

COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 21st October 2020 at 7.30 pm, online via Zoom.

In attendance: Cllr Griffiths (Chairman),
Cllr Scott (Vice Chairman), Cllr Elleray, Cllr Abraham, Cllr Feldman, Cllr Hollick, Cllr Martin,
Cllr Moffatt, Cllr McCabe & Cllr Westgarth.

District Councillor: Ian Sollom

Members of the Public: 3

Locum Clerk and Clerk: L White & A Bridges

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Vice Chair welcomed all to the meeting (The Chairman had temporary internet difficulties at the beginning of the meeting).

2. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Black.

3. To receive declarations of interests from councillors on items on the agenda and details of any dispensations held

Cllr Elleray had submitted a claim for expenses (Item 9). Cllr Martin had written the Spoonville proposal (Item 11). Lastly, Cllr Feldman reminded the meeting she lives near Bourn airfield development Item 8.2).

4. Comments & observations from members of the public & County and District Councillor Reports:

- A member of the public informed the meeting that he was present to discuss the lack of public footpaths around Comberton. His presentation illustrated Lot Way as an old disused footpath, linking Comberton to neighbouring villages. He explained that the Lot Way was a historic right of way and his aim was to explore its reinstatement as a right of way for future generations. The resident explained that the footpath now runs down the middle of a farmed field and unfortunately was not recorded as a footpath the 1960's, when other rights of way were. It was removed from the Ordnance Survey map five years ago.

The member of the public asked the Parish Council's opinion on the best way forward, as the legal expiry date to re-register was in 2026. The meeting spoke of the permissive path which ran adjacent to Lot Way and how many residents used and enjoyed this.

(The Chairman returned to the meeting at 7.45pm)

Cllr Westgarth spoke of a previous court hearing with Cambridge County Council to reinstate the footpath, which unfortunately failed, as the farmer proved he had been using the land for many years. The Clerk reminded the meeting that this was on the agenda as item 12.1. The resident thanked the Parish Council and left the meeting.

- A second member of the public spoke about concerns with the possible location of the East West Railway (EWR) link. She felt that Cambridge Approaches may negatively influence the final decision from EWR and this would affect the village. She also stated that she had

written to the Clerk and Chairman without receiving a response and was informed by both that this correspondence had unfortunately not been received.

Cllr Elleray said the website had been updated after a recent EWR meeting and that a further public consultation will occur next year. The meeting discussed the possible impact the most favoured route E may have on Comberton. Cllr Scott described Cambridge Approaches as a lobbying group, who aimed to work with parishes to offer possible routes for the EWR. The resident also queried the higher number of freight trains that may pass near the village, as the EWR proposal involved fewer stations. Cllr Scott described how larger car parks for commuters were being considered to allow easier access into Cambridge.

- **District Councillor** - Cllr Sollom gave an update about the increased number of COVID cases in the area and that Cambridgeshire County Council were stepping up involvement with local organisations again.

Cllr Sollom informed the meeting that there had been no Planning Department update on the extra 45 houses in the Bennell Farm development.

Cllr Martin asked the District Councillor if food parcels for vulnerable residents would restart. Cllr Sollom stated they would not be phased out as originally planned and would continue until spring. Cllr Martin also asked about mental health provision during the pandemic and Cllr Sollom said a co-ordinator will be reinstated in each local area.

Cllr Sollom left the meeting at this point.

5. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 16th September 2020

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2020 were approved and will be signed by the Chairman.

6. Co-option of new councillor Michael Tierney

Mr Tierney was introduced to the Parish Council. Cllr Hollick asked if Mr Tierney had attended the last meeting as a member of the public, which he confirmed. Mr Tierney was invited to comment on his application to join the Parish Council. Mr Tierney explained that he had been a Comberton resident since 2013 and felt very settled here. He spoke of being inspired during lockdown to get involved in local groups and to help improve the local community. All **AGREED** that Mr Tierney should be co-opted to the Parish Council. It was **RESOLVED** that Mr Tierney could join the meeting as a councillor and the Clerk to send the necessary paperwork.

