

Sundridge with Ide Hill Parish Council

Minutes of Amenities Committee Meeting Wednesday 29 July 2015, 7:00pm, Village Hall, Ide Hill

Present: Cllrs Baker, Edmonds, Evans, Jolley

Mrs S Codling - Clerk

Member of the Public: Mr S Blakemore, Mrs R Clark

Apologies were received from Cllr Stokes (meeting).

Declarations of interest: Cllr Evans declared a personal interest in Stubbs Wood. Cllr Edmonds declared an interest in the land transfer of Ide Hill Conveniences as he is Trustee of the Village Hall Management Committee.

1. To elect Chair.

John Evans was proposed by Cllr Edmonds and seconded by Cllr Baker.

Owing to a unanimous vote, it was **resolved** to elect Cllr Jolley as Chairman of the Parish Council. Cllr Jolley signed his Declaration of Office form.

2. To discuss Terms of Reference.

Terms of Reference from Speldhurst Parish Council were proposed. The only amendment made was the frequency of meetings. The Terms of Reference were approved by Councillors. (Appendix A).

3. To review calendar of dates

The dates were noted.

The Clerk is to ask Councillors for dates they are on holiday.

Action: Clerk.

4. Minutes of the Meeting, 26 March 2015

The minutes were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

None.

Mr Blakemore arrived 7.40pm

6. Stubbs Wood – to receive update and respond to communication from solicitor.

Communication from the Charity Commission was reviewed and Councillors answered questions posed. The Clerk is to respond to the Charity Commission.

Action: Clerk.

Councillors noted that the charity is to support the recreational nature of the environmental area, using money to keep the woods in a state that allows the public to continue to enjoy recreational pursuits in the woods.

Mrs Clark raised concerns about why a new charity had not been set up. It was explained that, at the time, the Parish Council were being pushed to a very tight deadline. However, that deadline has been pushed back.

Unfortunately, the deadline date is unknown to the Parish Council, despite numerous requests.

It was proposed to set up a new charity. All Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk.

The new charity is to have a management committee who will run the daily management of the wood, answerable to the Parish Council. There will be 2-3 members of the Council sitting on the management committee. Further volunteers will be sought. Hands on maintenance would be necessary. There would be the need to have a 5 year management plan put forward by a forestry company to manage it. All this will be agreed once the Parish Council is in ownership of the woods.

The Clerk is to continue with the current work with the Charity Commission.

Action: Clerk.

Cllr Evans answered questions posed by Mrs Clark, explaining that the Parish Council have built funds into the annual budget to run Stubbs Wood. Cllr Evans also explained potential management methods which will, again,

be discussed in finer detail once ownership has been transferred to the Parish Council. Discussions cannot take place until then as the contract has not been agreed.

Mrs Clark left 8.30pm

Councillors reviewed the contract. Mr Blakemore and Cllr Edmonds noted the clause regarding disposing of the wood, which are standard in any contract. However, Councillors noted that these should not cause a problem as the Parish Council wishes to hold the woods in perpetuity.

When reviewing the plan of the woods, it was noted that Yorks Hill car park is included, but the pumping station is not.

Cllr Edmonds advised that a gate should be installed at Goathurst Common. Residents have advised they would join a rota to open and close the gate. This is to be discussed with the appointed management committee.

Cllr Baker noted the need to have all documents available, should the need arise in a future audit.

Councillors advised they are disappointed with the amount of advice given. There should be advice regarding the conditions and small print. It is to be raised with the Finance Committee or Full Council about raising the budget for solicitor fees.

Action: Clerk.

Mr Blakemore left 8.40pm

Cllr Baker advised he would liaise with the Action Group on behalf of the Parish Council. **Action: DB.**

The Clerk is to ask Knocker and Foskett if the contract is a standard or bespoke contract. **Action: Clerk.**

The Parish Council would like further clarification about Clause 14. The Parish Council would also like (vi) on page 6 to be removed. Knocker and Foskett are to provide advice.

Action: Clerk.

Further to the amendments and further advice, Councillors approve the contract.

7. Ide Hill Conveniences – to discuss land transfer and contract.

Quotes are to be sought for restrictive covenant indemnity insurance.

Action: Clerk.

Restrictive covenant indemnity insurance is also to be sought for Stubbs Wood.

Action: Clerk.

The right of way for emptying the bins was discussed by Councillors.

Questions from the solicitor were reviewed and answered. The Clerk is to respond.

Action: Clerk.

8. Darent Project – to receive update.

A meeting was held with the Kent Rivers Trust, Environment Agency and Cllrs Evans, Jolley and Stokes.

Turning right onto the A 25 from New Road, a swale is to be dug into the River Darent to take away the surface water. The pavement is to be lowered by 8 inches, swale shaped, which is an approved method by Kent Highways. However, the owner of the private land has to approve the project.

The second swale is to be down a long track by the Recreation Ground, running down into the river. Kent Rivers Trust want to take out a weir at the top of the entrance of the land and bypass a weir at the bottom of the land for reasons of migratory fish.

After asking about whether they will be speeding up flow and undermining the bridge, Councillors were assured that they would clear out the river to reduce the water flow by widening. The Environment Agency have assured that engineers have taken site readings all the way along the proposed project. Neighbouring fields would take up any additional water.

Additional funding could be sought from the Lottery Fund. Both Kent Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency have their funding in place.

The Clerk is to find out the cut off date for spending the award from Big Community Fund.

Action: Clerk.

The work is anticipated to start in October. The Sevenoaks District Council Tree Officer is still to approve the Parish Council aspect of the project.

9. Urgent Business.

None.

10. Date of next meeting.

To be agreed via email.

The meeting closed at 9:45pm.

Sundridge with Ide Hill

Amenities Committee

Terms of Reference

1. The Committee will appoint a Chairman at the first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Council in May each year.
2. A Chairman shall serve no more than three consecutive years.
3. In the event of the Chairman's absence, the members of the committee present will appoint a Chairman at the beginning of the meeting.
4. The purpose of the Committee is to look after the land, buildings and facilities featured in Sundridge with Ide Hill Parish Council's Register of Assets and to ensure that these are run, maintained (and, where appropriate, developed) for the benefit of the Parishioners.
5. The Committee:
 - a. Will consist of a minimum of 5 Councillors
 - b. Have a quorum of 3 members required for each meeting
 - c. Will aim, wherever possible, to have a representative from both villages and will be mindful of the needs of the whole Parish
 - d. Will meet monthly, with additional meetings as required
 - e. Will report monthly to Full Council Meetings.
6. The Amenities Committee is responsible for monitoring the Amenities budget and will make recommendations for expenditure to either the Finance Committee or Full Council (whichever meets first). The Committee will recommend to the Finance Committee an appropriate budget for the next financial year.
7. The Committee will be guided by the following considerations:
 - a. Providing a good range of facilities, capable of giving benefit to people of all ages
 - b. Having them inspected regularly, and maintaining them in line with the latest Health and Safety requirements
 - c. Setting an appropriate charge for hiring out of the facilities
 - d. Engaging contractors for regular maintenance, or for development as the need arises.
8. The Committee will monitor and maintenance of the public rights of way within the Parish.
9. The Committee will communicate with Parishioners by submitting news and information for inclusion in the Parish and/or the village publications, as well as the website.
10. These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.