

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday, 31st October at 7.30 pm
in Church House, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given.

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

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

Members of the public attending: none.

Minute 62: Public Session

Since there were no members of the public present a public session was not held.

**Minute 63: Approve and sign the Minutes of the previous Meeting
(26th September)**

It was proposed (SMT), seconded (PC) and agreed that the Minutes be signed as a true record of proceedings subject to the following:

- (i) page 1, Minute 50: para 3, “Me” to read “Mr”.
- (ii) page 4, Minute 53.3.(ii), “Bagot Street” to read “High Street”.
- (iii) page 7, Minute 52.2.2. Cllr. Moore commented that she understands that there is an “intention” that the new licensee of the “Goat’s Head” will open up the outside toilets to the public.
- (iv) page 7, Minute 52.2.3. Cllr. Fox stated that the Minute should record that she “asked the position of the allotment, given that Mr PJ Male no longer resides at “Threeways””. (There was agreement that since Mr Male has paid rent on the allotment for the current financial year, it is not an issue at present.)

Minute 64: Matters Arising and Matters of Report

Page 6 Minute 54.9.1. The Clerk reported that he has collected from the Horticultural Centre of the Borough three sacks of daffodil bulbs for planting.

Minute 65: Planning:

65.1. Applications

- (i) **CU/26439/013 et al. Blithe Farm:** conversion of outbuildings to form holiday lets and installation of four septic tanks.

The Clerk had conferred with the Chairman and it was agreed that it was not necessary to circulate this pack of applications again since the Council’s only objection had been one of access and therefore this could be repeated as the sole objection.

- (ii) **HO/02923/008 59 Seedcroft Lane:** erection of a single storey side extension for use as granny flat/bedsit.

PC response: No objections

- (iii) **CU/21434/008: Vicarage Parish Rooms:** use of ground and first floor of parish rooms as offices for the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance.

PC response: No objections

- (iv) **PA/05471/007: The Bungalow, Lichfield Road.** Demolition of bungalow and erection of dwelling.

When previously discussed the Council raised no objections to the proposal to erect a single dwelling, though concern was expressed regarding the external materials to be used. This prompted the statement from the Planning Department (on 1st October): "...any consent issued for the site would have a condition requiring the submission of samples prior to commencement of site works"

- (v) **HO/06587/009: Wilversall House, Yeatsall Lane:** alterations to agricultural buildings to include reconstruction of gable and wall and installation of rooflights and formation of vehicular access.

PC response: No objections

65.2. Decisions

The Following applications have been **PERMITTED**, subject to stated conditions:

CU/13229/038 & 039: Surgery adjacent to Crofts House, Market Place. Internal alterations permitted as proposed.

The following applications have been **REFUSED**:

None.

65.3 Correspondence and other planning matters

1. **Section 78 Appeal by Mr G Knight, Harts Farm.** The Council is invited to contribute a statement regarding this appeal. The Clerk conferred with the Chairman who took the view that since the Council did not raise any objections at the time of the first application - July 2001 - it was unlikely that councillors would raise any objections now. A further letter of 15th October informs us that the hearing is due to be held at the Town Hall on 15th January at 10.00 a.m.
2. **Residential development off Ashbrook Lane:** In connection with the Council's comment that the land is prone to flooding in wet weather, Mrs A Garfield of ESBC Planning Department states: "Members of the Planning Applications Committee resolved to approve the development subject to conditions ... one of which advised the applicants to discuss the surface water from the proposed development with Severn Trent Water as soon as possible."
3. **Ash Farm, Glass Lane.** The Council has been notified of an Appeal against ESBC's refusal to grant planning permission for the erection of an agricultural workers dwelling and the installation of a septic tank. The Council is invited to make comments; however, the Council did not raise an objection to the initial application (see 7 below).

