

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held in the Pavilion, Pound Lane, Sonning, on Tuesday 12 April 2011 at 8.00pm.

PRESENT.

Mr M Green (Chairman), Mr K Peters (Vice Chairman), Mr J S Chapman, Mr P J Doyle, Mr A E Farnese, Ms S Robinson, Mr I Runnalls (from 8.00pm), Mrs L A Bates (Clerk).
2 Visitors.

APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS.

Apologies were received from Mr McCulloch (away), Ms Reeve (baby ill). The Chairman welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the current Council.

7823: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

Min. 7809, line five, bracket closed. Min. 7809, second paragraph, line two, *the*, was changed to *he*. Min. 7811, line eight, *been* was added after originally. The Clerk would check the figures in min. 7815 (b). The Minutes, having been amended and circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

7824: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

On planning application discussions, since Cllr. Chapman was a member of the Borough Council's Planning Committee, his views were expressed on the limited information before him only. He would reserve judgement and the independence to make up his own mind on each separate proposal as and when it came before the Borough's Planning Committee and heard all the relevant information. He would not in any way commit himself as to how he or others might vote when the committee came to consider a proposal. There were no other Declarations.

7825: CORRESPONDENCE.

Letters of Thanks. CAB and Sue Ryder had written to thank the Council for the recent donations. Sue Ryder had provided an update on the purchase of suitable chairs and would invite the Council to see these once they had all been purchased.

Notice of Poll. WBC had informed the Clerk that there were ten candidates for the nine seats on the Council. An election would therefore be held and WBC had now confirmed that the count would be held on Monday 9 May.

Land Registry. Changing the registration of allotment land, after WBC had inadvertently registered it in their name, had proved more complicated than WBC had indicated. As the Clerk was not a solicitor a deed and identification had to be completed and signed by a solicitor. Fortunately the Clerk had been able to obtain the services of a friendly solicitor.

WBC Sport Sponsorship. A request for matched funding towards sports sponsorship had been received. A question about the legality of Councils providing matched funding had been raised and no decision would be made until this was resolved.

WBC 'Are We Being Served' CD. Wokingham Area Access Group (ACCESS) had produced a CD with advice for sales staff when dealing with disabled customers. The Chairman agreed to look at a copy.

Invitation to Twyford Volunteer Centre AGM 5 May 7.30pm. It was agreed to ask Mr McCulloch if he would attend this on behalf of the Council.

Wokingham Borough/Town /Parish Conference 2 November. A request for discussion topics for the Conference had been received, deadline 9 June.

7825: CORRESPONDENCE (Con't).

Adopt A Street Initiative. Dave Allen had asked for feedback on this initiative, details of which had been circulated to Councillors. Mr Baveystock had mentioned it in his talk at the March Meeting and Mr Farnese had included details in his report on the Litter Pick for the Parish Magazine.

Annual Audit. The Notice of Audit had been received. The deadline for adopting the 2010/11 accounts was 30 June and the date for submitting the accounts to the Auditor was 4 July.

WDALC Meeting 14 April. The WDALC Chairman had stressed the importance of a representative attending this meeting where Localisation would be discussed. The Chairman was to attend.

Berkshire Sports Events June 2011. Berks Sports had e-mailed the Clerk about two events on the site during June. The first, Woodley Saints Football Festival could attract up to 3000 visitors over the weekend 18/19 June. The second, on 24/25/26 June, was the annual Sonning Hockey Club Festival, and included overnight camping. It was agreed that the Clerk should respond pointing out that residents and visitors to KGV Field used Gunners Lane and that the Lane should be kept clear to allow access. The importance of no off site parking would also be stressed and that the Club should advise the police of the events. The Clerk would also say that the Parish Council did not have facilities to inform residents and the Club should inform neighbours and advertise around the parish.

7826: PLANNING.

Planning List. Mr Doyle said that item (d), Greendown, was to comply with conditions on the original garage application including an archaeological report. A request to see this report had been ignored and the planning committee would discuss this at their next meeting. Weir House had been approved. Studio Cottage had been approved as no conditions had been applied to the original permission. Mr Ross had spoken to the new planning manager after he had advised the committee that, as they couldn't think of a planning reason to refuse it, they had to approve the application. In fact it was up to the Officers to come up with conditions and the manager had used the wrong criteria. 57 Pound Lane had been refused due to its bulk. Rosemary Cottage had been approved but the applicant was likely to put in doors of different design. The change to the garage roof at Greendown had been withdrawn. Estoril had been approved. Sonning Place had been recommended for refusal. There were new applications for Littlecourt, Falcon House and 24 West Drive. Consent had been given to 24 West Drive after an alternative application had been allowed at appeal. A retrospective application had been submitted because the dwelling had not been built as per the approved plans, but the plans did not show differences. Mr Doyle would speak to the case officer. An application to electrify the gates at Bishops Close had been received. A major application for Augustfield had been received. The design statement referred to meetings with planning officers. In an attempt to understand WBC's view on the application Mr Doyle and Mr Farnese had met Marcia Head and Mark Turner. Mr Farnese said he had never been treated in such a poor manner. The officers had been condescending, arrogant and were not prepared to say what they thought or what advice they had given to the applicants. Mr Doyle said he had pointed out that the plans were inaccurate and therefore misleading but he had been told that this '*didn't matter*'. Mr Doyle read from the WBC Residential Design Guide, which listed amongst things to be included in an application, '*Elevation/Section Drawings, showing exactly how the proposal works in three dimensions*'. When the previous application had been withdrawn the case officer had informed Mr Doyle that this was due to the lack of a farmhouse in a 'farm like' design. The latest plans indicated a 'farmhouse' as suggested by the officer. Mr Doyle had, as an individual, put in a request under the 'Freedom of Information' Act, for details of the

7826: PLANNING (Cont'd).

advice given to the applicants. Mr Chapman said he understood that informal, pre-application discussions were currently treated as confidential. Recent dialogue had highlighted the need for the local Borough Councillor to be included in these discussions. Mr Doyle said that a set of railings had been installed at the Lock preventing cyclists from cycling, which was banned, through the Lock. These were unsightly and had been thrown onto RBCS land overnight. The Environment Agency had removed the railings. A more suitable design might be acceptable and Mr Doyle would speak to Carole Morgan. The DSLAM box was now connected but it was unclear if it was available to users. Mr Liddiard was painting the old Telephone Kiosk. Ms Robinson asked about Model Farm and Mr Doyle said that the owner had said that the building was to be vacated in April, he would check this out. The Chairman thanked Mr Doyle and members of the Planning Committee for the in depth review of all applications and detailed comments, which continued to put pressure on WBC.

The following new applications had been received: 24 West Drive (F/2011/0309) erection of 1 x 7 bedroom detached dwelling with integral garage and basement (retrospective): Falcon House and Falcon Cottage Thames Street (CA/2011/0674 & F/2011/0673) Conservation area consent for the demolition of existing flat roof garage. Extension of existing triple bay garage block with single storey garage and erection of mower store to side of garage. Demolition of existing flat roof single storey garage: Little Court Charvil Lane (LB/2011/0665 & F/2011/0664) Erection of two storey/first floor extension to dwelling following removal of lean to roof & listed building application for a two storey/first floor extension to dwelling following removal of lean to roof: 54 Old Bath Road (EXT/2011/0679) Extend implementation date of planning consent F/2007/2856 for a further 3 years (Proposed erection of a two storey side extension plus erection of a detached double garage and erection of front boundary wall and gate).

The following applications were ongoing: 32 Glebe Gardens (F/2011/0221), 57 Pound Lane (F/2011/0265), Sonning Place Pearson Road (F/2011/0304), South Meadow Cottage (NMT/2011/0409).

The following applications had been approved: Weir House Sonning Lock (F/2010/2231): Studio Cottage 6 Pound Lane (VAR/2011/0159): Rosemary Cottage Pearson Road (LB/2011/0262),

The following applications had been refused: 57 Pound Lane (F/2011/0265):

7827: SONNING CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT.

