

Tolleshunt D'Arcy Parish Council

Minutes of the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Parish Council held on Tuesday 6th December, 2016 at
7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr R. Dent (Chairman), J. Smith, (Acting Vice-Chairman),
Councillors: L. Barwick, D. Cook, G. Munson, R Scott
Also, present: Julie Dent (temporary Minute Taker)
There were 2 members of the public present

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and updated councilors on the condition of clerk Kevin Money who is still in hospital.
2. The Chairman asked for the Committee's approval for Julie Dent to take the Minutes for this meeting to cover for our Parish Clerk, currently in Broomfield after a heart attack. This was proposed by Cllr J Smith and seconded by Cllr G Munson.
3. **Apologies for absence** were received from Councillor R Birkin and Kevin Money, Parish Clerk.
4. **Declaration of Interest**
To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests relating to items on the agenda. No Councillor declared an interest in any agenda items.
5. **Public Participation Session**
The Chairman invited questions and observations from members of the public. A maximum time of 15 minutes to be allowed.
 - a) James Fairbanks, Churchwarden of Tolleshunt D'Arcy Parish Church, thanked the Chairman for inviting him to the meeting to request a grant from the Parish Council for the remedial works required to the bell tower. Mr. Fairbanks reported the following:
 - The bell tower is the oldest building in D'Arcy and dates to around 1380-1420, and although major work was carried out in the mid 1980's the current level of work now required has come as a bit of a shock to the Parochial Church Council.
 - The bell tower has developed cracks at high level and was not originally built for the type of bells we have today. The bell frame needs securing as low as possible. The bell frame was put in to ring from East to West only and over time the frame has worked loose. £10,000 was spent in the 1980's to secure the frame.
 - There are cracks both internal and external in the fabric of the Tower. The Surveyor has said that the internal cracks should be attended to within 18 months (from April 2016). However due to the presence of a Bat Colony in the Tower this work must be delayed until April 2017. The work is quoted as £1,300 plus

VAT. A fundraising Coffee Morning has raised £400 and Mr. Fairbanks hoped that the Parish Council would contribute to the rest.

- Mr. Fairbanks explained that that there was no support from the Diocese or Government, and once the monthly support for the church of £1,350 had been sent there was not much left for other projects.
- The church is trying to raise funds themselves. Monthly coffee mornings are held in the pub and the monthly Parish Lunch in the pub is well attended. On the 16 December, there will be Carol singing outside the pub, with the pub providing the drinks and the shop the nibbles.
- In the future, the bell frame needs to be replaced and secured to ring North, South, East and West) although currently the frame and bells operate East/ West only. Ultimately the Bells need to be taken to Whitechapel for alteration and repair and will then need to be rehung. Quotations for this work show that the cost will be in region of £50,000-£65,000 and a major grant from some source will be needed

After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council would support the Church with a donation of £750 immediately, with a further £150 contingency if they had been unable to meet the cost of the initial work for £1,300 plus VAT. This proposal was agreed unanimously.

- b) The need for a light at the end of the village hall was raised. The Chairman advised that this was in hand and would be installed by a local electrician.
- c) An update on the Defibrillator was requested. The Chairman advised that he was actively seeking a wall mounted box so that the defibrillator could be mounted safely outside the village Hall. **Action: Chairman**

- 6. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of Tolleshunt D’Arcy Parish Council**
The Chairman reported that due to the Clerk’s illness it had not been possible to obtain a copy of the Minutes of the last meeting. Approval of the October Minutes to be deferred until the meeting on 24 January 2017.
- 7. Matters arising from the previous minutes**
Matters arising from the October minutes will be deferred until 24th January.
- 8. Planning Applications**
None currently, although it was agreed that responsibility for interfacing with MDC on planning would have to be reviewed if the Clerk’s absence were prolonged.
- 8. Decisions made by MDC**
Nothing to review.

9. Finance

- The Chairman had spoken with the Clerk's wife and was going to arrange a convenient time to go and collect the Parish Council cheque book.
Action: Chairman
- Cllr Munson reported that a company who had worked on the Pavilion in June had not yet been paid. The Chairman said he would consider this, but in the meantime Cllr Munson undertook to ask for the invoice to be reissued.
Action: Chairman & Cllr Munson
- **The Precept.** After discussion, the Precept of £19,129 was unanimously agreed. However, the Councilors felt it was important that that things should be seen to be done for the parish, ever mindful that money should not be wasted.

10. Representative reports

- a. **Burial Ground** – The Burial Book and the Burial Plot Plan to be retrieved from the Parish Clerk as a matter of some urgency. **Action: Chairman**
- b. **Recreation Ground** – Cllr Smith agreed to speak to Claire Saye to get her proposals. Cllr Smith hoped that we would have had the results of our grant applications by now. The current situation is we have £10,000 and a grant for £20,000 is still outstanding. Claire believes that we may get at least half of this. Cllr Smith proposed that the next steps are agreed and are within that budget, but if the grants applications are unsuccessful it may be necessary to seek a further £5,000.
Cllr Munson reminded the meeting that that removal of the old equipment last time has cost £2,500. Cllr Smith said that his proposal entailed removing three old pieces of equipment and replacing with another climbing frame for older children. He suggested that £5,000 be ring-fenced in case of a short fall in the grant applications. **Proposed: Cllr Scott Seconded: Cllr Cook**
This proposal was agreed unanimously
Cllr Scott reminded the meeting that the existing grant we have must be spent by March 2017 at the very latest.
- c). Cllr Munson stated that despite two safety inspections nothing appears to have been done. Cllr Smith asked if anything critical had been identified. Cllr Munson said just lots of bits and pieces, on the outdoor gym. Cllr Barwick said that money should not be wasted on playground equipment that is going to be removed and asked if she could have a copy of the original report again. Cllr Smith said the reports had not highlighted anything that was dangerous otherwise it would be dealt with immediately. Cllr Munson agreed to get quotes for removal of the old equipment to compare with the quotes that had been obtained by Claire Saye.
Action: Cllr Munson
- d) Cllr Barwick said items reported on Facebook and discussions elsewhere indicated that villagers were requesting a further dog bin. Cllr Munson said it would be possible to get Maldon Council to install another one but questioned how many dog bins we wanted in the village. Cllr Smith said surveys done by Colchester Council indicated that the number of dog bins did not necessarily

improve the problems. He believed that owners who pick up after their dogs will pick up and those who do not would not use them anyway. After discussion, it was felt that villagers would feel better if we did something, so to this end Cllr Munson would investigate obtaining a further bin and Cllr Barwick would ascertain the best place for it to be sited.

Action: Cllr Barwick & Cllr Munson

- e) **Highways.** - UKPower had inspected the environment around their substation in Tolleshunt D'Arcy and decided that was no safety issue and no further action will be taken.
- f) **Maypole** - Cllr Munson believed there was a potential tripping issue with the planters by the Maypole as this was used as an impromptu bus stop. Cllr Smith said that Cllr Birkin had written approval from Highways, Colchester when the planters were installed. **Action: Cllr Birkin to be consulted when he is well enough.**
- g) **Village Hall lighting-** The Chairman reported that two lights with motion sensors were to be installed down the parking side of the village hall.
- h) **Website/Facebook Update.** This would be held in abeyance until the return of the Parish Clerk.

11. Parish Clerk Contingency (Issue not on agenda)

Cllr Smith stated that as it is possible that we have no Parish Clerk for at least one to six months we need to take steps for the future. The items identified were as follows:

- a) **Planning** - Consultation letters go to the Clerk. This needs to be changed but might be difficult to do so. Cllr Smith said he would liaise with the Clerk's wife if necessary. The Clerk also sends the Parish Council's responses back to Maldon. Weekly list goes to the Clerk from Maldon District. Between now and 24 January short planning meetings might be necessary.
- b) **Minutes** – The Minutes of the last meeting are outstanding and arrangements need to be in place for future meetings.
- c) **Website** – The Clerk was uploading this. However, Cllr Barwick will train to gain access to do this herself. **Action: Cllr Barwick**
- d) **Bills/Payments – Inbound bills and outbound payments need to be captured.** As all the Parish Council work goes to a specific Parish Clerk's email set up for our Parish Clerk, it was suggested that gaining the password for this account might be the easiest way of dealing with the day to day items until the Clerk's return. Cllr Barwick was willing to monitor this in the short term.
- e) **Clerk' remuneration** – The Chairman to investigate actions needed. **Action: Chairman**

12. Village Hall Energy Survey. It was confirmed that £500 was ringfenced in the 2015 budget for the survey.

Action: Cllr Munson to schedule appropriately

13. Items for next agenda

The Chairman gave his apologies for absence at the next meeting.

14. Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 24 January at 7.30pm

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending

Signed.....

J Smith

Date:

DRAFT