

COMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

I hereby give notice that, as previously arranged, the Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on
Wednesday 13 September 2017 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

The Public and Press are cordially invited to be present.

All members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the business to be transacted at the meeting as set out below.



Mrs Gail Stoehr, Clerk
05/09/17

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence and declaration of interests**
 - 1.1 To receive written apologies for absence and reasons
 - 1.2 To receive declarations of interests from councillors on items on the agenda and details of any dispensations held
 - 1.3 To receive written requests for dispensations for interests and to grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate (if any)
- Comments & observations from members of the public & County and District Cllr reports**
- 2. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting**
- 3. Co-option to fill casual vacancy – to consider any applications received**
- 4. Matters arising or carried forward from the last meeting or a previous meeting for discussion or decision and to note the Clerk's report**
 - 4.1 (4.4) Herringland Charity request that the bench at the corner of Harbour Avenue is tidied up – to consider quotation if received
 - 4.2 (4.6) Old railway carriage at Watts Wood – to consider response from Comberton Allotments and Gardens Association and invitation for the Parish Council to take over ownership
 - 4.3 (6.1.2) Pavilion shower room ceilings – to consider quotation if received
 - 4.4 To consider the tree works survey
 - 4.5 To consider quotes for the Causeway
- 5. Finance, procedure & risk assessment**
 - 5.1 To receive the finance report and to approve the payment of bills
 - 5.2 Clerk's report on any use of delegated powers and action taken due to risk
 - 5.3 To consider insurance quotations and if to take a one or three year agreement
- 6. To receive reports and items from committees, working groups and members for information only unless specified**
 - 6.1 Proposal that the Council considers if work additional to the contract is required for the encroachment of vegetation /hedge adjacent to the Meridian School^(NT)
 - 6.2 Proposal that the Council considers Cllr Joseph's correspondence about setting up a flooding team and a flooding emergency plan^(HG)
 - 6.3 Proposal that the Council considers how to deal with ragwort in Jubilee Wood^(HG)
 - 6.4 Proposal that the Council reassesses the provision of bins on the Recreation Ground^(JF)
 - 6.5 Proposal that the Council considers the problem of antisocial behaviour, broken glass and litter at Watts Wood^(SM)
 - 6.6 Proposal that the Council consider the second part of Peter Oakes's quote for the horse chestnut tree in Long Road
- 7. To consider matters arising out of correspondence/communications received**
 - 7.1 Resident – southern side of boundary fence, Comberton Recreation Ground
 - 7.2 Resident – Broken boundary fencing, Thornbury
 - 7.3 CCC Invitation to bid for LHI funding 2018/19
- 8. Closure of meeting**

Initials in brackets adjacent to an item indicate the member who has tabled this item or is expected to report. Numbers in brackets before an item indicate the minute reference from the last or previous meeting when this matter was tabled.

Mrs Gail Stoehr, Clerk to Comberton Parish Council, 30 West Drive, Highfields Caldecote, CB23 7NY

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Clerk report to Comberton Parish Council meeting on 13 September 2017

Where I have information to support the agenda this is below.

Cllr Joseph's written reports have been circulated.

2. To approve the minutes of the meeting on 12 July 2017 - attached
3. Co-option to fill casual vacancy – to consider any applications received
4. Matters arising
 - 4.1 (4.4) Herringland Charity request that the bench at the corner of Harbour Avenue is tidied up – to consider quotation if received
A quotation will be brought to the meeting if received.
 - 4.2 (4.6) Old railway carriage at Watts Wood – to consider response from Comberton Allotments and Gardens Association and invitation for the Parish Council to take over ownership
“Thanks for your letter of 24th July 2017 – that confirms the situation as we understood it but we just needed to check that the Parish Council didn't claim ownership as the van is on your land.
Please pass on our thanks to Nick Taylor for effecting a quick repair to the forced opening in the side.
So that brings us on to the second part of my email of 13th June 2017 referring to a discussion on the future of the shed/ van.
The Allotment Association has no interest in it - we have not used it for 20 years at least and, as I said, the primary school were not interested in having it for their forest studies equipment, probably as they don't have the funds to repair and maintain it.
So does the PC wish to take ownership and put it to some use, such as a store or for conversion to a shelter (*Some of the timber is in poor condition but the corrugated metal ends and steel angle frame are still very sturdy*)?
If not we need to consider disposal, which will not be easy, but we need to eliminate any liability we might have should someone injure themselves on or in it, either on legitimate business or otherwise.
. As I said, we would be pleased to meet with the PC and discuss the options.”
. Robin Worship, Secretary, Comberton Allotments and Gardens Association
 - 4.3 (6.1.2) Pavilion shower room ceilings – to consider quotations if received
At the time of writing Mr Goat has not provided a quotation so other companies have been contacted. Quotations will be brought to the meeting if received.
 - 4.4 To consider tree works survey – to follow
 - 4.5 To consider quotes for the Causeway
Any quotations received will be brought to the meeting. I reported at a previous meeting that Peter Gaskin at CCC was willing to contribute £500 towards the project.
Mr and Mr Dickinson have offered to make the following contribution – a supply of matching cobble; £200 towards the cost; parking and facilities, water etc fo the workforce; project management/oversight and liaison with contractor.
 - 5.1 To receive the finance report and to approve the payment of bills – attached
 - 5.2 Clerk's report on any use of delegated powers
The Clerk used her delegated powers to:

- contract Peter Oakes to clear a fallen limb from a horse chestnut tree in Long Road at a cost of £240.00 plus VAT. Carried out as soon as possible for safety reasons.
- Following consultation with the Tree Group, granted permission to a resident in St Thomas's Close to trim a cherry tree.
- A tree which had fallen onto the "Safer routes to School" path has been removed by Cllr Taylor.

6. To receive reports and items from committees, working groups and members for information only unless specified

6.1 Hedge adjacent to the Meridian School – encroachment of vegetation – to consider if work additional to the contract is required

Cllr Taylor to report. He writes:

"The downed tree has been taken away and now we can see the edge of the path! Obviously this is from CGM not keeping it back as the growth is more than several years!

Can I ask Buchans to quote to get it right back to at least that line?- as it would improve access etc....and then they can keep it trimmed back to the correct position?"

The Clerk writes:

CGM's contract ended in 2015. Buchans have had the contract since 2016. They are contracted to maintain this area 4 times per year and to date, based on their invoices, they cut the pathways on:

2016 – 5 May, 15 July x2, December invoice (no date given for the works) = 4 cuts

2017 – 5 May, 28 June = 2 cuts

Buchans have quoted £125.00 for the hedge.

6.2 Proposal that the Council considers Cllr Joseph's correspondence about setting up a flooding team and a flooding emergency plan

The Chairman to report. He writes:

CCC wrote to Cllr Joseph as follows:

"None of the parishes in this division have taken up the offer for support with setting up a flood group and developing an emergency flood plan, however we would be happy to support those who would like to. There are no further documents to complete at this stage, but the parish would need to get together a group of volunteers willing to get involved in developing a flood plan. It would be best to arrange a meeting initially after which we will guide the group through the process of completing a flood plan which may follow the format of the Environment Agency's template which can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-flood-plan-template>

For those that are interested there will be a training session hosted by the EA in November this year, however the relevant parishes will need to notify us of their interest in order to receive an invite.

Attached is some information in respect of the responses received to the flood preparedness questionnaires.

I hope this information is of some assistance and if you have any further queries in respect of this matter, please contact me."

Yours sincerely,
Brian Heffernan
Principal Officer Flood Risk

Cllr Joseph has written:

“Could I ask you to include in your agenda this item: Flood plan.

If you haven’t replied to the questionnaire, please do so. If you haven’t received that questionnaire, please email Brian and he can get it to you.

There are many issues related to flooding (i.e. riparian water rights) which affect all parishes, even those that are at low risk of flooding and is in the parish interest to be up to date with it.

Please see email below and get in touch with Brian if you want to attend the November meeting and learn more about how to set up a flooding team and make sure you have an emergency flooding plan.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.”

This was previously considered by the Parish Council at its November 2016 meeting and the Council responded outlining the problems faced by Comberton with sewage and flooding.

6.3 Ragwort in Jubilee Wood ^(HG)

Following reports that there is a lot of ragwort in the Jubilee Wood area, Robert Cook has written:

“I do not feel we need to get steamed up about this, but there is a need to be rational and make any decision to remove the offending plants on legal requirements and evidence.

Firstly, ragwort is proscribed under relevant legislation under which the Secretary of State can make an order which requires a landowner to remove and destroy ragwort. This also goes for three other common species. In this case, I am unaware such an order has been made, though the fact that it could be made suggests perhaps we should remove it. The site <http://www.inbrief.co.uk/animal-law/ragwort/> proves the legal situation as I understand it. The relevant Acts were also cited in the email I sent last night.

The site <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-ragwort-disposal-options-guidance> provides the following guidance:

"The need to control ragwort

Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) is a specified weed under the Weeds Act 1959. It contains toxins, which can have debilitating or fatal consequences if eaten by horses and other grazing animals.

Ragwort may need to be controlled when its presence and the likelihood of it spreading to neighbouring land poses a risk to horses and other grazing animals or land used for the production of forage.

The Code of Practice provides practical advice on identifying the risk and the most appropriate means of control.

The safe and effective disposal of ragwort is an important part of ragwort control.

Disposing of ragwort responsibly reduces the risk of further spread by seed dispersal and regrowth from root sections."

The critical phrase is - 'Ragwort may need to be controlled when its presence and the

likelihood of it spreading to neighbouring land poses a risk to horses and other grazing animals or land used for the production of forage.' That does not apply in this case.

Secondly, ragwort is an endemic part of the British flora and like many plants contains toxic alkaloids, which have evolved to protect the plant from being eaten. The site <http://www.ragwortfacts.com/ragwort-law.html> provide plenty of information which seems to be authoritative, but does not give the site owner or publisher. The index on the side panel does give access to other information from the site. The points are, that as an endemic plant it has a role in British biodiversity and a number of species, including the pretty cinnabar moth depend upon the plant and much campaigning for removal of the plant originates from the British Horse Society

Thirdly, as far as horses are concerned we know the plant can be toxic. The site <http://www.ragwort.org.uk/> does seem to be rational about the problem, although a translation from a Dutch site. Horse owners are aware of the risks.

The essential judgement for the PC to make is whether or not you feel you need to remove a plant which has been part of this habitat since it was established many years ago. If you do, then you need to consider how to effect the removal and what to do with the plants you remove.

My judgement as a member of the advisory group is that a risk assessment suggests there is no need to take action because:

there are no horse likely to come into contact with the plant and if people do ride through they are unlikely to allow their horse to eat the plant - it would not anyway; seed dispersal is likely to be downwind where there are only arable fields or urban areas, the nearest horses are either 1 km away to the NW and 3 km away to the north and the landowners there will be cognisant of the need to control ragwort in their pastures if it can establish;
there are no adjacent fields used for production of horse fodder and anyone making hay would be unlikely to include ragwort in the mix or allow it to establish;
No order has been made;
Although the PC may not wish to be criticised because it has not taken action that decision can be defended on the grounds that an assessment has been made and that on balance the risk was deemed small.

I do not think I can add any more to this debate. I do not believe we need to remove the ragwort, but it is a decision for the PC.”

Best wishes
Robert

Further information can be found on: <http://www.ragwortfacts.com/index.html>

6.4 Proposal that the Council reassesses the provision of bins on the Recreation Ground
Cllr Feldman to report. She writes:

“A resident in Green End has requested that the Parish Council re-assess the provision of (dog waste) bins on the rec. as they are overflowing prior to emptying.”

- 6.5 Proposal that the Council considers the problem of antisocial behaviour, broken glass and litter at Watts Wood^(SM)
- 6.6 Proposal that the Council consider the second part of Peter Oakes's quote for the horse chestnut tree in Long Road

The quotation will be brought to the meeting. Cllr Tatnell to report.

7. Correspondence

7.1 Resident – southern side of boundary fence, Comberton Recreation Ground

“I would like to draw attention to the boundary fence, alongside the main footpath to the children's play area, at Comberton Recreation Ground. It has not been repaired and maintained for a number of years by the neglected state of it and there are many gaps now and loose wire between concrete posts along its length up to the school. On the other side there is a private paddock which is also neglected but I shall be clearing that and making it a usable paddock once again for horses to graze on it. I'm hoping that the area will be made good by the end of the summer (weather permitting!). I shall be ensuring that my horses are secure and safe but as there is an area of public use along it I feel that it is an issue that needs to be addressed for safety purposes. Since we moved here in January we have had the pleasure of moving bullocks off the football pitch!! It was amusing but could present danger to users of the recreational facilities.

I have spoken to South Cambs who suggested that it was a Parish Council concern and so I am contacting you to bring this forward at the next possible meeting.”

7.2 Resident – Boundary fencing, Thornbury

A section of fencing has partly fallen and a resident is claiming it poses a risk to children who play on the open space. The Clerk has written to the adjacent residents but all deny responsibility for the fencing. The Council has no record of the transfer of the boundary fencing to it.

7.3 CCC Invitation to bid for LHI funding 2018/19

“I am pleased to inform you that the new ‘Improve Your Local Highway’ web pages have now been published, which include all of the usual information on the Local Highway Improvement (LHI) Initiative and online application form, which remains largely unchanged from previous years.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/improving-your-local-highway/>

The deadline for LHI applications has also been extended to **15th October 2017**, following which you will be contacted to look at the feasibility of your application in more detail. Your final application will then be presented to the LHI Member Advisory Panel in February 2018.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate contacting us using local.projects@cambridgeshire.gov.uk”

8. Closure of meeting

COMBERTON PC FINANCIAL REPORT

Sep-17

Summary of Month

Balance brought forward	£	211,765.02
Adjusts/transfs/inc during period		
CHQ 1832	ADJUSTMENT	-625.00

Additional payments approved at last/previous meeting

A H ELECTRICAL	PAVILION PAT TESTING	-78.00
BUCHANS	GRASSCUTTING	-994.47
ALGAR SIGNCRAFT	ANTI CLIMB SIGNS	-42.60
EON	PAVILION ELECTRICITY	-88.60
JEZO	EVENT FEE	-300.00

Misc Credits

Total Adjustments	-2,128.67
Balance revised after adjustments	209,636.35

Bank Reconciliation

Account	Funds	Statement	Outstanding
National Savings D&M Fund	84,593.18	84,593.18	
Santander	125,043.17	135,360.11	-10,316.94
Total	209,636.35	219,953.29	-10,316.94

Expenditure for approval

		£	chq no.
MAGPAS	S137	75.00	
	SALARY	131.15	
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HMRC	PAYE	18.20	
LGS SERVICES	ADMIN SUPPORT	1576.90	
LGS SERVICES	ADMIN SUPPORT	1509.73	
ALARM MAINTENANCE	ALARM SERVICE	132.00	
RPM	PLAY EQUIP REPAIRS	3276.00	
BUCHANS	GRASSCUTTING	1666.86	
ALGAR SIGNCRAFT	REC SIGNS	129.60	
P OAKES	TREE WORKS - LONG ROAD	288.00	
CAMBRIDGE WATER	PAVILION WATER	245.20	

Total Expenditure

Balance C/F	<u>9,179.79</u>
	<u>200,456.56</u>

Gail Stoehr
Responsible Financial Officer

Notes:

Late invoices will be brought to the meeting