4. **Tree Preservation Order No 187:** Letter of 16th October amends the Order issued on 12th September.
5. **Tree Works, “Sonoma”: Mires Brook Lane.** The Planning Department writes to the Tree Surgeon involved on the site stating that “a Tree Preservation Order is not considered necessary in this instance.”
6. Copy of a letter from Design consultants acting for **Blithe Farm**, dated 14th September *withdrawing* the current planning applications.
7. **Ash Farm, Glass Lane:** Section 78 Appeal against the Council’s refusal of planning permission for the erection of an agricultural works dwelling: contributions to the Appeal Hearing to be submitted by 22 November.

Minute 66: Finance

66.1 Finance Statement for October. The Chairman drew attention to the statement which had been circulated as enclosure *a.* with the papers for the Meeting. **It was proposed (L Fe), seconded (MM) and agreed that the Statement be accepted.**

66.2 Bills paid since the last Meeting The Clerk reported as follows:

voucher no / cheque no.	Payee	sum due	details
35 367	PWLB	1,661.27	half year payment on loan due on 011101
36 368	GC McCulloch	140.00	work under devolved maintenance - to be reimbursed by SCC

66.3. Bills to pay. The Clerk introduced the following for payment:

voucher no /cheque no	Payee	Sum due	Details
37 369	Studiocraft	9.28	copy paper for Newsletter
38 370	ABPCC	17.00	for printing of Newsletter
39 371	Office World	49.97	stationery: 5 reams of copy paper at £10.20, 2 laser printer cartridges at 16.16 each, plus VAT
40 372	M Eastham	3,302.93	this sum for work on the War Memorial is as quoted - 2,811.00 + VAT
41 373	W Averill	85.00	for inspection of playground equipment over 3 months
42 374	P Youngs	831.07	salary & expenses, August - October.
43 375	Fleming Bank	5,000.00 ¹	payment as agreed - see Minute 54.6 (September)
44 376	Woolley & Wainwright	1,238.62	as quoted, less £200.00 for tarmac + VAT
45 377	G McCulloch	170.00	Final contract payment of year for grass cutting.

66.4 Section 137 Requests

¹ In connection with this the Clerk referred to Minute 54.6 (see September Meeting) approving the payment of £5,000.00. Lloyd’s/TSB had advised that a bank charge for a payment to Fleming Premium Bank could be avoided if the money was transferred to the current account and a cheque paid from this account. This is the course now being adopted.

66.4.1. Cllr. Moore reported that she is serving on the committee which is acting to secure Golden Jubilee medals for all children in the village. Already £400.00 has been assured, £200.00 from the Show Committee, the remainder from the Cricket Club. It was agreed that Cllr. Moore should ask the Committee to submit their request for financial assistance in writing.

66.4.2. The Clerk reported that the Evergreens had written a letter of thanks and appreciation for the payment of £150.00 made at the last Meeting.

66.5 Consideration of Village Hall as venue for future Council Meeting.

The Chairman introduced the matter saying that, in accordance with the stated wishes of the Council, a letter had been sought and received from the Management Committee of the Village Hall setting out precisely the letting conditions for the Council's regular use of the Memorial Room. It was noted that the cost would be the same as if the Council should feel obliged to hold its meetings in the ground floor room of Church House - i.e. £14.00 per session. **It was proposed (SMT) and seconded (LF) that Parish Council Meetings should be held in the Village Hall with effect from April 2002. It was carried.**

66.6. Borough proposals that the Council might participate in street cleaning arrangements.

The Clerk reported that, despite assurances which had been given, the officer concerned had not made contact to discuss the proposals further. The matter would remain on the Agenda for the present.

66.7 Other Financial Matters.

66.7.1. Cllr Tonking reported that an estimate had been received from Mr B Caldicott - the fencing contract used by Sherlock Homes - to erect fencing on two sides of the Schoolhouse Lane recreation area for a sum of £668.00. There was agreement that the Clerk should write asking that this should be presented as a quotation.

66.7.2. The Clerk reported that a cheque for £33.95 had been received from ESBC in settlement of the purchase of rose bushes for the Green.

Minute 67: Group Reports

67.1 Recreation

67.1.1. The Clerk was asked to make enquiries regarding the precise specification for five-a-side goal posts. The information is sought by the Keep Fat Club.

67.1.2. A councillor enquired when the Schoolhouse Lane recreation area was expected to be open to the public. It was suggested that it is too soon, as yet, to determine this.

67.2. Village Property

67.2.1. War Memorial. The Chairman voiced his thanks to those who had worked to achieve the renovation of the War Memorial. By common consent, it had proved to be a successful operation. The Clerk said that he would make application for the English Heritage grant once receipted invoices had been obtained from the two contractors. The Council was reminded that the British Legion had agreed to make a contribution of £300.00 towards the refurbishment. The Clerk also stated that highways contractors working at this point had agreed to tarmac around the Memorial, thus offering a saving to the Council of £200.00. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the Highways Department expressing appreciation of this gesture.

67.2.2. Christmas lights. The Clerk read a letter received from SCC reminding the Council of its responsibilities in respect of the safety of Christmas lights. It was agreed that the Clerk should confer with Councillor Wilson to take such reasonable steps (or seek advice, as appropriate) as was necessary to comply with requirements.

67.3. Highways and Pathways.

67.3.1. The Clerk reported the comments of the County Highways Engineer regarding matters raised at the last meeting:

- (i) Miresbrook Lane: subsidence to be investigated.
- (ii) Ashbrook Lane: street lighting obscured by overgrown vegetation: this had been referred to the lighting officer. The Clerk confirmed that this had been done and that a letter to the householder concerned is being prepared.
- (iii) Cow Lane/Back Lane: weeds. The officer states that "(I) shall arrange for the growth to be treated".
- (iv) Ashbrook Lane: fixed bollards, recently damaged by farm traffic to be replaced by movable bollards.

67.3.2. Newton junction on the B5013. (see Minute 55.3.3. - September) A report from the County Council - identical to that sent to Blithfield Parish Council - states that it is not considered necessary to make alterations on safety grounds to improve visibility.

67.3.3. Unsatisfactory street lighting at Uttoxeter Road traffic calming feature. The Clerk reported that he has written again to the County Council requesting that action be taken to connect the new street light which has been erected.

67.3.4. Proposed new footway, Lichfield Road. It was reported that residents were disappointed to learn that a retaining wall between their gardens and the new footway is not, apparently, to be erected. The Clerk was asked to investigate with the officer concerned and, if necessary, to arrange a site meeting to discuss the issue with the Chairman present.

67.3.5. Ashbrook Lane: modifications to traffic calming build out. Cllr. Tonking reported that she had received a letter from Mr PJ Morrison listing a number of complaints regarding highways matters, foremost amongst which was the statement that, contrary to an assurance given in the Newsletter, local residents had not been given prior notification of the work commencing. The Clerk explained that he had made officers aware of this commitment but assumed that, since it was not considered to close the Lane, as had been previously stated, such prior notice was not longer necessary. Certainly it had not been given.

67.3.6. Renewal of kerb stones. Concerns were expressed by a number of councillors regarding the length of time being taken to replace the granite setts. (The Clerk explained that it had been decided to concentrate the work into a single financial year rather than to spread it over two or three as had been originally intended) Of particular concern is the fact that at weekends in particular it would appear that traffic lights are in operation for no other purpose than “guard” the generator operating them. The Clerk was asked to make contact with the officer to request that more consideration could be offered in this regard.

67.3.7. Flooding to the south of the Village. The Clerk was asked to bring to the notice of highways department flooding in Orange Lane, by the cottages along Lichfield Road and in Seedcroft.

67.3.8. Harley Lane: A councillor enquired into the ownership of the lane running from Harley Lane to “The Gables”. The concern arises from the suspicion of fly-tipping in the lane. The Clerk said that he would look into this with officers of ESBC and report to the next Meeting.

