

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WHADDON LANE, HILPERTON,
at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 20th January, 2009**

There were twelve members of the public present

PRESENT	Mr. E. Clark (in the Chair)	Mrs. S. Sawyer
	Mr. W. Jameson	Mrs. K. Hayes
	Mrs. J. Waring	Mr. R. House
	Mr. J. Willis	Mr. B. Cullern
	Mr. T. Carbin	Mr. V. Bielecki

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: P. C. Lee Pelling

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that it was his intention to start the meeting and then adjourn it so that members of the public could speak about the proposed development of social housing at the former nursery site along Marsh Road. This application would then be considered immediately afterwards.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Ms. P. Turner and Mr. K. Jackson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

Planning application 08/03518/FUL: Mr. E. Clark, prejudicial

Planning application 08/03518/FUL: Mr. R. House, prejudicial

Agenda item 7 – Hilperton Village Hall's request for a grant: Mr. E. Clark, personal, as an ex officio member of the Village Hall Committee, and Mrs. S. Sawyer, personal, as a member of the Village Hall Committee.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 9th December, 2008, and the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 6th January, 2009, were approved and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING (a: From the December, 2008, PC meeting)

Minute 7 – Trees at Foxglove Drive: The Clerk had received a note from Mrs. Waring, voicing her concern about the intention to replace the felled trees with willows. The reason for this was that, in the summer, with the leaves on the trees and the branches hanging down, teenagers would often meet in the shelter of the trees, drink alcohol and generally cause a nuisance. She wondered, therefore, if the replacement trees could be a different species. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact WWDC's landscape officer for his advice, and this matter could then be discussed again at the February PC meeting.

Minute 7 – Horse Road: The Clerk had contacted Andy Cadwallader at WCC about the state of the road surface. He was aware of this area of Horse Road and confirmed that it was on the council's proposed list of resurfacing sites.

Minute 7 – Communities in Control: The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council's comments had been sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Minute 7 - Persimmon-owned houses in Horse Road/Wyke Road: The Clerk had been in touch with Ian Gazzard at Persimmon who said he would look into the matter and call her back. She had also spoken with Sean Duffy at WWDC who said the council had a surplus of properties for private-sector

leasing but, if the developers agreed to short-term lets, they could perhaps assist in finding suitable tenants.

Minute 12a: The state of the salt bin had been reported to WCC.

Minute 12b: Mrs. Waring had reported the berries on the footpath and these had now been swept away.

(b: from the January, 2009, Planning Committee meeting)

The Clerk reminded members that the Parish Council had said it would not object to planning application 08/01447/FUL: (Mr. T. Oatley, Marsh Farm, replacement of industrial building) provided the same time restriction was imposed regarding hours of operation. This condition had not, however, been applied, and the daily hours of operation had been allowed by the planning authority to increase by one hour. In view of this, the application should have gone to committee to be determined, and the Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council, had made a formal complaint about the way the application had been handled. She was now waiting for a response from WWDC.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chairman wished everyone a happy New Year. He also informed members of the Parish Council that former councillor, Dennis Drewett, was about to undergo an operation and he had brought along a card for them to sign to wish Mr. Drewett well.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7.42p.m.

Five members of the public addressed the meeting and spoke against planning application 08/03518/FUL: (Selwood Housing's proposal to erect twelve social housing dwellings at the former nursery site, Marsh Road). A representative from Selwood Housing spoke in favour of the proposal.

The meeting was reconvened at 7.55 p.m.

Both the Chairman and Mr. House then left the meeting, having declared a prejudicial interest in this application. It was agreed by the remaining members of the Parish Council that Mr. Bielecki should take the chair.

Planning Application 08/03518/FUL: Selwood Housing, former Nursery Site, Marsh Road
Erection of twelve dwellings, together with associated access and car parking

Mr. Bielecki said that the Parish Council should take into account the points parishioners had come to put forward about the application. He referred to WWDC's comments on affordable housing on rural exception sites which stated that, in exceptional circumstances, proposals for affordable housing might be permitted in sites physically well related to a village but outside village policy limits, provided that it could be demonstrated that the proposal would meet a particular need that could not be accommodated in any other way.

