

BRANDON PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Full Council held on Monday 4th June 2001
in the Community Centre, Bury Road, Brandon at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllrs Mr A Saxby (in the Chair), Mrs J Ahern, Mr E Ashley, Mr P Baldwin, Ms J S Bourton, Mrs S Jones-Weetman, Mrs S Jureko, Mrs E Milner, Mr R Silvester, Mr A Thorne and Mr N Vant

Also present were Inspector Bennett, PC Patterson and six members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Edwards and Squadron Leader Seymour

2. Declaration of Interest.

None

3. Order of Business

Cllr Saxby proposed, seconded by Cllr Vant and agreed that Standing Order 1a is suspended until after item 8 on the agenda.

Cllr Thorne proposed, seconded by Cllr Vant and agreed that item 38 be brought forward on the agenda to between items 12 and 13 because of the importance of the item to be discussed.

4. To receive a report from the Police

The Chairman Cllr Saxby welcomed Inspector Bennett the new Station Commander for Brandon and Mildenhall. Inspector Bennett introduced himself and his colleague PC Patterson. Inspector Bennett stated that he faced a steep learning curve, and was currently being briefed on issues. Members then asked questions.

Cllr Thorne expressed concern that the public were not being able to phone Brandon Police Station direct. Inspector Bennett stated that it was unfortunate but part of the Police policy on quality of service.

Cllr Ashley asked why when anyone reported a matter his or her details were given out over the radio. Inspector Bennett stated that the public could withhold their details, it was also hoped to have a new radio system, which would encrypt details. A time scale of a year was indicated for the installation of the new digital radio system. Cllr Ashley also asked Inspector Bennett if he had seen the recent BBC programme about Brandon. Inspector Bennett stated that it was on his list of things to do and therefore could not comment at present.

5. To receive, confirm and sign the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 2nd April 2001 and 9th April 2001.

Proposed by Cllr Vant, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jureko and agreed that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 2nd April 2001 be received, confirmed as correct and signed.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs Jureko, seconded by Cllr Mrs Ahern and agreed that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 9th April 2001 be received, confirmed as correct and signed.

6.To receive and confirm as correct the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 2nd April 2001.

Proposed by Cllr Baldwin, seconded by Cllr Silvester and agreed that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 2 nd April 2001 be received, and confirmed as correct.

Cllr Milner abstained.

7.To receive, confirm as correct and sign the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 14th May 2001 and the 21st May 2001.

Cllr Ashley stated that the Minutes of the 21 st May 2001 were missing the statement read by the former Chairman Cllr Ms Bourton. The Chairman Cllr Saxby stated that the matter would be discussed under item 38(b). It was therefore proposed by Cllr Mrs Ahern, seconded by Cllr Thorne and agreed by 4 votes to 3 abstentions that the Minutes of the Annual General Meetings held on the 14th May 2001 and the 21st May 2001 be received, confirmed as correct and signed. Cllr Ashley proposed, seconded by Cllr Jureko that the discussions with reference to the Statement be adjourned to item 38(b) on the agenda. The motion was carried by 6 votes to 1 against with 3 abstentions.

8.To receive, confirm and sign the minutes of the Staffing and Personnel Committee held on Friday 4th May 2001.

Cllr Silvester questioned the co-option of Cllr Thorne on to the Staffing and Personnel Committee, stating that he considered it to be a matter for full council. Cllr Saxby reported that advice had been sought and the co-option was allowed. It was proposed by Cllr Vant, seconded by Cllr Jureko and agreed by 6 votes to 3 abstentions that the minutes of the Staffing and Personnel Committee be received, confirmed as correct and signed.

9.Matters arising from the Minutes

Cllr Vant asked if clarification had been received on the Churchyard wall. The Clerk reported that the matter was still outstanding.

Cllr Vant also asked the Clerk to clarify the position with regard to the Council nominated Trustees to the Lingheath Trust. The Clerk reported on a letter and discussions she had had with Mr Hetherington. The Charity was stating the existing Trustees still had 2 years of their office remaining. The Clerk reported that she had sent a letter to the charity and was awaiting a formal reply.

10(a) To review Standing Orders

It was proposed by Cllr Saxby, seconded by Cllr Vant and agreed that Standing Order 1a be amended from 7.00pm to 7.30pm.

Proposed by Cllr Saxby, seconded by Cllr Thorne and agreed that Standing Order 3 be amended by deleting ♦save for the month of August♦.

Proposed by Cllr Saxby, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jureko and agreed that Standing Order 16 be amended to ♦at least 10 days clear notice including weekends and bank holidays♦.

Proposed by Cllr Vant, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jureko and agreed that the Standing Order 71 (b) be deleted.

