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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY
ON THURSDAY, 24TH JUNE, 2021 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: David Barnard, John Bishop, George Davies, Faye Frost, Ian Moody, Lisa Nash, Claire Strong, Mandi Tandi and Terry Tyler*

In Attendance: *Claire Morgan (Community Engagement Team Leader), William Edwards (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 2 members of the public, including registered speakers.*

51 ELECTION OF A CHAIR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2021/22

Audio recording – 1 minute 30 seconds.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer called for nominations for Chair of the Southern Rural Committee for the civic year 2021/22.

Councillor Claire Strong proposed, Councillor George Davies seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Faye Frost be elected as Chair of the Southern Rural Committee for the civic year 2021/22.

52 ELECTION OF A VICE CHAIR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2021/22

Audio recording – 3 minutes.

The Chair called for nominations for Vice Chair of the Southern Rural Committee for the civic year 2021/22.

Councillor Claire Strong proposed, Councillor David Barnard seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor George Davies be elected as Vice Chair of the Southern Rural Committee for the civic year 2021/22.

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 4 minutes 45 seconds.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sam North.

54 MINUTES - 4 MARCH 2021

Audio recording – 5 minutes.

The following Members commented on the minutes:

- Councillor John Bishop
- Councillor David Barnard
- Councillor Claire Strong

Points raised included:

- An officer from Environmental Health/Protection had not presented to the Committee for some time and a request had been made at the last meeting;
- A member of the Community Safety team was the most appropriate officer to provide an update on fly tipping in the Southern Rural area;
- Fly tipping was a serious concern to parish councilors and if an update was presented to the Committee parish councilors should be invited and/or informed;
- Recent information from the Community Safety team indicated that reports of fly tipping had decreased.

The Chair, Councillor Faye Frost proposed, Councillor George Davies seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 4 March 2021 with the following amendment be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair:

Minute 49 to be amended to include:

- “Councillor John Bishop requested that a representative from the Environmental Crime/Environmental Health teams be invited to update the Committee on fly tipping in the area as this was an issue of serious concern to residents.”

55 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 9 minutes 56 seconds.

There was no other business notified.

56 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 10 minutes.

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

57 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - LILLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Audio recording – 10 minutes 55 seconds.

Ms. Judith Crosier – Lilley Parish Council thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee and gave a presentation in support of their grant application including:

- The application was made on behalf of Lilley Parish Council for a new noticeboard;
- The current noticeboard was old and damaged and no longer fit for purpose;
- Ms. Crosier had recently taken over as clerk and was continuing the procurement process started by the previous clerk;
- The proposed noticeboard cost £1062 and the application was for £500 towards that cost.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor David Barnard

In response to questions Ms. Judith Crosier advised:

- The proposed noticeboard was made of aluminium with a wood-look effect;
- If the noticeboard was not of the same standard as that purchased by Kimpton Parish Council the Lilley Parish Council could do further research and if the price was comparable may opt for a similar model.

The Chair thanked Ms. Judith Crosier for her presentation.

58 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - KIMPTON CRICKET CLUB

Audio recording – 15 minutes.

Mr. Iain King – Kimpton Cricket Club thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee and gave a verbal presentation in support of their grant application including:

- The application was for £1500 towards the cost of a Dennis FT610 lawnmower;
- Kimpton Cricket Club was a well-established village club and was looking to increase participation and the number of teams it fielded;
- The club ran a successful youth programme;
- They had recently invested in improving pitch facilities with the help of a significant grant from Kimpton Parish Council;
- The new mower would keep the pitch in best condition;
- The model came recommended and the Club was confident they could secure a good deal on a second hand mower;
- The application submitted that match funding would be sought from the National Lottery Foundation but the club was unable to secure that money;
- The club intended to make up the balance as stated in the application by fundraising themselves or by drawing on member contributions.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor David Barnard
- Councillor Faye Frost

In response to questions Mr. Iain King advised:

- Without lottery funding there was a shortfall of £3500;
- The club proposed to fundraise by seeking sponsorship with local business and was prepared to meet any remaining cost from personal contributions;
- The club had made an application for funding to their County Councillor last year on a different project and did not want to approach them for support this time.

The Chair thanked Mr. Iain King for his presentation.

59 GRANT APPLICATION - LILLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Audio recording – 19 minutes 10 seconds.

Councillor Claire Strong proposed, Councillor Faye Frost seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £500 be awarded to Lilley Parish Council towards the cost of a new noticeboard for the village as outlined in paragraph 8.1.1 of the report entitled Grants & Community Update.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services which are provided by local organisations and groups accessed by the community.

60 GRANT APPLICATION - KIMPTON CRICKET CLUB

Audio Recording – 20 minutes 15 seconds.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor David Barnard;
- Councillor Claire Strong;
- Councillor John Bishop

Points raised included:

- The club should approach their County Councillor for funding;
- The grant application was for £1500
- The grant amount should be raised by £1000 in line with the amount given by the Committee to Offley & Stopsley Cricket Club;
- The committee considered each application on its merits and in line with the applications submitted;
- If the cricket club had the means to provide itself the Committee should allow them to do so.

Councillor David Barnard proposed, Councillor John Bishop seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £2500 be awarded to Kimpton Cricket Club towards the purchase of a wicket mower as outlined in paragraph 8.1.2 of the report entitled Grants & Community Update.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services which are provided by local organisations and groups accessed by the community.

61 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – 24 minutes 10 seconds.

The Community Engagement Team Leader presented the report entitled Grants & Community Update and drew attention to the following:

- After the grants awarded at this meeting the Committee had £5865 in the budget remaining;
- There had been a carry-over of £165 from the last civic year in addition to the annual budget of £8700;
- There were 4 remaining meetings in this civic year to make use of the remaining budget.

It was:

RESOLVED: That the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Southern Rural area be endorsed.

REASON FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the work of the Community Engagement team
- (2) To inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020.

62 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 25 minutes 40 seconds.

Members gave updates on the following Ward Matters:

Knebworth Twinning Association

Councillor Lisa Nash provided an update on forthcoming events at the Knebworth Town Twinning Association and the event to thank Lord Cobbold for his work as president of the Association. Councillor Lisa Nash also advised of a forthcoming talk by The Hon. Henry Lytton-Cobbold hosted by the Association.

Thursday, 24th June, 2021

Environmental Action Days

Councillor Claire Strong provided an update on environmental action day activities including litter picking across the District, two of which she had attended; she had been aware that the Community Engagement team was busy handling requests for equipment; the rural areas of the district looked well and litter was not generally visible but on closer inspection there was a lot to be found. Councillor Strong praised the efforts of the communities involved and wished they would continue with the project.

Councillor Claire Strong also noted that Highways maintenance and local farmers were out cutting grass verges and hedgerows more than usual and wished road users to stay safe.

Councillor Faye Frost advised that litter picking projects had been promoted on social media and that Parish Councils should be advised to contact the District Council to acquire high visibility jackets and litter pickers to support their efforts. Councillor Frost noted the amount of rubbish collected at the event in Offley she attended and the positive feeling it brought to the community.

Councillor David Barnard noted that while it was positive that the Council was offering equipment it was inconvenient for some parish councils to collect the equipment from Buntingford or Cumberlow Green and he wished a more convenient pick-up point could be arranged.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Chair