

Minutes of Whaddon Parish Council meeting held on 12th April 2010 at 7.45p.m. in the Village Hall, Whaddon, nr Royston, Hertfordshire.

Present:	Chairman	Dr N Strudwick
	Councillors	Mr W Burchett, Mr L Ginger, Mrs J Lewis, Mr P Neale, Mrs M Peyton, Mr C Rose
	District Councillors	Mr N Cathcart, Mr D McCraith
	County Councillor	Mrs L Oliver
	Parish Clerk	Mrs G van Poortvliet
	Parishioners	4 present

The Parish Council (PC) meeting started 15 minutes late due to over-running of the earlier Planning Committee meeting

- 1.0 **Apologies for Absence** – advance notice of early leaving received from County Cllr Oliver (attendance at other PC meetings).
- 2.0 **Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Burchett declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 as a member of Whaddon Playground Project (WPP). The Chairman declared a personal interest in agenda item 11.2 as Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee.
- 3.0 **Signing of minutes of last meeting (8th March 2010)** – Cllrs approved the minutes of the last PC meeting as a true record and the Chairman signed them accordingly.
- 4.0 **4.1 Reports from Clerk and Cllrs on matters arising from previous meetings:** the Clerk and Cllrs provided verbal reports on the status of matters arising from previous PC meetings:
 - RADAR gate (between church-yard and recreation ground) – this had now been installed.
 - Meldreth Road bus-stop – the ivy had been removed.**4.2 Update on new tree for recreation ground** – the final replacement tree (an elm) for the diseased horse-chestnuts had now been planted. Action: tree-watering rota to be organised.
- 5.0 **District and County Councillor Reports:**

County Councillor Report: County Cllr Oliver gave a verbal report.

 - Cambridgeshire County Councils (CCC) website had received the highest ranking for ease of use from the Society of Information Technology Managers.
 - Cambridge Central Library had officially opened.
 - Items being put on the verges in the village could prevent wide vehicles getting past. If an accident happened it would be the householder's responsibility. Action: The Chairman to put an article in the newsletter, making householder's responsibilities clear.
 - Discussions with BT about improving broadband service for the area had indicated that this was not commercially attractive for BT. Residents were encouraged to register on the Eastern Region Broadband Uplift Scheme (EREBUS) website (www.erebusonline.org.uk) to increase the chances of receiving funding. Action: details of the EREBUS survey to be included in the newsletter and website.
 - Discussions had taken place with NATS re changes in flight patterns. Although NATS had not accepted that any changes had taken place, information obtained from Stansted Airport showed that flight patterns had been moving steadily northwards. The PC was advised to lobby their MP as government policy is to move flight-paths from built-up to rural areas.
 - CCC policy is to reduce speed-limits in villages from 40 m.p.h. to 30 m.p.h. However, funding is limited and speed-limits are being changed on a priority basis.

District Councillors' Report: a verbal report was given

 - There had been no SCDC meeting since the last PC meeting.

- The decision of Marshalls not to move from Cambridge Airport resulted in a shortfall of housing against targets. This might have to be absorbed in local villages (this was thought unlikely for Whaddon).

6.0 Public Participation – no comments were received from the public.

7.0 Playground Issues

7.1 General Update from WPP – a verbal report was given. The shelves on the youth shelter were bending due to climbing. Action: WPP to contact the manufacturer.

7.2 Update re expenditure on matting for the mound – WPP had reconsidered spending >£1,000 for matting and were looking at other, lower-cost options. A Volunteer Date was planned (date t.b.c.). Action: WPP to advise the Clerk/PC of recommendations.

District Cllr McCraith commented that the numbers of children using the playground might be an argument to reduce the speed-limit in the village.

8.0 Planning

8.1 Noting of receipt of approved Planning Committee minutes from meeting of 11th January 2010 – receipt noted.

8.2 North Road Farm, Ermine Street (also known as Minstrel Court): noting of Planning Committee recommendations re S/9292/10LB, alterations to an unauthorised conservatory and Planning Committee comments on appeal re Enforcement Notice - refusal recommended for planning application S/9292/10/LB. Appeal comments - request for enforcement notice to be upheld.

8.3 General Planning Committee update – none given.

9.0 Bus-service update – the bus-service started today for a six-month trial. Thanks were given to Cllr Ginger, County Cllr Oliver and Anne Rose. Action: County Cllr Oliver to chase-up progress re bus turning-circle.