A discussion then took place on this application, at the end of which it was agreed that an objection should be made on the following grounds:-

The Parish Council was not of the opinion that a need had been established for more social housing in the parish, as required under Section H22 of the first alteration to the District Plan. Notwithstanding this objection on policy grounds, serious concerns should be expressed about flooding in this area of marshland and problems with inadequate sewerage that had not been solved and which must be put right before any further development was considered. Access to the site along this stretch of Marsh Road could be hazardous unless suitable traffic calming measures were introduced, particularly in view of any proposed future development on the opposite side of the road. The design of the dwellings was also considered out of keeping with the street scene.

Further points should be raised by the Parish Council to the planning authority in respect of car parking spaces on the proposed development, in that two spaces per dwelling were proposed, whereas it would

be preferable to have two and a half spaces per dwelling. Also, the Parish Council's views against social housing being introduced on one particular site rather than intermittently dispersed throughout the area, should be again expressed.

Objection proposed by Mrs. Sawyer, seconded by Mr. Cullern, seven in favour and one abstention)

The Chairman and Mr. House returned to the meeting and Mr. Clark again took the chair.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR, DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND POLICE

County Report

Mr. Clark said that there would be a meeting of the Trowbridge Area Board on Thursday evening, 22nd January, at the Strium, WWDC offices, Bradley Road. There would be a presentation by Trowbridge Primary Care Centre to which representatives of the cricket club had been invited to contribute to the discussion, and the Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce would be putting its views forward on the impact of the credit crunch.

WCC would be holding its budget meeting on the 24th February.

District Report

Mr. Carbin said there would be a council meeting on the 21st January at 7 p.m.

Police

PC Pelling said that his priority at the present time was to deal with the problems of young adults in the Hackett Place area, as there had been (low level) damage to the community centre and Budgens recently. Already matters were beginning to improve. He had investigated the complaint about cars parked along Whaddon Lane by canal residents but he had not seen any obvious problem when he had visited the area. A shed had been broken into at Hilperton School but the recent milk thefts appeared to have tailed off.

Questions were asked about speeding along Devizes and Trowbridge Roads. PC Pelling said he would have a word with the camera safety unit but pointed out that they had their own priorities. He would also chase up the results of the pilot schemes in respect of the community speed watch initiative. There was a problem with traffic using Middle Lane but PC Pelling said that as this was an unmetalled road with bridle path rights, there was nothing the police could do about this. Another PCSO was being trained at the present time but PC Pelling said that, with the formation of the new unitary authority, NP teams were being restructured because of new boundaries, and he was uncertain where his own particular patch might be in the future.

In conclusion, PC Pelling said he would investigate trouble with young adults at the Village Hall and problems with visibility because of parked cars at Carisbrook Crescent.

7. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND DISCUSSION

Pothole along Hilperton Drive

The Chairman said this had now been filled in but not before much lobbying, both from him and the portfolio holder at WCC, and he was not altogether happy with the response from the highways department.

Delta Kitchens

The Clerk reported that WWDC's planning compliance officer had been waiting for a response from the owner of the property who appeared to be in residence at the site. This had not been forthcoming within the specified time and she would now endeavour to take the matter a step further forward.

Mr. Jackson had sent a note to say that on the 12th January a Ms. Bolton of WWDC (planning enforcement) had knocked on his door as she was taking observations in respect of Delta. He had explained to her that the activity as shown on the schedule provided by the Parish Council was taken by him and that the level of overnight activity continued up to the middle of December. Since then it had been somewhat spasmodic and random but was ongoing from time to time.

It appeared that the owner's car was now being parked along Devizes Road and he was walking back to the premises. It was suggested that the registration number might be taken.

Notice Board

After a short discussion, it was agreed that the best place for the notice board would be next to the new seat along Trowbridge Road. The Clerk said she would find out whether or not planning permission would be required.

Allotments

The Clerk had written to the Village Hall Committee to ask if they would allow prospective allotment holders to approach the site along the side of the playing field and through the kissing gate at the top. She had said any such use would be restricted to pedestrians only. She had not yet received a reply but was assured by Mrs. Sawyer that a response would be sent soon.

The Clerk had not heard further from the owner of the land but would contact him again shortly. Mr. House said that Mr. Richard Stratford had offered to make a formal valuation of the site at some time, at no cost to the Parish Council. The Clerk had been told by Mr. Pike that, if the purchase went ahead, it could not be before September as the land in question was in use until that time.

Bus Shelter – Paxcroft Mead

As nothing further had been heard from Trowbridge Town Council, and as the town clerk had indicated that the council was waiting until April for match funding before they undertook anything on their list, it was agreed that this matter should be put on hold until that time.

