

TAPLOW PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF TAPLOW PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 15th JANUARY 2019 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE PERKINS ROOM TAPLOW VILLAGE HALL HIGH STREET TAPLOW SL6 0EX

Present

Cllr. Jamie Barnard (Chairman) Cllr. Louise Symons
Cllr. George Sandy Cllr. Karen Walsh
Cllr. Roger Worthington Cllr. Spencer Norton
Mrs. Holder - Clerk

Two members of the public including County Cllr. Dev Dhillon.

Open forum

Mr. Martin Maund of River Road – on behalf of the residents’ association, EDRA - wished to provide some of the history behind the Gladys Jones Bequest. He explained that she had lived in his house – opposite Taplow Quays - until his family bought it 1999. In her will she had left the monies with the intention that Taplow Quays be kept as a park for public access (which it had been since before Victorian times). However SBDC pushed ahead with development on the site and, with the overdevelopment of the Mill Lane site, residents’ concern is that the emerging Local Plan might take the Riverside area out of the Green Belt. EDRA requested that the Gladys Jones funds be put aside to provide a fighting fund against further development or to develop other policies to protect the area such as strengthening the Conservation Area documents from 2000. These had been significantly weakened as a result of the 2008 new Character Appraisal which had taken out historical details and certain protection criteria from the original document.

County Cllr. Dhillon confirmed that the £500 received by the Council from his BCC budget was towards the costs of lighting in the Perkins Room.

He enquired about the outcome of the meeting at Buffins with L&Q. The Chairman advised that a resident had mapped out areas where 37 extra parking spaces could be created from the grassed verges. L&Q had appeared amenable and would try and cost up the project. The issue was likely to be finding the funds to proceed.

He was still pursuing BCC about the dropped kerb application for Rectory Road opposite Autumn House.

He was pursuing Mark Davis about visiting Taplow to consider parking issues in the station area but Mr. Davis does not seem to be giving it priority now that Crossrail had been delayed for a year.

PC/01/19 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. Toby Greeves, Cllr. Gerry O’Riordan, Cllr. Val Pridmore and Cllr. Claire Price.

PC/02/19 To confirm the minutes of the meeting of 27th November 2018

These were **approved** and were signed by the Chairman.

PC/03/19 Matters Arising (not otherwise on the agenda and for information only)

Cllr. Norton referred to the proposal from BCC relating to the closure of the Burnham Household Waste Centre and the impact this was likely to have on increased fly tipping.

It was noted that there was little the Council could do as it was not in its remit. Cllr. Dhillon noted that most fly tipping was by local people. He said he would be arguing against closure as he believed that BCC would lose funding from Slough and the increased costs of removing fly tipping would outweigh the savings. He also felt that the new system of only accepting card payments from April would cause problems.

PC/04/19 To co-opt a new councillor if a suitable candidate is available

The Clerk confirmed no candidate had come forward yet.

PC/05/19 To consider responding to John Hampden School's consultation on its admissions policy

Cllr. Dhillon noted that residents in Burnham and the Farnhams had already expressed concerns about the John Hampden proposals. He had taken it up with the BCC education department who said that as John Hampden was an academy they could make their own decisions subject to National Guidelines. Any breach would have to go to the Schools Adjudicator. It seemed to be the case that they were proposing to increase their year 7 intake by about 30 pupils but seemed to be likely to favour Maidenhead pupils for these new places even though the school was funded by Bucks. **It was agreed** that a response should be sent expressing the Council's concerns about the fairness of the proposals.

PC/06/19 To consider installing a Salvation army clothes bank in the Hall car park

6.1 Cllr. Walsh reported she had met with the Salvation Army representative. The proposal was to put a clothes bank which would take up about half of the 'dead' space in the top right hand corner of the car park. It would be emptied weekly and more often if any build up of bags occurred. It would run for a trial period of 3 months with a 3 month termination notice period. Payment was based on national averages and there was no guaranteed payment but payments had been averaging at £100pm. She has since discovered that the school operated a similar clothes bank and she had spoken to the school's business manager who said it was a good source of income for the PTA and would have no concerns about the Parish Council also having one.

6.2 Cllr. Sandy strongly objected to the scheme on the grounds that it was not appropriate in the Conservation Area and could create noise and attract waste tipping. He proposed that the idea be rejected. Cllr. Spencer seconded his proposal. Following debate **it was agreed** by a majority (with one against and two abstentions) to not proceed with installing a clothes bank.

PC/07/19 To consider assisting BCC with footpaths maintenance

7.1 The Clerk confirmed that the hard line previously taken by BCC regarding devolution of services had dissipated and the Rights of Way department had said they would be happy for the Parish Council to take on the maintenance of some or all of the footpaths. Cllr. Sandy was concerned that any maintenance responsibilities should not include responsibility for trees.

7.2 **It was agreed** to set up a working group to decide which footpaths the Council could agree to maintain going forward and report back to the next meeting for approval. Cllrs. Norton, Worthington and Symons would form the working group with the Clerk.

PC/08/19 To consider parking issues around Taplow station

This was deferred until Cllr. Dhillon could persuade Mark Davis to visit the area.

PC/09/19 To consider the boundary issue between Rectory Farm and the Green

This was deferred until SBDC visited the area.

PC/10/19 To consider next steps regarding the barn

The Chairman had written to the two hirers who used space in the barn. He had met with the Scouts who had expressed an interest in using the Barn as and when it was converted into a public amenity (as planned). In fact, notwithstanding their storage issue, they were supportive of the proposal. They would be looking for alternative storage for their camping equipment. There had been no response from Burnham Concert Band yet.

PC/11/19 Planning

Cllr. Worthington had reported that:-

11.1 the following decisions had been made:

PL/18/4101/FA	Copeland Marsh Lane, extension	APPROVED
PL/18/4004/KA	Cedar Chase, tree fell	APPROVED
PL/18/4563/KA	Cedar Chase, tree prune	APPROVED
PL/18/4542/CONDA	Odds Farm, condition approval	APPROVED
PL/18/4359/KA	Hill Farm Rd, Tree prune	TPO MADE
PL/18/4101/FA	Copeland Cottage Marsh Lane, extension	APPROVED
PL/18/3761/SA	Amerden Lodge, extension	REFUSED
PL/18/3756/CONDA	BH office, Condition release	APPROVED
PL/18/3709/EU	Hunstwood Golf Club, existing use	DENIED
PL/18/2327/HB	Cliveden, Listed building repairs	APPROVED
PL/18/00317/FUL	Dunloe Lodge, 9 apartments	APPROVED

11.2 the following were still pending;

PL/18/3981/SA	Year round caravan usage, Amerden Lane
PL/18/3946/FA	Barn for quail rearing

11.3 the following were pending with no objection envisaged

PL/18/4543/VRC	Odds Farm, condition variation
PL/18/4428/FA	Taplow House Hotel, Spa and Conservatory
PL/18/4618/SA	Maidenhead Rowing Club, internal changes for gym
PL/18/4727/FA	Barge Farm, roof repairs and changes
PL/18/4832/KA	Conifer, fell
PL/18/4802/KA	Sycamore, prune
PL/19/0045/TP	Oak, pruning
PL/19/0087/KA	Sycamore, prune

11.4 The following were for discussion:-

11.4.1 PL/18/4641/FA Mill Lane Public House

- The developers proposed to allow public access along a walkway at the river edge. However it was felt important to protect public access in perpetuity, the riverside public path should be registered as a new Right of Way – see also Berkeley Homes section of path.
- The riverside picnic areas promised in the SPD have all vanished, only a thin walking strip is left. Will the public be able to use the riverside spaces of the pub without paying for drinks?
- Long standing failure of SBDC to protect the SPD – it was noted that almost the whole of the river bank on Mill Lane is being devoted to car parking

11.4.2 PL/19/0027/FA 8 Houses on The Old Boathouse

- The exclusion of the moorings from the application is unacceptable

- No vehicular access to moorings
- No parking provision for moorings visitors, either short or long term
- Loss of this access and parking provision makes the moorings unviable which is an unacceptable change of use.

11.5 It was noted that the need for a Neighbourhood Plan had become more pressing as the decision on the unitary authority appeared to have further delayed the development of the Local Plan. The 2011 Local Plan still applied but the protection it offered was weak. **It was agreed** that Cllr Worthington should call a meeting of interested residents so as to try and identify policies to put forward. Cllrs. Sandy and Norton were willing to attend such a meeting as was Mr. Maund.

11.6 Heathrow consultation – Cllr. Worthington thanked Cllr. Spencer for the excellent briefing he had provided to councillors about the latest consultation – namely that as there was no detail at the moment it was wise to hold fire. Cllr. Spencer agreed to provide the Clerk with a short piece for publication.

11.7 Finally Cllr. Worthington noted the CPRE response to the government survey regarding how the Housing Needs Formula had been assessed:

“The standard method for the estimation of local housing demand is already deeply flawed, and the proposal to retain the use of the 2014-based household projections is a fudge of staggering ineptitude.”

PC/12/19 Finance

12.1 Expenditure in the cashbook was **approved** and Cllrs. Sandy and Worthington authorized to sign the cheques listed.

12.2 With regards to the Gladys Jones Fund the Chairman noted that SBDC had said it had been left for environmental projects and what Mr. Maund had suggested in Open Forum would fit that remit and meet the actual intentions of the donor. Mr. Maund was asked to keep in touch should he feel that a formal proposal for the allocation of funds became necessary.

12.3 Cllr. Price had prepared a report on items 12.4 – 12.9 inclusive below which was read out by the Chairman:-

12.4 To consider projects requiring expenditure on the Hall - the following had been recommended by the Finance Committee and **were agreed**:-

Engineered Wood floor in Perkins Room and hallway - est. £3,000

New cupboards for Perkins Room - est. £1,000

New blinds for Perkins Room £- est. 500

Repainting Perkins Room and hall - est. £4,500

New Internal Doors (7 plus 1 double) - est. £4,000

New computer- est. £500

12.5 Review of 2018/19 Accounts:

12.5.1 Overall general income and expenditure for the year had been largely in line with budget, with the exceptions being a £2,500 increase in income from hall hire (largely due to the increase in usage from the Playgroup). We also received an unexpected cash injection of £12,042 from the Gladys Jones bequest fund. We did not complete all the special projects we had intended. The projects which were not completed will all roll into the 2019/2020 budget.

12.5.2 Key projects which have been/will be completed by the year end include:

Kitchen refurbishment £8,040

Replacement of all Perkins Room and office windows £5,750

Replacement of paving slabs £1,800

Repair and repainting of village gates £1,390 (which was helped by £500 LAF funding)

Total invested in capital projects £16,980 - compared to a forecast £25,000 meaning we will end the year with £22,000 more in our cash reserves than expected.

12.5.3 As a result we expect to end the year with the following in reserves:

General reserve £18,360

Building reserve £25,000

Brooking Estate fund £6,924

Gladys Jones fund £12,046

Land Securities Fund £34,629

Total reserves £96,959 (of which £90,000 is held in the Close Bros savings account)

12.6 2019/20 Budget

12.6.1 Planned projects for next year (total est. £15,000):-

Hall improvements (est. £13,000)

Replacement lights in Approach Road (est. £100)

Village plaques/signs (est. £1,000)

12.6.2 Planned additional expenses next year (total £6,500):-

New Lighting on Institute Road £3,500 (subject to receiving LAF Funding)

Taking on maintenance of overgrown footpaths £3,000

12.6.3 It is intended that planned projects will be funded largely out of reserves, but we need to maintain a minimum level of around £25,000 in distributable reserves at any time, and we also agreed that we should earmark £25,000 in a building reserve to cover future costs of a new roof for The Village Hall.

With that in mind it is clear that we will need an increased precept for 2019/20.

12.6.4 Fortunately, we will benefit from an additional £6,350 without having to increase the amount individual tax payers pay on account of the 300 new households in the parish on the tax base. This will go towards the £15,000 we intend to spend on projects, and we will take the remainder from existing reserves (with £1,000 coming from the Land Securities fund for The Village signage)

12.6.5 The additional £6,500 of expenses for Institute Road lighting and pathways maintenance would be incremental to this budget and therefore we propose to further increase the precept to cover these additional costs - both of which will provide much requested improved amenities for the Parish (although it should be noted that the Lighting on Institute Road is subject to receiving the necessary LAF Funding).

12.7 Precept recommendation

She added that the current precept is £25,000. Increased population takes this to £31,350 without raising individual tax payments and Investment in the key projects above takes the overall precept to £38,000. This represents a 21% increase to individual households, taking the annual Band D expense from £21.42 per year to £25.93 per year - a £4.51 annual increase, and still well below the equivalent charges in surrounding parishes.

12.8 If the Council approves the increased precept, along with the proposed expenditure, our reserves at the end of the next Financial year would be:

General reserve £13,253

Building reserve £25,000

Funds £52,099

Overall balance £90,352, a reduction of £6,606 over the course of the year.

Careful cash management will allow us to retain the Close Bros account for a further 6-9 months, and our reserves will be maintained at adequate (but not excessive) levels.

12.9 It should also be noted that we discussed potential work required to convert the barn to usable space and it was agreed that if we decided to progress with this

endeavour, then this cost would qualify to come out of the Land Securities Fund. As such this has not been provided for in the budget at this point.

12.10 The Council approved the 2019/20 Budget - agreeing to increase the Precept to £38,000.

PC/13/19 Any other business and agenda items for the next Council meeting on 5th February 2019 at 7.30pm

13.1 Cllr. Worthington said he had had a report that Berkeley Homes had put up 'no fishing' signs near the Jubilee River. He believed that they had done so on environment agency land but he would look into it.

13.2 Cllr. Sandy had found the letter from Helen Grellier - who had been Head Mistress of St Nicolas school during the 1970s and 1980s – in which she set out the history of the school field. This would be useful if BCC ever needed to be challenged about ownership of the field. It would be kept in the office safe.

13.3 Cllr. Walsh agreed to be the guardian of the defibrillator and comply with the checklist she had downloaded from the Ambulance service's website.

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm.