

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held in the Pearson Hall, Pearson Road, Sonning, on Tuesday 9 March 2010 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT.

Mr J S Chapman (Chairman), Mr P J Doyle (Vice Chairman), Mr McCulloch, Mr K Peters, M/S V Reeve, M/S S Robinson, Mr I Runnalls. Mrs L A Bates (Clerk). 19 Visitors.

APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS.

Apologies were accepted from Mr A E Farnese (delayed), Mr M Green (exams). The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and welcomed thirteen visitors. The Chairman then raised some points on procedure. The meeting would be adjourned for item 4, Mr Driver's presentation and again for item 7, Parishioners Questions. The meeting would then be reconvened and there would be no further opportunity for public participation. The Chairman also pointed out that two of Mr Driver's requests had been refused at the February meeting and could not be reviewed for 6 months.

7625: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

Min. 7612, line two and three was changed to read '*Mr Doyle outlined the planning meeting schedules and said that the meeting scheduled for 17 February had been rescheduled for 16 February to allow time to formulate a response to the Fire Station application before the deadline of 17 February. There was insufficient time to brief everyone by 8 February*'. The Minutes, having been amended and circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

7626: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

There were no Declarations.

7627: PRESENTATION BY MR DRIVER.

The Chairman closed the meeting and asked Mr Driver to speak. Mr Driver had previously circulated a report showing the position of the SCC over the past five years and talked Councillors through this. Although membership had grown and more members were from Sonning and Charvil the Club were struggling financially. Large items of expenditure, a new mover and hire/repair of a roller in 2009 and building costs for the new umpires changing room in 2010 had stretched the Club's finances further. The income from the bar was essential and Mr Driver had increased the fees and subs for 2010. This worked out as £210 per player, which was the highest, paid locally. Mr Driver had produced a development plan for the Club and hoped to obtain ECB accreditation in 2010. A grant application had been successful and would pay for new equipment including covers for the square.

Mr Driver made the following requests:

SPC to pay £200 towards the rolling in April 2009. SPC had agreed to reject this at February meeting. This could not be reconsidered until August 2010.

Payment for a skip on 28 March. This would be considered under item 11, Recreation.

Contribution towards construction of Umpires Changing Room. SPC had agreed to say no at February meeting. This could not be reconsidered until August 2010.

A reduction in the Licence fee from £1400 to £1200. The Recreation WG would need to consider this request.

7627: PRESENTATION BY MR DRIVER Cont'd).

Construction of protective fence around compound. The Council had previously agreed to carry this out at their expense. Mr Green would look into ways of securing the area as a matter of urgency.

More clarity of the income associated with the field and expenditure on the field.

Mr Driver concluded his presentation and Councillors asked questions about the SCC finances, which Mr Driver clarified.

#### 7628: CORRESPONDENCE.

Allotment Land. WBC had informed the clerk that they had mistakenly registered the Council's allotment land as theirs. They would be rectifying this with the Land Registry and the Clerk had asked them to use her details as the Council contact.

WBC Consultations. WBC were carrying out a consultation on Reparation and comments could be submitted on line. Separately, WBC were consulting on making an appointment to see GPs again this could be completed on line. Both were for individual rather than Council response.

Letter from RBCS. The Chairman had received a pre-application consultation from the head-teacher regarding a proposal to demolish and replace some old classrooms. Councilors were welcome to visit the School in order to see the building in question. The Chairman would acknowledge the letter and pass the information on to Mr Doyle.

#### 7629: PLANNING.

Planning List. Mr Doyle said that the Sonning Court application had been approved; The Fire Station application had been withdrawn, as had the application for Sonning Place. There was a retrospective application for 101 Pound, as it had not been built in the approved position. A new application had been received for 6 Glebe Lane, where a previous application had been dismissed at appeal. An application to renew an existing permission for a 5-bed detached house had been received for Greendown. An application for a new access to Greendown from Pearson Road, and removal of a large Oak tree had also been received. An appeal against refusal to allow change of use from, D2 (Assembly and Leisure) to D1 (Non Residential Institution) had been received, for Holme Park. There were concerns that 40 car spaces would require illumination. Mr Doyle had sent £20 to Planning Aid in thanks for their assistance.

The following new applications had been received: Ranmore Parkway Drive (F/2010/0297) Side and rear two storey extensions plus conversion of existing loft space to additional accomodation: 95 Pound Lane (F/2010/0209) Single storey rear extension to dwelling.

The following applications were ongoing: 45 Old Bath Road (F/2008/1303): Unit 4 The Old Forge C/2008/1793: Land adj. 7 South Drive Sonning (C/2008/2365): Bishops Close Sonning Lane (C/2008/2617): The Green Cottage (C/2009/1144): 45 Old Bath Road (C/2009/1600), 5 South Drive Sonning (F/2009/2463): 6 Glebe Lane (O/2010/0065).

The following applications had been Refused: No applications had been refused.

The following applications had been approved: 47, Wimbourne (F/2009/2636), 28 Glebe Lane (F/2009/2645), 50 Little Glebe (F/2010/0086).

The following application had been withdrawn. Fire Station Pound Lane (F/2009/2545 & CA/2009/2561): Sonning Place Pearson Road (F/2010/0117).

#### 7630: PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to hear questions from parishioners (see attached note).

#### 7631: BOROUGH COUNCILLOR

Transport Innovation Fund (TiF) bid. Cllr Chapman said that the Government would not be making any spending decisions until October. Pat Baxter understood that the TiF would be replaced by the Urban Challenge Fund and that two authorities were likely to receive funding. Reading hoped to receive written confirmation that they were one of these, as they understood that their bid complied with the requirements.

WBC Transformation. Cllr Chapman said that WBC would be facing a financial deficit if they took no action. WBC had already begun to develop a five-year transformation strategy, which included an IT investment of £5m and some redundancies, but would result in a more effective services delivery.

Cllr Chapman said that the Wednesday Walkers would be taking coffee at Berkshire Sports and using their car park in future but wished to be able to return to the Council's car park if necessary.

Mr Doyle referred to Cllr Chapman's explanation, for not being at the SPC Planning meeting on 16 February, and asked what the connection was between the Fire Station application being withdrawn, due to a divisive situation having arisen, and the Parish Council, how were the two connected. The Chairman said that the major reason the application had been withdrawn was the strong feelings between those who wanted key worker homes and those who were against backland development, which was becoming divisive within the community. He had always striven to avoid divisive situations since becoming chairman of the Council. Mr McCulloch felt this issue was better discussed outside the setting of a formal meeting. The Chairman said he thought his explanation was clear and apologised if it was not.

#### 7632: FINANCE.

- a) Report. The report had been circulated and was noted.
- b) Payment of Accounts. Mr Runnells proposed making the following payments, Mr Peters seconded and this was approved, with the Chairman abstaining.

#### FEBRUARY

British Gas – Pavilion Electricity	91.17
Mr S Chapman – Refreshments Highways WG	22.08
Mrs R Hulley – Litter	<u>141.67</u>
	254.92

- c) S106 Funding. The Chairman said S106 money was available from the three developments in Sonning, 45 Old Bath Road, 7 South Drive and 103 Pound Lane. Additional money would be available if the house in Greendown garden was built. The Leisure money available to Sonning was £6,591.20, £5,984.93 for children's play. The balance was for pitches and open spaces, this money had to be spent on these items but could include maintenance. S106 money from 103 Pound Lane still had to be negotiated but the Chairman hoped to get £1,899 play money and £254 for pitches and open spaces.

#### 7633: HIGHWAYS.

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

7.5t Environmental Limit. A HGV Survey would be carried out on 11 March.

Sonning Lane Parking outside RBCS. The work had been rescheduled for week commencing 15 March for completion by 26 March. Sonning Lane might be closed at times to provide

#### 7633: HIGHWAYS (Cont'd).

safety for the maintenance team. Mr Peters had met the head teacher at RBCS on 22 February to discuss the works and the Head would be advising staff, students and parents about access and timing. He would also advise how to minimise the impact on the alternative parking in the village end of Sonning Lane and re-emphasise that parking for the school was available at the RC&HC. Mr Peters had queried a note indicating that 'road patching' would be carried out in Sonning Lane at the end of March and it was now understood that, depending on financial approval, resurfacing would be carried out over a larger area of Sonning Lane following the recent bad weather. It was not clear if the TRO would be affected by this work.

Highways Working Group The fourth meeting had been held on 4 March and the two groups had combined their ideas for a single proposal that everyone could support together with the measures to make it practical. The positive and negative effects on residents and the effect on other issues, which had been identified as medium and low priorities. The next meeting would be on 18 March and the group planned to make a presentation at the Annual Meeting on 13 May. Mr Peters reminded everyone that any highways maintenance should be reported to WBC on 0118 9746335 or the website at: <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/highwayfaults/>.

WBC proposal for Pearson Road Pinch Point. WBC had sent a detailed proposal, which they said would require S106 money. The proposal would be discussed by the Highways WG. A proposal for the A4/Sonning Lane junction was expected in the near future. Mr Doyle asked if Mr Peters could provide figures to show the likely impact the proposed 44 car parking spaces at Holme Park Sports, would have on the traffic problems in Sonning Lane. The Chairman said that a filter lane from Sonning Lane onto the A4 had been discussed and this would reduce the hazard.

