

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday, 29 November 2006 at 7.30 pm
 in the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given

Present: Cllrs: PJ Charles (Chairman), C Cook, DT Eatough, AE Elkington, RT Esling, L Fox, KA McLoughlin, J Needham

Also present: EA Roy (Clerk)

Apologies: Apologies from Cllr RSV Jarman were received and accepted. Apologies were also received from Bor Cllr A Fox.

Members of the public attending:
 Laurie Coombs, Burton Mail/Uttoxeter Advertiser

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Minute 67: Public Session

The Chairman welcomed the member of the press present.

Minute 68: Minutes of previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting on 25 October 2006 be accepted as an accurate record.

Minute 69: Declarations of interest

Cllrs Esling and McLoughlin declared an interest in the Community First Responders.

Minute 70: Matters arising and matters of report

70.1 Circulated documents: There were no issues arising from circulated documents.

70.2 Community First Responders: Cllr Esling reported that a letter had been sent to the Ambulance Services raising the Council concerns and seeking responses. He gave some background to actions being taken by other groups and reported that there was still no evidence that the issues were being resolved. The Clerk reported that a reply had been received from West Midlands stating their support for First Responder groups. Although no

response had yet been received from Michael Fabricant, there were indications that he strongly supported the Council's position. It was noted that there were variations between counties and so no national standard that could be quoted or applied.

- 70.3 Horn Dance film:** The Clerk reported that the short film of the Horn Dance had now been transferred to DVD and this had been shown prior to the start of the meeting. He hoped to include an extract onto the village web pages.
- 70.4 PC Surgery:** The Chairman reported on the surgery held the previous Saturday where the issues raised were the lack of vehicle activated signs and notices for advising of speed watch. The PCC would like help in achieving disabled parking outside Church House. The Clerk was asked to raise these issues with Highways.
- 70.5 Rural White Paper:** The Clerk reported that a printed copy of the Local Government White Paper was being circulated and introduced a brief summary that had been prepared by Peter Young, Clerk to Lichfield District Council.

Minute 71: Planning

71.1 Applications

485 - PF/31029/001: Field House Farm: Erection of an agricultural building for livestock and storage
Received: 20/11/06 Replied: 30/11/06 Response: The Parish Council raises no objection to this application.

486 - PF/19234/002: Agricultural building north of Ashbrook Lane: Extension to existing agricultural building to be used for housing cattle
Received: 23/11/06 Replied: 30/11/06 Response: The Parish Council raises no objection to this application.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk communicate these responses to the local planning authority.

71.2 Decisions

The following applications have been **AGREED** subject to stated conditions:

480 - HO/20212/009: Darwen House, Bagot Street: Erection of a rear conservatory

481 - LB/20212/010: Darwen House, Bagot Street: Erection of a rear conservatory

482 - HO/06184/009: Woodlands Cottage, Bromley Wood: Erection of a single storey side extension

The following applications have been **REFUSED** – None

The following applications have been **REVISED** – None

The following applications have been **WITHDRAWN** – None

71.3 Correspondence and other planning matters

The Clerk reported that Staffordshire County Council has created a "Scoping Report" for the Waste Core Strategy, and now seeks comments and views on this document before 22

December. Information about the Waste Core Strategy and the Scoping Report were available on the County Council web site.

Minute 72: Financial Matters

72.1 Financial report

The Clerk introduced the financial statement for November and reported that an invoice to Highways had been raised for devolved maintenance and Golf Challenge invited to fulfil their promise of a contribution to the cost of new lights.

RESOLVED: That the statement be approved and the Chairman sign the report.

72.2 Report on payments made since the last meeting

The Clerk reported that no payments had been made since the last meeting.

