

Minutes of a Meeting of Elkstone Parish Council

8.00 p.m., Wednesday 9th December 2015, in Elkstone Village Hall

Present: Mssrs Hobbs (Chair) Collins, Cooch, Luck, Muschamp; Mrs Eyre (Clerk)
Also present were County Councillor Robbins, District Councillor Parsons, Mr Hutchings of GRCC, and a dozen parishioners.

1. Minutes of the last Meeting (23rd September 2015) were accepted and signed.

2. Matters arising - there were none

3. Possible Housing Needs Survey – Mr. Hutchings, GRCC, spoke to this topic, pointing out that the report of the previous survey was published in September 2010, so CDC & GRCC regard the findings as being out-of-date. He outlined some advantages of doing another survey. Councillor Parsons added that another advantage of having up-to-date evidence of local need would be, for example, to contest a proposed development for a lot of houses, including a number that were affordable, if it could be demonstrated that current evidence did not demonstrate such a need.

Mr Hobbs threw the issue open to questions from the floor. Mr. Hutchings and Councillor Parsons explained various concepts, including affordability, sustainability, and exception sites. Councillor Parsons explained that CDC currently has funding available, as a result of a development in Birdlip, but this can only be spent on affordable housing and within a certain time frame. Mr Hutchings added that, should a survey demonstrate that there is some current need, he would be pleased to work with the Parish Council to try to identify possible sites. It was clear that parishioners present would be opposed to building on the allotments (which are in fact CDC-owned garden plots, not statutory allotments).

Mr Hutchings said that if the Parish Council decides that no survey should be carried out with GRCC, then GRCC would not take the matter any further at this time.

Pointing out that it would not provide a decision in any way binding on the Parish Council, Mr Hobbs invited a show of hands in respect of conducting a new housing needs survey, and saw 6 for and 4 against.

Mr. Hobbs then closed this item, indicating that the possibility of carrying out another HNS would be further considered at the next meeting.

4. Finance

4.1 Payment of Accounts:

4.1.1 Bill for share of domain name renewal + hosting – Mr Cooch reminding the Meeting that EPC had committed to paying 50% of these costs, and a bill for £150.00 had been received and paid by the Village Hall Management Committee.

A cheque for £75.00 was written, signed, and will be hand-delivered to the Treasurer of the EVHMC.

4.1.2 Invoice for attendance at GAPTC Auto Enrolment Briefing - Mr. Cooch had attended this training session, in advance of an auto-enrolment deadline next August, which he reported as very helpful. The invoice for £15.00 has been received. A cheque for £15.00 was written, signed, and will be sent to GAPTC.

4.2 R.F.O.'s Report on Year to Date Income & Expenditure against Budget was received with thanks.

5. Planning

5.1 Amended details, Highgate Farm - Councillors had no objections

6. Current Consultations

6.1 Funded Public Transport

6.2 Draft Local Transport plan

6.3 Cotswold District Local Plan

These are noted. Details for participation in the various consultations have been published in the Elkstone newsletter.

7. Proposed extinguishment of public footpath BEL1

At the time of the dualling of the A417, this footpath was officially stopped short of the final fence boundary, so it is a dead end. The owners of Highgate Farm have now applied for its extinguishment. Councillors had no objections to its proposed extinguishment.

8. Meetings

8.1 PCSOs Neighbourhood Liaison Group, 29th October – Mr. Collins reported back on this. It was noted that there were 67 crimes (burglaries) reported in the period since the last meeting, of which the majority were classed as non-domestic, i.e. theft from sheds and outbuildings. It was also noted that no-one from Gloucestershire Highways was present, and there appeared to be a general dissatisfaction amongst attendees in respect of current difficulties in communicating with GH.

8.2 CDC's Town & Parish Liaison, 9th November – Mr Cooch briefly reported back on this, adding that all the significant points were then reported in the Cotswold Newsletter, which was delivered to all households shortly after.

9. Correspondence from the Parish – a parishioner e-mailed to ask if public footpath BEL 3 could be 'investigated' as it is becoming rather 'grotty'. He has been given details of the GCC on-line 'report a PRow problem' form, but warned that the PRow service is currently operating at 3.2 fte (for a network of over 3,500 miles of PRowS) and with a frozen budget. Councillors were of the opinion that nevertheless this issue would be better dealt with through official channels.

10. Other correspondence – has been put into circulation

11. A.O.B. – there was none.

12. Public Session – no other points were raised.

13. Date of next Meeting – 13th January 2016

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.14 pm.