(At this point County Cllr Oliver left the meeting – 8.25p.m)

10.0 Councillor and Chairman training courses – options were discussed. Action: the Clerk to book the Chairman and Vice-Chair onto a suitable training course and contact local PC's to see if there is interest in arranging for Cllr training to be delivered locally (in groups of ten or more).

11.0 Village Hall (VH)

11.1 Update on lease and Charitable Trust (CT) – a verbal update was given. Some progress had been made regarding the lease but the PC was still trying to get definitive answers from the National Association of Local Councils on some outstanding queries. District Cllr Cathcart had asked SCDC to provide an indication of support in principle for a grant for the VH – this might assist in getting funding elsewhere.

11.2 Agreement of expenditure on a professional valuation report – the transfer of the VH to a CT would constitute a 'disposal' in legal terms. To comply with legislation regarding disposal of PC land, a professional RICS valuation was required. The District Valuation Office had provided an estimate of £1,500 for a valuation report. Action: the Clerk to contact Bidwells for an alternative quote. The PC agreed to spend up to £1,500 on a valuation report, subject to an alternative quote being sought.

11.3 Consideration of inclusion of recreation ground in lease – this item was postponed until more details had been obtained. When the VH is redeveloped it is intended to use a small part of the existing recreation ground for a car-park. Action: the Clerk to look at the Land Registration documents to investigate the curtilage around the VH.

12.0 Affordable Homes Update – a verbal update was given. A meeting had taken place between SCDC planning department and the architects acting for Bedford Pilgrims Housing Association. Some progress had been made on certain outstanding issues e.g. CCC Highways and Conservation concerns but other concerns remained. SCDC Planning would put together a detailed response. The basis of allocation of housing to tenants was discussed. Action: PC to contact SCDC Housing Department to ask about the wording for allocation.

13.0 Finance

13.1 Approval of Payments - the PC noted the following payments already approved under delegated Clerk and Chair's authority (15th March 2010):

Cheque No.100670, for £752.00, R.G. Oliver & Son, grass-cutting, verges.

Cheque No.100671, for £80.00, D.M.Charles, newsletter.

Cheque No. 100672, for £75.00, P.E. Coningsby, grass-cutting, churchyard.

13.2 Discussion and Decision re transfer of responsibility of telephone kiosk power supply back to BT – the PC agreed to transfer the power supply of the adopted telephone kiosk on Bridge Street back to BT for five years, with the option for BT to disconnect the power during that period. Action: Clerk to sign amended contract with BT.

13.3 Verges grass-cutting: approval of proposed price increase – the PC approved the £40 increase in grass-cutting costs to £680 per year due to increased fuel costs. Action: Clerk to advise contractor to start cutting mid-May.

13.4 Church-yard grass-cutting: background to payment - the Chairman had started to investigate the history to this payment but the passage of time had made it difficult to establish. No anti-church feelings were involved in this action.

13.5 Noting of audit timetable and approval of internal auditor – the timetable was noted. The PC approved Peter Chilvers to act as internal auditor. Mr Chilvers would no longer carry out internal audit services after this year. Action: the Clerk to investigate alternative internal auditors for 2010/11 audit.

14.0 Correspondence

- Email from Mr R Huffer thanking the Parish Council for the volunteer work day at Pickering Wood.
- Letter from Andrew Lansley MP asking if we have problems with potholes in our Parish.
- CCC - letter asking if the PC are willing to accept delivery of planning application consultations electronically. Action: Clerk to accept electronic consultations.
- SCDC – application and guidance notes for Community Chest small capital grant scheme (grant of up to £1,000).

15.0 Annual Parish Meeting (27th April) Update: verbal update given.

16.0 Reporting of Village Upkeep and Maintenance Issues

- Action: Clerk to remind handyman to install litter-bin by Church Street bus-shelter. Also to repair the corrugated roofing at the rear of the VH (necessary prior to installation of the bicycle racks).
- The benches next to the VH were in a poor state of repair and required repair or dismantling. Action: Clerk to inform the handyman.
- There were bad potholes at the top of Bridge Street and on Whaddon Gap. These had already been reported.

16.0 Items for next meeting – no smoking signs for the bus-shelters; parking at the top of Town Farm Close; VH title-deeds and site of car-park; business operating at Whaddon Gap junction.

17.0 Date of next meeting - Monday 10th May (8.00 p.m.) following the AGM (7.30 p.m.).
The meeting was closed at 9.40 p.m.