West Wilts. Central Area Parish Councils' Liaison Group

Mr. Jackson had informed the Clerk that he was unable to attend the meeting on the 29th January and he wondered if anyone else would be willing to go along as a substitute. Unfortunately, no-one came forward to volunteer.

Parish Steward – Winter Programme

Details of the winter programme had been received, giving dates of future visits by the Parish Steward on the 22nd January, 17th and 18th February and the 19th March.

A half-day familiarisation for all parish contacts was to be arranged by Wiltshire Highway Services, the dates being in April and the events to be held at the Melksham depot. It was agreed that the Clerk should indicate that up to three representatives from the Parish Council would probably like to attend.

Tree Planting

Responses to the Clerk's letters to the primary schools had been received. Mrs. Bolton from The Mead school was very keen on the idea of tree planting as the school was developing a 'forest school' area within the grounds. Mrs. Farrell from Hilperton Primary school said it would be good to have some more shady areas around the school and to add more trees to their field boundary. After a short discussion, it was agreed that each school should be offered 12 trees of their choice, as long as they were native British hardwoods.

The Clerk should now see what grants might be available for tree planting in the school grounds and also along the Trowbridge Road. Mr. Jameson pointed out that the Tree Council had an annual grant programme for schools and communities.

A gentleman from the village had also come forward expressing an interest in becoming a Tree Warden and the Clerk had given him details of the launch on the 31st January. As the closing date for registration was Friday, 23rd January, it was considered important that he should be contacted immediately so that the Parish Council could confirm, in principle, his appointment.

Approval of the Budget and Setting of the Precept for 2009/2010

The Clerk tabled copies of the proposed budget for 2009/2010 and said that the estimated number of band D properties in the parish had actually gone down, due, she had been told, to an increase in the number of exempt properties, some dwellings in the parish being classed as empty and unfurnished. Based on the estimate given of 1,847.20, if the levy remained at £10.99 this would produce a precept of £20,300.73. After a short discussion, the Chairman proposed the adoption of the budget and the setting of the precept at this figure. This was seconded by Mrs. Hayes, with all in favour.

The Clerk went on to say that she had been told by Andy Brown, WWDC's finance service manager, that payment of the precept to parishes would be in two stages: 50% on or before the 30th April, 2009, and the remaining 50% on or before the 30th September, 2009. She had written back to him to say that she would be very surprised indeed if the Parish Council agreed to the payment of the precept in two stages and that she believed members would insist on receiving it at the beginning of the next financial year so that they would be able to fulfil the financial requirements of the Parish Council. Mr. Brown's reply stated that the County Council, as lead authority, had chosen this option as their preferred payment profile, and by law councils only had to pay some of the precept by April with the remainder in September. He had voiced his concerns from a West Wiltshire perspective, as parishes were used to receiving 100% in April and budget their cash flow accordingly. The matter was being taken up by County and he was awaiting a decision. It was agreed that, when the Clerk formally applied for the Precept, she should again express the need to have the full amount by the end of April, 2009.

Scheme of Delegation under the new Unitary Council – Street Naming

The Chairman reminded members that the Parish Council had decided, some time ago, that it did not want to take on any powers under the new unitary authority. Since then, however, several parish councils had indicated that they would like to be responsible for street naming. He suggested that the Parish Council should go back to WCC to say that it, too, would like to take on responsibility for street naming within the parish, and this course of action was agreed.

New Wiltshire Area Boards – Proposed Boundaries

The Chairman had put this item on the agenda not so much as it related to Hilperton but because of the impact on Holt and Staverton. Hilperton would be within the Trowbridge area board, which was an obvious place, but in the new Holt and Staverton division, Staverton would be expected to have empathy with the Bradford-on-Avon board whilst, for planning purposes, most of the parish fell under the planning policies relating to Trowbridge. After a short discussion, it was agreed that no comment should be made by Hilperton Parish Council regarding Staverton.

New Unitary Council – Proposed 'Call-In' Powers

Andrew Murrison, MP, had written to the Clerk, enclosing a letter from Keith Robinson, Chief Executive of WCC, on the above subject. The County Council still held the view that in future parish and town councils should request that applications to be considered by committee should be made through their locally elected Wiltshire Council Division Member, rather than by contacting officers

direct. Dr. Murrison, whilst appreciating Dr. Robinson's good intentions, found it difficult to see how the change would not degrade the powers that parish and town councils held in planning matters.

