

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011 IN THE MEETING ROOM PUCKLECHURCH COMMUNITY CENTRE, ABSON ROAD.**

**PRESENT.** R. Symons Chairman, M.C. Smith Vice Chairman, E. Aze, Mrs. G. Boyle, Mrs. L.P. English, P.J. Green, W. Prewett, Ms Lori-Anne Scantlebury, M.S. Watson.

Boyd Valley Councillor Steve Reade.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the new Councillors.

**NO 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** None.

**NO 2. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.** Lori-Anne Scantlebury, Edmund Aze & Wayne Prewett the new members co-opted to serve on the Parish Council were invited to sign their Declarations of Office. They also passed their completed Register of Members' Interest to the clerk for forwarding on to the Monitoring Officer at S.G.C.

**NO 3. PRE MEETING WITH S.G.C. PLANNING OFFICER.** Cllr. Symons introduced Mr. David Stockdale saying planning was a complex issue for which Councillors may need more dialog/training and Councillors would like to build relationships with the Planning Department.

David Stockdale said he would do his best to answer questions and was willing to take anything back to S.G.C. that he couldn't answer.

Cllr Smith said not all the Parish Council concerns were specific to planning, there were issues where their local knowledge would have been beneficial. He said there were three main areas of concern:

1. Councillors do not feel part of the planning process and they think S.G.C. see them as a necessary evil rather than a partner.
2. While we believe S.G.C's. processes are within the law, they are concerned that these can be difficult to understand by the layperson and this does not help to get the best results for the community.
3. When asking specific questions the replies are written in lawyers terms that are not understood by Councillors.

Cllr. Smith mentioned the process dealt with by Circulated Schedule and the fact that objectors are not informed that the decision will be dealt with in this manner. Likewise when a notice was put up advising the transfer of land on Oaktree Avenue the Council were not specifically informed but found out by chance. David Stockdale agreed to pass comment back.

Cllr. Watson expressed concern that at several Gypsy/Traveller Site appeals S.G.C. use a Planning Officer against a skilful lawyer employed by the Travellers. This he believes is

wrong in principle. Mr. Stockdale said S.G.C. employ a Barrister for Public Enquiries but put up a Planning Officer for Appeals because the Planning Inspector does not like informal hearings turned into a debate.

Regarding big planning issues - Oaktree Avenue development. Councillors wanted and tried to engage with the Enabling Team but were kept at arms length and consultation was minimal. Mr. Stockdale said he thought the Planning Officer, Marie Bath, had invited the Parish Council to attend a meeting with the developers. Councillors confirmed they had been invited in but had been shown an urban extension similar to Emerson's Green and that it was so late in the process we had little influence. Their views, which we believe reflected the view of our local residents had not been taken into account.

Mr. Stockdale said there was a problem when dealing with a developer because it is the developer that does the exhibition and prepares the application the Planning Officer cannot be seen to promote the development it is not part of the process.

Cllr. Boyle said a recent planning application contained jargon which she would have liked to have been able to discuss with someone. Mr. Stockdale said the Planning Officer would be available or he could be contacted. He said if there was a difficulty with a particular application he would be willing to sit down and talk it through.

Councillors were concerned that if the Localism Bill becomes the Localism Act planning could have implications. Mr. Stockdale offered to pass back that workshops were needed.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Stockdale saying Councillors appreciated him coming.

**NO 4. TO AGREE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.** Installation of Wi-fi. Clerk confirmed the order has been placed and should be installed within 5 -7 working day.

Screen for projector. Following discussion it was agreed to purchase a 2.4mt screen.  
**Action: Clerk to purchase 2.4mt screen.**

The potential need for an emergency plan in the event of a nuclear accident at Oldbury Power Station which is 20km from Pucklechurch needs to be considered and should include the identification of vulnerable residents and discussions with Merlin and the school.

**Action: Ongoing.**

Make-Over Team.

**Action: Ongoing.**

Eagle Crescent Play Area – New sign ‘ No Ball Games Except Basket Ball’

**Action: Order placed awaiting installation.**

Contact List of Groups in Village.

**Action: Ongoing.**

Community Plan - A meeting has been held, and Tina Symons appointed Chairperson with Gail Boyle as secretary.