67.3.9. The Orchard, Market Place. The Clerk reported that enquiries have revealed that the County Council does not own the strip of land along the roadside opposite the entrance to this property. It is therefore not a straightforward matter to erect a polite “No parking” sign. At the same time the matter has been referred to the Highways Department of the County Council and a consultation letter had been issued to the effect that waiting restrictions be introduced, not least because of the difficulties highlighted in respect of emergency vehicles reaching not only the Orchard but also other properties along the southern side of the Market Place.

Councillors debated the matter and expressed their sensitivity to the problems of access and parking. At the same time it was felt that the introduction of yellow lines on the road would be an unwelcome departure from established practice and would set a precedent which would be quoted in other situations where similar circumstances existed. The Clerk was therefore asked to reply to SCC recording the Council’s opposition to waiting restrictions if this were to entail the painting of yellow lines on the roadway.

67.3.10 The Chairman voiced concern regarding the dumping of rubbish along Goblin’s Lane, off Woodmill Lane, and commented that rats had been seen in the area. The Clerk was asked to investigate with the appropriate department of the Borough Council.

67.3.11 Salter Grange The Clerk reported that, in answer to his query regarding adoption raised after the last meeting, Tay Homes had stated that it was intended to complete the small amount of work outstanding and the company was “hopeful” that this would be completed by November.

67.3.12 Narrow Lane It was reported that, once again, access in the Lane is difficult. The Clerk said he would investigate and confer with Mr McCulloch as necessary; it is understood to be a legitimate use of devolved Highways monies.

67.4 Competitions.

The Clerk reported that the Top Team Quiz will again be held this year. It will be known as “The East Staffordshire Beacon Top Team Quiz” - in recognition of its sponsor. The Clerk was asked to contact Mr Ron Pagel to ask if he would be willing, once again, to select and organise a team to represent the village.

67.5 Rural Housing

Nothing to report

67.6 Newsletter

The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, expressed thanks to Cllrs. Ferguson and McLoughlin for their work in compiling and publishing the Newsletter. Thanks were also voiced to councillors who distributed copies throughout the village.

67.7. School Governor’s Report

Councillor Ferguson stated that he had nothing to add to the report given in the recent edition of the Newsletter.

Minute 68: Village Design Statement

Cllr. Tonking stated that there had been only two individuals who had come forward from a number who had indicated interest in consequence of the W.A.S.P. questionnaire. However, both she and Cllr. Moore had had a meeting with Borough Councillor Fox to discuss possible ways forward. Cllr. Fox, whilst expressing some scepticism concerning the notice taken by developers and planners of VDS’s, did feel that there was some value in proceeding to develop a “Village Plan”, not least since funding might be attracted to such a project through the “Vital Villages” initiative. It was agreed that:

- the small group should continue to meet,
- that efforts should be made to interest the Borough Council in the undertaking,
- that there should be a concentration upon what is “unique and special” about this village and community,
- that where there are needs of particular groups, e.g. the elderly, these should be identified and highlighted, and that
- there should be widespread consultation.

It was further agreed that the matter should be tabled for the Agenda of the next Meeting so that councillors can be kept informed. The Clerk said that he would circulate Cllr. Fox's letter dealing with the Vital Village initiative with the papers for next Meeting.

Minute 69 Millennium Green

69.1. Borough Cllr. Fox informed the meeting that he had "met with Countryside Agency's representative last week and, as a result, had received a 50% grant towards a claim made for 2001 maintenance costs." A cheque for £373.00 will be received shortly.

69.2. Cllr. Fox also reported that the Charity Commission has now confirmed that the land has now been transferred into their ownership. In due course revised documentation will be received from the Land Registry, this being a condition of the lottery grant to purchase the land.

69.3. Cllr. Tonking reported favourably upon the work being undertaken by Wendy Averill in inspecting the play area equipment, though the recording of inspections may not be as meticulous as it might be.

