

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held in the Pavilion, King George's Field, Sonning, on Tuesday 10 February 2009 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT.

Mr J S Chapman (Chairman), Mr A Barker, Mr P J Doyle, Mrs P Glasspool, Mr K Peters, M/S S Robinson. Mrs L A Bates (Clerk). 2 Visitors.

APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS.

Apologies were accepted from Mrs P Byrne (away), Mr A E Farnese (bereavement). The Chairman welcomed 2 visitors.

7406: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The Minutes, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

7407: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

The Chairman advised that Councillors who were dog owners would not have a prejudicial interest in item 10, Dog Fouling on King George's Field, as this was a community issue.

The following was noted. 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

7408: CORRESPONDENCE.

New Water Charges. Theresa May (MP) had responded to the Clerk's letter on proposals to charge for the water running off buildings, which had to be treated in the same way as raw sewage. It was hoped that the charges would encourage the incorporation of soakaways, especially on new buildings. Mrs May had written to Jane Kennedy (MP), Minister for the State and Environment asking if there were plans to make exemptions for charitable and community facilities such as the pavilion.

Protocol at Working Group Meetings. The Chairman said that the notes of the last Highways Working Group meeting showed that a member of the public had attended without the prior agreement of the WG Chairman. These meetings were closed to the public. They did not make decisions but agreed recommendations, which were then brought to the main Council meeting for approval, where the public could attend. Any request by a member of the public to attend a WG meeting should go through the Chairman of the WG.

WBC Area Managers. The Chairman said that there had been uncertain reception to these new posts from Borough Councillors. The Clerk had met the Sonning Area Manager, Nick Christo, and it was agreed to invite him to the March meeting.

Lamppost Outside Tile House. A post had appeared outside the Tile House, and a power supply had been connected to it. This was not a Sonning light and the Chairman was waiting for an explanation from Mr Halley (WBC).

Potholes. Following the recent bad weather the Chairman had reported a large pothole in Pound Lane south and Sonning Lane, Mr Potts had issued a work order for both.

7408: CORRESPONDENCE (Cont'd).

Tree On Footway Along Side Parkway Drive. The Chairman had reported this tree, which was obstructing the footway.

The Chairman said that there would be four clashes of meeting dates between SPC and WBC where he was involved. Following discussion it was agreed to change the meeting day to the second Monday of each month beginning in June. The Chairman would e-mail this information out for the benefit of those Councillors not in attendance.

WBC Customer Centre. The new system was now up and running.

#### 7409: CASUAL VACANCY.

The Chairman said that, as discussed at the last meeting, Mrs Auld had resigned and he had written to thank her for her contribution to the Council. As there had been no call for an election the Council could now co-opt a new Councillor and he proposed co-opting Mr Runnalls. Mr Doyle seconded and this was unanimously agreed. The Clerk would provide Mr Runnalls with the necessary papers to sign and Mr Runnall's e-mail would be added to the Council circulation list.

#### 7410: ALMSHOUSE TRUST VACANCY.

The Chairman said that Mr Bates had resigned as the Council's representative and agreed to write to thank him. Following discussion Mrs Glasspool proposed appointing Mr Phil Parker as the Council's representative, Mr Doyle seconded and this was unanimously approved. The Chairman would contact Mr Parker to confirm that he would accept. Following this the Chairman would inform the Almshouse Trust of the appointment.

#### 7411: PLANNING

- a) Planning List. Mr Doyle said that he had difficulty contacting a planning officer due to the new call centre system; it appeared that even dialling direct could result in a call being directed to the centre. The internal refurbishment of the Bull had almost been completed and it was looking good. The officer had not finalised the conditions for Berkshire Sports (C/2008/1652). Ivy Cottage had been refused because a bat survey was required. Comments had been made regarding the glare from the repositioned lights at Berkshire Sports (F/2008/2581). The application for a certificate of lawful use at 33 West Drive contravened several policies. No comments had been made regarding Shelton, West Drive. A fourth application for 24 West Drive had been received and would be discussed at the Planning meeting on 18 February as would the applications for Sonning House, 101 and 101a Pound Lane and Uplands. An application for two semi-detached houses plus a single storey unit had been received for the Old Dairy.

The following applications were ongoing: 1 Old Bath Road (F/2008/0339), The Bull Inn (LB/2008/1236), 24 Glebe Lane (F/2008/1259), 45 Old Bath Road (F/2008/1303), Wimbourne 47 West Drive (F/2008/1544), 45 Old Bath Road (C/2008/1660), Berks County Sports Club (C/2008/1652), Unit4 The Old Forge C/2008/1793, Land adj. 7 South Drive Sonning (C/2008/2365), Bishops Close Sonning Lane (C/2008/2617), Sonning Golf Club Duffield Road (F/2008/2716), Berks County Sports Club (F/2008/2581), 14 South Drive (F/2008/2706)

The following applications had been Refused: Ivy Cottage Pearson Road (LB/2008/2493 & F/2008/2490), Whitecroft Bath Road (F/2008/2574), Manor Gate (F/2008/2633 & CA/2008/2634) 33 Waldor House West Drive (CLP/2008/0011).

#### 7411: PLANNING (Cont'd)

The following applications had been approved: Holme Park Sonning Lane (C/2008/2527).

The following new applications had been received. Bull Inn (C/2009/0126 Details to comply conditions, 43 Shelton West Drive (F/2009/0049) Two storey front and rear extensions plus raising of the eaves and new pitched roof with rear dormer, 24 West Drive (F/2009/0082) Proposed erection of 1 x 7 bedroom detached dwelling with integral double garage, Sonning House F/2009/0095 & LB/2009/0098) erection of single storey rear extension to provide patio store, addition of roof lantern light to existing single storey rear TV room plus construction of boiler housing.

#### 7412: QUESTIONS FOR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR

Mr Peters asked if the WBC Travel Token scheme was to be abandoned. Cllr Chapman said that this would be decided at the full Council meeting on 19 February.

#### 7413: PUBLIC QUESTION TIME.

A member of the public spoke of her concerns regarding the item, Dog Fouling on King George's Field, and the suggestion that dogs might be banned. There was concern that dog owners might not have seen the posters and therefore were unaware of the suggestion. Banning dogs would penalise responsible owners as well as those who allowed their dogs to foul the field. One dog owner in particular regularly allowed his dog off the lead to roam the field. Mr Doyle said that there were more young people using the field now that the junior football club was playing at Sonning. The Chairman said that if the Council decided that they wished to introduce a ban there was a specific process including consultation with residents. Mr Doyle said that Twyford dog ban had been hit and miss, other dog owners could assist by policing the situation.

#### 7414: DOG FOULING ON KING GEORGE'S FIELD.

Mr Doyle said that he was a dog owner and walked King George's Field on a regular basis. He was concerned at the level of fouling especially as several junior football teams were now playing every week and wished the Council to consider a dog ban. There could be a period to see if the threat would improve the situation before going for a ban. Mrs Glasspool said a minority of dog owners were at fault and was in favour of educating irresponsible owners rather than a ban, she liked the idea of self-policing but some dog owners would not wish to challenge the offenders. The Council could carry out a 12-hour watch and distribute information leaflets. Mr Barker said that there was a need to engage all users not just dog owners and to promote a sense of responsibility. It was agreed to invite Nick Christo to the next meeting to provide advice and information. The Chairman would draft a notice, to be widely distributed around the parish, saying that the Council were considering a ban and that the issue would be discussed on 10 March.

#### 7415: FINANCE.

- a) Report. A report had been circulated and was noted.
- b) Annual Audit. The Clerk confirmed the Audit had been completed in December and provided copies of the External Auditor's report.

#### 7415: FINANCE. (Cont'd)

- c) Payment of Accounts. M/S Robinson proposed making the following payments, Mrs Glasspool seconded and this was unanimously approved.

JANUARY

WBC – rates	6.20
WBC – Rates SLTC	6.20
WBC Rates Pavilion	18.60
Belmont Fabrication – repairs to 2 <sup>nd</sup> litterbin.	89.70
Mr S Chapman – SPC Christmas refreshments.	16.46
SEC DD Street Light Energy	429.83
British Gas DD Pavilion Electricity	<u>243.04</u>
	<u>810.03</u>

- d) Investment Strategy Meeting. The Chairman said that the investment income would be lower due to the financial situation and the Council had agreed to spend up to £5,000 of the investments if necessary. Ten percent of the precept would be paid on 6 April and 40% on 30 April. He had discussed investing with COIF with Mr Williams but there seemed to be no advantage in doing this especially as the interest would accrue. The Swallowfield Clerk had informed the Chairman that they had done well with their corporate bond investments over the years. £70,000 could be put into corporate bonds as this could only be used for capital items. The Government would guarantee up to £50,000 so it could be split. Mr Barker said that corporate bonds were not risk free. It was agreed that more information was required before making a decision. The Chairman would e-mail out any information that came to hand.

