**GREAT BRADLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 21st November 2012 at the Village Hall

**Present**:

Councillors: Rowan Sylvester-Bradley (Chairman), Karina Joyce, Anne Smith, Sue Willington. Also present was Clerk John Barnett.

**Open Forum:**

Nothing reported

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| **Item** |  | **Action** | |
| 1 | **Apologies for absence:**  Councillor S Kiddy |  | |
| 2 | **Councillors Declarations of Interest in any item on the agenda:**  The Clerk read out the information from Suffolk Association of Local Councils regarding the conflicting advice as to whether, under new legislation, Councillors can legitimately set a budget without receiving dispensation. The Council considered this was all complete nonsense and Councillor Smith proposed to proceed as normal, seconded by Councillor Sylvester-Bradley and all agreed.  There were no declarations of interest. |  | |
| 3 | **Minutes of the last meeting:**  The minutes of the last meeting of the Parish Council on 26th September 2012 were approved and signed together with the cheques approved at that meeting. |  | |
| 4 | **Matters arising from the minutes:**   1. Interpretation Panel. Councillor Joyce said that she had received no feedback on the draft leaflet. She hopes to finish it next week so any comments please before then. Clerk to send the leaflets holder information around again before placing an order. 2. Computer courses. Clerk said that the first course was about to finish this week and everyone seems to have enjoyed it and found it useful. The next course will start around the middle of February and whether there is a 3rd course will be dependent upon how much grant money remains after that. It is hoped that perhaps a shorter course may be able to be run. The router caused problems in this course and Councillor Smith said that she had access to some spare routers that might be suitable and could be tried out by the tutor. If not a new one would need to be purchased or BT contacted for a router suitable for their business broadband connections.  Councillor Sylvester-Bradley said that we should see if there was any way to keep these courses going in future. | | CouncillorsClerk  Clerk  AS/Clerk |
| 5 | **Highways:**  The following problems were reported:   1. Clerk reported that he had the contact details for a Highways representative who would come out to see the water leaking at Crown House. It needs to be in a dry spell but after a period of rain when the water was still flowing. 2. Councillor Willington said that the white lines were very faint at the Hall Road junction. Clerk to examine all the white lining in the Parish together with the ‘SLOWS’ that have also disappeared completely (those remembered missing were at the Z bend on Hall Road, each side of the bend at the Village Garden and near to Pond House) and advise Highways accordingly. 3. The flexible reflectors at the Village Garden are missing/broken 4. Councillor Joyce said that the ‘Suffolk’ sign at Sipsey bridge is still missing. 5. Councillor Smith said that there should be a ‘Road Narrows’ sign before Sipsey bridge which might help avoid all the accidents there. | Clerk  Clerk | |
| 6 | **Planning applications:**  Three Tuns - revised application for erection of rear extension. The Council decided it had no objection to this. | Clerk | |
| 7 | **Recreation Area entrance trees:**  Councillor Sylvester-Bradley said that his records show that St Edmundsbury Borough Council took over Fox Green and thereby they may have a legal responsibility for the entrance to the Recreation Area. Although they are unlikely to take a ‘good neighbour’ view and cut the large conifer tree down. A considerable discussion ensued as to whether the Parish Council should take this responsibility or not. In the end only one vote was in favour of having the tree removed. Councillor Sylvester-Bradley said that he would speak to the neighbours affected by the tree and report the outcome back to the Parish Council. | RSB | |
| 8 | **Recreation Area:**   1. Rubber safety matting under/around the Play Equipment. Clerk read the response from St Edmundsbury Borough Council regarding the Parish Council’s attempts to resolve the question of whether the integrity of the rubber safety matting had been compromised by an accumulation of mud within its structure. The supplier had given written assurance that it had not and St Edmundsbury Borough Council had confirmed this was all that was needed to be done. 2. Glade area edgings. Councillor Sylvester-Bradley said that the pressure treated wooden edgings had not lasted at all well and that his recommendation was to replace them with a metal strip. Although the initial cost was high at over £600 this could be a saving in the long-term. Councillor Willington raised a question over the safety of a relatively sharp edge should a child fall upon it. Clerk to contact St Edmundsbury Borough Council Parks Dept for advice. There was also discussion upon whether the metal, if approved, should be simply galvanised or powder-coated. 3. Glade wildflowers. Councillor Smith said there were a lot of seedlings in the area but at this stage it is unknown what they are. It was decided to wait to see what these seedlings become before deciding on any further steps. | Clerk | |
