**TILBROOK PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the Parish Council held at the Village Hall, Church Lane, Tilbrook on Wednesday 18 March 2015, commencing at 2000 hours.

**PRESENT** Councillors C Paull (in the Chair); B Faherty; Mrs C Rowland; C Haynes and K Gutteridge

**IN ATTENDANCE** District Councillor J Gray**;** C L Thatcher, Clerk to the Council and 7 members of the public.

**14/15 APOLOGIES** were received from County Councillor P Downes.

**15/15 PUBLIC** FORUM A member of the public asked about a hedge which has been planted on the roadside of the B645 adjacent to the entrance to Tilbrook Hall and which obstructs the stile giving access to footpath 10. It was ascertained that the hedge has been planted by the landowner, Councillor Gutteridge, and he replied. He said that he will ask his Estate Manager to remove the plants which obstruct the footpath but meanwhile, anyone wishing to use the footpath may simply push aside or remove plants.

The member of the public also asked why the hedge was not aligned with the existing hedge. Councillor Gutteridge said that he owned the land to the edge of the carriageway and originally there was a fence which was along the line of where he has now planted the hedge.

Councillor Gutteridge was also asked what he could do to make stiles more accessible to dog walkers and he said that he has removed the netting which now enables dogs to walk through. He was asked to remove barbed wire from the relevant stile.

A member of the public referred to the desire amongst some residents for a 20 mph limit to be placed on Station Rd. He said that he recognized that the Council has limited funds and that the Council was trying to replace the reactive signs on High St. He did, however, feel that Station Road was a priority as a 20mph road and that the limit should be extended, at 30 mph, to Bustard Hill.

The Chairman pointed out that the police were not in favour of a 20 mph limit and it is unlikely that any funding would be forthcoming from the District or County Councils. It is estimated that the cost of implementing a lower speed limit would be several thousand pounds, due to the advertising costs in addition to signage, and it will be some time before Council has sufficient funds available. There was a discussion on this point and the relative merits of new reactive signs in High St compared with the change to Station Road.

*Councillor Gray joined the meeting.*

A resident had noted the new ‘public footpath’ signs which had been erected and wished to know by whom they were funded. This Council has no knowledge of the work and therefore assumes that the Rights Of Way Officer of the County Council had arranged for them to be erected.

**16/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.** None were made.

**17/15 MINUTES** of the Council meeting held on 21 January 2015 were read, approved and signed as a true record of that meeting.

**18/15 MATTERS ARISING**

1. Sale of Reactive Signs. The Clerk reported that no further information had yet been received from Councillor Downes.
2. Planning Training. The Chairman thought that the training session had been of benefit and the ‘hand-outs’ were useful. Councillor Haynes, however, thought that some of the information provided had been incorrect.
3. Station Road ‘puddle’. Councillor Gray said that only today he had received a call from Anglian Water and it seems they may have found the cause of the problem, for they told him that the road will have to be closed for remedial work.
4. Request for 20 mph speed limit in Station Rd. This matter had been dealt with comprehensively above, but it was agreed that residents supporting the reduction in speed limit should be asked to write individually to the County Council as individual letters always count for more than a circular. They are asked to supply a copy of their letter to the Parish Council.
5. 24 High St – metal gate and light. The Clerk said that the Enforcement Officer had been dealing with the owner’s agent and has been trying to negotiate an amicable solution. For the gate to remain, a planning application will be required, but there was a suggestion by the agent that the gate be set back into the field by at least 2 metres. Should this be done, the fence from the road to the gate could be no more than 1 metre high.
6. Verges. The resident who had made suggestions regarding the reduction in the cutting of grass on verges was present and explained his point. He thought that simply mowing a narrow strip at the kerb side of any verge, rather than mowing the whole verge, would be very beneficial to wildflowers and wildlife.

There was concern that doing this might in fact cost more than the present system and members agreed to seek the views of our contractor, since we will this year be in year 2 of a 3 year agreed contract. It was thought that the County Council had already adopted the suggested system where there were no concerns about road safety.

1. Huntingdonshire Local Plan – It was agreed that, as there was no proposal in the Plan to affect Tilbrook, there is no need of any response. A hard copy of the Plan had been available at the recent meeting, but had not been picked up by the delegates. The Clerk will write and request a copy.

**19/15 COUNTY COUNCILLOR** was unable to be present.

**20/15 PLANNING MATTERS.**

The following application was considered –

1500230 Land between 10 & 24 High St – erect agricultural building.

Members considered the application and listened to a letter read by the Clerk, which was the Clerk’s response, as a neighbour, to the application.

It was thought that the erection of the building would be overdevelopment and an intrusion into open countryside. It was proposed by Councillor Haynes, seconded by Councillor Rowland and unanimously agreed to recommend refusal, on the grounds of overdevelopment; out of keeping with surroundings; too big and aggressive and in the wrong location. It was further noted that, although the applicant referred to this being an ‘agricultural holding’, it was not and was simply a householder application.

**21/15 HIGH ST LIGHTING , PAVEMENTS & HEDGES**

Councillor Mrs Rowland had requested this item on the agenda and said that she was concerned about the narrowness of the pavement and the difficulty in walking on it in some places, due to overhanging hedges. Lighting is also very poor. It was agreed to look at the hedge growth and to ask frontagers to deal with these problems.

**22/15 ACCOUNTS**

The following were approved for payment:

E-ON Streetlight Energy Feb/Mar 57.38 inc VAT

Westcotec Streetlight maintenance 69.42 “ “

C L Thatcher Pay Feb/Mar 102.26 no “

HMRC PAYE Feb/Mar 25.50 “ “

**23/15 CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Local Joint Forum for Parishes.

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the Forum will be held at Huntingdonshire DC’s offices on Monday 13 April, commencing at 7pm. The Chairman said that he would represent the Council.

1. Local Elections 7 May 2015. The Clerk distributed the nomination packs to those members intending to seek re-election and reminded them of the need to make sure they were returned to Huntingdonshire District Council no later than 4pm on Thursday 9 April.
2. Councillor Bob Faherty had signified his intention not to stand again and the Chairman thanked him on behalf of Council for his service to the Parish Council and the village.
3. Stop Bicton Windfarm Campaign – Mr Martin Patterson informed the meeting that the campaign had been successful in having the windfarm application refused, though, of course, it was entirely possible that a new application could be made. He thanked everyone for their support but said that there is still a shortfall in funding, with those who have put in money being unable to be repaid. The shortfall was £7000 and he asked whether the Council could assist.

There was considerable discussion but it was decided that regretfully the Council could not assist further.

1. HACT – request for grant aid.

*Councillor Faherty declared an interest in this item, took no part in the discussion and did not vote.*

The Clerk read the letter requesting financial assistance towards the community bus services. It was pointed out that Council policy was not to make donations, but it was recognized that the service is a lifeline for, certainly, two residents who, without it would find it very difficult to get around. Following discussion, where it was acknowledged that offering money where the SBWF request had just been turned down, was difficult, but it was thought essential that this service be maintained and accordingly it was proposed by Councillor Mrs Rowland, seconded by Councillor Haynes and agreed to donate £150 to HACT.

1. CAPALC. The Clerk reported receipt of the subscription renewal notice for CAPALC, in the sum of £151.34, as compared with last year’s subscription of £99.98. Members were surprised at the level of increase and following a proposal by Councillor Gutteridge, which was seconded by Councillor Mrs Rowland, it was agreed not to renew membership this year.

**24/15 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

Councillor Gray said that Huntingdonshire District Council is making a point of combating litter and is issuing enforcement notices. Where a person is seen throwing litter from a vehicle – and this includes cigarette ends and chewing gum – a notice will be issued and the person fined. Members of the public are invited to report such littering and, providing they are willing to sign a statement confirming witnessing the act, action will be taken.

Regarding the Local Plan, consultation is almost over and there is ongoing contention over the inclusion of Wyton.

**25/15 MEMBERS’ POINTS OF INFORMATION**

There were no points raised.

**26/15 NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Council will be held on Wednesday 13 May 2015, commencing at 8pm in the Village Hall **following the Annual Parish Meeting, which commences at 7.30pm.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2145 hours.