

Minutes of Whaddon Parish Council meeting held on 12th October 2009 at 7.30p.m. in the Village Hall

Present: Vice-Chairman Dr N Strudwick
 Councillors Mr W Burchett, Mr P Neale (from 8.00 p.m), Mrs M Peyton,
 Mr C Rose
 District Councillors Mr D McCraith
 Parish Clerk Mrs G van Poortvliet
 Parishioners 4 present

- 1.0 Apologies for absence** – received from Cllr L Ginger (holiday), District Cllr N Cathcart (holiday) and County Cllr L Oliver. Cllr Neale gave apologies in advance for his late arrival.
- 2.0 Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Burchett declared a personal interest in agenda item 11.0 as a member of Whaddon Playground Project. Vice-Chairman Strudwick declared a personal interest in agenda item 9.0 as Chair of the Village Hall Committee.
- 3.0 Signing of minutes of last meeting (14th September 2009)** – Cllrs approved the minutes of the last PC meeting as a true record and Vice-Chairman Strudwick signed them accordingly.
- 4.0 Matters arising from previous meetings – Clerk’s and councillor’s status reports:** the Clerk and cllrs provided verbal reports on the status of matters arising from the September meeting:
- Draft minutes had been published on the website within ten working days of the last PC meeting.
 - Detailed plans had been received for the bus-turning circle and were being circulated to the cllrs. There had been no further progress made by the public transport officers at Cambridge County Council (CCC) regarding the bus-service. Cllr Ginger would speak directly with the operator of the bus-service, which it was proposed to divert via Whaddon, to try to progress this.
 - Parish Path Partnership (PPP3) – the arrival of Cllr Neale was awaited for an update.
 - Contact details had been obtained for the handyman in Meldreth. The job-description was still being reviewed.
 - District Cllr McCraith had spoken to Environmental Health about the village hall (VH) bin. It would be necessary to pay for a refuse contract in order to get a full-sized bin. The Clerk would investigate. It would be advisable for the VH letting agreement to require users to remove their rubbish - Vice-Chairman Strudwick would bring this up with the VH Management Committee (VHMC).
 - The interviews for the parish councillor vacancy – had been arranged for Friday 23rd October.
 - The PC had responded to the gypsy and traveller site consultation and MP’s letter.
 - The necessary forms to change the bank signatory arrangements had been received and needed to be signed by the appropriate cllrs. The Clerk would co-ordinate this.
 - A reminder had been sent to Highways about the repairs needed re Meldreth Road footway.
 - Advice had been received from the SCDC tree officer about the re-sprouting horse-chestnut stumps. Cllr Peyton to action.
- 5.0 Updates from District and County Councillors** - District Cllr McCraith gave a verbal update. The consultation on Gypsy and Traveller sites had ended on 9th October. A petition with 1300-1400 signatures had been delivered to SCDC’s offices in Cambourne, objecting to the proposed new site in Spring Lane, Bassingbourn.
- The Vice-Chairman provided a verbal update highlighting the main points from an email from County Cllr Oliver:
- CCC Highways had requested comments from the PC on the plan for the bus turning-circle
 - Forecasts suggested that CCC could be around £113m worse off in five years time – funding was expected to stay the same but would be eroded by inflation and increased demand for services. The county is the fastest growing in England. The County Council is reviewing how to respond to these challenges.

- Cambridge Central Library had opened, incorporating a British Film Institute Mediatheque.
- The guided Busway between St. Ives and Cambridge is due to open on 29th November.
- A review of speed-limits on the A1198 is about to conclude.
- Representations are being made to Stansted and Luton airports and NATS to ensure that recent increases in aviation noise and number of flights experienced in some parts of South Cambridgeshire do not become permanent.

6.0 Public Participation – the Vice-Chairman explained that ‘public participation’ would remain in this position on the agenda to allow members of the public time to get used to it. It would be reviewed after a few months.