72.3 Bills to pay

The Clerk introduced the following for payment:

<i>Vch/Chq</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Powers</i>
44/793	G McCulloch	267.10	Grass cutting	PSA 1906 s.10
44/793	G McCulloch	91.20	Devolved maintenance	LGA 1972 s.101
45/794	AB Village Hall	45.00	Room hire	LGA 1972 s.150
46/795	E A Roy	376.85	Clerk's salary/expenses	LG(FP)A 1963 s.5 & LGA 1972 s.112(2)
47/796	CPRE	26.00	Annual subscription	LGA 1972 s.111
48/797	SLCC	85.00	Clerk's annual membership	LGA 1972 s.143
49/798	AB PCC	17.00	Newsletter printing	LGA 1972 s.142
50/798	AB PCC	52.50	Church House room hire	LGA 1972 s.150
51/798	AB PCC	120.00	Clock maintenance	PCA 1957 s.2
52/798	AB PCC	303.00	Churchyard maintenance	LGA 1972 s.214
	TOTAL payments	1383.65		

RESOLVED: That these payments be made.

72.4 Section 137 payments

The Clerk reported that there were no requests for payment under s.137.

72.5 Other financial matters

72.5.1 **External audit:** The Clerk reported that the external audit had been completed with no issues identified. A statutory notice recording completion and advising the opportunity for inspection had been displayed for the required period.

72.5.2 **Quality Council grant:** The Clerk has received details of the grants available to Quality Councils. The maximum sum available is £2272. The Council must provide 25-33% of the full project cost and applications are due by 30 November (although a few day extension has been granted). The project must be completed by 31 March 2007. Possible projects suggested include:

- Newsletter development
- Improved signing at bottom of Paget Rise
- Standardisation of the litter bins
- Improvements to recycling area

(Further discussion of this item was deferred until the item relating to the newsletter)

- 72.5.3 **Budget preparation:** The Clerk reminded members of the timescale for preparation of the budget and precept request. He reported on a letter received from Abbots Bromley First Responders outlining their plan to replace their vehicle. There was a short discussion of items that should be considered in the budget preparation. The working group would meet on Tuesday 12 December to prepare a draft budget for review by the Council on 10 January. If it is not possible to replace signs and bins in the current year, then these could be considered for inclusion in a budget for next year.
- 72.5.4 **Christmas tree:** The Chairman reported that a Christmas tree was available for our use but would need some work to select, install and eventually remove.
- 72.5.5 **Grass cutting contract:** Sealed responses to the ITT had been received from two contractors. These would be opened and considered at the end of the meeting in the absence of press and public.

Minute 73: Group Reports

73.1 Recreation

The Clerk reported that he had received an update from the ESBC Solicitor to advise that the costs for grading and levelling the Nuttery path were now being reclaimed from the bond. This action had been made necessary due to a lack of response from the developer to the request for payment.

(Cllr McLoughlin declared an interest in this item as a present Trustee of the Millennium Green.)

The Clerk drew attention to the NALC Legal Topic note concerning Councils acting as Trustee and introduced a response from Bor. Cllr. Fox to the enquiry about boundaries. The relevant documents were available for members to inspect. There was some discussion of the practicalities involved in the ongoing operation of the Trusteeship.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk write to the Millennium Green trustees confirming the Council is willing to accept the Trusteeship of the Millennium Green.

73.2 Village Property

The Clerk reported that the old Christmas lights were still stored and asked if these could now be disposed of? No possible opportunities for re-use were identified and it was agreed that they should be disposed of.

73.3 Traffic, Parking, Highways

Cllr Fox reported that there had still been no grass cutting in Cow Lane. The Clerk will inform Richard Rayson that this has not been done.

Cllr Elkington asked if was any change of policy on the installation of Vehicle Activated Signs. The Chairman reported that there was a priority list and no opportunity to "buy" our way up. Cllr Elkington also reported that pavement parking was a continuing problem.

Cllr Cook reported that enthusiasm within the Community Speedwatch team was not high mainly due to the need to display warning notices – a practice that apparently dissuaded motorists from speeding.

The Clerk was asked to write to County Cllr Atkins and invite him to come and assist the Parish Council in understanding how these issues (and those raised at the surgery) could be progressed with the County Council.

