

## EARSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Earswick Parish Council held in Earswick Village Hall on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>D Jones</b> <b>S Wiseman</b> <b>P Sapsford</b> <b>K Pace</b> <b>S Millson</b>
	<b>Clerk</b>	

**Members of the Public Present:-** K Oxtoby, M Earnshaw, N Earnshaw, H Mead, A Nichols, H Davey, J Sharpe, J Cook, L Blackburn, K Beamish, A Herbert, I Jones, S Winspear, N Eden, S Eden.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

P Leveson.

### 2. Declarations of Interest.

None.

### 3. Minutes of Previous Meetings.

Parish Council Meeting minutes for 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 were approved as an accurate record by the councillors and signed.

### 4. Members of the Public.

Comments were made regarding; Dog Fouling was a serious problem and had been worse in the bad weather, Comments were made regarding the agenda item on the future of the Enclosed Public Space, some residents wanted it to remain as a buffer between Fosslands and the Old Village and allow it to be an area for wildlife, all residents were against outside parties being able to purchase the land space, residents felt they had a right to be consulted before any action was taken by the Council.

### 5. Clerks Report

a. The ongoing action tracker was reviewed and it was noted that:-

- i. The Council had received £369.09 in Double Taxation and there were still some requests awaiting a reply
- ii. The clerk had been in contact with CYC regarding the purchase of a V.A.S. sign, it would cost between £3000 and £3500. The next stage in the process would be to identify a suitable position, CYC will make further contact with the clerk.
- iii. The clerk and Chairman had produced all the relevant paperwork to be sent out to applicants and suggested the post be advertised immediately to enable a candidate to be appointed to shadow the clerk from April. Councillors agreed to this.

b. The following pre authorised payments have been made since the last meeting;-  
Clerks salary for January.

£24.00 to British Gas for service contract for February.

£300.00 to A Hill for planting the hedge in the River Access Field.

£84.00 to M Harland for his maintenance contract.

Councillors authorised a payment of £5.52 to S Millson for stamps and £36.00 to A Hill to remove a fallen tree on the BMX track.

£369.09 had been paid in for Double Taxation from CYC.

## **6. Planning Applications**

Planning application 11/03390/FUL 12 Whitelands had been withdrawn.

## **7. Monthly Equipment Check**

Following the monthly play area check for February it was noted that the hole had not yet been repaired due to the bad weather and that the litter bins at the Lock House Land car park had not been emptied. Neighbourhood services will be contacted.

**Action KP**

## **8. Enclosed Public Space.**

Parish Councillors had been sent a report that considered all the options available to them concerning the piece of land known as the Enclosed Open Space, sited at the rear of Earswick Chase and the Village. These were as follows:-

### **1. Do Nothing**

The Parish Council have this year included additional maintenance of this area following on from complaints from residents of Earswick Chase that this area needed some attention. The cost for 2012/13 will be £600.

**Advantages** - Minimum cost to the Parish Council

**Disadvantages** - under utilisation of a parish Asset

### **2. Sell All the Land**

If the Parish Council decide to sell the land they MUST ensure that they realise the maximum value of the land. This would involve the land, however it is divided up for sale, being advertised on the open market. An estimated value of the land is £100,000, at current investment rates this would give an annual income of £2000.

**Advantages** - Increased income for Parish Council

**Disadvantages** – No control over who would purchase the land and to what purpose it may be used in the future.

### **3. Sell Part of the Land**

This option would involve selling part of the land on either side of the field to existing residents. This could realise approximately £30,000 and give an annual income of £600. There is the problem of the ditch which needs to be maintained.

**Advantages** - Increased income for the Parish Council.

**Disadvantages** - Not all residents may want to purchase the land at the rear of their property and this would leave an irregular shaped piece of land. Could cause problems in other areas of the village where residents border on POS. Historically the Parish Council have refused to sell land and recently illegal infringements have been removed. If the land is sold the Parish Council could be accused of dual standards.

### **4. Open Up The Space**

The Parish Council could look at ways to utilize the land and the Environmental Group have indicated that this land would be ideal for planting a community orchard with around 100 trees. This would cost between £600 and £2000. The area could be further developed by suggesting the honey bee hives be relocated there and other environmentally friendly projects could be developed such as hanging bird feeders, creating hedgehog nests and opening it up to children from the local primary school as an education site.

**Advantages** – Good for the environment, benefit to all the residents in the Parish, it would complement the work in the River Access land and meet initial residents concerns that the land was not being adequately maintained.

**Disadvantages** – Still a cost to the Parish Council. Opening up the land could cause a problem area for vandalism or unsociable behavior, however this could be addressed by closing off the area and restricting access.

Members of the Public were then given the opportunity to make any comments before Councillors voted.

Councillors voted on the options :

1. Do Nothing: unanimously voted against
2. Sell All the Land: unanimously voted against
3. Sell part of the Land: unanimously voted against
4. Open up the space: unanimously in favour of utilising the space.