- It was reported that the VH bin was full on Friday even though it had been emptied in the morning. The cllrs commented that there had been a function in the VH that day. The PC and VHMC are considering the issue of VH refuse.
- The tree-irrigator bags that had previously been leaking were now retaining water and might be full of mud. Cllrs Peyton and Rose to investigate.
- Private planes flying over Whaddon were considered a much greater disturbance than commercial planes. The nuisance was considered to be getting worse. District Cllr McCraith commented that Bassingbourn PC had arranged for the Chair of Little Gransden airfield to address their PC and were also represented on the liaison committee. District Cllr McCraith would provide contact details so this could be taken up by Whaddon PC.

Cllr Neale joined the meeting.

7.0 Vice-Chairman – discussion about workload and identification of solutions – the Vice-Chairman asked if any of the cllrs would consider providing assistance until such time as a Chair was appointed. The cllrs suggested that the Vice-Chairman contact them to ask for assistance with specific tasks. The Vice-Chairman asked the cllrs to check their emails regularly.

8.0 Planning Applications – recommendation of Planning Committee re S/1271/09F extension and alterations, 118 Meldreth Road – approval recommended.

9.0 Village Hall

10.1 Update on Charitable Trust and nomination of Management Trustees from the PC – an update was given by the Vice-Chairman. The lawyers at the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) had reviewed the documentation relating to the proposed lease of the VH, recreation ground and playground to a Charitable Trust. They had come back with a number of queries which had been submitted to Limbach Banham (LB), the solicitors representing the VH. LB had only recently responded to these queries. The Vice-Chairman would talk to the Cambridge and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CPALC) to try to resolve a number of remaining queries. There is a disagreement between ACRE and NALC about the usefulness of a Deed of Dedication in relation to the playground. SCDC had sent a notification that the Community Capital Grants had been oversubscribed for 2009/10 and invited applications for 2010/11. The deadline for applications is 31st January 2010. Cllr Ginger to action.

The Village BBQ had made a profit of £594. The October quiz-night had been cancelled due to poor support. The next VHMC meeting would take place late October/early November.

10.0 Affordable Homes Update – the Vice-Chairman provided an update. An email had been received from Bedford Pilgrims Housing Association (BPHA) advising that they hoped to submit a revised application for the Affordable Homes development by mid-November. The Vice-Chairman had requested sight of these plans before they were resubmitted. The application was likely to go before a Planning Committee in January or February 2010. The Vice-Chairman and Cllr Peyton had started work on a document to demonstrate proof that no alternative sites were available. The Vice-Chairman commented that the application would need the support of the District Cllrs at the

Planning Committee and that he was disappointed by their current level of support. It was hoped that the documentary evidence being compiled would help to convince the District Cllrs.

11.0 Playground Issues:

- **11.1 Parking – review of parking signage** – Mr Neil Gallery, co-ordinator, Whaddon Playground Project (WPP) addressed the PC. Some temporary car-parking signs had been put up and were judged to be successful in encouraging users to park in the appropriate place. A ‘do not park here’ sign in the middle of the basket-ball court might also be needed. Concerns about potential damage from parking on the recreation ground in Winter were discussed – the effects might be mitigated by lower seasonal usage-rates. WPP recommended the purchase of some liability notices and playground rules signs. The PC agreed that WPP commission some permanent car-parking signs and also investigate some public liability/rules signs. The PC requested sight of the draft wording of the latter.
- **11.2 Bicycle Racks** – two bicycle racks had been purchased by WPP. A discussion was held about the most suitable location for these. The views of the VHMC would be sought as the bicycle racks were likely to be attached to VH property. The Vice-Chairman would action.
- **11.3 Fencing of toddler play-area** – an email had been received from a member of the public reporting an incident at the playground involving an un-leashed dog and a toddler. The member of the public had requested that the playground be fenced to prevent further incidents and also to guard against dog-fouling. The issue of fencing the toddler play-area was discussed at some length – the key points were:
 - The major funding bodies for the play-equipment had wanted the area to be free-flowing, allowing access for all.
 - The law only required that dogs be under close-control in such areas
 - WPP had asked a sample of parish residents who used the playground for their views. They had expressed a preference that the area remain unfenced.
 - Noise from gates on a fenced-area being constantly opened and closed could aggravate nearby residents.
 - This was the only incident reported to date.
 - WPP made sure the play-area was clean - there had been no incidents of dog-fouling to date.