Mr Doyle said that the first public viewing would be at the SPC AGM. Mr O'Callaghan would manage the stand and forms would be available. The Chairman said there had been a question from a member of the public on Localisation and he had responded to say that this would be considered once the C A Assessment had been completed.

7828: BOROUGH COUNCILLOR.

Cllr Chapman said that the Judicial Review was going ahead, it would be damaging and a financial burden on WBC and the Parishes involved. It could lead to major applications outside the Strategic Development Areas. Landowners had submitted lists of land, outside the Strategic Development Areas, they considered suitable for development. These were limited in Sonning but the University had indicated 40 hectares of land at the back of the Farm adjoining the Glebe area. The Residential Design Guide was being revamped and was due out within the next two month.

7828: BOROUGH COUNCILLOR (Cont'd).

Wokingham Town Centre Regeneration. Peach Street was very run down and a deal had been agreed with WBC paying £8.3m. David Lee wanted WBC to build their own council houses

so they could retain 100% of the income. Currently the rents were split 50/50 between them and the government who owned the housing stock. Mr Doyle asked when the Conservation Area policies would be added to the Core Strategy, these were vital to Sonning. Cllr Chapman said that Jane Ireland was working on these and he was waiting for a reply from her. A new document, Managing Development was due out for consultation in June. The Residential Design Guide was likely to be more restrictive but MP Eric Pickles didn't want 'restrictive'. Mr Farnese asked about the 6% increase in council housing rents. Cllr Chapman said that WBC had no control over this, central government made the decision. Mr Farnese said that Tenants Services had said that there was no statutory regulation requiring them to provide fire escapes. The Chairman said that WBC were required to carry out a fire risk assessment and if this identified a need WBC would be required to provide fire escapes. The Chairman thanked Cllr Chapman for all the work he carried out on King George's Field and hoped that this would continue after his stood down from the WBC and SPC.

7829: PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS

Dr Robinson said that the grass had not been mown in Charvil Lane yet.

7830: FINANCE.

- a) Payment of Accounts. Mr Peters proposed, Ms Robinson seconded approving the following payments and this was approved with Mr Chapman abstaining.

March

Mrs R Hulley Litter Feb	144.67
Mr K Trimmings Litter Feb - part	72.32
Street Furnishings Ltd – CA Signs	641.40
Mr S Chapman – Wharf Keys, chain, lock	48.73
Mr S Chapman – Fencing Materials	34.44
Horton's – Deposit SLTC Hut	2700.00
TV Air Ambulance-Donation	150.00
Age Concern Twyford-Donation	200.00
Berks Blind-Donation	50.00
Sonning PCC – Donation	650.00
Sonning PCC- Donation Parish mag.	60.00
ReadiBus-Donation	150.00
Twyford & District Volunteers Donation	50.00
CAB-Donation	50.00
Sue Ryder Care-Donation	100.00
SLCC Ann. Subs	135.00
Mrs L A Bates-Honorarium	2665.71
Mrs L A Bates-Telephone	40.00
Inland Revenue NIC	4.84
	<u>7947.11</u>

- b) Report. A report had been circulated and was noted.

- c) Upgrading Office Equipment. This was ongoing.

7830: FINANCE (Cont'd).

- d) Appointment of Internal Auditor. The internal auditor was no longer available and the Twyford Clerk had recommended Cedric Gilson. Mr Gilson already carried out the internal audit for Ruscombe and Twyford and would be auditing Charvil in 2011. The

Clerk had circulated details to Councillors. Following discussion the Chairman proposed appointing Mr Gilson, Mr Runnalls seconded and this was unanimously approved.

- e) Allotment Rents. The Budget had included an increase from £5 to £10 per allotment as the water rates had increased dramatically. This was still substantially lower than other allotment rents in the area and the Clerk asked that this be confirmed. Mr Chapman proposed the increase, Mr Doyle seconded and this was unanimously approved.

