

Bringsty Common Manorial Court

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 14th February 2018 at Whitbourne Village Hall

Present:

Allan Corder, Tom Fisher, Mike Harrison, Peter Hall, Claire Hall, Tim Phillips, Paul Friend, Carol Friend, Sue Long, Martin Roche, Anne Evans, Nigel Shaw, Jenny Creek

1. Apologies for absence

None

The clerk apologised to Tim Phillips for a mistake on her part which resulted in him missing the November meeting.

2. Chairman's report

The chairman had nothing to report that was not covered by the agenda.

3. Treasurer's report

- We have received £33.80 interest in December from our Secure Trust account.
- After charges for mowing and excavation we have £1809.82 left in the Drovers' Pond maintenance fund.
- There has been no more income since the last meeting and our income over expenditure stands at over £1400 but we are likely to go into the red when the maintenance season starts.
- Mike also informed the committee that he would not be standing for re-election at the AGM in October

4. Parish Reports

a. Ward Councillor - Nigel Shaw

He informed the committee that Gigaclear are the company providing the fibre cable to households for high speed broadband, and that they will be starting work in the spring. He encouraged everyone to register on their website for connection to the service. All details and prices are available on their website. A general discussion ensued about various aspects of this forthcoming event, some of which are presently unclear. Allan requested that this should be an agenda item for the next meeting in May for an update on the progress.

Action: Jenny to note this for the next agenda

b. Brockhampton - Paul Friend

A couple of planning applications were submitted and approved, otherwise it is a fairly quiet time for the group, apart from the neighbourhood development plan, the process for which has just commenced.

The chairman asked about a planning application for a mobile home park, but it is not within the parish, so not of direct concern.

c. Whitbourne – Anne Evans

It has also been a fairly quiet time for Whitbourne council. There have been some planning applications, including a retrospective one for recent work at Pippin Tree cottage, which the owner had believed was permitted development.

5. Matters Arising from Minutes of last meeting

a. Stewardship grants

Natural England require us to do a feasibility study for a new management plan, which is the only way to get access to the higher tier funding We invited bids from 9 consultants, approved by NE, to carry out this study. We have had two replies: from Farmerology who quoted £7000 and from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory group for £11000. NE will pay 100% funding for the lowest bid so we have opted for the Farmerology quote. We now await confirmation from NE that this is acceptable. Because this is a time-consuming process it will be too late to apply for funding this year as we had hoped, however we believe that it is likely to result in some funding in 2019. Tom mentioned that we are still due some £1300 from the previous grants which should have been paid last January, but will not now come until June this year.

This is a process in which Allan and Tom have both been involved. Allan thanked Tom for dealing with the paperwork which had been a frustrating business.

Finally, Allan suggested that if we do not get sufficient grant from Natural England, then we might have to consider seeking funding from more local sources.

b. Owl boxes

Paul brought in a prototype box to explain his construction techniques based on the RSPB plans. He estimates a cost of approximately £50 - £60 per box. He will construct 6 boxes, for which we have several sponsors. Suitable sites have been identified around the common.

c. Woodland management scheme

Allan was hoping to have a report to discuss at this meeting, but this has not yet been produced by the forestry consultant. The cost of this initial phase will be met by Natural England; we will have to consider the cost of any proposed work to see whether it will be covered by any grant we may receive.

d. Use of bracken as biofuel

There is a company who might be interested in cutting bracken on sloping areas, with the intention of turning it into biofuel. The chairman expressed his scepticism about the scheme. He has spoken to the company who have said they would be prepared to cut the bits which Brackenburn leave. He is now awaiting a call from them. We would be happy if they want to do it, but we are very satisfied with what Brackenburn achieves. No further action unless they call us.

e. Trees on the south slope of the Jubilee

Two of the trees have gone but there are several more which should be felled, and it should be possible to do this within the total of 3 days as agreed with Hugh Davis. Allan will monitor the progress of the work and has the committee's approval to emphasise the agreed schedule. The trees are to be left where they fall, to provide good habitats for wildlife. This will be stressed as there was an issue with some of the felled wood having been removed.

Paul pointed out that they need to be felled soon.

Allan agreed to speak to Hugh and Paul said he would also mention it.

Action: Allan to talk to Hugh

6. New Business

a. Live & let Live drainage

There has been no progress despite some strongly worded email correspondence with George Thompson. Nigel reported that there had been a meeting on site with environmental health and building control the previous week, which may lead to some action. The committee discussed the issue at length and it was agreed unanimously that the following resolution should be sent to HCC:

"The Council needs to resolve this situation urgently. It has been allowed to drag on for far too long. The Council is in breach of its duty of care to local residents. The Council has ample enforcement powers at its disposal. It should be prepared to use them"

Allan asked Tom to prepare an appropriately worded email to George Thompson to accompany this resolution.

Action: Tom to prepare email

b. Level of Drover's pond

The amount of water in the pond was discussed. It is currently at its maximum level, but there was a suggestion that the level could be raised by putting extensions on the outflow pipe. Tom felt the current level is acceptable, but more water in it would dry out less quickly in summer. Paul thought the dam would need to be reinforced. Allan asked Tom and Paul to look into this.

Action: Tom and Paul to look at the pond.

c. The hunt

The hunt recently drove their support vehicle over the common. This caused a bit of damage because the ground was very wet. They had tried unsuccessfully to notify us in advance. They have now promised to notify Allan in future, and they will try to address any issues with using their vehicle. If we have any complaints in the future about their presence, we may have to refuse permission to use the common.

7. AOB

a. Three splashes

Tim had concerns that the three splashes are beginning to look neglected, and asked what had happened to the HWT Pooling Together project. It was explained that this has now finished and their maintenance is now our responsibility. Tim suggested that we should have a working party to tidy them, but after some discussion it was agreed to leave well alone.

b. Traffic on the Live track

Since this BOAT has been surfaced, it has become something of a racetrack. Tim wondered if there is a speed limit but apparently the national speed limit of 60 mph applies. There is nothing we can do about this other than some signage warning of pedestrians.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was then closed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in Whitbourne village hall on Wednesday 9th May 2018