The PC agreed that WPP investigate appropriate signage for the play-area relating to dogs. The Clerk would ask Highways for some signs to put at either end of the public footpath requesting owners to keep their dogs under control. The issue would be reviewed again at a later date.

- **11.4 Finance** – the issue of WPP continuing to maintain a separate bank-account was discussed. WPP offered to pass the funds from their bank-account to the PC. The funds would be ring-fenced within the PC reserves for playground expenditure.
The playground inspection reports were handed to the clerk.

12.0 Neighbourhood Watch (NW) and Speedwatch: update and agreement of next steps re speeding issues

– Cllr Peyton informed the PC that a mobile police surgery would take place by the VH on 16th October between 6.00p.m. 7.00p.m. The Vice-Chairman provided a Speedwatch update. Speedwatch continued to carry out approximately one check a week. The Vice-Chairman and Mr Mike Monks (NW) had met with County Cllr Oliver on 7th October to discuss the Speedwatch results. County Cllr Oliver would ask a traffic official to make a site-visit to give advice on what speed-restriction measures might be necessary and what these would cost. CCC had very little funding for such projects and a contribution from the PC was likely to be necessary.

13.0 Recreation-ground grass-cutting: decision on contract extension

– the contract for grass-cutting (recreation-ground) had been awarded for a period of one year only. The Clerk was asked to re-tender the contract for a period of three years. Cllr Burchett would assist with the tender specification.

14.0 Finance

- **14.1 Approval of Payments** – the PC approved the following payments:
Cheques to be signed today (14th September 2009):
Cheque No.100657, for £460.00, Moore Stephens, audit of PC annual return for year ended 31 March 2009.
Cheque No.100658, for £253.00, M D Landscapes, recreation ground grass-cuts, August 2009.
It was commented that the audit fee was significantly higher than last year. The Clerk explained that the audit fee is determined by the size of the PC's income and expenditure. This had been higher than usual due to the playground project.
- **14.2 Audit completion** – the 2009 audit had been completed and the audit report signed by the external auditors. The necessary notices were being displayed on the main notice board.
- **14.3 six-month budget report** – the Clerk presented a financial update and budget for the six month period ended 30 September 2009. The Vice-Chairman had reviewed the bank-reconciliation for the same period.

At this point the Vice-Chairman invited Cllr Neale to update the meeting about matters arising (Agenda item 4.0) relating to PPP3. Cllr Neale would contact Mr Roger Huffer to arrange a volunteer date for tidying up Pickering Woods. He would also agree the amount of work to be done by contractors. It would be necessary to produce a specification for the work to be done.

15.0 Correspondence

- SCDC – invitation to Voluntary Sector Fayre, 26 November 2009
- SCDC – invitation to Orchard Workshops, 8 November 2009
- CCC – survey re levels of housing growth within Cambridgeshire over the next two decades. Deadline 31 October. It was agreed that the PC would respond directly to the consultation on the East of England Plan which had a later deadline. The Clerk would put this on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Cambridge Climate Change Charter – invitation to Climate Change Expo 09 Event 23rd October.

16.0 Reporting of Village Upkeep and Maintenance Issues

- The railings on the recreation ground were rusting and in need of painting. Cllr Burchett would prepare a maintenance schedule to include this and other projects within the village.
- The roof on the lean-to part of the VH needed maintenance. This would be reported to the VH maintenance committee.
- The footway on Church Street (outside Town Farm Close) continued to break-up. It was also deteriorating near the Church. The Clerk would report this to Highways

17.0 Items for next meeting:

- Talk from CPALC about benefits of being a Quality Parish Council
- Co-option of new councillor
- Design Statement (Cllr Neale to check timeframe for consultation period).

18.0 Date of the next meeting- Monday 9th November at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting was closed at 9.20 p.m.