The above changes to be placed before the Full Council at their next meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Vant, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jureko that the remaining items be adjourned to the Finance Committee for consideration.❖

(b) To consider the implementation of the Specimen Financial Regulations
The item was adjourned to the Finance Committee for consideration.

11.To Co-opt Councillors to fill the two East Ward vacancies

The Chairman reported that it was nice that the Council had received a letter from Mrs Susan Hufton indicating her interest in being co-opted onto Brandon Parish Council. The letter was circulated to members. Cllr Saxby proposed it, seconded by Cllr Ashley and agreed that Mrs Hufton be co-opted onto Brandon Parish Council.

Cllr Mrs Hufton then signed her declaration of office and joined the meeting.

12.To receive a report from RAF Lakenheath

No report was available, as apologies have been received from Squadron Leader Seymour

13.To receive and adopt the list of accounts paid and list of accounts to be paid (Including confidential payments)

Cllr Thorne asked for clarification on item 55. The Clerk offered an explanation it was then proposed by Cllr Mrs Milner, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman and agreed by 8 votes to 1 against that payment be withheld to Mr Baker pending clarification on the paperwork.

Item 60. It was proposed by Cllr Ahern, seconded by Cllr Vant and agreed by 8 votes to 2 abstentions that a letter be sent to Forest Heath District Council requesting clarification.

Item 24. Cllr Mrs Ahern requested that a letter be sent to Suffolk County Council requesting a reduction on the Hire fee for the Hall during the winter because of the noise and coldness. It was agreed to write to Suffolk County Council.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Jureko, seconded by Cllr Mrs Ahern and agreed that the remaining payments be passed.

It was proposed By Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman, seconded by Cllr Mrs Milner and agreed with one abstention that the confidential payments be passed for payment.

14. (a) To discuss a letter from Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman

Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman read out her letter and outlined the nature of her complaint against Cllr Ms Bourton. Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman requested an apology from Cllr Ms Bourton. Cllr Saxby asked if anyone wished to speak on the matter. Cllr Vant

outlined previous problems.

Cllr Saxby stated that as the new Chairman he would try to ensure that all members had a chance to speak on matters and hoped that if he had acted unfairly in any way members would correct him. He also hoped that the Council could now move forward in a positive way.

Cllr Saxby reported that he had tried to deal with this matter at a local level but had been unsuccessful.

Cllr Ms Bourton stated that she had allowed Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman several chances to speak and stopped her to allow other Councillors to speak.

Cllr Mrs Milner stated that this had been a difficult time and that things should now move forward.

(b) To discuss a letter from Cllr Thorne

Cllr Thorne stated that he was getting no pleasure from putting the motion forward and like Cllr Mrs Milner would like to put a line under what has happened in the past. Cllr Thorne then tabled a motion of censure against Cllr Edwards, Silvester and Ms Bourton. Cllr Thorne stated that he would like to withdraw Cllr Edwards name, as he had not taken part in the personal attacks. Cllr Thorne then outlined the grounds for his motion in some detail. Cllr Vant seconded the Motion.

Cllr Mrs Milner asked for clarification on the three clear days notice and outlined her request for a confidential staffing meeting without the Clerk. Cllr Saxby agreed to take legal advice on the request.

Cllr Silvester stated that he had no intention to embarrass the Clerk; he just felt that papers left at lunchtime on Friday was unreasonable. Discussion then ensued on what constituted three clear days. Cllr Saxby read out the letter from SALC.

The motion was then put to the vote and was carried by eight votes to two against. There were two abstentions.

15.To receive and discuss the following:

TPO 2, 2001. Numbers 11-14 Heron Avenue and 9-12 Kingfisher Drive, Brandon.

TPO 3,2001. 38 Rattlers Road, and land adjacent Brandon.

The Council welcomed the proposed Tree Preservation Orders. Members raised concerns over other tree issues. It was agreed to adjourn the members concerns to the Environment and Open Space Committee.

16.To receive the Clerk's report and an update on actions taken after the last Council Meeting.

Cllr Vant reported that it was good news about the Pelican Crossing on the Bury Road.

Cllr Vant asked for clarification on the instruction given to the Land Agent dealing with the New Cemetery. Cllr Vant asked if the Council had ever discussed or given approval to the instruction. The chairman Cllr Saxby stated that the Council had not discussed the matter and

that the Council's instructions were contrary to the approach taken by the Land Agent. The Clerk reported that she had phoned the Land Agent who stated that the instructions had come from the Temporary Administrator. It was agreed to get clarification from the Temporary Administrator on who had given him this information. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Ahern, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman and agreed unanimously that the Council instruct the Land Agent to refute the proposal and just merely offer to buy the land for the New Cemetery.

17. To receive, consider and approve the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2001.

It was agreed to adjourn this item to the Finance Committee

18. To receive a letter for the Audit Commission on the appointment of External Auditors for Brandon Parish Council.

It was agreed to ask for the District Audit to be appointed as External Auditors for Brandon Parish Council. It was also agreed to write and complain to the Audit Commission.

19. To confirm the signatories on the Bank Accounts

Cllr Saxby reported that the signatories were last changed in 1995 and were therefore out of date. It was agreed to amend the signatories to the council Bank accounts to include all members of the Council and the Clerk.

20. To discuss the Council's response to the objection to the 1999/2000 audit.

Cllr Mrs Ahern, Saxby and Vant declared an interest and left the meeting. Cllr Mrs Milner chaired this item.

Cllr Mrs Milner stated that she considered this to be a serious matter. Cllr Mrs Milner stated that she believed once the legal process had been started the Parish Council had to pay the legal costs, it was therefore a matter of damage limitations.

Cllr Ms Bourton reported that the then Chairman had taken advice and had apologised to the Council and had taken no further part in these discussions. Cllr Ms Bourton stated that the then Chairman's interest was not pecuniary.

Cllr Silvester stated that the then Clerk but unfortunately had resolved the matter it was remarks made at the end of Mrs Vincent's letter, which had caused offence to another councillor. Cllr Silvester stated that it had not been a financial interest.

The Clerk circulated the advice from SALC and reported that the advice to the Council was to stay neutral and not add to the debate.

Cllr Mrs Milner repeated that once the process had started it could not be stopped. Cllr Ms Bourton stated that the money had been precepted to go to the playing fields and that the Chairman's vote had not influenced the decision of Council. Cllr Silvester supported these comments and stated that it was merely a matter of declaration of interest. Cllr Silvester also felt that there was no possibility of recovering the money.

Cllr Mrs Milner stated that the Council must try and minimise the liability of the Council.

Cllr Ms Bourton stated that a proposal was needed to reply to PriceWaterhouseCoopers. Cllr Ms Bourton proposed, seconded by Cllr Silvester and agreed by six votes for with three abstentions that the response should be in the form of the second paragraph of SALC's letter, namely that the Council could not substantiate the accusations of misappropriation. That it was a matter of declaration of interest, which had already been dealt with by the Council. The reply to be supported by copies of the minutes. The response also to include a hope that this will draw to a close the objection at no further cost to the Council.

Cllr Mrs Ahern, Saxby and Vant rejoined the meeting.

21. Street Lighting:

To review the position on the stock taking of lighting columns

Adjourned to the next ordinary meeting of the Full Council.

To consider a letter from Brandon Residents Association for extra streetlight at St Nicholas Walk.

It was agreed to add this to the list of improvements.

22. To receive the Annual accounts from the following Charities;

The Brandon Poors Estate

The Edmund Atmere Charity

The Lingheath Trust Charity

The Chairman stated that copies were available in the Clerk's office.

23. To receive a letter from a resident concerning an accident on Market Hill.

It was proposed by Cllr Saxby, seconded by Cllr Baldwin and agreed that the Council writes to the Suffolk County Council Highways department expressing the Council's concern and asks them to look into the matter as a matter of urgency. Cllr Silvester requested that a copy be sent to the District Council

24. To consider the provision of Christmas Lights in 2001

It was agreed to adjourn this item to the Environment and Open Space Committee as soon as possible.

25. To consider and approve the draft Statement of Principles for Brandon Remembrance Playing Field Steering Group.

Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman raised the question that the Parish Clerk was Clerk to these meetings and believed that the Council had never formally discussed or approved this. Cllr Mrs Milner enquired on the frequency of the meetings. Cllr Ms Bourton said the meetings were quarterly, but that the initial meetings had been closer. Cllr Ms Bourton felt that once the scheme was running the meetings would be quarterly. Cllr Jureko asked if each group could take the minutes alternately. Cllr Milner proposed that both Brandon Parish Council and Forest Heath District Council undertake to Clerk two meetings each. Cllr Vant felt that if the Parish Clerk took the minutes then there would be better representation.

Cllr Ahern proposed, seconded by Cllr Mrs Hufton and agreed by nine votes for, with one

against and one abstention that one person should be Clerk and that the cost of this be shared equally between the three parties.

Cllr Baldwin felt that for continuity the Parish Council provides a Clerk for four meetings a year. Other members of the group do any meetings over and above this. The cost of correspondence to be shared by the group. Cllr Vant asked if it has been just minutes the Clerk took or whether there was any administration responsibility. The Clerk confirmed that it was just minutes.

Cllr Mrs Milner withdraws her proposal.

Cllr Saxby reported that the Council could withdraw from the scheme at any time and proposed that members support the draft scheme with the above proviso.

Cllr Jones-Weetman added an amendment that the Council should only commit if funds are available. The amended was added to the proposal and seconded by Cllr Jones-Weetman. The proposal was carried with one abstention.

26.To consider the report from SALC on the Government's rural white paper

Noted.

27.To consider the report from the Clerk on the Market Town Initiative, the Keystone Community Partnership and Brandon Community Regeneration Project

The Clerk reported that the Council had been asked to supply a member to the following advisory committees of the Keystone Community Partnership. The advisory committees are Learning and Skills and Community Safety.

It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman be the council's representative on the Learning and Skills Advisory Committee and Cllr Thorne on the Community Safety Advisory Committee.

28.To review the closure of footpaths under the restrictions for Foot and Mouth.

The Clerk reported on the current advice from Suffolk County Council.

29.To receive a request from Cllr Baldwin to make arrangements for the Nine Stiles Walk.

Cllr Baldwin reported that he had received a request from a member of the public to hold the walk. It was agreed to hold the walk pending any problems with Foot and Mouth. It was agreed to hold the walk on Friday 13th July 2001 at 7.00pm commencing at Coulson Lane

Cllr Vant requested and agreed that the Foot and Mouth signs be replaced in the top meadow.

30.To receive and discuss the following grant applications:

Rethink Disability
Brandon Neighbourhood Watch
Children with Leukaemia
East Anglian Air Ambulance

Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields
Bringing a Buzz to Brandon III
Brandon & Mildenhall Citizens Advice Bureau

It was agreed to refer the above items to the Finance Committee save for items (e) and (f).
Cllr Mrs Jones-Weetman reported that Brandon Neighbourhood Watch no longer required a Council Liaison Officer.

(e) Proposed by Cllr Vant, seconded by Cllr Ahern and agreed by 8 votes to 3 against that the remainder of the 2000/2001 grant be paid to Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields

(f) Cllr Ahern proposed, seconded by Cllr Thorne that £120 be paid to Bringing a Buzz to Brandon. After a short debate the motion was put and was lost by two votes for to six against with three abstentions.

31.To discuss letters from the Suffolk Police Authority

Policing Forums

It was agreed that members should respond individually.

Signing on lighting Poles

Noted

32.To consider the provision of a photocopier , the provision of additional phone lines and an Internet provider for the Parish Council's office

Cllr Thorne outlined various options on Internet providers. It was agreed to get more information for the next meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Saxby, seconded by Cllr Thorne and agreed that a second phone line be installed in the office.

It was proposed by Cllr Saxby, seconded by Cllr Thorne and agreed that the Council take up the second option on leasing a new photocopier from Canon Business Solutions

It was agreed to advertise the disposal of the old computer in Brandon Life, requesting offers from the public.

Cllrs Silvester and Ms Bourton left the meeting.

33.To receive various items of correspondence from SALC

It was agreed that the Council's representative attends the Annual General Meeting of SALC.

34.To receive a request from Mr Carter to resume work on the Orchard

It was agreed to adjourn this item to the Environment and Open Space Committee

35.To receive an invitation to attend 'Market Towns - a new focus' East of England regional seminar.

It was agreed to send two representatives to the seminar.

36.To receive notice under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Section 53. Claimed

extension to Footpath 5 in Brandon.

It was agreed to adjourn this item to the Environment and Open Space Committee

37. To discuss a letter from Suffolk County Council on the provision of bus shelters

It was agreed that the Council lodge an interest in the proposal but could not commit council revenue to ongoing maintenance costs.

38.To discuss the schedule of meetings, and vacancies outstanding from the AGM.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Ahern, seconded by Cllr Thorne and carried by seven votes for, one against and one abstention that Planning meetings be held every two weeks on a Monday to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory obligations.

Cllr Mrs Ahern stated that a Staffing and Personnel committee was urgently needed to deal with the staff's contracts of employment. Cllr Vant felt that the Clerk's office was not a suitable venue for committee meetings because of the problems with disabled access. After sum discussion it was agreed to hold a Staffing and Personnel Committee on Monday 11 th June 2001 at 4.00 pm in the Clerk's office.

39.To review the position of the Temporary Administrator and arrange holiday cover for the Clerk.

This item was referred to the Staffing and Personnel Committee

40.To discuss a letter from Mrs Vincent

This item was adjourned to the next meeting of the Council.

41.For the Council's Information:

Suffolk Hedgerow survey newsletter

Forest Heath District Council - Best Performance Plan 2001/2002

Suffolk Coast Bike Ride

Making Tracks - The newsletter of the Brecks Tourism Partnership

Direct - May 2001

The above items were noted.

The meeting closed at 10:30 pm.

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