

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HILPERTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, WHADDON LANE, HILPERTON,
at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 17th November, 2009**

PRESENT	Mr. E. Clark (in the Chair)	Mrs. S. Sawyer
	Mrs. K. Hayes	Mr. K. Jackson
	Mr. R. House	Mr. T. Carbin
	Mr. J. Willis	Mr. D. Tucker

Before the meeting, Mr. Peter Crane from the West Wiltshire group of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, presented the Parish Council with its certificates in respect of this year's 'Best Kept Village' competition. The meeting commenced at 7.38 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Ms. P. Turner, Mr. W. Jameson, Mr. B. Cullern, Mrs. J. Waring, Mr. V. Bielecki and PCSO Ellen Wickenden.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL/PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

Agenda Item 8 – Grant request from the Village Hall: Mr. E. Clark, personal, being the Parish Council representative on the Village Hall committee; and Mrs. S. Sawyer, personal, being a member of the committee.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 20th October, 2009, had been circulated. The Clerk pointed out an error she had made in the fact that Mr. Willis had not been present at the meeting and his apologies had been recorded. His name from the list of those present should therefore be deleted and replaced with the name of Mr. Tucker, who had attended the meeting. Subject to this amendment, the Minutes were approved and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 8 – Hill Street notice board: The new window had been ordered and delivered to the Chairman's house, ready for replacing the window which had been damaged by graffiti.

Minute 8 – Trowbridge Area Board: The Parish Council's views on meeting venues had been acknowledged.

Minute 8 – Good Citizen Award for Primary School Children: The Chairman was awaiting a response from Hilperton Primary School.

Minute 8 – Local Works: A cheque for £25 had been sent off.

Minute 8 – Core Strategy: A letter of support had been sent to Trowbridge Town Council and acknowledged.

Minute 13a – Rusty roundabout sign on Horse Road: The Clerk had reported this to John Earney of Wiltshire Council.

Minute 13b: The Clerk said that the estate agents' sign at Paxcroft Mead had been put in the wrong place and actually referred to the sale of some flats.

Minute 13c – Burnt-out litter bin at the underpass, Paxcroft Mead: The Clerk had been informed that, following inspections of the area after the litter bin had been removed, it was decided that a replacement was justified and, as a result, a new bin had been installed. It was in a slightly different position to the old one but a recent inspection found that it was being used. Wiltshire Council would look to move it again just a short distance to ensure maximum usage.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

- a) The Chairman spoke about the recent spate of vandalism, resulting in the burning out of a number of letter boxes in the village and beyond. He said that Royal Mail would be replacing them in due course, although the ones set in walls would have to be replaced with a different sort of box.
- b) The Chairman had received an invitation to attend the civic carol service at St. James's Parish Church, on Wednesday, 16th December. He asked if any parish councillor would like to attend.

6. WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR

Mr. Clark reported that the Gifford's Day Care Centre had been under threat of closure because of financial problems. The funding situation had eased a little but the Parish Council might be approached to assist by way of a grant.

7. POLICE

PCSO Ellen Wickenden had sent her apologies, as well as a short report. During the past month reported crime in Hilperton had reduced significantly. Enquiries were going on with regard to the destruction of the post boxes. Criminal damage to cars in Cornbrash had reduced and, for general information/awareness, there had been an increase in burglaries in Trowbridge and the surrounding areas.

Mrs. Sawyer said that the window in the bus shelter at the top end of Hill Street had recently been smashed and would need replacing.

Mrs. Hayes said that the next tasking group meeting would be on the 10th December. It was suggested that she should raise the matter of the spates of vandalism in the village and the need for more police presence, especially late at night. Mr. Jackson referred to the last meeting, when PC Mark Hough had said he would make some spot checks for speeding, up and down Devizes Road, and Mrs. Hayes might ask him about this at the tasking group meeting.

The results of the speed survey along the Trowbridge Road had not yet been received.

8. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND DISCUSSION

Paxcroft Mead Community Centre Boundaries

The Chairman gave a quick reminder of the situation to date with regard to the transfer of the community centre. Two or three years ago plans were sent to the Land Registry but they were refused on the basis that they did not show enough detail. Since that time Marshgate had sold to Attivo, and the current management committee of the centre appeared to be changing its position on what it wished to own. The sensible way forward would be for the boundary issue to be agreed between the new owners, or their agents, and the management committee, and when they had come to an agreement, the land could then be registered.

Allotments

The Clerk said that the Parish Council's solicitors had been through the contract and there were only a couple of minor 'tweaks' to be made. Working through the title had proved to be somewhat more complex, given the fact that they were working with particularly old deeds. They had raised a couple of points on this but would summarise the main issues in a letter to her in the next day or so.

The solicitors had also asked if the option to purchase further land should a) be made a part of this current deal or b) be kept separate until completion of the purchase and then worked on. It was agreed that the option should be included in the current deal.

As the legalities were moving forward, it was unanimously agreed that, when the contract was ready, this should be signed, on behalf of the Parish Council, by the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman.

Mr. House gave a short report on his recent meeting with the Village Hall committee. Whilst in principle they supported the allotment initiative, they still had reservations concerning parking and access. This was something the allotment sub-committee would look into when preparing the allotment agreement. Other matters discussed at the meeting included the possibility of vandalism, the removal and repositioning of the access gate into the allotment area and the piping in of the water supply.

Mr. House had received a number of quotes for fencing, grass seeding and further installation of water points etc. and it was – again unanimously - agreed that the allotment sub-committee should be given delegated powers to make decisions regarding the work needed to be done.

The Chairman thanked Mr. House for attending the Village Hall committee meeting.

Trowbridge Community Area Parish Council's Liaison Group

Mr. Jackson reminded members that the next meeting would be the AGM and would take place on the 4th February, 2010, at Southwick Village Hall. This would give the Parish Council plenty of time to put forward any issues it would like discussed.

Parish Steward

On his last two-day visit the Steward had cleared leaves from drains and footpaths, repaired potholes and trimmed hedges. His next visit would be for one day only, on the 10th December. Mrs. Sawyer said that the drain by the old post office in Church Street needed unblocking.

Tree Planting

The sixteen trees had now been delivered to Mr. House and discussion took place on when to plant them.

The Clerk had obtained a quotation for stock-proof tree guards, in the amount of £107 each, erected, making a total of £1,712 (plus VAT) and had completed an application form for a grant of 50% towards this cost from Wiltshire Council (community area grant scheme). Mr. House said that both tree wardens were unwell and it might prove difficult to get enough volunteers to plant the trees. After a short discussion it was agreed that the best way forward might be to obtain a quote from the stockists of the tree guards for planting the trees (properly staked) as well as providing the guards, and that Mr. Jackson, Mr. House and the Chairman should be given the authority to make a decision on this, so that the trees could be planted without any undue delay. It was also agreed not to go ahead at this time for a grant from the Area Board.

'Welcome to Hilperton' Village Sign

Since the last meeting, the Clerk had looked at the preferred location for a sign (on the verge at the Trowbridge side of Fieldways roundabout) and stated that there was already a sign just before the roundabout which displayed the word 'Hilperton' on the top, then a picture of a canal boat underneath, with directions under that for Paxcroft Mead. To put a 'welcome to Hilperton sign' here might look a little odd. If, however, it was placed on the other side of the roundabout, at the entrance to Trowbridge Road, it might upset Paxcroft Mead residents.

It was agreed that the Clerk should go back with this information to the person who suggested the sign, and the matter could be discussed further at the December meeting.

Trowbridge Area Board: Report on the meeting held on the 5th November, 2009

The Chairman had attended this meeting and he said that, among the items discussed, were:-

- * the national launch of the 'Touch2idScheme' – a new age verification scheme which validated ID cards
- * the possible introduction of no smoking in play/recreation areas owned by the Council.
- * the allocation of grant funding

Village Hall Grant Request

Since the last Meeting, the Clerk had sent to parish councillors details of previous grants given to both the Village Hall and the Paxcroft Mead Community Centre (which she was asked to keep up to date for future reference). She had also received a letter from the Secretary of the Village Hall committee describing the work that had been done to enhance access for both disabled and able bodied users of the hall's facilities. It was felt that the improvements were working very well and were much appreciated by wheelchair users and the less able.

After a short discussion it was agreed that a Section 19 grant of £500 should be given to the Village Hall (proposed by Mr. Jackson, seconded by Mr. House, all in favour with the exception of the Chairman, who abstained from voting).