#### 7416: HIGHWAYS.

Report. Mr Peters had circulated a report, which was noted.

The TRO was applied on 9 January and the signs installed on 21<sup>st</sup>. There had been very wide press coverage and indications were that the press were keen to do a follow up. The next step would be to meet with the Police and Trading Standards to discuss ways of enforcing the restrictions.

There was no update on the Thames Street pinch point but Mr Peters would follow this up with Nick Rose in early March. The Chairman said that Mr Doyle had offered to sell part of his land so that the wall could be moved back to facilitate widening the footway. WBC now had the information to evaluate both options.

The High Street/Pearson Road Bollards had not been installed as planned but were now in place. Mr Doyle said that bollards in the Deanery embankment had been vandalised.

A formal decision had yet to be made on the installation of a Police Patrol Vehicle Hard Standing Point in Sonning Lane.

The Highways Working Group had agreed the top three priorities as: 1 Thames Street Footway; 2 Sonning/A4 Junction; 3 Glebe Lane/Little Glebe/Pound Lane Footway; 4 Pearson Road Pinch Point; Nick Rose had suggested that building the footway out might solve this problem. The Chairman said that the new footway outside Little Court had cost approximately £35,000 the Glebe Lane/Pound Lane/Little Glebe footway was likely to cost some £25,000.

Sonning Lane Parking. It was understood that the RBCS Head teacher had contacted Gareth Wiseman over this. Mr Peters had agreed to arrange a meeting with the Head to try to find a solution. Mr Peters would contact Mr Wiseman in order to ensure that SPC were involved in any discussions.

#### 7416: HIGHWAYS (Cont'd).

Highway Pavement Survey. Mr Peters asked for Councillors input on this.

Rugby Club Park and Ride. Mr Peters said this was a fairly large operation with 40 or 50 cars parked regularly and coaches travelling to TV Park and back, using recognised bus stops. There were parking restrictions within TV Park. It was not clear if a licence was

required for this operation, which was having an impact on local roads. The Chairman would contact Marcia head to see if planning permission was required.

#### 7417: RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT W. G.

- a) Report. A report had been circulated and was noted. Mrs Glasspool proposed spending £270 plus VAT for the three anti frost heaters and £80 plus VAT for boiler repairs, the Chairman seconded and this was unanimously approved.

The Tennis Club membership was open to all residents and there were special offers for juniors. The membership had expanded and there was a need for better facilities. A replacement clubhouse was being considered, costs were likely to be approximately £10,000 to £15,000. Councillors were in principle in agreement with this idea and Mrs Glasspool would inform SLTC.

Signs. It was agreed that these should go ahead.

New trees had been purchased and awaiting collection.

Mowing Quote. The 2009/10 quote was £113.30 per cut. The previous work was of a good standard and Quadron were significantly cheaper than the previous contractor. Mrs Glasspool recommended accepting the quote, the Chairman seconded and this was unanimously approved.

No date had been set for planting the David Penny memorial tree on the Wharf. But it was likely to be in March. The proposal to plant trees along the A4 could not go ahead but other options were being considered.

#### 7418: SPRING CLEAN.

WBC was planning a Borough wide litter collection on 26 April, which was also the date of the SLTC Fun Day. It was agreed to take advantage of the WBC arrangements and the Clerk would confirm with WBC. The Spring Clean would therefore be held over the weekend of 25/26 April. Maximum publicity was required via newsletter, flyer and Parish Magazine.

#### 7419: POLICE AND SECURITY

In the absence of Mrs Byrne there was no report.

#### 7420: ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.

The Chairman said that Pat Baxter (Highways RBC) had agreed to speak. Drinks and nibbles would be served from 7.00pm with a 7.30pm start. Details would be in the April and May Parish Magazines and a flyer would be distributed. Information would also be included in the Council Newsletter.

#### 7421: NEWSLETTER.

The Chairman said that a Newsletter was due and asked for contributions by 27 February so that a draft could be circulated by 6 March. This could then be approved on 10 March ready for distribution on 13 March. The APM flyer would be distributed closer to the time.

#### 7422: WEB SITE.

M/S Robinson said that she, Mr Robinson and the Clerk had met to agree items for the Freedom of Information. The web site would need to be redesigned to accommodate these additions and Mr Robinson would need to acquire a new software package.

7423: ACTION LIST.

This was reviewed and updated.

7424: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The next Meeting would be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 10 March 2009.

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