7831: HIGHWAYS.

HGV Survey. Mr Peters said that eight overweight vehicles had been reported on 22 February but two had right of access. Mr Peters had kept a status log of all vehicles identified since confirmation of the weight limit in June 2010 and had sent these to Oxon TS asking for an update. This showed that the majority of drivers had received warning letters. It was frustrating that there had been no prosecutions, as the publicity would act as a deterrent. Sonning had been supporting TS for over a year and Mr Peters wanted to meet, together with David Woodward, with the TS manager and Judy Heathcote to understand what support they might expect. Mr Woodward had contacted his Oxon County Councillor, Carole Viney, who had copied the head of Trading Standards and Judy Heathcote in on her reply. TS had said that they remained dedicated but TV Police now had cameras on the Bridge, which provided 24-hour coverage, so TS were not needed onsite. They felt that warning letters acted as a deterrent; were effective and more cost effective than prosecution. TS were aware that the community believed that prosecutions were more effective. Mr Peters said TS were using the cameras as an excuse not to prosecute previous offenders but the Police had said that it was important for the community to see a physical survey taking place. Mr Peters said that he would like access to information showing when the offences were being committed. Mr Chapman said that Wokingham and Berkshire TS should have taken advantage of the offer to see information from the cameras. Mr Doyle suggested they hadn't because they thought they would be overwhelmed with data. The Chairman said that the lorry data could be siphoned off and Mr Peters said that SPC carried out most of the work. Much could be made from one or two prosecutions if BBC South picked it up. Mr Chapman agreed to write to Mrs Viney and copy to Mr Peters. Mr Chapman said that it was about the effect on localisation/community, the impact on buildings and the dangers to pedestrians. Mr Doyle said that it wasn't just about the Bridge it was about the harm to the community.

Community Speed Watch. Mr Peters said that the Police website encouraged community involvement but it was on hold in the Thames Valley. There were different levels of success in different parts of the country. It was worked well in Norfolk but not in Northamptonshire: in some areas the Police paid the insurance and in others they did not. Mr Peters was arranging to meet Inspector Binns to discuss the situation.

Highway Strategy. Mr Peters said that Mr Baker would not support any of the SPC proposals unless the Police supported them in writing. However Mr Baker liked the idea of a temporary closure to the High Street providing the Police would endorse it. Data could be collected on other Sonning roads before, during and after the trial to measure the effect. Mr Peters had sought support from Andrew Luck who had said 'yes' providing there was a physical barrier and suggested a '*temporary experimental order*' could be put in place. Residents would need to be consulted. Mr Chapman said that an expert would be needed to design a road closure,

7831: HIGHWAYS (Cont'd).

which would allow access to residents. The ideal route for through traffic was from the A4, down Pound Lane through to Thames Street. The traffic lights could be managed to control the length of traffic queues. Mr Doyle said that lorry drivers did not want to be in Sonning but

found themselves in the middle of the village with no way to turn back. Mr Peters said that camera signs were needed on the HGV signs and had been requested from WBC.

Traffic Sign Survey. Mr Hulley had done an excellent job and there were photographs of all the signs on the website. 20mph limit signs had appeared in the village but would not come into force for two or three months. The signs had been paid for out of the 2010/11 WBC budget. The Chairman thanked Mr Peters and his group for all the work they had put into the traffic issue.

7832: RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT W. G.

The Chairman said that the SLTC hut was on order, with delivery expected on 23 April and installation on 4 May. An electrician had said that some electrical work had to be carried out to comply with new regulations. He had quoted £1200 but Mrs Moss had obtained a cheaper quote. The old SLTC hut had been removed free of charge and SPC would use the old shed in the compound. The Chairman had asked that the specification of the wooden walls be increased from 44mm to 75mm.