**Action: To go through plan and identify actions/responsibilities.**

Visit to Shortwood Landfill Site.

**Action: Date to be confirmed.**

Speed Watch Cllr. Smith to contact Chairman.

**Action: On going.**

Community Notice Board. Clerk confirmed notice board would be in the Conservation Area and will require planning consent.

**Action: Clerk to submit planning application.**

St. Aldams Drive Play Garden - Clerk confirmed the relevant pages of the Deeds have been made available on the web site. Cllr. Symons confirmed the answer to Mr. Judd's question 'why was the equipment different to the original plan' was that additional items for the 'Adventure Trail' had been given free of charge. A letter from SGC confirmed the cable runway is considered acceptable in an unmanaged public play area provided it has been built and installed to comply with BSEN 1176 and BSEN 1177. A qualified RoSPA Inspector has already inspected and passed the cableway as safe for use.

Shrubs on Partridge Road. Cllr. Watson confirmed the pruning has been carried out.

Bus Stop outside the Star Inn - clerk advised Councillors agreement to extend the keep clear markings by 2meters has been confirmed.

Investigation into providing gates for gaps in fencing on Hill View Road side of recreation field.

**Action: On going.**

Letter from Coal Authority. Cllr. Reade confirmed he has a list of properties that may have a shaft in the garden that the Coal Board has been inspecting. He is now able to share the list.

Cllr. Symons asked if it was the Councils wish that he signs the minutes of the meeting dated 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011. Seconded by Cllr. Green, all agreed.

**NO 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** Cllr. Symons invited Chris Bowering to speak. Mr. Bowering said he was disappointed that the S.S.C.G. report in Pucklechurch News was more interested in reporting on 'Horse Riding' signs than on the need for a pavement between Oaktree Avenue and the new Play Garden. Cllr. Watson confirmed the need for

a footpath had been raised at S.S.C.G. and that it was now on the S.G.C. Task Register. Cllr. Symons said the report for Pucklechurch News had been written before the Council knew the outcome. Mr. Bowering drew attention to the cyclepath in front of YOI Ashfield advising it was overgrown. Cllr. Steve Reade said Sustrans may be able to help.

Cllr. Symons thanked Mr. Bowering to attending.

Cllr. Symons invited Mr. Alan Holder to speak. Mr. Holder said the P.C.A. had been successful in obtaining grants for insulation and replacement guttering and has an application in for automatic vents. He is grateful to the Parish Council for funding the third party 10% for the grant for the installation of insulation out of the £3000.00. grant made by the Parish Council to the PCA for upkeep of the Community Centre. The remainder of the Parish Council grant has been left with the clerk and they would like to use more of the grant money in the same way should their applications be successful.

Mr. Holder expressed concern that the new lights installed by S.G.C. are a very bright white and that the one at the bottom of Abson Road dazzles drivers.

Mr. Holder advised that the notice in front of the hedge between the New Burial Ground and the Churchyard lurches to the left and spoils the view of the Church. He wondered if the Council would consider moving the sign to the other end of the Burial Ground.

Mr. Holder expressed concern about the 'Letter to the Editor' published in the Autumn edition of Pucklechurch News about the Play Garden on St. Aldams Drive and signed On Behalf of Residents Opposed to the Playbuilder Scheme (Name Withheld). He did not like the letter but was more annoyed because it was anonymous and said that after giving many years of service to the community he felt there was no recourse. He has corresponded with the Editor but is concerned a serious error of judgement occurred in publishing the letter without a name.

Cllr. Watson said we note your comments and asked, for clarification, why the P.C.A. had withdrawn their Area Forum grant application. Mr. Holder explained that it was because they had already been successful in securing a grant from S.G.E.B.

Cllr. Symons thanked Mr. Holder for attending.

Cllr. Symons invited Mr. G. Judd to speak. Mr. Judd said he had involved many people before taking the letter to Pucklechurch News and asking if their names could be withheld. The reason for withholding names was genuine as they were concerned about repercussions. They respect the Council acts as one voice and that no one person is responsible but three people resigned on the spot. The extra ordinary meeting agreed in the July minutes for the 24<sup>th</sup> August to discuss problems and look at a management plan did not take place. Cllr. Watson had said aggressively at the August meeting that another open meeting would not be appropriate and that the decision not to remove the equipment had already been taken. Mr. Judd said the views of those opposed to the play garden are just as important as those who support it and he has contacted S.G.C.

Cllr. Symons thanked Mr. Judd for attending saying his comments were duly noted.

**NO 5. LAW & ORDER.** Cllr. Watson advised the new Inspector at Staple Hill is Derek Reece. Cllr. Smith put on screen a copy of Avon & Somerset crime report from the web site showing crime figures for June and July. It was agreed that Clerk would ask if the Police could attend the next meeting or send a written report.

**Action: Clerk to contact Police.**

**NO 6. FINANCE.** Cllr. Symons had emailed a copy of the budgeted figures to Councillors, he explained for the benefit of the new Councillors how the budget was prepared.

The following resolution was passed ‘That the authorised signatories in the current mandate for the accounts held by Pucklechurch Parish Council be changed in accordance with Section 5 of the new mandate.’ The clerk asked Councillors to sign the mandate and the new Councillors to complete, sign and take the form with the necessary ID to a branch of Nat West.

The following cheques were agreed for payment and signed. Mr. & Mrs. Hall £90.00. rent for Shortwood Play Area. Instant Landscapes £528.00. grass cutting services. A.L.C.A. £180.00. being clerks training course £50.00., training for two Councillors “Being a Good Councillor” £130.00. Ensign Print £299.00. printing Pucklechurch News. Town & Country Services £2590.80. repairs to fence at St. Aldams Drive and entrance to woodland and re-grade & resurface steps to St. Aldams Drive. P.C.A. £79.00. use of meeting room for 2 Parish Council Meetings and four sessions of Youth Club. Getspatial LLP £48.00. annual subscription to Parish-on-Line Mapping System. S.J. Aplin £852.00. replace edging and re-fix safety tiles around swings at Shortwood Play Area. Mrs. A. Sharpe £178.00. Mrs. D, Bailey £383.11. being salary £319.97. + stamps £1.84. + Initial subscription, activation fee, postage & packing for wireless router bundle for Village Hall £61.30. (future monthly payments to be paid by direct debit). P.J. Green £11.20. expenses for travel to Waste Management meeting in Thornbury. S.G.C. £95.00. fee for planning application for new Notice Board.

**NO 7. LOG & CALENDAR.** The log was looked at and it was agreed clerk would ask for update on the following Redford Lane, Hillview Rd and Shortwood Road Traveller Site. Cllr. Smith proposed that the log be improved by consolidating arisings and the action log so that all outstanding items were in one place. He felt that this would avoid items coming up twice on the agenda. This was agreed by the Council and the Chair took the action to revise the format to suit this proposal.

The calendar was discussed and it was suggested that quotations for next years contracts would need to be obtained and a specific meeting arranged to discuss budget. Cllr. R. Symons said he had used last years budget plus 3% as a baseline for this year budget. Cllr. Symons agreed to look at expenditure for next meeting. Cllr. L. English offered to help with finance.

Cllr. Smith advised copy date for the Chairman's Report for Pucklechurch News was 10<sup>th</sup> October and Cllr. Symons asked if what items members would like included. The following were suggested: St. Aldams Play Garden, Community Plan, Part Night Lighting, Village Orderly.

**NO 8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION.** PK11/2528/F erection of 1 detached bungalow, 74 Parkfield Road, Pucklechurch. Lori-Anne Scantlebury declared an interest. After discussion it was agreed Councillors object to the application on the grounds that it is inappropriate development in the green belt. Councillors were sympathetic to the personal circumstances of the applicant but felt that the quickest and easiest way to meet the needs of the family and overcome the current problems with the mobile home was to install a new mobile home to modern specifications. Members did not consider a modern brick built home was an option given the terms of the existing planning consent.

**NO 9. CORRESPONDENCE.** North Bristol NHS Trust consultation. It was agreed that Councillors could on this occasion respond individually through the website [www.nbt.nhs.uk/ft](http://www.nbt.nhs.uk/ft)

A letter was read from Rebekah Harrison advising she is a leader with the 3rd Pucklechurch Rainbow Guides and a member of Dyrham District Senior Section and she is hoping the Parish Council could consider assisting her financially with the cost of a trip she will be leading next summer. She will be part of a leadership team taking a group of Rangers to Europe for three weeks, the total cost of the trip is approximately £1000.00. and she will need to buy equipment. She is fundraising by contacting local businesses and the group will be holding table top sales and bag packing at local supermarkets amongst other activities. Parish Council is not allowed to give financial support to an individual, however they may be able to help if a grant for equipment was requested.

**Action: Clerk to reply that the Parish Council may be able to give a grant for equipment but would need to know how many of the group she is planning to take to Europe live in Pucklechurch, what equipment would be needed and whether it could be brought back and used to benefit the parish.**

Cllr Smith received an email from a resident who is concerned that the Council wanted to invade her privacy by using green belt land to build houses. The resident was not specific about the location of the land. Cllr. Smith has replied and explained the situation with regard to Oaktree Avenue as it is likely that this is the area meant by Green Belt. Cllr. Smith also asked for clarification in case it was not related to the Oaktree Avenue development.

A letter was received from Iain A Selkirk advising that the Audit Commission is being disbanded as part of the Government cuts and as a consequence it is more than likely that this will herald the end of the 'lighter touch Audit'. This may result in Parish Councils being advised to seek their audits through the medium of local firms of accountants which may prove to be problematical since parish audits are a specialist area in which

few such firms have had experience. As a chartered accountant qualified to undertake the duties of the full audit of parishes he is researching the ramifications of such an undertaking and would appreciate without obligation, an indication as to whether the parish would support him.

A similar letter was received from Internal Audit & Compliance Ltd.

**Action: Clerk to advise Council will respond after the Localism Bill when the facts are known.**

C.P.R.E. an invitation was received to attend the AGM on the 13<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr. Prewett agreed to attend.

An email was received from Inspector Thatcher thanking the Parish Council for their good wishes and advising he has enjoyed working with them.

An email was received from John Sexton advising several residents are concerned about the damage a tree at the Village Hall end of Birch Drive is causing and would like to request its removal. The roots they believe are damaging the outside wall and patio of 49 Birch Drive, lifting the pathway and damaging the end wall by the turning area at the end of Birch Drive.

**Action: Clerk has forwarded the email to S.G.C. Highways Department as they repaired the wall last year.**

**NO 10. ST. ALDAMS DRIVE.** Councillors were concerned that Mr. Judd and some neighbours were still hoping that the equipment would be removed/re-located and noted their comments. Problems have been identified and we are gathering information.

Cllr. Reade said that he and Cllr. Stokes have both been contacted by the residents and received representation. They are very dissatisfied people who think the Parish Council has let them down, their questions haven't been answered and they haven't had their democratic rights.

Following further discussion about possibly erecting signs the zip wire should not be used after daylight hours and giving out police non emergency number it was agreed that Cllr. Symons would collate and identify all the issues raised and after review by the Council it would be shown to Mr. Judd with a view to getting an agreed list of issues with which the council could work.

**NO 11. PARISH ORDERLY.** Clerk confirmed six replies have been received to the advertisement placed in Pucklechurch News for a Parish Orderly. It was agreed Cllrs. Boyle, English & Prewett would form a sub committee to interview the applicants.

**NO 12. SPORTS FACILITIES.** A letter was received from Pucklechurch Cricket Club explaining that over the past few years they have been growing their playing membership and are now able to field five youth sides, covering ages 6 – 17years, three Saturday adult sides and a Sunday development team. The amount of cricket being played and the need

for good quality training surfaces is putting a strain on the current square and as a result they are now contemplating three areas of growth.

1. Increasing the size of the square by approximately 5 meters in the direction of the Oak tree. This will cost in the region of £3000.00.
2. Installing a semi-permanent net facility consisting of an artificial playing surface, steel frame and cover net. Position to be mutually acceptable perhaps between the graveyard and the basketball court. This will cost in the region of £2000.00.
3. Increasing the number of suitably qualified coaches. Cost in the region of £1600.00.

These changes will enable them to provide good quality playing surfaces for all age groups and a safe environment for top grade training and coaching. They have launched a new fundraising committee in an attempt to secure funding and their goal is to raise at least £2000.00. this year. However, before they can progress their plans they need to obtain the backing of the Parish Council and have two specific requests.

- a. Parish Council agreement to proceed with items 1 and 2.
- b. Consideration towards any financial support the Parish Council may be able to provide.

Cllr. Smith confirmed that according to National/S.G.C. guidelines Pucklechurch is short on formal sports pitches by approximately 1.74hec. and suggested that perhaps the Council should look at other locations. He suggested a project group be set up to survey, develop plans and look at funding opportunities with the objective of meeting the needs of the community.

Cllr. Boyle suggested that at the moment training facilities for football and cricket were the most important consideration.

Cllrs. Boyle & Prewett agreed to form a project team to look at funding and develop plans with a view to increasing sports facilities for the parish and to enquire if anyone from the sports teams would be willing to join the team.

Cllr. Watson proposed that a letter be sent to the Cricket Club confirming the Council has no objection in principle to them increasing the size of the square by approximately 5 meters in the direction of the oak tree. Council also supports in principle the installation of a semi-permanent net facility but before being able to commit to financial help will have to undertake a spending review. Seconded by Cllr. Prewett, all agreed.

**Action: Clerk to write confirming Councils decision and advise Councillors will meet them on the recreation field 19<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm to discuss positioning of semi-permanent net facility.**

**NO 13. EXEMPT ITEM.** The Council passed the following resolution 'Due to the confidential nature of this agenda item, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings)

Act 1960 s. 1 (2) the press and public will be excluded from the meeting during its discussion'. The exempt item was discussed and a decision agreed.

**NO 14 REPORTS.** Cllr. Watson had attended the Kings Forest Area Forum, funding opportunities were looked at and attention was drawn to S.G.C. 2011 – 2026 draft Strategy Consultation and the need to respond.

Cllr. Watson attended the Health & Well Being Partnership which is being dissolved. He also attended a meeting in Bristol on National Planning Policy Framework and will circulate a summary.

Cllrs. Symons & Green attended the Waste Management Meeting at Thornbury a report has been circulated.

Cllr. Boyle attended the Heritage Forum and reported two officers have moved on to other jobs, they have a good idea of what they want which will be discussed at the AGM.

**NO 15. UNITARY AUTHORITY REPORT.** Cllr. Reade thanked the Parish Council for welcoming David Stockdale and said he hoped the meeting had been useful. He has been contacted by a local resident about the mural on the Village Hall and has a meeting with the Hall Committee. He said he had attended the Village Green Enquiry on the first day and it had been very protracted.

Cllr. Watson said he had attended on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> days to present what the Parish Council had agreed and the hearing finished on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day by dinner time. A response is expected November at the earliest.

**NO 16. MEMBERS MATTERS.** Cllr. Watson reminded the meeting of the importance of members attending the A.L.C.A. AGM 13<sup>th</sup> October. Amendments to the proposed new constitution will be considered. There are 9 people willing to run ALCA and they are looking for support for the amended resolution. Cllr. Watson is unable to attend, Cllr Symons confirmed he was able to attend. Each Council has two votes and it is important that we use them.

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October Parish Charter Annual Review Meeting. Cllrs. Watson & Boyle to attend.

Cllr. Green reported blocked drains between the Ring Road bridge and 81 Main Road, Shortwood.

**Action: Clerk to contact S.G.C.**

Cllr. English advised a property in St. Aldams Drive was being used as a 'Half Way House' residents had expressed concern as to whether the people living there were being supervised.

**Action: Clerk to contact S.G.C. Jacqui Ward for advice.**

Cllr. Smith advised there had been complaints about the 689/620 bus service.

Cllr. Smith reported the cradle seat on the two bay swing on recreation field was broken.

**Action: Clerk was already aware of the problem and was arranging for it to be replaced.**

Cllr. Smith asked if the id and password for parish-on-line mapping system could be given to the new Councillors.

Cllr. Smith said there were no direction signs for the cyclepath on Shortwood Road and it has become overgrown.

Cllr. Smith said he has received complaints from a number of residents who are finding the new lights in the village blinding and distracting.

**Action: Clerk to write to SGC and get guidance on this.**

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

Date for next meeting. 19<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm.

**NB.** General correspondence not received before the Council's formal meeting agenda has been issued can only be dealt with at the following month's meeting.