Wiltshire Local Development Framework

Copies of Wiltshire Council's consultation document 'Planning for Wiltshire's Future' were tabled. The parts relating to the Trowbridge community area were contained in pages 24 to 28 and the Chairman asked members to look at the proposals so that the Parish Council could formulate its response at the December meeting.

Sir William Roger Brown's Coal Charity

Under Standing Order 68, this item was classified as confidential.

There were no additions to the eight people mentioned at the last meeting and it was therefore agreed that each should be given £10, making a total of £80. £50 of this would come from the interest which had accrued, and £30 from the Chairman's allowance.

Wiltshire Council – Invitation to Planning Enforcement Seminar on the 30th November

Details of a seminar to be held in the Council Chamber of County Hall, on Monday, 30th November, had been received. It would commence at 5 p.m. and its aim would be to demystify the planning enforcement process.

Mr. Jackson said he would like to attend and Mr. House, as Chairman of the Planning Committee, said he would also try to get along.

Wiltshire Council – Planning Development Control Six-Month Review

The Clerk said that, in the lead up to the creation of the new Wiltshire Council, a detailed review of the development control service was jointly undertaken by members of the former districts and county council. The objective was to produce a set of working procedures and protocols which could be used by officers and members following the creation of the new council. At the time it was agreed that it made sense for the way the service operated to be reviewed after six or seven months. The time had now come for the Council to ask town and parish councils for their observations on the way the service had been operating.

Members agreed on the responses to the questions answered, as follows:-

Question: Do you have any observations on communication between your Council and the Development Service, for example consultation on planning applications?

Answer: It should be made clear that the Parish Council feels strongly that the increase in the use of electronic communication should not extend to plans, which must continue to be sent in paper-form.

Question: Do you have any observations on the current 'scheme of delegation to officers' or the member 'call in' process, whereby applications are determined by planning committee?

Answer: It has been noticed that the volume of applications received has reduced. The Parish Council's right to be able to call in applications should be reinstated because there are no contingency plans in place in the event of a unitary councillor, for whatever reason, (e.g. illness, away on holiday) being unable to call in an application him/herself.

Question: Something which crops up at meetings with Town and Parish Councils is 'training'. Are there any aspects of the development service's work where you would like more information?

Answer: Where new strategies are introduced or changes in policy made for any reason, town and parish councils should be updated.

Question: Do you have any thoughts on what is, or is not working well for you or other points you would like to raise about the current service?

Answer: The new Wiltshire Council limits three people to speak in favour and three to speak against a planning application. As the number of applications taken to committee has dropped off and meetings now commence at 6 p.m., it is felt this should be left to the discretion of the Chairman. It is also felt that, if Parish Councils are not given the right to call in applications, then the time scale for the unitary member to call in an application should be increased from three to four weeks. As the Parish Council is not sure if the system has been adequately tested, there should be another review in six-months' time.

GPS Traffic Diversion

An e-mail had been received from Hans Tober to say that a lot of unnecessary traffic was coming through Devizes Road and down Ashton Road due to GPS navigation systems not having the latest data. Googlemaps, TeleAtlas and Tom Tom were now getting together to get the best possible mapping data and they were giving the public the opportunity to input road changes and updates. They would need a certain number of updates on the same point before they would actually come over to survey and implement it into the data sets, so the more people reporting changes correctly and consistently the quicker it would go in. It was agreed that this information should be publicised through the parish magazine and on the website, with an e-mail sent to all parish councillors. It could also be included in the next Newsletter.

Roundabout Sponsorship

In the same e-mail, Mr. Tober said his company would be interested in sponsoring the two roundabouts at either end of Hilperton Drive, but had been informed that this would need to be initiated by the Parish Council by way of putting in a request and obtaining a licence. After a short discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk should contact Andy Cadwallader at Wiltshire Council to see if this could be arranged.

BT Sponsor a Kiosk Programme

The Clerk said that the time had come to decide whether or not to continue the sponsorship of the kiosk located outside no. 2 Greenhill Gardens for another year. The cost for this would be £300 (plus £45 VAT). She reminded members that 130 calls had been made between the start of the sponsorship last October and the end of May this year, and she had asked for (but not yet received) statistics regarding its use since the beginning of June.

After a short discussion, it was agreed to continue the sponsorship for another twelve months and that this should also be discussed at the Parish Assembly next May.

9. PLANNING MATTERS

Applications

09/03009/FUL: Mr. S. Uncles, 23 Greenhill Gardens

Two storey extension and front porch, and construction of parking bays

It was agreed that no objection should be made to this application

09/03234/TPO: Mr. F. Hinks, Woodcote House, 112 Church Street

Crown reduction of Beech tree

It was agreed that no objection should be made to the work proposed, as long as it met with the approval of the Landscape Officer.

Decisions

09/02586/FUL: Mr. R. Wall, 8 Fairwood Close, Paxcroft Mead

Demolition of existing garage and construction of new garage – permission with conditions

09/01209/FUL: Mrs. S. Johannessen, Ring ‘O’ Bells, 321 Marsh Road

Change of use from residential home to domestic residence – permission with conditions

Planning application 08/01447/FUL: Marsh Farm

The latest response from Sarah Butler, Wiltshire Council’s Corporate Complaints Manager, was that this was an issue made by a former district council using a policy that no longer existed. Her advice was that the best way to address this would be with the local councillor. After a short discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council had reached the end of the line with this matter and would go no further.

Notification of Planning Appeal

An appeal had been lodged by Marstons plc against the refusal of Wiltshire Council to allow permission for an application to discharge clauses within the Section 106 agreement dated 6th February, 2004, at land adjacent to Hackett Place, Hilperton. The Chairman said that it had been agreed to decide the appeal by holding a Public Inquiry and this would probably be towards the end of March, 2010.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

11. PUBLICATIONS

- a) Paxcroft Mead Community Centre – Newsletter, October, 2009
- b) Paxcroft Mead Community Centre – Minutes of the 7th October, 2009, meeting and agenda for the 5th November, 2009, meeting.
- c) Minutes of Trowbridge Area Board meeting held on the 24th September, 2009
- d) WALC Newsletter – October, 2009, (already circulated)
- e) WALC Annual Report, 2008/09
- f) Town and Parish Newsletter – November, 2009
- g) Society of Local Council Clerks Newsletter – October, 2009
- h) The Clerk – November, 2009
- i) WALC Newsletter – November, 2009
- j) Clerks and Councils Direct – November, 2009
- k) Wiltshire Rural Housing Association – aims of the Association/details of the development process

12. ACCOUNTS**Payments authorised:****a) since the last meeting –**

Trowbridge Windows – improvements to Village Hall (including £162 VAT)	£1,242.00
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Local Works – support for campaign (Chairman’s allowance)	£25.00
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b) this meeting –

Clerk’s salary and expenses for November, 2009	£620.18
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BT – Sponsor a Kiosk: annual payment (including £45.00 VAT)	£345.00
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Futurform Group – stationery/office supplies (including £13.81)	£105.88
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Metrosigns – replacement window for notice board (including £13.13 VAT)	£100.63
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Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal – wreath for Remembrance Day (Chairman’s allowance)	£17.00
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Hilpertown Village Hall – Section 19 grant approved earlier	£500.00
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13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

a) Mrs. Hayes referred to the old nursery site land and the possibility of travellers gaining access. The Clerk had written to Persimmon about this and had received a response which indicated that the company had years of experience with travellers and had arrangements in place that ensured the swift removal of them from private land (normally on the same day) without resorting to lengthy and expensive legal process. They had already said, although they had no obligation to keep the land free of weeds etc. for the period up until the construction of the Hilpertown relief road, they would be willing to ensure that where it abutted existing highway footway, they would cut vegetation back for the safety of pedestrians and road users.

b) Mrs. Hayes spoke about the state of the land on the opposite side of the road and it was agreed that, if Persimmon were not willing to do anything about this, the Parish Steward could be asked to tidy it up.

c) Mr. Jackson said that, at the cut-off point in Ashton Road, someone had cut back in height a length of hedge, and it was now only fence-height. The job had been done well and the cuttings had been taken away, but it was now out of context with the rest of the length of hedge and he did not believe it belonged to the householder concerned. The Chairman said he would go to the site and take a look.

14. ITEMS FOR PARISH NEWS/LOCAL PRESS

a) Sponsorship of the BT kiosk for another year

b) Details of GPS traffic diversion

c) Tree planting update

d) Presentation of the certificates for the ‘Best Kept Village’ competition

e) Grant for the Village Hall

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 15th December, 2009, with the possibility of a planning committee meeting on Tuesday, 1st December, 2009.

The meeting ended at 9.37 p.m.

Signed Date