WWDC: Gambling Act 2005 – Consultation on Statement of Principles for Wiltshire Council

WWDC: Local Government Act 1982 – Consultation on Draft Policy and Regulations re. the Licensing of Sex Establishments for Wiltshire Council

WWDC: Licensing Act 2003 – Consultation on Statement of Licensing Policy for Wiltshire Council

As the above generally repeated old policies to be taken up within the new unitary authority, it was agreed that all three should be noted but that the Parish Council would make no comment at the present time.

Paxcroft Mead Community Centre

The Chairman of the management committee had written to thank the Parish Council for its grant of £185 recently received. However, he was still struggling to understand which items it was reasonable to seek the Parish Council's help for (i.e. the distinction between 'revenue items' and 'capital expenditure'). He indicated that the centre's guttering needed replacing in parts at a cost of the parts alone at just over £500. Also, the Gannet Foundation had recently informed the management committee that their request for a grant for a new stage had not been successful, although they had been invited to apply again in the spring. Details of the committee's receipts and expenditure had also been included in the Chairman's letter.

A general discussion followed, and it was agreed that a response should be sent to the Chairman of the management committee, stating that the Parish Council looked at every grant application on an individual basis, and capital items would receive more sympathy than revenue items. The committee should be invited to request a grant for whatever items it deemed necessary, and the Parish Council could give consideration to each in turn. The question of support from Trowbridge Town Council was also discussed. The management committee had been told that the Town Council had allocated all of its grant money until the next financial year and would not be considering new grants until May, 2009. The community centre might have difficulty meeting the Town Council's criteria, which included a need for grants to benefit all of Trowbridge. Although anyone living in Trowbridge could hire rooms in the centre, users tended to be more local and the centre was provided specifically for Paxcroft Mead. They would not be ruled out completely, but there could be a possible problem and the centre could be in danger of falling between two stools, being neither wholly Hilperton nor wholly Trowbridge Town. Whilst appreciating the community centre's dilemma, it was agreed by the Parish Council that the management committee should continue to seek assistance from Trowbridge Town Council in view of the fact that the centre served Trowbridge residents as well as Hilperton residents.

Waste Collection/Recycling

Mr. Jackson had asked for this item to be included on the Agenda. Although he had sent a short report to the Clerk, it was agreed that discussion on this issue should be deferred until the February PC meeting.

Hilperton Village Hall – Request for Section 19 Grant

A request had been received from the Treasurer of the Village Hall Committee requesting funding to help with the maintenance of the playing field. The Chairman reminded members of the background to what had become an annual request. After a short discussion it was agreed that a Section 19 grant of £1,446.57 should be made to the Village Hall, made up as follows:-

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

- a) Mrs. Hayes pointed out that the Parish Council might receive a request for lighting at the teenage meeting shelter on Paxcroft Mead.
- b) Mr. Willis had noticed that there was no street lighting between Newleaze and Greenhill Gardens. Mrs. Sawyer had already reported the problem, due in all probability to the stormy winds the previous weekend, and the Clerk said she would report this as well.
- c) Mrs. Waring said that a badger had been killed recently in Horse Road. WCC had been approached and had been asked to remove it from the road, which they said they would do. However, it had since been discovered dumped in bushes by the old nursery site. The Clerk was asked to contact WWDC to get them to remove it.
- d) Mrs. Waring said that bins at the play area at Hammond Way were not being emptied regularly. Two large bins by Towpath Road/Tudor Drive had no bags inside to contain the litter.
- e) Mr. Bielecki said that, as so much fly tipping was taking place regularly along Middle Lane, it might be an idea to have a sign at each end, reading 'Fly Tippers will be Prosecuted'.
- f) Mr. Cullern reported graffiti on the underpass at Paxcroft Mead.
- g) The Clerk said that, since she had reported graffiti on one of BT's maintenance relay boxes on the corner of Helpswell Road, Paxcroft Mead, BT's Openreach team had investigated. They had tried to remove the graffiti but to no avail. Therefore, when the cabinet team were next in the area, they would paint the doors.
- h) The Chairman said that there would be a Valentine's Dinner/Dance on the 7th February at the Village Hall – tickets £25 each.

13. ITEMS FOR PARISH NEWS/LOCAL PRESS

Some pre-meeting notes for the parish magazine had been submitted by the Clerk, owing to time constraints for the parish news. Items included:-
Allotments, tree planting, approval of the budget and setting of the precept, new Wiltshire Area boards, planning application, grant request from the Village Hall.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 17th February, 2009

The meeting ended at 9.35 p.m.

Signed Date