Councillors resolved that the area of land should be utilised and proposed that the Environmental group come up with a detailed proposal. A meeting would then be held for the residents to come and look at the proposal and make any comments for the Council to consider.

**Action KP**

### **9. Grant Application Scheme**

Councillors discussed the idea of introducing a grant application scheme to enable groups in the Parish to apply for funding. The Council have to be fully accountable for any money they spend and the introduction of this scheme would allow an audit trail when funds, including 106 money, are given to a project. Councillors voted to implement the scheme. Groups will need to complete an application form, available from the clerk, and present it to the Council.

### **10. Scented Garden Group**

Following on from comments made by the Scented Garden concerning finance a meeting had been held on the 24<sup>th</sup> January between representatives from the Scented Garden, 2 Councillors and the clerk. A report, including the background of the Scented Garden and matters arising from the meeting had been circulated to Councillors. This was then discussed and the following actions were agreed.

**i.** The Parish Council agreed the third and final payment of £1000 would be ring fenced from 106 money for 2012/13 on condition that: Any expenditure incurred from this sum of money should relate to the scented garden and the surrounding public open space within the boundary of the hedge. No other monies for expenditure for these POS areas, apart from grass cutting, will be given by the Parish Council

**ii.** The Scented Garden Committee can satisfy the Parish Council that it has an acceptable constitution based on a fair and equitable process which includes advertising to the village as a whole any vacancies on the committee, regular minuted meetings which are open to the public to attend and an annual general meeting at which members are elected and re-elected. Accounts must also be open to public scrutiny.

The £1000 will remain within the Parish Council's budget and any monies to be spent must first be identified and agreed by the Scented Garden Committee, **including the Parish Council representative**, and a request for approval for the agreed sum of money be sought from the Parish Council through its normal procedures i.e. at a formal council meeting. This condition will allow the Parish Council to meet its obligations on good governance in regard to the spending of public money.

iii. The scented garden must be open and accessible to residents on a daily basis, except where adverse weather conditions dictate otherwise, for a minimum of 10am - 3pm from October to March and 10am - 6pm from April to September.

iv. The Scented Garden should take immediate steps to reduce its expenditure and to increase its income from fundraising so as to reduce its dependence on Parish Council funding.

v. From 2013/14 any requests for funding for the Scented Garden will have to be considered along with all other requests for grants.

vi. The Parish Councilors representative will meet with the Scented Garden Committee to discuss the resolutions agreed by the Council. **Action PS**

### **11. Shed and Path in the Scented Garden**

This item is deferred until after the meeting with the Scented Garden.

### **12.Environmental Group**

Councillors heard that the Environmental Group had discussed various issues in the Village. They would like to sow wild flower seeds, put up bird and bug boxes and help develop the Enclosed Space into a Community orchard. They had planned a Village Walk to look at further areas which could benefit from development but this had been postponed due to snow. Councillors formally confirmed that the funds received from the Nature Reserved would be ring fenced for the Environmental Group, but that the group would have to make a grant application for funds to be released and a risk assessment provided before any work could be undertaken.

### **13. Village Hall**

Councillors discussed the boiler in the Village Hall, which is now 17 years old, whether to replace it or to continue the maintenance contract with British Gas. They decided to continue with the maintenance contract but to obtain 2 quotes to replace the boiler so that if it needed replacing this work could be undertaken quickly.

**Action SM**

### **14. Pruning Trees**

Councillors had looked at a request from a local resident who had asked if the height of the trees in front of the Village Hall and in the Enclosed Public Area could be reduced. Councillors agreed to this request and authorised £440 plus VAT.

**Action SM**

### **15. Tennis Courts**

Councillors resolved to increase the annual subscription to £20 per household for the 2012/13 season. Although there are funds to enable the courts to be maintained it would not be possible to build up reserves to resurface the courts.

They looked at the membership rules and discussed the possibility of opening up the membership to non residents. This could be on a recommendation basis with a limit to the number of non resident members and at a subscription of £40 per household.

Councillors asked the clerk to e mail current members and obtain their opinions on opening up the membership.

**Action SM**

**16. Newsletter**

Councillors had received a draft Newsletter which will be printed in colour and in a new format which will hopefully attract residents attention to what is happening in the village. Councillors authorised £30 for the printing costs.

**17. Litter Pick**

It was agreed to have a litter pick on the 26<sup>th</sup> February, starting at the Village Hall at 10.00a.m.

**18. Local Development Framework**

The clerk will circulate a reply to Councillors giving their opinions before the letter is sent. **Action SM**

**19. Revised Code of Conduct**

The clerk will circulate a reply to Councillors giving their opinions before the letter is sent. **Action SM**

**20. Items for Information/next agenda**

The Ward Councillor reported that ward spending had been frozen.  
The Scented Garden had a meeting and discussed the costs of running the Garden and how this could be funded.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m

Signed.....

Sarah Millson

Date.....

