Sports Field:

4.1 Temporary Village Shop:

A report was made by E. Owen, please see detailed report attached.

In summary – The change of use been approved. An account has been opened and treasurer appointed. Further grants have been received and donations. Village fundraising began. Tenancy has been agreed, does not include land at rear. The Insurance for utilities is in hand. A meeting will be called for the village shortly. There will be a cleaning/painting weekend on 30/11 and 1/12.

A statement was read out written by Patrick L – The tenancy agreement has now been created directly between the SCC and the Kingsdon community centre committee. The only thing that stands in the way of the shop opening is funds, we are making excellent progress but around £3000 more is needed. A whole village meeting has been arranged for Thursday 28th November at 7pm in the village hall, all residents invited.

E.Owen expressed thanks to Patrick, SSDC and SCC for all their hard work and support. There will be a press release to which D.Ruddle has been invited.

The parish council agreed match funding of £750, the project is now asking for this money now. This was agreed to now be handed over by the Parish Council.

4.2 Kingsdon Centre:

E.Owen. There is no more to add at this time but it will be tackled at the meeting on the 28th November 2013.

4.3 Former Primary School Field:

Councillor D Morris reported:

The information he is getting back from David Huxtable, David Clews and Charlie Fields, seems to be a case of one or the other, we can have the school or field, they are inextricably linked. David wants a decision on field to be put off until at least the school project has been running long enough to see if it has a future. Otherwise, if the school project does fail, we are in great danger of having lost both. He has written many times asking for us to have at least a temporary lease on the field.

The village will have no green space of its own if we lose the field (we only lease the field opposite the pub). An action group will be required but this is a little ahead of the game until we get a lease on the field. So we need to wait to hear back from Charlie Field. This will be asked for in the chronicle once we have heard back from Charlie Field.

E.Owen requested to see a copy of the letter sent to David Huxtable. She also stated that she does not believe we can draw the conclusion that it is one or the other by reading between the lines.

David replied that he has directly been told this.

Dean Ruddle stated - we have an obligation at County hall to raise as much money as possible. He has no paperwork yet but it is very likely that we will receive paperwork in the next 2 or 3 months for planning permission.

A parishioner questioned why have we not had a reply? If we have sent letters they are obliged to reply. We shouldn't take no for an answer. We can't say we haven't got a reply so therefore we are going to lose. David responded that he has certainly not given up and is keeping up the pressure.

T. Masters asked both Dean Ruddle and John Calvert - what side of the fence are they sitting? John stated he has no standing being at County Council but the SCC point of view would be that the school is more of a liability than field, therefore they are more likely to want to get rid of the school to the village but do something (build houses) on the field. i.e. the school could lose them money but the field will make it for them. There would also be Kudos for the SCC.

Dean agrees and said it wasn't easy to get the lease on the school but the SCC will want something back for the school – they will apply for the field.

Tony stated that therefore if the shop fails, you will take it back and we will have nothing – no school or shop.

David stated concern that to him there is a very real likelihood we will lose both he believes personally that there is a likely 50/50 chance that the shop will/won't work as it will be costly to run and sustain in a Grade II listed building. He feels (personally) wiser to invest in small extension onto existing village hall, where the advantage of car park, facilities and customers already exist.

Elaine responded that the Plunkett foundation is running at a 96% success rate. A parishioner and councillor Owen think the shop has a high chance of working.

M.Clode said that it needed a fair trial and he would support whatever the outcome.

John Calvert said we may need to accept loss of the school field and look to purchase another field using the 106 money we will receive if we want a field.

David pointed out that there is no other field in the village for us to buy with 106 money and appealed to the parishioners - How fond are we of green spaces in our village?

5. Maintenance

5.1 Grass verge cutting

No update as A.Colton absent.

5.2 Environment

Received an update from M. Clode- we have a new dog bin by school and a waste bin is about to be put in place. New notices can be acquired if parishioners are getting problems of dog fouling. We should have some in parish for people to have if they wish.

Parishioner – do we want more stickers, we have enough.

There was agreement to buy the stickers and Parish council to hold them to be given out to parishioners who request them should they have a real problem.

6. Highways

6.1 Speed limit

No report as A.Colton absent.

7. Legal Policies

Code of conduct, freedom of information, financial regulations and standing orders were discussed.

Code of conduct-

Mel Clode stated that he is not happy with just adopting the current NALC code of conduct. They have reduced it to 7points instead of 10. He feels important ones have been dropped important ones and the old ones should be put back in.

Elaine Owen stated that she was unsure that making changes reflecting back to 2003 would be wise. It is safer to have the current and up to date document.

David questioned whether there was an issue with adding in the missing points? Can we find this out?

It was agreed that the Clerk would check with Ian that we can add the missing points that have been omitted from the 2003 code of conduct.

Freedom of information –

Elaine stated that we have to adopt this with no changes, supposed to have been done in 2009.

Adopt the part we have to without change.

E. Owen proposed that we adopt the model publication scheme, seconded by Mel, all were in favour.

The document that we fill in as part of the freedom of information needs to be ready to adopt at the next meeting.

Action – all councillors to respond to clerk before the next meeting with what needs to go in the empty boxes.

Standing orders –

M Clode stated that they are missing prejudicial interest and this needs to be added in. This is not being able to vote if a councillor has an interest, called declarable prejudicial interests.

The Councillors need further time to look at the standing orders therefore this will be carried over to the next meeting.

Action – councillors to look at standing orders and report back to clerk before the next meeting.

Financial regulations –

A. Saunders would like to put a few queries through to the solicitor first so it was agreed to propose this to the next meeting.

8. Children's Play Area/Equipment

The clerk read out a message from Mike Brown which said he has decided to not take any further action until he had heard from all grant requests. By the end of the year he should have a decision from all funders. Then with a figure of what's available, he will work on more detailed plans of what would be possible and put an article in the chronicle to allow the children of the village to decide what they would like in their area.

The old play equipment has been mentioned to Mike that is in the old school. The school committee will take this away if no one wants it.

9. Village website

E.Owen reported that everyone has seen a mock up. We need to make a decision on url, it better to have .org as we are not American (.com) or a business (.co.uk).

Who will look after it? Individual people will look after their page, and everyone has a deputy. This will keep the website updated.

Elaine proposed that we pay the first installment of £300. All agreed.

10. Grants

10.1 Health and well-being fund

Dean would like the health and well-being fund money out by February. We have had no requests from parishioners. David is interested in using this money for the sport field for the lease. Dean feels it is too far off to use the money for this.

10.2 Invest and Save Scheme (formally community enablement fund).

Clerk clarified this scheme from email from Dean Ruddle. The advice is not to use the scheme. Councillors agreed to follow this advice.

11. Langport Railway Station

Patrick wanted to back Langport in their request to have a railway. Do we want to back this?

Angie – could we send a letter of support to Langport?

Tony personally doesn't feel this is logical.

Dean stated that there is a long term plan to open up Somerton and langport station. Doesn't think it is the right time to back it yet, but support in the future may be useful.

It was agreed to leave it at this stage but act in the future when the time was right.

12. Somerset Community Justice Panel

This is a charity that helps victims of low level crime:

Often the incidents in themselves are not serious enough for the Police to proceed leaving the issues unresolved. This is where we come in. The police refer such cases to us and we organise restorative justice conferences in the community where the disruption is taking place. Run by our highly trained local volunteers these panels give the victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood disputes the major causes of social harm, a safe and controlled environment in which to come together to agree a trouble free way forward. A formal agreement is reached and passed back to the Police for monitoring.

They are looking to make people in the community aware that this is available to them, for volunteers and funding.

It was agreed to put something in the chronicle about it but the parish council were unable to give a donation.

13. Community Briefing at RNAS Yeovilton

Elaine Owen and Tony Masters attended an informative session on the future changes at RNAS Yeovilton. Elaine reported that there is going to be lots of building work, but knocking down existing and putting up new. There will be increased traffic. The types of helicopters will be changing, but no increased activity. Some of the low flying is not their fault, if it's not a helicopter it's not them. There will be a change of personnel as some army people coming in; impact will be mainly on the schools. The main impact in Kingsdon will be people moving into the area, my-be looking for housing in the area. Only initially as overall the numbers will remain the same.

14. Cheque signing and financial report

14.1 Financial report

John Calvert asked when would we be setting our precept? He also reminded us that the District Council are short of money, things that we have looked to the district council in previous years we won't be able to get, services previously paid for by the District and County Councils will now fall to the Parish Council to cover, so it may-be wise to increase the precept a little. The District Council budget contains substantial cuts so err on the side of caution. The County highways will be taking the biggest hit. Parishioners will not be happy at a rise in council tax but be prepared for this increase.

The precept is due to be set at our January meeting. Councillors will be circularised shortly with 2013/2014 figures and of anticipated outgoings in 2014/2015.

The Internal Auditor has recently seen the accounts and as far as he is concerned everything is in order.

Balances have been notified via the agenda and Council brought up to date with payments made out of Council as detailed on the agenda.

The Council has received a refund of £20.40 from AJ Products, which the company had inadvertently overcharged us for the dog bin. This sum is reflected in the balances given as per the agenda.

I feel that we need to anticipate the submission of the verge cutting invoice from Simon Rumbles and Philip Waters. Chairman, Tony Masters, negotiated a reduction on their original quote of £450 down to £400 and notified Councillors at the beginning of the summer. Tony submitted the invoice at the start of the meeting. Simon and Philip to be thanked, in writing, for the extra work on the pound at no cost to the Council.

It was asked if there was any progress on VAT rebate? Angie replied that no and HMRC have no record of it being submitted. Angie is going to have to re-submit it.

14.2 Cheque signing

Cheques signed out of Council since the last meeting:

a) AJ Products waste bin £94.80; b) minute book £16.99; c) Kingsdon Centre (balance of SCC grant £557.50)

Cheques approved and to be signed after the meeting:

a) W. Elliot for cutting of the Parish field 2013 season, £775

b) K. Hatt 2x £50 (Nov and Dec) payments

c) Simon Rumbles and Philip Waters - £400.00, verge cutting

d) Kingsdon Centre -pledge from KPC - £750.00

e) Hannah Carlisle for web design - £300 on production of invoice.

f) Purchase of dog fouling stickers 50 for £15 + vat + £1.51 PandP.

15. Bus shelter and snow clearance

Tony asked if someone else take on these areas after Anthony resignation. Tony will forward them to everybody.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30 pm.

