

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Upton Parish Council.
August 3rd 2015

Present: Cllr Clarke, Cllr Bottwood, Cllr Ingram, Cllr Chauhan, Cllr Lawrence, Cllr R Barrett. F Keable (Clerk)

Also in attendance: County Councillor Jill Hope, Cllr Lita Herbert (Duston Parish Council) Lee Twistleton and Andy Norfolk (Falcons football Club) Stuart McDermott (Easiserv Websites)

01.2015 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Hannah Barrett, Cllr George Barrett, Cllr Earle and Cllr Evans. It was RESOLVED to accept the apologies.

02.2015 Declarations of interest

Cllrs Bottwood and Ingram declared that they are also Duston Parish Councillors, Cllr Bottwood is also a Northampton Borough Councillor and Minister for Environment.

03.2015 Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting on July 13th 2015

The draft minutes of the meeting on July 13th 2015 were circulated prior to the meeting, there being no amendments required to the minutes the council RESOLVED to accept the minutes and they were signed as a true record.

04.2015 Clerks report on matters arising from the previous meeting.

The clerk reported that Mr Oakley had explained the following;

- a letter had been sent to the Cricket Club regarding the maintenance of the grassy area at the roadside, no response had been received.
- a letter had been sent to Taylor Wimpey to ask for permission to move the bus shelter from outside the Retirement Village, no response had been received.
- Mr Oakley had arranged for local company Easiserv to present their website design service at the August meeting.
- Cllr Jill Hope had sent some photos of the damage to a fence and railings in the parish.

05.2015 Police and Public Session

There were no police present at the meeting. The two representatives from Falcons Football Club spoke to the council outlining their need for a permanent base. The land behind St Crispins social club appeared to be suitable for playing football. Cllrs explained that there are plans to build a new community centre on that site which would provide facilities including changing rooms and 1 adult and 2 junior pitches. The land is currently public open space and is therefore free for anyone to use, there are issues with car parking in the area and also rubbish removal which were highlighted by Cllrs. It was agreed that the clerk would take a note of the contact details for Mr Twistleton and would contact the club in future if the facilities became available, it was noted that another football club has already registered an interest in using the future community centre.

At this point the Chairman agreed to move Item 5 – Presentation by Easiserv to the agenda. Please see Minute ref 10.2015

06.2015 Planning Matters

Cllr Earle had sent an email through detailing his recommendations for the two planning applications under discussion. It was agreed that the structure of the council and its committees/ advisory groups would be placed on the September meeting agenda and that no further meetings of any 'sub-committees' would take place.

06.2015/1 New applications

N/2015/0680 Princess Marina Hospital – application for approval of reserved matters of planning permission 11/0041/Repwonn for the erection of 114 dwellings.

It was RESOLVED to respond with No objections to this application, and to submit the Observation that there appears to be little open space within this development particularly for childrens play areas.

Action: Clerk to write to NBC with this observation.

N/2015/0707 Local neighbourhood centre Dragonfly Way, construction of a local neighbourhood centre with single storey building for retail (Class A1), professional and financial services (Class A2) Café/restaurant (Class A3) and hot food takeaway (Class A5) and a two storey building for a childs nursery (Class D1) and parking. The council RESOLVED to make the following Observations;

No objections in principle but comments made that the Environmental Impact Assessment is 6yrs old and the application is on a flood plain. Also that we are concerned about the mix of nursery and HGV delivery vehicles with the access bend being a safety issue and that a separate goods entrance would be suitable.

Action: Cllr Earle to submit the response to NBC Planning Dept.

06.2015/2 Application Decisions

None known.

07.2015 Finance

07.2015/1 Receipts

No receipts to report

07.2015/2 Payments

The Clerk reported that unfortunately no payments could be made as there is only one signatory left on the council bank accounts.

07.2015/3 Bank reconciliation

The Clerk reported that a bank reconciliation will be available from the September meeting for the chairman to check and sign.

07.2015/4 Bank account and signatory list

The Clerk reported that it was very important to agree at least 2 new signatories for the council as soon as possible. To this end forms had been obtained from Natwest bank. It was RESOLVED that the following Councillors would be signatories on the account;

Cllr Bottwood (Existing Signatory), Cllr R Barrett, Cllr Clarke, Cllr Chauhan and Cllr Earle.

