



## MINUTES OF BUDBROOKE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 AT BUDBROOKE VILLAGE HALL

**Present:** Councillors Bryan, K. Dutton, M. Dutton, Hales, Robey, F Roper, C Roper, Treacy;  
WDC Cllr Phillips & WCC Cllr Les Caborn

BCA – Budbrooke Community Association/ CC – Community Centre/ HA – Highways Authority/ HMRA – Hampton Magna Residents’ Association/ HOTH – Hampton on the Hill/ HOTHRA – Hampton on the Hill Residents’ Association/ NALC – National Association of Local Councils/ NW-Neighbourhood Watch/ PC – Parish Council/ PCSO – Police Community Support Officer/ WALC – Warwickshire Association of Local Councils/ WRCC – Warwickshire Rural Community Council/ WRWCF – Warwick Rural West Community Forum/ WCC – Warwickshire County Council/ WDC – Warwick District Council/ VH – Village Hall

### STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The chairman opened the meeting and made the following statement:

“I have to raise a matter that has come to my attention because of complaints and concerns from various sources about a document that has been put out in the name of the Hampton Magna Residents’ Association. I don’t do this lightly, but as this is in the public domain, it is proper for me to raise concerns in this forum and in this way.

Firstly, Alex takes personally comments made, largely incorrect, about her work:

“As I am responsible for some of the matters it refers to, I feel that this is comment on and criticism of me as the clerk to the council; in particular the comments about the APM not being publicised and the minutes not being produced promptly. I believe that many people reading this update would be aware that these are the responsibility of the clerk.

As the parish council is my employer, I don't feel it is appropriate that members of the council should be publicly making such comments and criticisms, emailing them to local residents and posting them on the internet (it is on the HMRA website)”.

The parish council employs Alex as its Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer. She has a difficult job in difficult circumstances and her work is exemplary. The context of this matter makes it far more difficult if she thinks that councillors are on her back. Alex has my full support in bringing this matter up. No one is above criticism but to publicly do so shows a complete lack of leadership. I believe this is tantamount to a lack of respect and contrary to the reasonable behaviour expected of a parish councillor. She deserves at least an apology.

Secondly, it contains significant inaccuracies, misrepresentations and insinuations. When communicating issues in public, a councillor must take heed of his or her role at the very least checking that statements are accurate. I am advised that issues relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and Gypsy and Traveller Site matters are incorrect and misleading.

I personally take issue with the attendance at events immediately prior to the latest draft plan and publicity for these. The Parish Show event had a considerable number of people attending and kept four members of the team tied up for most of the afternoon. Other events were less well attended, admittedly, including those that were publicised by HMRA. But the overall representations were at an acceptable level.

Thirdly, and this another matter that I take particular exception to as Chairman of the Parish Council. It is the implications contained in the document that the council is acting improperly and without “Openness or Transparency”. This is an issue that HMRA continually raise, questioning integrity and openness. All councillors are elected. All council meetings are open to the public. Budbrooke Parish Council respects

individuals' views and has a section on the agenda specifically for Public Comments, and this has been well used. All business is discussed in public, with decisions made democratically. Minutes are available. Minutes are distributed in the newsletter around the Parish and are also on the council's website. This has been the case for well over twenty years in respect of the newsletter, less so in respect of the website. This compares to a self-styled "campaigning body" with an unknown number of unnamed members led by a committee of six (including four parish councillors) that professes to have the interests of the community at heart. Where is the democracy in that? Where is the Openness and Transparency?

To question how the reserves should be differently addressed shows that the accounts that were issued alongside other joining documentation had either not been read or had been ignored.

In summary:

- The document has unwarranted criticism of the parish council, on which the group has four seats, and its officer, who works on behalf of the council as a whole
- Public statements must be accurate and not misleading and, if a councillor disagrees with a democratic decision, he or she should explain why that decision has been reached.
- While agreeing that things can sometimes be improved, the manner in which this is done must be open and transparent, and agreement democratically achieved.

Members of HMRA committee who are also parish councillors should reflect on how this has escalated and must in future be seen to be able to make judgements that show they understand their responsibilities as representatives of everyone in the parish and act according to the code of conduct for councillors and not bring the council into disrepute."

### **Response from Councillors**

Cllr Frank Roper stated that he would like to respond to the statement at the next meeting. Cllr Frank Roper and Cllr Treacy apologised to the clerk in the event of any offence caused by the HMRA document.

#### **1 PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Seventeen members of the public were present. Matters raised included:

Blandford Way/Field Barn Road parking restrictions – WCC Cllr Caborn confirmed that these are on the list to be considered by WCC in November 2015.

Self-build and how to find information on this

A46 flooding – Cllr Caborn to ask WCC officers to contact the Highways Agency

#### **2 APOLOGIES AND ACCEPTANCE OF REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

Received and accepted from Cllr Shirley.

#### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

##### **I. To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda**

None received.

##### **II. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests**

None received.

##### **III. To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate**

None received.

#### **4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Resolved minutes of the meeting of the council held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 true and accurate

#### **5 POLICE MATTERS / WRW COMMUNITY FORUM ISSUES**

The forum met on 24<sup>th</sup> September. Ron Ball, Police and Crime Commissioner, and Citizens Advice representatives attended. Police priorities have been set and these are school parking in Bishops Tachbrook and Lapworth. Health and wellbeing were discussed.

It was noted by Cllr Bryan that an article in the parish newsletter about the Safer Neighbourhoods team

made no reference to the police and it may not have been clear to many readers that this is a police team. Any future articles should include clarification of who the Safer Neighbourhoods team are.

## 6 PLAYGROUNDS

- **Playground report**

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

- **Annual safety inspection**

The annual safety inspection has been carried out by Wicksteed and the report received. This will be considered at the November meeting. The clerk to ask David Connolly, the council's playground inspector, to review the report and attend the next meeting to discuss it.

- **Anti-social behaviour at Styles Close**

Martin Davies, the parish council's grass cutting contractor, had reported evidence of drug use at Styles Close play area and field. This has been reported to the PCSO.

## 7 MATTERS ARISING

- **Traffic surveys for Hampton on the Hill**

The results of the three surveys had been received and circulated for a preliminary discussion. It was agreed that WCC Cllr Caborn would pass these on to WCC Road Safety officers and ask for an officer to attend the next meeting, to discuss the results.

An email from HOTHRA was read out, thanking the council for undertaking the surveys and advising it of a petition signed by 127 residents, requesting that action be taken to slow down traffic in Hampton on the Hill.

- **Barracks memorial cleaning/inspection**

No update yet as information is being sought about the materials used in the memorial.

## 8 COMMUNITY CENTRE EXTENSION

Julia Smith, Chair of Budbrooke Community Association, gave a brief update on the planned extension and the situation with the roof, which is need of repair or replacement. BCA asked the council to consider funding a refurbishment survey for the community centre, at a cost of £475.00 plus VAT.

The council agreed to pay for the survey. BCA to forward to the clerk copies of the two survey quotes received.

## 9 CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence, circulated prior to the meeting, was noted:

- Notice of WALC Warwick meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015
- Notice of WALC AGM on 4th November 2015
- WCC update on a combined West Midlands authority – WCC voted not to join this and WDC Cllr Phillips confirmed that WDC also voted to decline the invitation to join on the current terms
- Flood risk management consultation – members to respond individually

The following correspondence was discussed:

- Monitoring Officer's invitation to join a Joint Standards Committee for Warwick District – the council agreed to accept
- 50th anniversary of Hampton Magna, email from Richard Lyttle. It was agreed that the parish council would support and be involved in celebrations. An item is to go in the newsletter asking for ideas for an event to mark the anniversary and for volunteers to be involved in organising it. Cllr Hales to prepare the newsletter item.
- WDC SHLAA update and request for sites. The clerk to forward to WDC Cllr Phillips for information

## **10 PROPOSED GYPSY SITE AT OAKLANDS FARM**

The letter to WDC, drafted by the chairman and circulated prior to the meeting, was discussed. It was agreed that a paragraph drafted by Cllr Frank Roper would be included, asking whether there would be a further call for land for gypsy sites, as there had been for housing sites.

## **11 PARISH MAINTENANCE**

The clerk to report the following matters to the appropriate authority:

- Pavement between Cawston House and the shops is uneven in places and can be a hazard for those with mobility problems
- Manhole cover in Old Budbrooke Road by Warwick Parkway crossing is sticking up
- Pot hole in New Close
- Field Barn Road by Old Budbrooke Road junction towards Damson Road, branches of ornamental cherry trees are getting lower - need to raise the canopy
- HOTH – kerb on the main road on the opposite side from where vehicles are parked needs attention
- Drains possibly below the correct level on Old Budbrooke Road from between the station and Blandford Way

WDC Cllr Phillips confirmed that the district council is aware that the grass at Ryder Close is not being cut and they are trying to resolve the issue.

The location of the goal posts at Styles Close was queried. The posts cannot be moved without making the pitch too small and they cannot be removed as there is nowhere to store them.

It was noted that the council has not received a request from Norton Lindsey Football Club to use the field for the 2015/16 season.

Martin Davies's quote of £20.00 plus VAT to cut the grass around the oak tree on Field Barn Road was accepted. He has been asked whether the grass and weeds growing in the roadway down to the Montgomery Avenue bungalows could be treated and if the brambles at the entrance could be cut back from the road. The clerk to investigate whether these are the parish council's responsibility.

## **12 MATTERS PERTAINING TO OUTSIDE BODIES (CC / VH / OTHER)**

### **Community Centre**

The first village scarecrow competition, held on 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September, was a success. The BCA AGM is on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Village Hall**

The Remembrance Lunch is almost sold out with a few tickets still available. The next committee meeting is on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

## **13 PLANNING MATTERS**

### **I. Planning applications & appeals:**

W/15/1411 - 7a Seymour Close, Hampton Magna: Replacement of existing balcony on rear elevation with new larger balcony  
No objections

### **II. WDC Planning decisions**

None received

### **III. Planning Enforcement Enquiries**

Planning Enforcement officers are to investigate 3 Grove Croft and have asked for further information on the field building in HOTH.

**IV. Neighbourhood Plan Update**

The plan is currently with WDC for an environmental assessment. This may result in some amendments. It was agreed that it would be helpful to include an FAQ section.

**14 NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE**

**Website**

Short profiles of councillors are to be included on the website. Cllr Hales to coordinate via email. A warning about a current council tax scam is to be published on the website and in the newsletter – WDC Cllr Phillips to forward the information to the clerk.

**Newsletter**

A children’s page will be included when space permits and the front page will continue to be used to publicise events.

**15 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL’S STANDING ORDERS**

Item postponed to the November meeting.

**16 FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

Bank balances: Investment Account £54,533.33, Current Account £63,362.11

**I. Precept received**

It was noted that the second instalment of the precept had been received: £11,622.50.

**II. Payments**

The following payments were authorised and the payment authorisation sheet signed off:

Description	Amount
Clerk Salary & Expenses September 2015	£479.74
Village Hall - room hire August & September Hire (NP)	£48.00
Newsletter editor third instalment 2015/16	£87.50
Martin Davies - grass cutting September 2015	£420.00
David Connolly - playground inspections September 2015	£80.00
TWP - newsletter October 2015	£250.00
WDC - land rent Oct 15 - Mar 16	£400.00
D Shirley - repayment for bulbs and plants	£38.99
M Dutton - repayment for gift voucher for logo prize (NP)	£30.00
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>£1,834.23</b>

**17 MATTERS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA & DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Items for next agenda:**

- HOTH traffic survey results and implications
- Review of standing orders
- Half year accounts
- Preliminary precept discussions

**Next meeting:** 8.00pm on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2015, Budbrooke Community Centre, Hampton Magna.

Signed: ..... Dated: .....