**19LHPC10b Little Horkesley Parish Council**

**meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 16 October 2019**

**Present:** Chris Exley (Chair)

Chris Jacobs

Hannah Taylor

Susie Goldring

Roger Drury (Clerk)

With Jo Petersen (Clerk des.)

**Apologies** were received from Maria Oats and Cllr Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North).

No Pecuniary or Non-pecuniary interests were declared.

**1. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September were agreed as an accurate record.

**2. Affordable Housing**

Chris Exley reported that CBC had drafted letters to the landowners of the sites under consideration although at one site there appeared to be a Land Register query on actual ownership.

It was believed that a meeting of CBC, involving Nigel Chapman, with Hastoe HA had been held on 16 October but obviously no reports of that meeting had been received.

**3. Clerk’s Report**

a. Little Horkesley PC Website

Jo Petersen reported that she had taken over ownership of the website and found that it was antiquated and excessively complicated. She was creating a new website using a different Host which could retain the photographs currently uploaded whilst giving fast access to a range of online vehicles.

The domain costs were £130 and the overall set up costs in the region of £250. However, this new website would involve very fast updating and in the long run was potentially cheaper than the existing website.

The new Host could provide email addresses for Councillors, but she would investigate cost prior to the next meeting.

Jo was requested to report more fully at the November meeting.

b. Playing Field

The Playing Field had had its last cut of the season and it had been confirmed that D A Page Landscapes would continue in 2020/21. Hannah Taylor reported that she had had a weeding session but would be out of action for some time as she was having eye surgery and asked Councillors to maintain the weekly checks – emptying the waste bin and weeding.

It was agreed that Jake Jacobs would ensure that the guards on the scattered orchard were attended to.

Stuart Mosley would repair the supports to the playground equipment in early November.

The Clerk had discussed with Paul Cutler actions needed on the oak tree over hanging the Playing Field, which needed cutting back for safety reasons, and this would be done this autumn as previously agreed.

c. Roads and Verges

Cllr. Anne Brown (ECC Constable) had been contacted about property owners placing obstructions on verges to prevent their damage – no response had been received.

The Highways Report (JRD’s email 16/10) was noted.

d. Standing Orders

The Clerk reported that he had obtained a copy of model Standing Orders but he had not yet reviewed them to establish what changes are need to those of Little Horkesley.

e. Glover Report

The Clerk reported that the report sponsored by DEFRA made important recommendations amongst were:

* National Parks and AONBs should be designated Natural Landscapes;
* The Government should increase the resources available for their management;
* The process of creating or extending existing areas should be simplified and speeded up;
* Greater planning protection should be given.

The Council’s letter to Bernard Jenkin MP enlisting his support for the Report and his response were noted.

f. Footpaths

The email from Essex Highways informing us of the changes to Footpaths 7/4/22/29 was noted, although the Council and the DV & SV Project had objected, the email was confirmation that the changes were to be implemented.

Hannah Taylor had requested ECC to provide an up to date map of the village’s footpaths.

g. Internet Services

The email from County Broadband stating that they were laying fibre broadband in Eight Ash Green, and Dale Close and then moving onto to Aldham, Wakes Colne, Fordham etc was noted.

It was agreed to follow up with Superfast Essex on the plans of Gigaclear to bring fibre to parts of Little Horkesley.

h. Rix Reservoirs

The Environment Agency had reported that they had no responsibility for reservoirs of this size and advised that the Council should raise the issue with CBC.

Hannah Taylor agreed to identify what authority had raised concerns in the first place.

i. Emergency Assistance Plan

It was noted that the Council had received a Yellow Weather Warning from the CBC Resilience Officer. It was agreed that such warnings, which are widely broadcast and unlikely to demand a response, were not needed.

Chris Jacobs agreed to inform CBC we only needed to know about Red warning where local action may be needed.

j. Police Invitation

The invitation from Essex Police to attend a future meeting was noted. However, in a low crime area it was not felt to be appropriate to waste Police time and it was agreed to thus reply.

However, it was agreed to request updating on the two crimes that have occurred locally - cross border drug dealing and hare coursing.

**4. Meetings Attended**

a. New Clerk’s Course, 3 October

Jo Petersen reported that she had found the course a useful introduction the role and had found the exposure to other “would be” Clerks and EALC valuable.

She was learning more about the CiCLA qualification route via EALC course and web learning and was able to apply for the training Bursary which must be completed before her ClCLA course on 31 October.

b. Dedham Vale & Stour Valley Partnership, 20 September

The Clerk reported on the Meeting and in particular:

* Glover Report – see Item 3e. above;
* Local Plans – see Item 5 b below;
* Actions being taken by the recently formed Dedham Vale Farm Clusters – it was noted that small farms had not been invited to join the Cluster which was felt to be regrettable.

c. Dedham Vale Society AGM 23 September

The issue of the failure to take any enforcement action at Thrift Farm was an issue of conversation.

**5. Planning**

a. Thrift Farm, Nayland Hill, Great Horkesley

The Clerk had written to Dale Keeble, CBC Head of Enforcement, on behalf of the Parish Council and DVS to express concern at the continued appalling state of Thrift Farm. Dale Feeble had reported that they had no enforcement action outstanding but in view of the complaint they would look at it again.

A Jan Lewis, CBC Planning, would report back to the Clerk.

It was noted that the large herd of goats at the bottom of Water Lane were running amok in the village.

b. Local Plans

The progress of the CBC Local Plan with the Planning Inspectorate was noted. The concern was that if rejected CBC would not be able to show a confirmed 5-year building stock as required by the Government and, in that case, developers would have licence to exploit land in their ownership.

Concern was expressed at the consultation document proposing new housing on School Road/ Coach Road, Great Horkesley.

c. Horkesley Park

It was noted that Mersea Homes had stopped the building works and this was believed to be because they wished to change the mix of properties originally agreed in the planning application.

The Clerk to investigate.

**6. Finance**

a. Quarterly Report to 30 September

At the quarter the reserves stood at a healthy £8,073.06 after receiving all the 2019/20 Precept but, after deducting anticipated expenditure until the year, the reserves at 31 March 2020 were predicted to be £5,054.08.

This was a preliminary estimate which would be firmed up before the 2020/21 Precept was agreed in December.

b. FY2020/21 Budget

The Council examined the projected 2020/21 budget and possible Precept options – decisions don’t need to be made until December.

c. The following expenditure was approved:

* EALC £78 – New Clerk’s Introduction Course;
* Lorraine Brooks £73.75 – website maintenance;
* Jake Jacobs £100 – Playground inspections;
* D A Page Landscapes £144 – Grass Cutting;
* EALC £600 – CiCLA enrolment fee.

d. Online Banking

Maria Oats was making progress and she would brief the Council on the introduction of online banking at the next meeting.

**7. Correspondence**

The following correspondence was noted:

* DV & SV September Update;
* EALC October Legal Briefing – Maria Oats to brief at the next meeting.

**8. Items for the Next Meeting**

The following issues were raised to be discussed at the November Meeting:

* Refurbishment of benches at the Bus Shelter and Village hall;
* Village Event to celebrate 75th Anniversary of VE day.

**…………………………………………………………………. (Chris Exley)**

**…………………………………………………………………. (Date)**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 November 2019.**