The Clerk was asked to inform Highways that the road markings outside the Richard Clarke School were worn, and that cars were now parking on the restricted area.

73.4 Competitions

Cllr Elkington gave a brief update, and this was followed by a discussion of how the competition had been run and lessons to be learnt for future years.

73.5 Newsletter

Cllr Esling introduced notes from a meeting with Cllr Charles and the Clerk that had considered a number of options for the future of the newsletter. From this there were a number of recommendations:

1. Evolve the content to bigger subjects that better reflect the contribution the Parish Council makes to community life.
2. Four planned editions a year but issue extra “special” editions when appropriate.
3. Re-design to A3 folded full grey-scale printed that is able to include photographs.
4. Apply for grant to acquire printer and supplies to print our own newsletter.

RESOLVED: That these recommendations be adopted and the Clerk make an application for a grant from the Quality Council scheme on this basis.

Cllr Elkington provided copies of the latest newsletter for distribution.

73.6 School Governor’s Report

Cllr Eatough reported that a new school plan had just been issued.

73.7 Village Plan

The Clerk introduced a letter from Bor. Cllr. Fox sent to all the Bagot Ward Parish Councils seeking to reach agreement on the appointment of a village agent. He also reported some observations on the subject from Mithra Tonking.

The Clerk was asked to respond advising that we had already provided the required financial support the scheme for 12 months. Having demonstrated this level of commitment to the joint activity by all three parishes, we expect that the Steering Group will ensure that high value is delivered. This Council has reservations, previously expressed, about the effectiveness of an agent based in Leek due to the remoteness.

73.8 RISES

Cllr Fox reported that a new payment of £423.83 had been received.

73.9 Village Hall

Cllr Fox reported that there were plans for a “Live and Local” event in March 2007. Redecoration had been made possible by a grant and this would be taking place in January.

Minute 74: Correspondence, bulletins and reports

- 74.1 SPCA Executive: We are advised of four vacancies on the Executive Committee of the SPCA for our district and are invited to make nominations of those willing to serve up to the 2008 AGM.
- 74.2 Rural Post Offices: The Countryside Alliance has written to encourage support for rural Post Offices. Agreed that the Parish Council should write to Mr Fitzpatrick and Cllrs Elkington and Fox will provide some suggestions for the Clerk to put in a letter.
- 74.3 Cannock Chase Country Park: Is holding a "consultation drop-in exhibition" at the Cannock Chase Visitor Centre, Marquis Drive from 10 until 4 on Sunday 3rd December.
- 74.4 Uttoxeter Forum 50+: Has sent a copy of their Annual Report/Review.
- 74.5 LAA updates: Updates on progress with the LAA continue to arrive by email most weeks. Further details are available at www.staffordshirepartnership.org.uk.
- 74.6 Staffordshire County Council have written advising the demise of the Freight Quality Partnership and implying that any action to reduce the volume of HCVs using minor roads is unlikely to be successful.
- 74.7 Staffordshire County Council have written inviting bids for funding under the Community Paths Initiative for 2007/2008. The deadline for bids is 31 January. The Clerk was asked to ask the Footpath Society if they had any proposals.
- 74.8 County Cllr Philip Atkins has drawn attention to £800,000 of funding available to youth projects in Staffordshire. Bids from young people are required by 15 December 2006 and may be for sums of up to £10,000. The Clerk was asked to pass details to Simon Wilson.

Minute 75: Items for agenda of next meetings

- 10 January: Planning and budget
- 31 January: Possible visit from County Councillor Atkins.

Minute 76: Date, time and place of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meetings should be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 10 January 2007 (Budget) and Wednesday 31 January 2007 in the Memorial Room at the Village Hall.

Appointment of Contractor for Grass Cutting

It was resolved that in accordance with Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and public be excluded from the Meeting during the discussion of this item as it would be likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraphs 7 and 8 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The Meeting concluded at 22:33pm.

Chairman Date: