

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup>  
JANUARY 2009 IN THE MEETING ROOM, PUCKALECHURCH  
COMMUNITY CENTRE, ABSON ROAD.**

**PRESENT.** O.A. Beg Chairman, D.A.E. Holder Vice Chairman, P.J. Green,  
Mrs M.C. Palmer, R. Symons, Mrs. S.E. Turley, M.S. Watson, L.J. Whittock.

**NO 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** M.C. Smith, Cllr. S Grant.

Mr. Beg opened the meeting with a welcome and introduced Mr. M. Follett.

**NO 2. PRESENTATION.** Mr. Follett said he was the Play Development Adviser for South Gloucestershire Council, also he was involved with Play England which was funded by the Government to promote play. Over the past 20years childhood play has become more formal and a KFC (kit-fence-carpet) culture has developed. There is now a move to encourage more imaginative play by introducing a more interesting landscape ie sand, planting, boulders, fallen tree, hills etc around the existing equipment.

Mr. Follett said that 2/3yrs ago S.G.C. had received letters from children at Pucklechurch Primary School asking for a better play area but at that time they had been unable to help as the land belonged to the Parish Council. However, they have now secured lottery funding of £35,000.00 and would like the opportunity of working with the Parish Council on a new scheme. Mr. Follett handed around brochures showing schemes already implemented in other areas and copies of the S.G.C. Play Strategy that includes an 'Approach to Risk' as managing risk is very important.

S.G.C. would carry out the consultation process with children and the community, provide a Landscape Architect to create designs, put the work out to tender and oversee the project. On completion the work will be signed off and responsibility handed over to the Parish Council.

Councillors were interested in the proposal and asked the following questions:

Is there any cost to the Parish Council? £35,000.00. is the amount available but Parish Council could provide extra funds.

Is there any provision for ongoing costs? There is no money available from S.G.C. but a landscape approach would have little impact on the existing maintenance budget.

Insurance Liability? The risk is no more significant - you can only be sued if you are unreasonable, it is reasonable to expect some risk and justifiable to provide improved play.

Siting - where? The site has not been fixed but the one most used would be best.

Can existing equipment be blended into a landscape approach? Yes equipment can be kept or re-located, this approach is more about stimulating interest and making the area attractive for the whole community.

Is the money time limited? Yes the scheme would need to be completed by the end of the next financial year (Easter 2010).

Fencing? Fencing between risk is necessary for example between play area and road or canal but not against dogs, dog owners should be encouraged to be responsible.

In the Parish Plan we have identified a need to improve play for 8–12yr olds? This approach is much more about stimulating interest and targets 8–11yrs olds.

Mr. Beg confirmed Councillors would like to progress to the next step. Mr. Follett suggested 1 or 2 Councillors form a sub committee to work with him. He will begin the initial consultations from which a concept plan will be drawn, presented at a Community Event and then re-drawn into a final plan.

Mrs. Turley and Mr. Holder agreed to represent the Parish Council on the working group and Mr. Holder suggested Councillors look at obtaining some external funding to top up the grant. .

Mr. Beg thanked Mr. Follett for his presentation and confirmed Councillors looked forward to working with him.

**NO 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** Update on progress reference Village Hall Make Over. Mr. L. Bence said he had nothing to report Mr. Thomas had emailed his apologies/report. Mr. Bence is concerned members the Project Group do not want to report to members of Steering Group and very disappointed as they want the Make Over to happen.

Mrs. Symons thanked Parish Council for their offer of financial help and as requested she had brought last years accounts. She said that in 2003 C.A. had had big bills and that the peaks and troughs shown in the accounts related to work done. The C.A. is aware of the importance of grants as without them they would have made a loss but outside bodies were reluctant to give grants towards repairs. With regards utility bills the C.A. is no longer eligible for special rates for water and sewage also with lighting and heating costs rising it has been necessary to reduce maintenance. Mrs. Symons said profit and loss has gone up and down but C.A. has remained liquid.

This year there are three invoices outstanding amounting to approximately £1000.00. and they would be grateful for help with paying them.

Reference April 2009/10 the Community Association estimate £3000.00. may be needed towards the maintenance and continued use of the building until the Make Over. A 5% increase will be levied on users but help will probably still be needed.

Mr. Beg thanked Mr. Bence and Mrs Symons for attending the meeting.

**NO 4. LAW & ORDER.** Mrs. Turley advised there had been two farm break-ins in the parish and expensive welding equipment had been stolen. Clerk had received an email from P.C. Skelton advising he had received an incident report from a resident in St. Aldams Drive regarding the club. This has been passed to the District Licensing Officer for investigation. PCSO Anne James is returning to work following a long serious illness, she is working from home and has been tasked with keeping the Parish Council aware of local crime trends and problems.

**NO 5. ARISINGS.** Lyde Green Common – Legal Status. Clerk advised an email from Montague Harris confirmed the application to register the land has been cancelled because the applicant did not reply to the Land Registry’s requisitions. As the application has been cancelled clerk has not pressed the Solicitor to check the legal status of common land. Councillors thought it would be helpful to try to establish the definition of ‘Common Land’ Mr Symons agreed to contact A.L.C.A. for help.

Mr. Beg confirmed the consultation on School holiday dates has reverted to the old school terms.

Reference the Rural & Parish Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> February Mr. Holder agreed to attend the whole day session and Mr. Watson the evening one.

The minutes of the meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> December 08 were agreed a true record and signed.

**NO 6. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** Councillors said the Village Hall was essential to the village and after looking at the current budget agreed to set aside £1000.00.

In order to allow the possibility of ring fencing money to support the C.A. during 2009/10 Councillors agreed that no 10 on the agenda (Parish Council Reserve and Responsibility as an Employer) and no 14 (Finance – to agree Precept for 2009/10) should be brought forward.

**NO 10.** Mr. Symons asked that Councillors discuss how much money should be held in reserve as at the A.L.C.A. AGM it was disclosed that they had £44,000.00. in reserve and that this referred to national recommendation. In line with the recommendation Mr. Symons suggested the Parish Council’s Reserve Account could be increased to £9,000.00. Mr. Beg said that previously 10% of Precept that had been discussed and risk assessed had been sufficient. Mrs. Palmer strongly objected to money being sat in an account.

Mr. Symons said the Council has a responsibility to the clerk as an employee, she has been provided with a laptop and salary etc but it information from ALCA advises some

Councils employ an H.R. Firm for their clerk. It was agreed Mr. Symons would contact the Secretary at A.L.C.A. for advice.

Mr. Beg said he had received a communication from the Village Hall Project Group asking if the Parish Council could provide a grant of approximately £1000.00. to fund the cost of preparing plans for an exhibition.

This years budget requirement was discussed after which Mr. Symons declared an interest being a Trustee of the Village Hall.

Mr. Holder proposed £1000.00. could be set aside this financial year to help the Community Association. All agreed.

It was further proposed by Mr. Holder and seconded by Mr. Watson that last years precept figure plus inflation plus £3,000.00. making a total of £28,092.00. should be requested for 2009/10 financial year. This figure is based on £3000.00. ring fenced for C.A. use and £1000.00. for preparation of plans for Make Over. All agreed.

Councillors were concerned that communication was breaking down between the Steering and Project Group and it was agreed a letter should be sent to Mr. Clive Thomas explaining that although the Parish Council is the landlord they have nothing to do with the running of the Village Hall, this is the responsibility of the Community Association and it is through them that communication and requests for expenses should be made.

**NO 7. MEMBERS MATTERS.** Mr. Green advised asbestos had been left near the Crematorium and that there were more 'for sale' boards on the verge outside The Poplars.

Mr. Green asked that Parish Council encourage the introduction of a cycle/footpath at the bottom of Police Station Hill. Clerk said the Cycle Group Meeting minutes confirmed S.G.C. were in the process of designing plans for consultation.

Mr. Whittock reported dogs fouling by the bungalows in Homefield Road. Clerk to contact the dog warden and ask if signs could be erected.

Mr. Whittock said the Garage on Westerleigh Rd was closing.

Mrs. Turley advised reference the illegal development on Westerleigh Rd. Mr. Hazel had pleaded guilty, he was fined £8,000.00. given a conditional discharge and 28days to clear the site starting 8<sup>th</sup> January 09. It now appears Mr. Hazel is going to appealing and everything has to stop.

Permission has been granted for the mobile homes which have been delivered to Meadow View, Shortwood Road. However, John Malone S.G.C. Traveller Unit will be going on site to carry out his annual count and will check and report to Enforcement if necessary.

Mr. Symons enquired if he needed a sick note as he had been unable to attend two meetings. Mr. Beg confirmed a note was not necessary but said any Councillor expecting to be absent long term should request permission as he/she would be automatically disqualified if absent for 6 meetings.

Mr. Symons asked that Quality Council Status be included on the agenda for next months meeting. Clerk said she had discussed this recently with the Chairman having looked at the guide to becoming a Quality Council and the CILCA portfolio guide. Quality Status is dependant on the clerk obtaining CILCA qualification, completing the portfolio takes up to a year to complete and the training costs approximately £250.00. The Parish Council already meets the majority of the criteria but the clerk will be past retirement age before being able to gain the qualification. Mr. Beg said he thought the clerk worked tirelessly on their behalf and that Quality Status could be gained in the future. All agreed.

Mr. Holder asked if the top of Oaktree Avenue could be gritted. Clerk to ask S.G.C. if Oaktree Avenue could be included on the secondary route.

Mr. Watson reported an increase in the parking of HGV/trailers on Oaktree Avenue. Clerk advised a report of the registration numbers should be sent to the Licensing Authority as units should be kept in a depot overnight not parked on the road.

Mr. Watson reported litter and graffiti in the underpass on Oaktree Avenue.

Mr. Smith sent a written report reminding Councillors that the deadline for items for the March edition of Pucklechurch News was 10<sup>th</sup> February (before the next Council Meeting).

Reference re-naming the Rec to 'The Burrell' if members agree he is willing to liaise with Gail Boyle on the historical facts and develop an article requesting comments from parishioners. All agreed.

Is the Council supporting National Spring Clean this year? If so could a date be decided so that the event can be advertised in Pucklechurch News. It was decided to hold the event between 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**NO 8. REPORTS.** A report from Mr. Smith advised the visit to the Landfill Site at Shortwood had been very interesting and informative, his concern is that greater attention should be given to the wheel washing facility.

**NO 9. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.** Councillors adopted the new model publication scheme. The guide advising how and where information is available was completed. After discussion it was agreed a charge of £3.00. was reasonable to cover administration costs. Voting 5 in favour 3 abstentions.

**NO 10.** Discussed previously.

**NO 11. RURAL SPATIAL STRATEGY.** Parish Councils have been asked to carry out a local survey/consultation regarding development in the green belt. Councillors did not think another consultation/questionnaire was necessary as they have already organised public meetings to raise awareness. However, they did not object to the information being made available on the web site.

**NO 12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS.** The following applications were considered and observations made. PK05/1009/O Residential development (approx. 400 units) small scale retail/commercial units (approx. 500m<sup>2</sup>gross) on 13ha of land. Construction of new access road from The Rosary roundabout and associated works (Outline). Revised Indicative Master Plan, Revised Environmental Statement, Supporting Framework Plans, Design & Access Statement and Rosary Roundabout details. A decision on these plans was deferred as the plans could not be viewed due to IT problems on S.G. web site.

PK08/3254/F erection of single storey front and first floor side extension to form additional living accommodation. 74 Abson Road. Mr. Holder declared an interest. Councillors objected strongly to the proposed front and rear dormer and the rear two storey extension.

**NO 13. CORRESPONDENCE.** An email was received from Mr. Owen Jenkins at S.G.C. regarding the problem of ice on Parkfield Road confirming it has been added to the secondary routes for salting. Clerk to write and ask if Oaktree Avenue and Castle Road could also be added.

**NO 14.** An invitation was received to attend the Chase & Kings Forest Community Project meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

**NO 15.** An email was received from Mrs. L. English regarding the staff at Ashfield Prison and the way they continue to park in Becket Court and St. Aldams Drive. She is concerned that the parking is inconsiderate and dangerous with cars parking opposite each other making it difficult to get a small car through and impossible for an ambulance or fire engine. When the prison was in the planning stage many residents voiced concerns about the size of the car parks but was told there were plenty of spaces not only for staff but also for visitors, this is definitely not the case. Councillors have raised this issue in the past and will contact S.G.C. again as the problem is ongoing.

**NO 16.** An email from Mr. M. Broom advised he wanted to raise awareness of the disgraceful state of the underpass/subway that passes under Oaktree Avenue. The amount of broken glass, jagged cans and general litter lying around is unacceptable. He suggests that as the small shopping complex on Oaktree Avenue has been replaced with housing the underpass is no longer essential and could be filled in and a zebra crossing installed. Councillors discussed the possibility of filling in the underpass with S.G.C. some time ago but the cost was very high and could not be justified. It was agreed clerk would contact S.G.C. and ask if the possibility could be investigated again but in the interim the underpass cleaned and re-painted.

**NO 17.** The next Safer Stronger Community Group Meeting is 4<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm.

**NO 18.** A letter was read from Inspector Thatcher reference the Pucklechurch Sports & Social Club advising the Licensing Officer Phil Lawrence has spoken to committee members and pointed out local community concerns and that since the meeting no further incidents have been reported.

**NO 19.** An email from Steve Grudgings regarding Brandy Bottom Colliery was received confirming he has spoken to Martin Leathwood the Project Manager for AIBT who have a lease on the site. The overall message from all involved with the site is that a local group actively involved would be very welcome. He put forward some suggestions for consideration and offered to attend a Parish Council Meeting to discuss the points. It was agreed clerk would invite him to the February meeting.

**NO 20.** An email was received from Revel Committee thanking the Council for allowing the 'Turning on of the Christmas Tree Lights' event and confirming its success. They believe concern was raised at last months meeting that the electric box may still be letting in water and would be grateful to receive feed back. It was agreed clerk would obtain quotation to have the electric box/light fitting removed, resealed and reset.

**NO 21.** A resident in Becket Court has written to S.G.C. requesting information as to who is responsible for maintaining the sewer serving his property. S.G.C. advised the sewer serves only private properties and is therefore the responsibility of the users even when located within the public highway or public open space, the only exception being damage by a third party. It was agreed clerk should write to the resident concerned concurring with the views of S.G.C.

**NO 22.** S.G.C. Gypsy Traveller Consultation. It was agreed clerk should reply that the Parish Council has not commented on the consultation as there is no allotment suggested for Pucklechurch but stress they are concerned that any planning conditions attached to developments should be strictly adhered too.

**NO 23. FINANCE.** A request for grant aid towards the upkeep of the Churchyard at St. Thomas a Becket was received. Mr. Beg and Mr. Holder declared an interest and took no part in the voting. After discussion Mrs Palmer proposed a grant of £800.00. seconded by Mr. Watson. All agreed.

A budget request for the funding of Pucklechurch News for 2009/10 setting out options was received. After discussion Councillors agreed to fund option 2 'Black & white with one colour on cover at a cost of £950.00. plus the production of an updated village directory. Estimated cost of printing 1500 copies of 16-20 page A5 directory £350.00. Clerk to thank the Editors for all their work and confirm Councillors would be happy to be approached should anything special occur and they would try to be sympathetic.

The following cheques were agreed for payment and signed. P.C.A. £34.50. use of the meeting room for 3 meetings Oct. Nov. Dec. 08. EDF Energy 1 Ltd. £12.83. unmetered

supply to millennium stone. Gail Boyle £50.00. for hire of scout hut for two youth survey sessions for the Community Plan. S.G. Heritage Forum £10.00. membership. Town & Country Services £424.25. supply and erection of new posts and tubular rails to replace fence on recreation field near scout hut. Mrs. A. Sharpe £125.00. Mrs. D. Bailey £312.46. being salary £310.66. plus £1.80. stamps. St. Thomas a Becket Church £800.00. grant towards upkeep of churchyard.

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

Date of next meeting 18<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm.