

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday, 26th September at 7.30 p.m.
in Church House, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given.

Present: Cllrs: PJ Charles, L Fox, RSV Jarman, KA McLoughlin, MM Moore, C Talbot(Chairman), SM Tonking and S Wilson.

Apologies: Cllr. LG Ferguson

Also present: Borough Cllr. AJH Fox, PJ Youngs (Clerk),

Members of the public attending: Mr D Core (representing Bagot's Park Estate) and Mr V Weighill (Project Developer for Powergen)

Minute 50: Public Session

The Chairman welcomed Messrs. Core and Weighill and invited them to address the meeting concerning the proposal to install, on an experimental basis, a mast for measuring wind strength on the Bagot's Park Estate (see Minute 53.1.(vi) below).

Mr Core began by explaining that the farming community is under pressure to diversify and this is likely to be all the greater as government subsidies are progressively reduced. He circulated a map of the area indicating where the turbines might be situated if the scheme proved to be successful and a fully-fledged wind farm were to be established. He also indicated which roadways were likely to service the site. He then introduced Mr Weighill to explain more technical aspects of the scheme.

Mr Weighill was at pains to stress that the erection of a single mast was purely experimental and there was much to be done in evaluating the "technical and economic viability" of the scheme before the company entered into the complex arrangements involved in proceeding to introduce a wind farm to the site. At the same time he stated that such schemes are a necessary part of meeting the Government's target of achieving 10% (as opposed to 3% at present) of power from renewable resources by 2010.

Reasons favourable to the Bagot's Park site were listed as follows:

- the site is large enough for the placing of the requisite number of turbines;
- initial data tests suggest that wind speeds are satisfactory;
- there are few domestic properties in the immediate vicinity;
- in visual terms the site is relatively well screened by trees;
- there is good access to the site from the A50 and Uttoxeter, and
- the site is reasonably close to a National Grid point at Rugeley (i.e. the power station).

Mr Weighill stated that as part of the evaluation of the experiment over the coming months ("the spring and possibly the summer") the company would be evaluating not only the technical data but also the social and environmental ramifications and that a proposal to introduce a full and working scheme was "quite a way in the future". He then responded to a number of questions touching upon such matters as:

- the height of the masts of a working wind farm - which he gave as 60m. (90m to the tip of the highest blade);
- noise: (he said that no property would be nearer than 500m. to the nearest turbine);
- density of turbines;

- effects upon wildlife - which he said were negligible, citing the employment of an ornithologist to investigate the effects upon birdlife;
- proximity to the Staffordshire Way: he suggested the site might be “an attraction” to passing walkers;
- materials used: given as tubular steel.

In conclusion both Mr Core and Mr Weighill said that the company would keep the Council and the local community fully in touch with Powergen’s plans. Four copies of promotional material were left for circulation.

The Chairman thanked both visitors for their informative presentation.

Normal business resumed at 8.00 p.m.

Minute 51: Approve and sign the Minutes of the previous Meeting (25th July)

It was proposed (PC), seconded (LF) and agreed that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

Minute 52: Matters Arising and Matters of Report

The following points were made by the Clerk:

- (a) **Minute 41.** ESBC has confirmed that an inspection of the Millennium Green play area equipment has taken place; the report will be issued when a newly-appointed officer has taken up his post on 1st October.
- (b) **Minute 43.10.2** The following documents were circulated prior to the Meeting
 - i) SPCA “Guidance on Reserves & Contingency”
 - ii) and “Guidance on dealing with Planning Applications”
 - iii) Amendments to Standing Orders of December 2000
 - iv) Record of Clerk’s conduct of business from 21 - 26 September
- (c) **Minute 44.3.2.** lighting of traffic calming feature, Uttoxeter Road. Despite all attempts to resolve the matter such efforts had proved to be in vain. A high-level meeting between SCC officers and MEB to discuss this and many similar difficulties is arranged for early October.
- (d) **Minute 47.1** Horn Dance Day, Mayor’s visit completed satisfactorily. A letter of thanks has been sent to the Mayor’s secretary.

Minute 53: Planning

53.1 Applications

- (i) **PA/11009/005: Ashbrook Lane:** erection of seven dwellings - *revised plans*
PC response: “Whilst the misgivings of councillors are eased somewhat over the decision to apply for permission to erect seven, as opposed to ten, dwellings, concerns of some councillors remain. Foremost amongst these are:
 1. the access point to the main highway, Ashbrook Lane, is at a dangerous stretch of this road, close by one of the traffic calming features, and
 2. this area of land is subject to flooding during heavy rain as the size and character of the storm drain is insufficient to meet demand.”

- (ii) **PA/24286/006: Cross Hayes Field, Maker Lane, Hoar Cross:** 4 metre wide extension to existing access track ...to provide a short hardcore strip and access track for the take off and landing area for gliders.
No objection of Chairman and Vice Chairman though we questioned whether it related to this parish. Note: ESBC states that adjoining parishes have also been consulted.
- (iii) **HO/24030/007: Breach House Farm, Pinfold Lane:** erection of glazed covered yard.
PC response: A majority of the Council raise *no objections* to this application, though a minority consider that the proposals suggest a structure which looks out of place between existing buildings.
- (iv) **CU/13229/038: The Croft, Market Place:** change of use from dental surgery to offices.
PC response: No objections.
- (v) **PA/11528/017: Yeatsall Farm:** erection of a 20 metre high steel lattice mast with 6 antennae and 4 dishes, and installation of associated equipment cabin.
PC response: "A significant majority of councillors view this proposal with considerable alarm. The grounds are two-fold. Firstly, it is felt that at 20m high the mast will be visible from a considerable distance and, secondly, there are safety concerns given that, in due course, there will be several dwellings in the immediate proximity."
- (vi) **PA/25905/001: Bagot's Park:** Installation of 40m high mast for measuring wind data.
PC response: There are no objections to the installation of a temporary mast for research purposes but councillors are likely to express substantial objections if this should be the precursor to a commercial wind farm; one councillor points out that the Staffordshire Way runs close by this site.
- (vii) **LB & CU/26439/012 & 011 et al.: Blithe Farm:** alteration to agricultural buildings in association with conversion to holiday lets.
PC response: Councillors continue to voice the same misgivings which were expressed in the Clerk's letter dated 29th March (ref. 076/01) when this application was last considered. In particular, councillors are concerned that the increase of traffic on minor country lanes would constitute a serious hazard for all concerned and therefore the application is opposed.
- (viii) **PA/05471/007: The Bungalow, Lichfield Road:** demolition of existing property and erection of a detached dwelling and garage.
PC response: Councillors do not oppose this proposal but it is noted that section 6 has not been completed. This is regarded as an important aspect of the application - viz. the external materials, including roofing materials - which will be used, and this omission gives rise to real concerns regarding the structure's visual appearance. It is to be hoped therefore that any approval that might be given will be accompanied by strict guidelines relating to the external visual appearance of the completed dwelling and that it should be in accordance with the traditional character of a village such as this.
- (ix) **PA/26905/001: Bagot's Park, Abbots Bromley:** installation of a 40 m anemometry mast for measuring of wind data for a period of 24 months. (**Amended Plan**)
PC response: This amendment does not alter councillors' views as expressed in the Clerk's letter on the matter of 17th September, ref. 194/01.

53.2 Decisions

53.2.1. The following applications have been **PERMITTED**, subject to stated conditions:

- (i) **HO/06965/013: Eastman's Croft, Bagot Street:** retention of rear porch and installation of three rooflights.

- (ii) **PA/20532/003: Radmore Wood Cottage:** erection of detached building with agricultural store and garage on ground floor office and store on first floor (Revised scheme).
- (iii) **HO/04740/014: Gannimede, Ashbrook Lane:** erection of a first floor front extension and pitched roof over existing garage and hall/study.
- (iv) **HO/26768/001: Greenway, Ashbrook Lane:** conversion of garage to lounge, cladding of front elevation and formation of canopy roof.
- (v) **HO/26790/001: Ashberry Barn, Lichfield Road:** retention of single storey rear extension.
- (vi) **HO/24030/007: Breach House Farm, Pinfold Lane:** erection of glazed covered yard.
- (vii) **PA/11009/005: Ashbrook Lane:** erection of seven dwellings and garages.
- (viii) **FP/11009/006: Ashbrook Lane:** diversion of part of Footpath 12.

53.2.2. The following applications have been **REFUSED**:

- (i) **CU/05685/005: Harts Farm, Bromley Hurst:** conversion to form holiday lets. The same reasons given as previously - “within a rural area ...(and) ...buildings in poor physical condition”
- (ii) **PA/25107/003: Ash Farm, Glass Lane:** erection of agricultural workers dwelling and installation of a septic tank.

Reasons for refusal:

- (a) “The site is within a rural area ...insufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that it is essential that a dwelling be provided on the site to warrant overriding national county and local countryside protection policies.”
- (b) “The proposed dwelling would be of poor design, harmful to the amenities of the Special Landscape Area, contrary to ...the Local Plan.”

53.3. Correspondence and other planning matters

- (i) **Harts Farm, Bromley Hurst:** “An informal hearing will take place on 031001 at Burton Town Hall at 10.00am” Views can be made know in writing; the Council’s and the Appellant’s statements can be seen by making an appointment to do so during office hours.
- (ii) **Tree Preservation Order No 187, 120901** This refers to four trees - one Irish yew tree, one sycamore and two yew trees - at Latham House, High Street.

Minute 54: Finance

54.1 Finance Statements for August and September The Chairman drew attention to the statements which had been circulated prior to the Meeting. **It was proposed (PC), seconded (RJ) and agreed that the statements be accepted.**

54.2 Bills paid since the last Meeting (25th July) The Clerk reported that the following had been paid with the approval of the Chairman and Vice Chairman:

Payee	sum paid	details and date paid
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GC McCulloch	£170.00	grass cutting according to contract on 14 th July and 7 th August. (28 th August)
Cornhill Insurance	£22.62	Additional premium to cover fidelity guarantee to £30,000 (28 th August)

54.3 Bills to pay

The Clerk introduced the following for payment:

voucher no /cheque no	Payee	Sum due	Details
29 361	npower	84.59	quarterly payment for floodlighting
30 362	SPCA	2.70	payment for "Declarations of Interest" pamphlets
31 363	GC McCulloch	85.00	additional grass cutting - Millennium Green
32 364	GC McCulloch	170.00	grass cutting on contract - Invoice No 5 (cuts on 6 & 21 Sept)
33 365	ESBC	100.00	Horn Dance entertainment

It was proposed (RJ), seconded (LF), and agreed that these bills be paid.

54.4 Section 137 Requests.

54.4.1 The Clerk reported upon further discussions with Mrs Jill Crooks regarding the possible purchase of Golden Jubilee medals for children in the village. He stated that, whilst Mrs Crooks is confident of receiving financial support from other village organisations, she is not yet in a position to declare any specific commitments. She hopes to be in a position to be able to do so after a meeting early in October. The matter will therefore be brought to the next Meeting of the Council.

54.4.2 Cllr. Tonking introduced a letter which she had received requesting financial assistance for the Evergreens. There was general agreement that this was a cause that should be supported. **It was proposed (RJ), seconded (LF) and agreed that a sum of £150.00 be paid to the Evergreens.**

54.5 Completion of Audit 2001

The Clerk introduced the papers signifying that the audit had been satisfactorily completed. Since all the points arising from the Clerk's meeting with the auditor had been addressed in the July meeting it was agreed that a copy of the relevant minutes should be forward as evidence of appropriate action having been taken. The Chairman signed the document signifying that the Council had responded to the auditor's advice.

54.6 Parish Council Deposit Account.

The Clerk advised the Council on further discussions he had had with Fleming Premier Banking and advised that a sum be transferred from deposit accounts with Lloyds/TSB where, a sum of £10K, for example, could be expected to attract some £400.00 more interest over a full year, given current rates of interest quoted, than if it were to remain where it is currently. **It was proposed (RJ), seconded (MT) and agreed that a sum of £5,000.00 be withdrawn from the Business Call (i.e. Recreational Account) with Lloyds/TSB and invested in an Access 30 account with Fleming Premium Banking.** The relevant forms were completed and the

Clerk agreed to undertake the necessary arrangements to ensure that the transaction was put into effect

54.7 Consideration of holding Parish Council Meetings in the Village Hall. (Two councillors declared that, whilst they are on the Village Hall management committee, they have no pecuniary interest in that body.)

The Chairman drew attention to papers which had been prepared and circulated prior to the meeting and specifically to a meeting which he and Cllr. Tonking had had with two members of the Village Hall Management Committee - neither of whom was a parish councillor - on 29th August.

The issues were debated at length at the conclusion of which it was felt that a decision should be deferred until the Council had received specific and formal notification from the Chairman of the Management Committee of the sum that the Council would be charged for holding its meetings in future and what precise relationship was understood between the charging arrangements and the duration of meetings.

54.8 Proposals to introduce devolved street cleaning.

The Clerk reported that he is expecting a meeting to be arranged in October with the officer of the Borough who had first put forward the suggestion of some devolution of street cleaning and he will report again to the next Meeting in the light of developments.

54.9 Other Financial Matters.

54.9.1. The Clerk reported that the Council is entitled to a sum of £64.49 under the Borough's "Bedding Plants" Scheme. It is possible to receive reimbursement of £33.95 for the purchase of rose bushes (see Minute 43.3) so this leaves an entitlement of £30.54. It was suggested that if spring bulbs could be acquired these might be planted in and around the Millennium Green.

54.9.2. Horn Dance Day - receipts from street traders for licenses to trade Cllr. Wilson gave to the Clerk for banking the sum £160.00.

Minute 55: Group Reports

55.1 Recreation

55.1.1. Site off Schoolhouse Lane. Cllr. Tonking reported upon recent discussions with Mr R Boucher-Giles in which he had promised to supply a number of trees and some fencing to the play area. It would leave the Council to pay for fencing on two sides but Mr Boucher-Giles was willing to erect this and to invoice the Council accordingly. A map of the area was circulated giving the proposed dispositions of the trees. Councillors expressed their pleasure at these proposals but asked the Clerk to contact Mr Boucher-Giles expressing acceptance, with thanks, in principle but to request some approximate estimation of what the cost would be to the Council.

55.1.2. Millennium Green Play Area. Cllr. Tonking reported that she had had a meeting with Mrs Wendy Averill recently. She was disappointed to discover that checks of the equipment were not as regular as were stipulated in her letter of contract, nor was the booklet recording inspections kept fully up-to-date. Cllr. Tonking reminded Mrs Averill of her responsibilities in this area.

55.2 Village Property

55.2.1. Buttercross. The Clerk reported upon correspondence which he had had with the Conservation Officer of SCC. It is reported that the structure is sound and has suffered no appreciable damage following a coach backing into it in February. However, it has been noted that the pigeon-netting has come loose and the Officer is requesting her surveyor to examine this; she will report upon the outcome of these investigations.

55.2.2. Toilets Cllr. Moore reported that she understands that the new licensee of the "Goat's Head" intends to open the toilets off Bagot Street to the public for no charge to either the Borough or Parish Councils. He will seek to meet his costs for donations to be made to charity.

55.2.3. Allotment off Back Lane Cllr. Fox enquired the position regarding the tenancy of the allotment off Lichfield Road now that Mr PJ Male no longer resides at "Threeways". The Council took the view that there is no issue immediately given that the rental is paid for the current the financial year.

55.2.4. Letter from Mr WG Brown, Dunstall Hall Farm The Clerk reported upon a letter received from Mr Brown drawing attention to members of the public depositing plastic bags - often containing dog faeces - in the field running adjacent to Narrow Lane. He requests that an item is placed in the next edition of the Newsletter requesting the public to desist from this practice which is harmful to cattle. The Clerk was asked to bring this matter to the attention of Cllr. Ferguson.

55.3 Highways and Pathways

55.3.1. Narrow Lane, overgrown hedgerow. The Clerk was asked to write to a householder in Goose lane whose hedge overhangs Narrow Lane to request that he has it cut back since it is impeding the passage of pedestrians.

55.3.2. Salter Grange It was reported that this road has not yet been adopted in consequence of which it is not being fully serviced by the County and Borough Councils. The Clerk was asked to write to Tay Homes in an attempt to have the matter expedited.

55.3.3. Junction of road to Newton off the Abbots Bromley/Uttoxeter Road (B5014). The Clerk was asked to write to the County Council to request that steps are taken to improve visibility on the "blind" bend at this point.

55.3.4. Miresbrook Lane Despite previous remedial work there is serious subsidence once again which needs to be addressed. The Clerk was asked to report the matter to the County Highways Department.

55.3.5. Overgrown trees, Ashbrook Lane. The Clerk was asked to report once again the fact that the trees are overgrown outside the property “Chailey” and are obscuring the street light situated here.

55.3.6. Back Lane Cllr. Fox reported upon the unsuccessful attempts by herself and the Clerk to have the weeds removed which had surfaced through the newly-resurfaced tarmac. The Clerk was asked to take up the matter once more.

55.4 Competitions.

Best Kept Village Award, 2001 The Chairman reported with justifiable pride upon the fact that the village had won first place in large village section of the Best Kept Village Competition in the Borough of East Staffordshire. The Clerk read out the comments made by the judges.

Cllr. Tonking agreed to prepare an article for the Newsletter which would convey thanks and appreciation to all who had contributed to this notable achievement; at the same time there was a resolve to take advantage of the constructive criticism offered in the hope that the village could achieve the same distinction at least next year.

55.5. Rural Housing

Nothing to report.

55.6. Newsletter

It was reported that Cllr. Ferguson wishes to receive articles for the next edition which he hopes to publish in late October.

55.7 School Governor’s Report

Nothing to report.

Minute 56: Village Design Statement

Cllr Tonking said that she hopes to be able to make a report on progress to the next meeting following discussions which she is having with Mr Philip Somerfield of ESBC. Borough Councillor Fox was confident that he had identified a possible source of funding. It was agreed that the matter should be placed on the Agenda of the next Meeting.

Minute 57: Bagot Ward Action Service Plan (W.A.S.P.)

The Clerk drew attention to a letter from Miss L Kelly of ESBC which covered the various issues which have been under consideration for possible adoption under this Scheme. Of the various points raised the Council expressed a wish to proceed as follows:

- (i) traffic calming in Bromley Wood: request that a site meeting is set up with an officer from SCC;
- (ii) advanced road signs to Newton Village to be installed;
- (iii) extend dog fouling enforcement zone - having checked the present arrangements;

- (iv) the Council should consider providing more skips for heavy household waste disposal at the next round of budget-setting meetings, due for 2002/3;
- (v) await contact from Inspector Farrington regarding the re-launch of the manning of the police station in the village.

It was appreciated that schemes involving more finances, e.g. improved street lighting in High Street, could not be met from the WASP budget but would require the involvement, not only of the Borough Council, but of the County Council also. The question of the creation of a zebra crossing in Bagot Street was being deferred to the next financial year.

Councillors were made aware by Borough Councillor Fox that, compared with other wards, Bagot's Ward had done notably well in past years from resources made available through the WASP budget.

Minute 58: New Ethical Framework for Local Government.

The Chairman drew attention to enclosure e which had been circulated with the Minutes. He asked Borough Councillor Fox to provide some background information to this initiative.

Cllr. Fox stated that this is an important development in local government at all levels. It had arisen out of public concerns for standards in public life highlighted by the Nolan Commission in the mid eighties. By the establishment of Standards Boards, with their quasi-judicial powers, these bodies would have the power to exact swift action should they be called upon to investigate irregularities by Members at any level of local government. The implications at the level of parish councils were likely to be particularly significant.

It was agreed to place the matter on the Agenda of the next meeting when consideration would be given to the points raised at the end of the Assistant Chief Executive's letter.

Minute 59: Correspondence.

The Clerk raised the following for consideration:

- (i) Staffordshire County Council Budget Consultation Meeting - at various times and in different venues.
- (ii) SPFA AGM on 13th October.
- (iii) Uttoxeter Plus Initiative. Meeting on 2 Oct.
- (iv) AGM of SPFA on 17th October.

The Clerk was asked to present apologies for the fact that the Council would not be represented at any of the above, with the exception of (iii).

Cllr. Wilson drew attention to the Staffordshire Orchards Initiative explained in the Summer edition of "Sustainable Staffordshire"

Minute 60: Items for the Agenda of next Meeting

The following were tabled for the Agenda of next Meeting:

- (i) Village Design Statement
- (ii) Millennium Green, standards of behaviour
- (iii) New Ethical Framework for Local Government.

Minute 61: Date and time of next Meeting

Contrary to previous notice given it was agreed that the next Meeting should be held on Wednesday 31 October at 7.30 p.m. in Church House.

The Meeting concluded at 10.30 p.m.

Chairman..... date.....

Proposed seconded.....