

TERLING AND FAIRSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Terling and Fairstead Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd November 2020 at 7.30pm, (Remote Meeting by Zoom)

Present: Mrs S McNamara (Chairman) Mr A Dyke
Mrs S Alder Mr R Dixon
Mr S Thatcher Mr M Tugwell
Mrs J Long Mr C Barker

Cllr Abbott, Cllr Bebb, Cllr Dervish

F Killby – Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

4 members of the public

24.72 ***Apologies for Absence*** – Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs P Bird.

24.73 ***Declaration of Interests*** – Although no longer employed, AD declared a non-pecuniary interest in all Agenda items relating to his past employer Lord Rayleigh's Farms Limited, Lord Rayleigh and Lord Rayleigh's.

24.74 ***Meeting Open to the Public*** –

The Conservative candidate for Essex County Council's election 2021 introduced himself.

A member of the public had some comments to make regarding planning issues and the solar farm.

A member of the public asked that footballers be reminded to park in field and not obstruct driveways.

Hon Freddie Strutt – a new employee for the estate will be installing waymarks for the new footpaths.

24.75 ***Minutes of Last Meeting*** – SA stated that at Minute 24.56 regarding Longfield Solar Farms, the point made by JFS at this meeting had not been minuted. From her understanding JFS had stated that the panels would not be visible from any ground floor window of any property in the parish. JFS responded that he did not believe he had given such an assurance and that in the non-statutory consultation they would take advice from members of the public in that they would be set back from properties. JFS apologized if he had given the impression that this was guaranteed at this stage and he had no intention of misleading the council. AD commented it would be impossible to confirm this point at this early stage of the development. SM also stated that although the Clerk had minuted the estate's presentation, it was passed to Lord Rayleigh for clarification as she felt it was in the best interests of all to get as much information as possible.

It was therefore proposed by AD and seconded by JL that the Chairman should sign a copy of the minutes of the meeting of 22nd September as a true and accurate record of the meeting with the amendments as stated above, unanimously approved.

24.76 ***District and County Councillors' Reports*** –

Cllr Dervish – Roadworks will be starting on 7th November (nights) on the A12.

As a Parish Councillor for Hatfield Peverel she stated that the proposed solar farm development had been discussed briefly at a recent meeting but that they will be responding.

Cllr Bebb – the consultation regarding the ONS numbers for the Local Plan has now ended, no feedback so far.

BDC is in arrears due to pandemic due to loss of council tax and business rates. There is a shortfall of government support which is making things difficult. The Revenues team is administering business support grants, the new scheme for benefits and the scheme for people to self-isolate. The Council provided £0.25 million to Fusion during the lockdown and allocated another £700,000 after opening, as they had reduced income due to fewer members and some reticence from existing members. The Council will review matters in about a month's time. RD asked if some of the centres were potentially earmarked to be closed. Cllr Bebb replied that this is currently being looked at.

Some funds are still available for the Councillors' Community Grants.

Cllr Abbott has again reported the sign at the junction of New Road and Fairstead Road. He has sent a photo and email to remind Highways. The sign is probably salvageable as it is just the post that has rotted. He will update the council as soon as possible.

Fuller Street Flooding – He has met with SA, his understanding is that the matter will be dealt with this year if the work is not too complicated. He will update the council as soon as possible.

Drains in Waltham Road – an inspector is going out to look at this problem. He will update the council as soon as possible.

Directional Signs in Fairstead – Highways will replace the wooden sign at Ranks Green, he will get costings for the two metal signs as council may be able to pay for the materials.

At the most recent ECC meeting on 13th October, there were various questions around potholes, Witham recycling centre and the disparity between the level of service compared to Braintree and Maldon. The motion for debate relating to local government reform and the possibility of unitary authorities in Essex is now on hold.

ECC is carrying out a lot of work supporting vulnerable people.

The council tax budget is not looking too bad but there is enormous uncertainty going forward.

A recent meeting of the Essex Climate Action Commission brought forward some good recommendations.

The locality funding grant has been partly spent in Terling and Fairstead (replacement of playground equipment, and a new bench at Terling Ford).

SA thanked Cllr Abbott for all his efforts to get work carried out in Fuller Street but wanted to draw his attention that the leak close to the pub has now returned. Cllr Abbott will look into this.

SA asked about the problem of heavy traffic in Ranks Green, including gravel being dragged into the road. Cllr Abbott stated that he had included the potholes at Ranks Green in his pothole request for work to be carried out on the top 50 potholes. Highways is in discussion with the Humphreys regarding a possible new access arrangement, which they would have to pay for.

The passing bay from Ranks Green to Fairstead Road has been submitted as an LHP scheme but there is no budget for any work until the next financial year.

24.77 ***Councillor Vacancy – Terling Ward***

SM proposed and SA seconded co-option of M Webster, unanimously approved. MW will sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and return to the clerk. The Clerk requested MW return his Register of Interests form to the Monitoring Officer at BDC without delay.

24.78 ***Chairman's Report*** – nothing to report

24.79 ***Finance***

Copies of Receipts, Payments, Bank Reconciliation, Budgets and Forecast for the current financial year were distributed prior to the meeting to all councillors. RD proposed that the following cheques/direct debits be approved for payment. Seconded by SA, unanimously approved:

Clerk has got a reduced quote for tractor insurance of £95, with no cancellation charge from current insurer. Council were happy to proceed, providing cover is like for like. Clerk to clarify and if all is in order to transfer insurance over.

Clerk reminded councillors that budgets for next year were due to be reviewed in order to set the precept for the year 2021-22.

24.80 ***Environmental and Footpaths***

Parish Map – Clerk has contacted designer, the lead on the project has left the company and as the business will be furloughed until December clerk will contact in January.

Dog Waste Bag Dispensers – Clerk sent examples to all councillors. AD stated that he was not a great fan of these devices but would bow to other opinions on this matter. It was agreed that one dispenser would be installed at Bromwell Leaze as a trial. The cost is £79.00 and the bags which are bio degradable cost £26.00 for 800. JL has kindly agreed to keep the dispenser stocked and CB has kindly agreed to fit it.

Water Quality, Sewage Plants, River Ter – Clerk has chased all letters sent to Environment Agency, Great Leighs Parish Council and Greenfields with no response and will send again by registered post and email. Clerk will also send the report received from a parishioner to these parties. RD stated that the report from Mr Guppy is a worrying read and that a Freedom of Information request should be applied for. AD stated that this was a Great Leighs Parish Council issue. JL asked if children are playing in the ford at Great Leighs which is very close to the plant. It was confirmed that they do play in the area in the summer months.

Replacement of Litter Bin in Owls Hill - BDC will replace the bin free of charge if we use their standard bins. JL would like to find an alternative that will be more in keeping with the area and wondered if the grant funding received recently could pay for it. She will forward designs to councillors. Cllr Dervish offered her assistance regarding liaising with BDC on this matter if needed.

24.81 ***Estate Liaison*** – nothing to report.

24.82

Health and Welfare

Playground

- Sail Shade – Clerk has circulated examples of sail shades which are competitively priced but RD pointed out that the upright supports can be more expensive. Councillors’ concerns were that the structure could blow away in high winds and attract the wrong type of people as did the wendy house in the playground. The structure would be removed in the winter and in high winds and it was felt that its open structure would not cause a problem. LRF has been consulted and does not wish to stand in the way of the council if they wish to install this structure. RD suggested putting forward a budget for this cost for the next financial year.
- Oak Tree Survey – this is still due to be done. Clerk to chase BDC.
- The council thanked Cllr Abbott for his grant for the new piece of equipment for the playground. Clerk to order.
- Defibrillators – no update from Lottery Funding, clerk to chase. Cllr Dervish offered to help with this funding.
- Buddy Bench, Terling Ford – this will be a proper bench made from recycled materials and will be in addition to the present ones. It will need to be anchored due to flooding, CB to arrange fixing. Cllr Dervish is happy to contribute the shortfall for this funding with the grant as mentioned in Minute 24.76. Clerk to action.
- Emergency Plan – needs to be reviewed and the Telephone/Whats App ring round/contact to take place before the next meeting.
- Clerk is to put a notice on the Hub reminding residents that volunteers are available to help with shopping, dog walking, prescriptions, etc.

24.83

IT & Publicity – AD reported that Gigaclear was surveying in Fairstead for superfast broadband to be available in spring of next year.

24.84

Planning and Highways

Planning App: 20/00462/FUL - Demolition of bungalow and erection of 2 No. dwellings, The Lincoln, New Road, Terling. - A supplementary application had been received, it was uncertain if a comment was needed from the council. No response to date from the formal complaint made against the decision.

Planning App: 20/00890/FUL - Proposed abattoir extension and associated works, Blixes Farm, Ranks Green Road, Fairstead – RD stated that this was a good example of liaison between applicant and parish council.

Planning App: 20/00161/VAR – Great Warley Hall, Ranks Green, Fairstead - Removal of Condition 2 'Annex Occupancy Restriction' of approved permission 06/01863/FUL granted 03/11/06 for rebuild of existing barn into 2 bed annex- still under consideration. Following on from the last submission in August, RD suggested the Clerk contact BDC Planning to see if their proposals had been favourably received.

Planning App: 20/01724/HH – 8 Viner Cottages, Owls Hill Terling - Single-storey side – Planning committee to consider.

Planning App: 20/01669/HH – 16 Hull Lane, Terling - First-floor rear extension –
Planning committee to consider

- Street Light at Terling Ford – this has now been replaced, thanks to CB
- Oakfield Lane/Waltham Road flooding – see minute 24.76
- Fuller Street flooding – see minute 24.76
- Road Repairs – see minute 24.76
- United Reformed Church – no update
- School – the 3pr scheme is now up and running thanks to the efforts of the school in promoting and monitoring this scheme. RD asked how many children are at school (approximately 100) as he counted 46 cars on one morning school run. JL believes this could be due to children coming from outside the parish. CB stated that he would circulate costs for posts on green opposite school and apologised for delay.
- Local Plan – see minute 24.76
- Directional Signs – Council to supply up to date list of all Terling signs that need replacing/repairing, CB asked if council could repair/replace the signs but this is not possible as they are on Highways land and have to be managed by them. It would be possible to contribute to costs as per minute 24.76 but the council cannot carry out the work.

24.85 ***Recreation Ground*** – nothing to report

24.86 ***Longfield Solar Farm***

After council held an informal meeting/presentation with proposed developers, leaflets have gone out to all residents detailing an informal consultation process, to be followed by a formal consultation process at which time the Parish Council will be asked to formally comment. RD asked if formal responses to the council's questions had been received. Clerk to chase.

A member of the public stated that although he lived outside the proposed area covered by these proposals, it had been interesting to see the reaction across the board and the fact that the Parish Council appeared to be the only council that had reacted to this proposal, as a coordinated approach by parish councils would be best. He stated that the restitution proposals are almost as important as the construction process looking ahead to the restoration of the countryside after a period of time (eg 40 years) and that coordinated and constructive local response would be the best approach.

24.86 ***Councillors' Reports, including Village Hall Report, School Report and Church Liaison***

ST – thanks to fellow councillors who have been helping out in Ranks Green, CB for repairs to the phone box, JL for organizing this and SA for her great assistance at the recent litter pick.

JL – carried out a litter pick with her family up to Troys Lane, she collected a huge amount of rubbish on this one road. This is in addition to what she collects on her daily walks. .

SA – carried out a socially distanced litter pick with nine residents attending and eleven sacks of rubbish. Thanks to Vic and Sue at the pub for the coffees, also socially distanced.

AD - A resident had expressed concern over new notices stating that the Oakfield Lane is a private road and also that notices had been placed on cars. AD confirmed that the bus

shelter in Oakfields Lane is on LRF land and is registered. Oakfield Lane is not actually registered to anybody, it is not highways land and therefore remains private and is not owned by anyone. Certain people have rights of way over it but it is not a public area. SM stated that unfortunately this is not a parish council matter. Cllr Abbott – had looked into whether ECC would adopt this road but this would only happen if it can be brought up to the standard for a modern road.

RD – asked if the Chairman’s Fund that is usually used to buy Xmas drinks for volunteers, etc in the community could be used to treat pensioners in some way to make them feel less isolated but the budget is very small (£200). He asked for any suggestions from councillors. It was also queried if this fund has to be limited to pensioners or could also be for people living alone as well.

24.87 ***Clerk’s Report***

A resident in Ranks Green has enquired about the possibility of a concrete crushing facility in the area. Cllr Abbott stated these applications are listed on the ECC website not BDC planning. Clerk to look into this.

The recent litter pick at Terling resulted in twenty sacks of rubbish plus assorted car parts and plastic shelving, etc, collected by fifteen residents.

24.88 ***Information exchange / next agenda items*** – nothing to report.

24.89 ***Date of next meeting, including committees:*** - Parish council meeting – 15th December 2020, 7.30 pm (remote meeting by Zoom)

Meeting closed at 09.47 pm