#### 7634: RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT W. G.

Update. Notes of the WG meeting had been circulated (see attached). M/S Robinson said that the some revisions still had to be made to the Beech Lodge agreement. There were two recommendations:

- Allow SCC to have an additional cricket net.
- Consider wharf willow tree work quotes

It was agreed to allow a second cricket net. SCC would be asked to secure the existing net as it had become entangled in the pavilion gutter.

The three quotes were considered and the Chairman proposed spending up to £911 on tree works, M/S Robinson seconded and this was unanimously approved.

Playbuilder. The Chairman handed out location plans and diagrams showing the final location for the equipment. The total price was £45088, which included the contractors store and set up fees.

Tree Planting. The Chairman proposed spending up to £250 on whips for a hedge along the SLTC boundary. Mr Peters seconded and this was unanimously approved.

SCC Requests. Following discussion the Chairman proposed spending up to £200 on a skip M/S Robinson seconded and this was unanimously approved. The other requests would be discussed by the Recreation WG at their next meeting.

Safety Checks. These were all up to date and the Chairman had provided copies to the Clerk for her records.

#### 7635 TECHNICAL SERVICES.

In the absence of Mr Farnese there was no report. Mr Doyle said that he would be able to provide facing for all the noticeboards. Mr Doyle said that the arrangements for the Spring Clean were all in hand and notices would be displayed week commencing 15 March.

7636: POLICE AND SECURITY.

In the absence of Mr Green there was no report. The Chairman said that regular reports were being received from the police. There had been a burglary in Sonning Meadows on 5 March, instances of men dressing as police officers in order to gain access to homes and two 25-year old men had been arrested for drug offences. There had been an increase in thefts from cars. PCSO Ann Chalmers would be a Safe and Sound meeting.

7637: WEB SITE.

M/S Robinson said that there was no link to the Regatta or the Scarecrows, the Regatta had their own web site. Two photographs of Councillors were still needed.

7638: NEWSLETTER.

This had now been completed..

7639 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.

The Clerk would provide an article for the April and May editions of the Parish Magazine.

7640: ACTION LIST.

This was reviewed and updated.

7641: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The Next Meeting would be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 13 April.

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

PARISHIONERS QUESTION MIN. 7630

Mr Moss asked that the Council reconsider the proposal to install play equipment on King George's Field as part of the Playbuilder scheme. In particular the decision to install the Junior Climber adjacent to the tennis courts. Mr Moss believed that this would encourage older children to loiter and lead to unfortunate instances, similar to those, which had occurred since the skatepark had been installed. The Chairman said he had already explained in an e-mail, to the SLTC Chairman, that WBC had identified King George's field as ideal for the Playbuilder scheme and this piece of equipment, which was for younger children, was 40 metres away from the tennis courts. The field was for all users and there could not be an exclusion zone around any part of it. Young people would always congregate in the rec. during the summer months. Other concerns were raised including: other locations for the equipment: youths accessing the equipment from Sonning Lane likely to throw rubbish onto the tennis courts and damage to the fencing: attract older youths to loiter and make abusive comments: youths starting fires. Mr Doyle asked if there had been any complaints and the Chairman said not since April 2009. Mr Moss said that the tennis players wouldn't contact the Council every time there was an issue. Mr McCulloch asked if it would be worth discussing potential issues with the Police and the PCSO, having read the e-mails from members of SLTC he wondered how many times abusive language, which was an offence, had been reported to the Police. The Chairman said he was not aware that there had been any. When complaints were made in 2008 he had alerted PCSO Anne Chalmers and walked around the field with her, something he was prepared to do again. He had also suggested to SLTC that they report any incidences to PCSO Chalmers but they did not appear to have done so. A SLTC member said reporting bad behaviour was not taken seriously and speaking to the offenders met with abusive language. The Chairman was then asked if the decision could be deferred for one month for further consultation to take place but the Chairman said that the equipment had to be installed by the 31 March or the money would be lost. Mr McCulloch said that he had seen the award as a golden opportunity to improve the facilities for the community, particularly for young people. There had only been one objection and this had been considered and a compromise made, he was surprised by the extent of feeling. The Chairman said that the SLTC Chairman had failed to read his e-mail, sent in November, outlining the situation. The same e-mail had gone to other users, the SCC had responded and their observations had been taken on board. In the last few days he had received an e-mail from the SLTC secretary acknowledging the compromise.