7. Matters arising or carried forward from the last meeting or a previous meeting and to note the Clerk's report:

- The Locum Clerk told the meeting that she had been working with the new Clerk to ensure a smooth handover. The meeting thanked the Locum Clerk for all her work and was congratulated for achieving her recent British Empire Medal.
- Cllr Feldman asked if she could discuss The Drift at this point in the meeting and this was permitted. A resident had asked for the road to be reclassified as a restricted byway due to safety concerns. These included the increased number of speeding vehicles, increasing dangers to pedestrians and children using the road for Forest School. The police have also been called on several occasions due to these safety concerns. It was **AGREED** that it should be investigated Cambridgeshire County Council. **ACTION** Clerk to contact.

8. Planning Matters

8.1 To receive a report from the Planning Committee: A report from the planning committee was circulated before the meeting. There were no questions. Cllr Elleray informed the meeting that decisions and comments submitted online by the Planning Committee were not being recorded on the new planning website. This meant that some applications were approved by SCDC after being contested by the Planning Committee. Cllr Abraham stated that it was vital that this process worked satisfactorily, and the meeting agreed.

8.2 Bourne airfield development application and S106/traffic mitigation that affects Comberton: The developers have proposed that traffic calming measures should be introduced to the area to reduce speeding vehicles. Cllr Moffat felt that these measures were not always successful, and Cllr Elleray stated they were proven to be effective for the majority of speeding motorists. It was agreed by all that any traffic calming measure needed to be thought through carefully.

8.3 East West Railway – Cambridge Approaches update following Anthony Browne meeting: This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

9. Finance, procedure and risk assessment

9.1 To receive the finance report and to approve the payment of accounts (list of invoices to be listed at the end of the agenda). Cllr Hollick asked the Locum Clerk why there were now bank charges. A £6 monthly charge on the new bank account was confirmed. All **AGREED** that the finances were to be approved. Cllr Elleray abstained (due to an expense claim).

9.2 To receive the Recreation Ground Co-ordinator report including any action taken using delegated powers. None received.

9.3 To consider Cllr Martin's research into additional funding available for the Council for ongoing projects. All **AGREED**.

9.4 To consider the new Clerk's access to set up payments on Unity Bank: this was **AGREED**.

9.5 To approve a pre-paid card for use by the clerk for ad hoc items. The Locum Clerk informed the meeting that a pre-paid card would enable the Clerk and Handyman to buy necessary items without using their bank account. This could have a limit of £300 for example. Cllr Elleray suggested that PayPal could be used and it was agreed that this could be an option. **ACTION** - Clerk to investigate different pre-payment types.

9.6 To approve the Clerk's training with CAPALC - The meeting **APPROVED** the £125 for clerks training (half the fee split with another Parish Council).

9.7 To consider the Clerk's training for CiLCA in 2021 (enrolment now). The Locum Clerk felt that this would be beneficial to the Clerk and the Council. The CiLCA qualification was the equivalent to a Level 3 NVQ and cost approximately £400. This would take two years to complete. This was **AGREED** by all.

9.8 To consider seeking funding for a new defibrillator. The Chair presented two quotes, one from London Hearts and one from Community Heartbeat Trust. The Councillors discussed the possible location of the defibrillator, and Cllr Martin confirmed that the village only had a defibrillator at the dentist. As the village hall gates were locked in the evenings, it was agreed that the pavilion would be the most suitable place to consider.
ACTION - Clerk to obtain a third quote.

10. To receive reports and items from committees, working groups and members for information

10.1 Tree group report including findings of the tree survey was carried out at the beginning of the month.

The Chairman asked for clarification on who was in the Tree Committee as there was some confusion over the suggested tree works. Cllr McCabe asked if the resident who chaired the committee could be invited to the next meeting to discuss the recent tree report. This was **AGREED** by all.

Cllr Martin informed the Parish Council that the Woodland Trust could give free trees to local community groups and that the Scout Group had agreed to help plant these. All **AGREED** that these could be obtained.

10.2 To consider the quote for tree work at 26-30 Bakers Close.

The Locum Clerk asked for clarification on this matter and the other ongoing tree works in the village. Bakers Close was confirmed to not be urgent work but needed attention. It was agreed that the Tree Group would meet separately to this meeting and report back. It was also stated by Cllr Abraham that the group will need its Terms of Reference reviewing.

10.3 To consider the state of the village pond and where to seek advice.

The Chairman stated he had received lots of comments about the state of the pond. It was felt that the pond was looking tatty and unkempt and it was **AGREED** by all that an expert was needed to give advice. Cllr Scott felt that most residents wanted a well-kept pond rather than an environmentally friendly pond. She argued that many enjoyed seeing the ducks rather than an overgrown pond. Cllr Elleray discussed having a clay lined pond after it had been cleaned. The Locum Clerk suggested that the Wildlife Trust could offer advice on the pond and it was **AGREED** that this should be pursued by a Pond Working Group.
RESOLVED - Cllrs Abraham, Tierney, Hollick Feldman and Scott would form the Pond Working Group. The Locum Clerk reminded the Parish Council that Terms of Reference needed to be established at the first meeting. It was also **AGREED** that the residents would be invited to offer any relevant knowledge in the Comberton Contact.

11.0 Recreation Ground Group

11.1 To consider activities, priorities and funding for the Recreation Ground:

The Parish Council was reminded that the Recreation Group consisted of Cllr Abraham, Cllr Martin and Cllr Feldman. A spreadsheet was distributed to the Parish Council which illustrated priorities for future work. These included an upgraded pavilion, new dog signs, a multi court (they had applied for funding), flood lights, an eco-toilet, a bike track and a trim/explorer trail. They asked for the Clerk's assistance in helping getting quotes.

The Locum Clerk reminded the group that the S106 funding for Bennell Farm was not yet confirmed and could take time to materialise. A Public Works Loan was discussed as an interim option. It was also confirmed that the flood lights would need Planning Permission. Cllr Moffat felt that they were unnecessary and could deter wildlife and Cllr Martin said that they would be low-level sensor light only, to help deter vandalism. All **APPROVED** the plan, although Cllr Abraham felt that more information and prices were needed on the eco toilet.

12.0 To consider correspondence/communications received

12.1 To consider the correspondence from a resident in relation to Lot Way

The footpath was discussed again. Cllr Scott felt that the Permissive Path, situated near to the footpath, would be maintained by the farmer. He also stated that as Lot Way went through the middle of a used field, rather than the edge, the permissive path around the edge was a good option for all. Cllr Hollick told the meeting that it would be beneficial to reinstate the historic footpath for future generations. Cllr Westgarth agreed that a formal right of way where the permissive path was would be a good compromise. The Chairman asked if the councillors felt it was appropriate to discuss this with the farmer and Cllr Westgarth agreed to do this informally.

12.2 To consider the correspondence from a resident asking for support to scalp an unmade road at Newnham.

This item was carried over from last month and it was agreed that the resident should be directed to Cambridgeshire County Council.

12.3 To consider the correspondence received about the overgrown hedge on Thornberry Wood

The hedge was confirmed to be a tree by Cllr Westgarth. She explained that branches had fallen off and damaged a resident's garage. One tree needed to be cut and another reduced. The first quote for work was given on 18th September and Cllr Westgarth felt that a decision needed to be made in this meeting. It was **AGREED** that a second quote for the removal of the (diseased) Ash tree was needed and if both were quoted to be under £700 (before VAT) the clerk could authorise it. **ACTION** - Clerk to contact the resident and arrange for a second quote.

12.4 To consider correspondence received about the inconsistencies of planning application determination at SCDC

This was discussed in 8.1

13.0 Closure of meeting - the meeting finished at 22.05pm.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held via Zoom on
Wednesday 18th November at 7.30pm.

Signed:

Date:

Chairman