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk, F Keable, would also be a signatory but only in an administrative capacity.

Action: Clerk to take completed forms to Natwest so that payments can be made at the September meeting.

08.2015 Appointment of the new Clerk & RFO

The Chairman reported that the council had recruited a new clerk and RFO, Fiona Keable, and she would be working for the council for 8 hours per week.

It was agreed that a new contract and expenses arrangements would be agreed over the next few weeks.

09.2015 Purchase of new computer equipment

After some discussion it was RESOLVED that the Clerk would be authorised to purchase a new laptop on behalf of the parish council. It was thought that a laptop would cost in the region of £500 but that the vat could be reclaimed.

It was agreed that the clerk was happy to use her own printing equipment subject to reimbursement of costs by the council.

Action: Clerk to get costings from Computer Doctors and other retailers and to arrange the purchase of the laptop as soon as possible.

10.2015 Presentation by Easiserv and discussion regarding the purchase of a new parish council website.

The council listened to a presentation by Stuart McDermott from Easiserv. The council need to develop a new website as the current one is no longer maintained. Easiserv are a local company and can provide a full website and logo design service. It was RESOLVED that the council needed to obtain at least 2 other quotes before a website designer can be agreed.

Action: Clerk to obtain two further quotes, Easiserv to provide some costings for the September meeting, Clerk to agenda item for September.

11.2015 Maintenance of St Neophytes Churchyard

This item was deferred until September.

12.2015 Audio recording of meetings.

Cllr Barrett explained to council that he had recorded the entire meeting, this caused some concern from Councillors and members of the public as the intention to record the meeting was not displayed on the agenda or in the meeting room.

The Clerk explained that council is allowed to record meetings but a sign should make the public aware that the meeting is being recorded.

The procedures surrounding recording a meeting and the length of time that recordings are kept will be discussed at the September meeting.

Action: Clerk to find out correct procedures and recording retention time.

13.2015 Co-option of a new councillor.

The Clerk advised that the closing date of 14 days after the vacancy notice is posted is not for applications from prospective councillors but is the date that the poll of electors closes. Applications had been turned down because they had been received after this date, this was not the correct procedure and the Clerk advised council to extend the vacancy period to Sept 6th to allow applicants to then attend the next full meeting on September 7th 2015. Co-option of a new councillor would then proceed at the September meeting. Adverts notifying residents of the vacancy would be placed in the community noticeboards, at the Elgar centre if possible and also in the local press if it was not prohibitively costly.

Action: Clerk to draft vacancy notice, Cllrs Bottwood and Ingram to assist with putting up vacancy notices.

14.2015 Communications

None reported

15.2015 Borough Councillors Report

Nothing reported

16.2015 Service requests and reports from members

Cllr Barrett reported that he had reviewed the councils Financial Regulations and noted that there was a difference in the financial regs and the councils adopted standing orders. The standing orders state a limit of spend of £5K before council formerly goes out to tender, the financial regulations state £10K.

The Chairman proposed that the limit is cut to £5K on the financial regulations, this was seconded by Cllr Bottwood and all agreed.

Action: Clerk to review all policies and governance documents over next few months.

Cllr Barrett also asked Cllr Bottwood, as the NBC representative for the Environment, to look into the issue of large bins at St Crispins for recycling which do not appear to have been emptied for some time.

Cllr Bottwood reported that Northampton Borough Council are close to agreeing to adopt the land at St Crispins, NBC would like to let it to Community Spaces Northampton on a 30 year lease. The question was asked as to whether the parish council still want to take ownership of that land? A decision would need to be made very soon.

The Chairman stated that a decision could not be made at this meeting and asked if Cllr Bottwood could bring the pro's and con's of such an agreement to the September meeting for discussion.

Cllr Ingram asked if it would be possible to have a meeting with the cricket club.

17.2015 Next meeting date.

Where possible the council meets on the first Monday in the month, if this is a bank holiday it would be the following Monday.

Next meeting dates in 2015:

September 7th

October 5th

November 2nd

December 7th.

18.2015 Meeting closed 21.50pm