69.4. Councillors were made aware of a considerable amount of vandalism on the Green and in and around the new village hall. As regards the perpetrators there was a general view expressed that whilst these may form a small minority of adolescents visiting the site it was probable that many more knew of their activities. It was important that they should be identified and that their misdemeanours should be brought to the attention of their parents and the police. It was felt that this message of identification should be put across to the village at large. Various councillors said that they would pursue such lines of enquiry as were open to them.

69.5. There was agreement that the broken trees should be replaced. This was a matter which would be discussed shortly by the Millennium Green Trustees. In the meantime, the Clerk should make enquiries with Mr Graham McCulloch regarding the possible source of replacement trees. Enquiries should also be made of the Horticultural section of the Borough Council concerning the availability - or otherwise - of free trees to the community.

69.6. Grass cutting of the Green for 2002. The Clerk was asked to confer with Mr McCulloch on how frequently he considers it best to cut the grass on the Green next year. Once agreement has been reached then there should be an appropriate amendment to Mr McCulloch's contract.

Minute 70: New Ethical Framework for Local Government

In response to a question on the timescale involved, Borough Councillor Fox outlined a probable timetable leading to the drawing up of Committees. At the same time, their terms of reference would be defined. The Clerk drew attention to the SPCA mailshot (dated 24th October) which contains details of a seminar being organised to deal with the issue.

Minute 71: Uttoxeter Plus

The Clerk reported on the meeting which he had attended on 3rd October. He stated that in his view this initiative is likely to have a significant impact on the regeneration of Uttoxeter and the surrounding ten kilometres (which includes Abbots Bromley). A booklet dealing with issues covered in the meeting will be published and circulated.

The next phase of the initiative is about to begin. This will be intended to raise public awareness of the scheme. It is understood that the village hall is to be hired as one of a number of venues for the purpose of mounting a travelling publicity display.

Minute 72 Local County Council Member Initiative Scheme.

Attention was drawn to the papers which had circulated prior to the Meeting and copies of correspondence between the Clerk and the local County Council Member.

It was clear to councillors that the various initiatives currently under consideration (at least four referred to in the course of this meeting²) suggest that the Council needs to focus on groups and organisations in the village that may benefit from an infusion of financial aid that may be forthcoming, and to decide, through consultation, how resources may best be targeted upon perceived needs.

Minute 73: Correspondence, bulletins and reports

The Chairman drew attention to items of correspondence contained in the Clerk's record of his conduct of business between Meetings. In particular the Clerk drew attention to the following:

- (i) W.A.S.P. A letter had been received from Miss L Kelly, Head of Central Services at ESBC, acknowledging receipt of a copy of Minute 57 sent to her and Borough Councillor Fox after the Council's September meeting. She further stated that she would be "in contact with Councillor Fox to discuss how to continue our joint working." It was noted with some satisfaction that there is every prospect that the swimming club will recommence in January.
- (ii) The Enforcement Officer of the Community Services Department of ESBC had written offering to speak to the Council regarding her work which covers such matters as "litter and dog fouling ...(which are) ..issues of concern to resident in many areas". The Council asked the Clerk to reply, thanking the officer for her offer to address the meeting, but to state that it was not considered necessary for her to do so at the present time.

Minute 74: Items for the Agenda of next Meeting

It was suggested that the following matters should be discussed at the next Meeting:

- (i) Millennium Green

² a) W.A.S.P.
b) Vital Villages, sponsoring Parish Plans, community service projects and transport schemes,
c) Uttoxeter Plus, and
d) Local County Council Member Initiative Scheme.

(ii) Village Design Statement/Village (or Parish) Plan

(iii) Proposed dates of Parish Council Meetings for 2002

Minute 75: Date and time of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Meeting should be held in Church House, Abbots Bromley, at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 28th November.

The Meeting concluded at 9.50 p.m.

Chairman..... date

Proposed..... Seconded