| 9 | **Finance:**   1. Internal auditor. Clerk said that there had been an offer from a resident for this position. Clerk to also follow up on the suggestion of another possible person by Charles Ryder. 2. Proposal by Councillor Sylvester-Bradley to authorise the donation of £20 to the Royal British Legion under section 137. This was seconded by Councillor Smith and all approved. 3. Review the Village Hall accounts with a view to confirming this year’s annual donation from the Parish Council as per budget and also to set within the budget for next year. The V Hall accounts had not been forthcoming so a lower figure of £250 was agreed for both years. 4. Set the budget and the Precept to St Edmundsbury Borough Council for 2013/14. The Council had decided at the previous meeting that the Precept should be no more than this year so the Clerk had provided 4 ‘suggested’ alternative budgets. The first of these was a ‘minimal’ budget with a Precept of £8,500 (down from £9200 this year). The remaining 3 budget alternatives were with a Precept of £9,200.  Considerable discussion ensued with a consensus appearing around the alternative ‘C’ with a Precept of £9,200 and changes as follows: a) Clerk’s salary was agreed to be increased by £75 b) The Garden was to be reduced to £100 c) The donation to the Village Hall was to be reduced to £250 d) The outdoor gym equipment was to be dropped unless grants can be obtained e) The pop-up gazebos were dropped f) The living willow structure was reduced to £50 g) The trees removal from the Recreation Area entrance was dropped   This should reduce the forecast deficit of £1,764 to much closer to balance.  Suffolk Association of Local Councils had already written to all Parish Councils to advise that with the uncertainty still remaining regarding the possibility of a referendum ‘trigger’ for ‘excessive Council Tax increases’ coming out of recent government legislation, all Precept decisions should be prefaced by ‘the Council is minded to’ and only be confirmed in January when further government guidance should have been issued.  The Parish Council therefore is minded to agree a Precept of £9,200 for 2013/14 and will inform St Edmundsbury Borough Council accordingly.  The Clerk is to ensure the Parish Estimates form is returned to St Edmundsbury Borough Council in due time to obtain the grants.   1. Accounts for payment. Councillor Sylvester-Bradley proposed 16 payments to a total of £2739.87. Councillor Smith seconded this and it was all approved. | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk | |
| 10 | **Bonfire Night:**  Councillor Sylvester-Bradley said that it had all gone very well. The bonfire had lit very quickly and impressively, the food and drink was consumed in quantity and the fireworks were good. Everyone seems to have been very pleased with the evening. The final cost of the evening was around £130 and to be able to put on such an event for so little was thought to be remarkable. |  | |
| 11 | **Bugle:**  The editorial team are stepping down after the Dec/Jan edition. Stuart Wilson has offered to compile the Bugle from articles sent in and the Council was extremely grateful for this as the Bugle is regarded as an essential village information newsletter. The Clerk will take over the advertising and monies will, in future, go directly into the Parish Council account. The Clerk explained that he will not be able to be pro-active with advertising but will handle the existing advertisers and any new enquiries. The printing and distribution of the Bugle are unaffected by this. | Clerk | |
| 12 | **Footpath between the Recreation Area and Clarendale:**  There is thought to be one household alongside this footpath with overhanging vegetation which needs cutting back. Clerk said he would wait till the Recreation Area side is done and then write to the householder asking for it to be done. | Clerk | |
| 13 | **Village Archives:**  Councillor Sylvester-Bradley said he has been unable to progress this due to lack of time. Clerk offered to contact Wendy Barnes to get things underway if possible and to ensure the others involved initially were informed about any possible meetings. | Clerk | |
| 14 | **Fire Service proposed merger consultation:**  Due to lack of time in this meeting it was agreed that this consultation would be done by the Councillors individually. | Councillors | |
| 15 | **Village Events notified:**   1. Saturday 24th Nov - Quiz night at the Village Hall 2. Sunday 9th Dec - children’s party at Village Hall (depending upon demand) 3. Tuesday 18th December - carol singing 4. Sunday 23rd December - Carol service at the church |  | |
| 16 | **Matters for consideration at the next meeting:**   1. Confirmation of the Precept demand after receipt of government guidance and Suffolk Association of Local Councils advice | Clerk | |
| 17 | **Dates for next meetings:**  The next meeting dates are: 16th January and 13th March 2013. Further dates were agreed of 17th April (Annual Village Meeting), 15th May (Annual Meeting of the Parish Council) and 26th June (final date for approval of the 2012/13 accounts). | Clerk | |

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 10pm