The kitchen was almost complete and Mr Chapman was to be congratulated Mr Chapman said that fitting would be cheaper than expected and he would do some research into water heaters. The Chairman had met representatives from SCC who asked for net curtains at the windows but it was agreed that these were unsuitable. A movable bar either side of the entrance had been agreed, as had some hanging baskets/containers. However SCC had dug out flowerbeds either side of the entrance without permission. Councillors disapproved and were concerned about the upkeep throughout the year, but it was agreed to allow the beds to remain and to monitor the situation. The Chairman had received a belated apology from SCC. Concern was expressed about the number of occasions that SCC had made alterations without permission. The Chairman would write to Mr Driver pointing out that, under the terms of the Licence, SPC permission was required and that the pavilion was not for SCC storage. Mr Driver had asked for a skip for the SCC clear up but the Chairman had said that the budget only allowed for rolling and seeding. Spectators watching football had damaged the field, but it had recovered and looked better following a cut in March. Quadron had provided a mowing quote and the Chairman was seeking a second.

Mr Chapman said that S106 funding would pay for the extension to the playground safety fencing and two new seats (these had already been approved by the Council in principle). He had three quotes for the fencing, First Choice at £6479, Fawns Playtime at £8124 and OCS at £8627, all plus VAT. Mr Chapman proposed accepting the First Choice quote, the Chairman seconded and this was unanimously approved. This would require WBC approval and Mr Chapman would apply for this prior to the order being placed. WBC would provide an additional £2460 for maintenance. An additional piece of equipment might also come out of S106 funds and Ms Robinson asked that young ladies should be consulted as well as boys. The Chairman said that both sexes had been involved during the last consultation.

School Parking. The Chairman said that there had been near accidents when drivers, parked along side the bus shelter outside Sonning School, reversed into the path of children and parents exiting the school. Lockable bollards would prevent parking during school opening and closing times but allow parking at other times. The school would operate the bollards and it was hoped pay for the bollards.

7832: RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT W. G. (Cont'd)

Wharf. The Chairman said the area was looking better after WBC had carried out some levelling and seeding but the seed was unlikely to grow in some areas. The Clerk would inform the WBC contact about this.

Recommendations. The Chairman proposed increasing the SCC fee to £1500 per season Ms Robinson seconded and this was unanimously approved.

Safety Checks. Mr Chapman had carried out the checks and would provide these to the Clerk.

7833: ELECTION 5 MAY

The Chairman said that as there would be an election. The likely cost to the Council was £1500 to £2000. The Chairman agreed to put a leaflet together, for distribution around the Parish, containing a CV from each prospective Councillor. It was agreed that the optimum time for delivery was 30 April/1 May. Councillors would e-mail their CV's to the Chairman in no more that 50 words by 22 April. The Chairman would contact Ms Reeve and Mr Holt.

7834: TECHNICAL SERVICES.

Mr Farnese said that thanks were due to those residents who had turned up for the Litter Pick, 25 sacks had been filled. WBC had provided new litter pickers, which the Clerk had in the office. These would be available to residents wishing to take part in the 'adopt a street' campaign. Mr Farnese would put an item in the next Parish Magazine. Mr Chapman and Mr Liddiard would repair the roof to the Pearson Road bus shelter and Mr Farnese would attend in order to monitor the traffic. A tile was missing from the Sonning Lane shelter roof.

Mr Doyle said Mr Stansfield had said that SPC should be progressing the bus shelter and they would then receive the funding. Mr Doyle would ask Mr Stansfield if delivery and installation would be included. The Clerk would speak to WBC highways about permission and speak to the manufacturer about delivery, installation and a specification for the base. Mr Doyle had a provisional quote from a local builder for £2000.

Safety Checks. Mr Farnese had carried these out and would provide copies to the Clerk.

7835: POLICE AND SECURITY.

The Chairman said that he would be meeting the new PC, Giles Murphy on 21 April.

7836: WEB SITE.

Dr Robinson said that the counter was now operational. A new photograph was required for the front page.

7837: ACTION LIST.

This was reviewed and updated.

7838: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The Annual Meeting of the Council would be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10 May in the Pavilion, Pound Lane.

The Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Wednesday 25 May in the Pearson Hall.

Signed..... Dated.....