

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PARISH MEETING HELD 14TH MAY 2008 IN THE MEETING ROOM, PUCKLECHURCH COMMUNITY CENTRE, ABSON ROAD.

Present. O.A. Beg Parish Council Chairman, Diane Bailey Parish Clerk, Mrs. G. Boyle, Mrs. V. Broom, Cllr S. Grant, P.J. Green, D.A.E. Holder, Mrs. M.C. Palmer, Cllr S. Turley, Rev. S. Young, M.S. Watson.

Mr. Beg presided welcoming everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence. M.C. Smith, Vicky Freestone Pucklechurch Cricket Club, Malcolm Grainer Pucklechurch Football Club, Elizabeth Webb St. Thomas a Becket.

Copies of the minutes of the previous meeting dated 23rd May 2007 were available and those present agreed they should be signed as a true record.

NO1. Parish Council Chairman's Report. Mr. Beg acknowledged the work of those members of the previous Council who either did not stand for re-election (Jean Crispin) or who were not re-elected (Bill Skidmore & Robert Lee). These colleagues worked hard for the village and he would like to thank them for their time, expertise and dedication. Our new Councillors, Bob Symons, Sarah Turley and Malcolm Watson have all in different ways already made valuable contributions to Council meetings and village life generally.

As minutes are available on the Pucklechurch Website, Mr. Beg decided to highlight a few topics which show the range of issues with that Councillors are involved with and needed Council attention.

BUS SHELTERS. Last year the Council provided a new bus shelter at the top of Merlin Ridge and renewed the one on Partridge Road. Although these shelters are expensive they provide much needed cover in the wet and windy weather. The Council will be looking at ways to refurbish some shelters which have been damaged and are an eyesore, particularly on Abson Rd and Shortwood Rd.

RAILINGS. New railings have been installation around part of the recreation ground, this was made possible with a grant from Cory Environmental Trust. Council expects to put new railings around a further part of the recreation field, following a new grant application which was signed earlier this year. Council is ever mindful of the need for the safety of children and young people who use the various recreational facilities in the parish, and all play equipment is checked regularly.

HOUSING. Sovereign Housing Association has presented indicative plans for houses/apartments on land at the top of Oaktree Avenue, together with the provision of a new Doctors Surgery. Council fully support the need for the Surgery and would want it to be built without undue delay. Our initial response to the housing provision was less than positive as we thought the proposals would bring an urban 'Emerson Green' type of

property to the countryside. Also the proposed provision of parking spaces was far less than we thought appropriate and we had reservations about the provision of open space around the development. When a full planning application is made Councillors will study it in detail and very likely hold a public meeting to allow village views to be expressed.

SITA – In vessel composting facility. The way in which the people of Pucklechurch worked to ensure the composting facility was defeated shows how important collaboration is. Council colleagues, with their differing knowledge and experience played a major part in the short, yet effective campaign. It was a pleasure for me to be part of the team which defeated the plan.

FINALLY. Our new Council has worked very well in its first year and I am sure we are well placed to deal with the challenges of the coming years. Diane Bailey our Parish Clerk continues to work tirelessly for us. She is our link with S.G.C. and does not hesitate to contact them should the Council as a body or individual Councillors, have an issue which it is felt has not been dealt with quickly enough or in the right way. Mr. Beg has again enjoyed Chairing the Council and believes all members have made a positive difference to the lives of villagers and the environment in which we all live.

NO 2. FINANCIAL REPORT OF AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2006/7. Clerk confirmed the 2006/7 accounts had been audited and that £12,840.00. had been carried forward.

Total Income for 2006/7 including precept.	£28,559. 53.
Total Expenditure.	£24,910. 61.
Surplus.	£ 3,648. 92.

The accounts for 2007/8 have been prepared and are ready for audit.

Income.	£35,913. 46.
Expenditure.	£38,339. 04.
Deficit.	-£ 2,910. 58.

The overspend was budgeted for in 2006/7 and £11,168.74. will be carried forward to 2008/9. Precept this year was increased by 3.9% to cover inflation.

Mr. Beg said finances were well managed with two Councillors, Mr Holder and Mr Symons, budgeting and monitoring. Mr. Symons had set up the accounts on the computer, this is a great improvement and more efficient. Mr. Beg thanked Mr. Holder and Mr Symons and the Clerk for the day to day administration.

NO 3. REPORT FOR UNITARY AUTHORITY. Cllr. S. Grant gave the following summary of achievement. S.G.C. is a high performing Council that is improving well, reflected by the consistently high scores achieved within the Comprehensive Performance Assessment framework. It is not complacent and continues to improve, particularly in the priority areas, as was illustrated by the Higher Adult Social Care and Housing rating

in the latest assessment. The annual Audit and Inspection letter confirmed this stating “The Council continues to provide many good and excellent services at comparatively low levels of spending overall.”

Overall satisfaction by S.G.C. residents is 57%, top quartile performance, which is very good set against a climate where satisfaction rates have declined nationally.

S.G.C. focus on excellence has led to a wide number of achievements reflecting their ambition and priorities. Some examples are:

The lead authority within the west of England for a joint major transport scheme (Greater Bristol Bus Network), to secure a significant improvement to bus services across the sub-region.

Our area will deliver the first low carbon development under the Government’s Carbon Challenge programme.

S.G.C. has worked closely with English Partnership to establish the planning and design framework for the site which will provide about 2000 zero carbon homes of which at least one third will be affordable housing.

As part of the strategic approach to the future housing and care needs of a rapidly growing older population, S.G.C. has focused on the development of extra care housing and hub and spoke services to create virtual extra care in community settings. Their strategy is underpinned by clear capital prioritisation for extra care accommodation and dementia services.

S.G.C. has taken forward its modernisation programme for learning difficulties services e.g. the closure of two resource activity centres, the opening of Turnberrie’s community building and the commissioning of new community based services.

A wide range of partnership work has been undertaken to help people in South Gloucestershire to be safer. In 2007 the recorded crime rate was 45.2 offences per 1000 residents, significantly lower than both English and regional averages. People also feel safer. In 2007 only 3% felt unsafe during the day and 27% at night.

Working in partnership S.G.C. has made a number of significant improvements to the waste services e.g. introducing alternating collections, paper recycling and expanding plastic bottle sites. This has resulted in a significant rise in household waste recycling and composting rate from 7.6% in 2000/01 to 39.5% in 2006/07 ranking us third out of 47 unitary authorities.

Through work in Priority Neighbourhoods, residents living in some of the most deprived areas of South Gloucestershire are experiencing improved quality of life. Using ‘planning for real’ techniques communities have been actively engaged in developing

specific cross partner action plans to address the most pressing needs of that community, be it health, education, poverty, poor housing or the environment.

In 2006 S.G.C. achieved Beacon status for School Improvement, reflecting the fact that there are no schools requiring special measures, there is a rising trend of performance within primary schools, overall attendance has been consistently above the national average, exclusions are low and progression into education, employment and training continue to rise.

Compared to upper tier authorities S.G.C. are top quartile performers. In 2006/07 nearly 70% of our strategic performance indicators improved with 36% in top quartile. In some areas S.G.C. performance against certain indicators is in the lower quartile; this has been a concern and we have significantly improved our performance in a number of these areas e.g. benefits and planning. Due to our focus on priorities some performance indicators are poorer performing in comparison with others, e.g. some culture indicators. S.G.C. is aware that it must not become complacent in its improvement when compared to other councils.

S.G.C. has recently refreshed its strategic performance indicators to reflect the Community Strategy, Council Plan, new Local Area Agreements and Multi Agency Agreements. This will further strengthen our focus on the things that matter and which are important to local people.

The following questions were raised: Reference the introduction of the Hub & Spoke scheme, some residents in Pucklechurch were sad to lose their warden. What steps are S.G.C. taking to reduce the 27% of people that felt unsafe at night? Cllr. Grant replied that some things were beyond Local Council control and she would try to find out what is being done to improve safety at night but suggested the issue could be taken up with the Safer Stronger South Gloucestershire Group.

NO 4. REPORT FOR PUCKLECHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL. Gayle Boyle made the following report: Overall this has been another good and settled year for the school and there has been some notable achievements:

We have been awarded an **Activemark** as part of an accreditation scheme for the primary sector that recognises and rewards a school for its commitment to promoting the benefits of physical activity and offering good physical activity provision. The programme provides schools with a thorough auditing and development tool to help raise the standard of physical activity provision.

We are currently being assessed for and are hopeful of achieving Healthy School status. To become a Healthy School, we needed to show evidence of how we have met criteria in the following four core themes including evidence of how the whole-school approach has been used in the process:

1. Personal, social and health education, including sex and relationship education and drug education (including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substance abuse) – PSHE provides pupils with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to make informed decisions about their lives.
2. Healthy eating – Pupils learn have the confidence, skills and understanding to make healthy food choices. Healthy and nutritious food and drink is available across the school day.
3. Physical activity – Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to be physically active. They learn to understand how physical activity can help them to be healthier, and how physical activity can improve and be a part of their everyday life.
4. Emotional health and well-being – this involves promoting positive emotional health and well being in order to help pupils understand and express their feelings, and build their confidence and emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn.

The Curriculum has continued to be re-modelled. The approach which is being adopted allows teachers to be more creative in the way the lessons are delivered whilst still meeting the requirements of the national curriculum.

Links with the wider community have been strengthened – in particular the relationship with the Church. School Council took an active role in the formation of the Children’s questionnaire which has been fed into the Community Plan. There have been a number of fund-raising events with sizable donations to charities such as NSPCC and Cancer Research. This was the first year that the Reception classes took part in the Revel parade. We will continue to support Revel with our usual concert.

Pucklechurch School Association has held some successful events including a Ladies Night and a juice/smoothie bar in conjunction with children which was extremely successful and raised more than a cake sale. The major fund raising events will continue to be the Firework display and the annual fete which will be held this year on Thursday 22nd May – all welcome.

Our ‘Out of School Club’ has continued to make progress – the numbers are more sustainable than they have ever been and it has become a real asset to the school and recently a newly formed ‘Breakfast Club’ is proving popular.

The school continues to be a hive of creativity – we had a fantastic performance of the Wizard of Oz by years 3&4 last term and now we are looking forward to the ‘Trojan War’ by years 5&6 – a chance to really let their hair down after Sats. We are also holding a Sports Week in July instead of just a day and this will have an Olympic theme.

Unfortunately school numbers are down but this had been predicted and is in line with national trends – we continue to take pupils from a wide area including many from Emerson's Green. We are doing all that we can to promote the school but the lower numbers will undoubtedly have an effect on the school budget.

NO 5. REPORT FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS. Revel Committee – Written Report. Every year since 1999 has seen Revel growing in one way or another and 2007 was no exception. In gross terms the surplus (after expenses) from Revel events, was just short of £9000.00. made up from £6000.00. Beer Festival and £3000.00. from the other Revel activities. This allowed us to return £8100.00. back to community groups.

During the last year the committee, both formally and informally, took time to reflect on what Revel was all about and why it was important. Historically, revel can be traced back over 700 years, it was all about giving the local people a break from the hard work in the fields, quarries and mines. It was a day of revelry a day for giving a treat to the children and it was a time when the whole community came together. That knowledge helped us to re-focus Revel on community. We felt that in our modern society community was more important than ever. Revel is about bringing the community together and that also means providing a focus for children. Fund raising is an important by-product of the activities but not an end in itself.

This years Revel will have an increased focus on Children with a children's area with entertainment such as Punch & Judy and giant games sponsored by the Parish Council, also pocket money stalls. The Parade theme is 'Music and dance' and will be led by the Bristol Samba also sponsored by the Parish Council.

Continuing the theme of community Revel held a new event the 'Newcomers Barbeque'. This attracted over 50 recent arrivals to the area as well as 30 or so representatives from various village organisations. All attendees felt this was an enjoyable event and many newcomers commented on how positive it was for the community.

This year Revel week is in fact closer to Revel fortnight with over twenty events starting on the 9th June and finishing with Revel Day Saturday the 21st.

Community Plan Report 2008 by Mr. Alan Holder. Within the community Plan there are and have been small steps and big steps to be completed. The Plan has just completed two very large steps. The first was the allocation of rounds, the village being split into 40 rounds, and every house visited, sometimes three or four times to obtain questionnaires, a magnificent effort by 60 or 70 villagers. Then came a second big step entering all that data onto a data base and completing the first analysis.

FACT: Approximately 1207 houses were visited of which there 715 household and 1273 individual responses, each household questionnaire contained about 65 questions. We know that the time taken to enter was of the order 300 hours, there has been no estimate made of the time taken distributing and collecting the questionnaires, but we can say that except for the printing the cost was nil to the Community Plan.

As they did with the distribution and collection of the questionnaires, and now with the analysis, the people of Pucklechurch and Shortwood responded magnificently. We have to say thank you so very much to all our volunteers.

There is much in the report that we 'knew' but now we have hard facts not opinions with which to fight our corner.

Questions 6 – 16 revealed the majority of parishioners chose to live in Pucklechurch because of its rural location (91%) and do not want to be physically linked to Emersons Green (91%) or have the Green Belt around them eroded (94%).

In other areas we have collected information. We have been given a book by the Guide Group with the various pages showing the pupils opinions and photographs of our Village, likewise from the Primary School who gave us the results of a questionnaire they had devised, answered and analysed. Community Plan had two meetings for the youth of the village when they were invited to give their opinions they were given disposable cameras to take photographs of their likes and dislikes.

Once we have completed our report we will have facts to present to Pucklechurch Parish Council and South Gloucestershire Council for action.

Already the plan has had an impact on the life of the Village a group has been formed to encourage good neighbourhood habits and another to promote habits of sustainability. Also there has been an effort to match people with gardens that are too large for them to manage with villagers that would like to do more gardening.

We have achieved this firm foundation with meetings of the Steering Group on the first Wednesday of each month. We should not lose sight of our vision which is to form a plan of action that will carry Pucklechurch and Shortwood forward into the future in the form that Parishioners want.

Pucklechurch Sports Football Club – Written. We continue to run 3 adult football sides in the Gloucestershire County League and Bristol District League. Although we have been able to fulfil all the fixtures, performances on the field have been disappointing. The third team finished mid table but both the first team and reserves find themselves in or very near to the relegation zone in their respective leagues. Our status for next season may well therefore be determined by the leagues themselves.

Off the field there are changes in personnel taking place at the end of the season. Our team manager duo of Andy Frankcom and Tom Hartree are standing down and anyone interested in replacing them should contact club chairman Chris Belcher. Also we are losing the services of Jackie Mooney as Secretary, she has been secretary for 4 years and will be greatly missed. Richard Savage has indicated a willingness to take over the reins and this is likely to be confirmed at the club's AGM.

The saga of the goalposts has at long last been concluded with the arrival and installation of a new set of demountable posts which are taken down and erected for each game. The Gloucestershire County League standards still make reference to a solid barrier around the pitch but as far as we know this is not currently an issue for existing clubs.

The condition of the rear elevation of the village hall and in particular the dressing rooms has for some time been a cause of concern. In agreement with the CA new aluminium guttering has been ordered and will hopefully be installed shortly thus allowing the brickwork and general structure to recover for the future. This has been funded partly by the PCA but the football and cricket clubs have contributed by using the remainder of the revel grant for renovating the dressing rooms.

Fixtures have been completed for the season, players, officials and spectators are taking a well earned rest prior to preparations for next season with pre season training starting in a month or so. Anyone interested in playing for the club can contact them via the website.

St. Thomas a Becket – Rev. S. Young reported that since the last Annual report they have continued with their Mission and Outreach in the Parish. In the summer of 2007 they had a very good Holiday Club run over 4 weeks for one day per week, 25 young people attended each session.

Messy Church – A short act of worship followed by arts, crafts, etc. and refreshments has been held twice, the last one on Palm Sunday when once again two donkeys come into Church.

All Festival Services are well attended with a full Church on Remembrance Sunday, Carol and Christingle Services. The other service which has been well received is the All Souls Service in October when people are invited to attend who have lost loved ones through death either recently or in the past.

We are gradually improving our links with the School the young people come into Church for services and curriculum work, we also go into the School.

We have had a slow but gradual increase in the number of people regularly attending Church.

The fabric of the Church remains in good order all minor works have been carried out. In the near future (June/July) some work is due to start on the Organ and the electrics have to be tested for safety.

The Churchyard is well maintained, and we are grateful for the Parish Council grant of £800.00. In 2007 the Parish Council kindly helped to pay for the thinning of the Horse Chestnut and Sycamore Trees overhanging the garage and again we are very grateful.

We continue to have fund raising efforts in order to keep our lovely old Village Church well maintained the last being a very successful Scarecrow Competition. We thank the Village for their continued support.

Pucklechurch Twinning Association – Mrs. V. Broom. The past year has involved a whole range of social activities for the Association. We held two safari suppers which were well attended with superb food, Greg's B-B-Q has become a fixture and the Horse Race event saw good weather and was held at Elaine Stones.

Two quizzes were held at The Star and both evenings raised substantial sums.

Two skittles evenings at the Pucklechurch Sports & Social Club were well attended and brought out the competitive spirit in both men and women.

A Christmas Wine and Cheese event and the Christmas meal in January were both enjoyable and well attended.

Revel as always brought a raft of events that members were involved with and thanks was given to everyone for their effort to impress the judges with the float and to the person that plans the route for Revel Ramble each year.

Enjoyable as all the social activities are the main thrust of Twinning continues to be the exchange visits with Pringy.

In April we hosted 47 French guests for the 20th Anniversary celebrations. An Anniversary dinner and Dance was held on the Sunday and a Barn Dance in the Village Hall on the Monday evening. Feedback from their Committee was that they were absolutely delighted with the events and we are now planning for the second part of the anniversary celebrations when Pucklechurch visits in October.

The Parish Council was thanked for their contribution towards the cost of the celebrations and for their support of twinning.

They also thanked members for their support saying to have reached a 20th Anniversary is a fantastic achievement which reflects well on members past and present.

NO 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS. Mr. Whittock suggested other organisations should be invited to make a report. Mr. Beg said the meeting was open to everyone and confirmed a notice asking residents/organisations to give a report had been placed in the Parish Council Notice Board and on the Pucklechurch Website. It was agreed the notice would also be advertised in the March edition of Pucklechurch News.

Mr. Beg thanked everyone for attending the meeting and said he looked forward to seeing them next year.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

