

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday, 19 June, 2002 at 7.30 p.m.
in the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given.

Present: Cllrs: PJ Charles, LG Ferguson (Chairman - L Fe below), RSV Jarman,
KA McLoughlin, MM Moore, CN Talbot, SM Tonking and S Wilson.

Also present: EA Roy (Clerk), Inspector Andy Mason (Staffordshire Police).

Apologies for absence: Cllr. L Fox and Borough Councillor AJH Fox.

Members of the public attending: Mr A Elkington, Mrs J Crooks.

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Minute 30: Inspector Andy Mason

The Chairman welcomed Inspector Andy Mason who introduced himself. He was appointed to Uttoxeter from start of April and has spent some of that time on holiday. Immediately prior to that he was working on community safety. Although new to rural settings, he is looking forward to the challenge.

He reported that changes in operational organisation are still being discussed and will be the subject of a formal announcement by the Chief Constable in due course. The aim is to redress the existing imbalance between community and on-demand policing back towards more community work. This will be achieved by separating out some officers for community work and they will be insulated from demand tasks so that they are able to tackle longer-term issues. They will not be working alone, but in teams so that they can support each other when individual locations need additional manpower.

He ended his summary of the changes by offering to come back and provide further details once the announcement had been made.

Concerns about parking were raised. Inspector Mason agreed that the warning letter approach was a viable option, but would have to be resourced at an appropriate level of priority. It would not be possible for a civilian to issue these.

Other concerns raised included speed of traffic through the main street and the fact that some larger vehicles routinely mount the pavement to pass others.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Mason for his visit and contribution.

Minute 31: Public Session

The Chairman welcomed the members of the public present and invited them to raise their topics of interest.

- 31.1 Mr Elkington (Ashbrook Lane) informed the members of the Council that he had been attempting to straighten his drive for a number of years where it diverts round a defunct spring. Despite efforts with the Land Registry and various other bodies, he has been unable to determine the title of the piece of land involved. The due process has now run its course and he proposes to go ahead in order to solve major difficulties with egress from his property following the introduction of the traffic-calming scheme.
- 31.2 Mr Elkington also reported that there were a number of trees dying off in the area and wondered if the Parish Council should be involved? A number of acer and fruit trees are withering, and it appears to be caused by disease. He was recommended to contact the tree specialist at ESBC.
- 31.3 Mrs Crooks reported that there was some money left over after the Jubilee, and it has been proposed that a bench and plaque be purchased. She was present to invite suggestions on where it could be sited. The Millennium Green and the Nuttery were both mentioned as possibilities. There was also the cost of installation to be considered.

Normal business was resumed at 8.10 pm.

Minute 32: Approve and sign the Minutes of the previous Meeting

It was proposed (MT), seconded (MM) and agreed that the Minutes be signed as a true record of proceedings subject to the following corrections:

1. Page 5 item 23.7: Extraneous "a week" in the last line to be removed
2. Page 5 item 24.2: Should read "it has been the custom for a member to welcome and entertain"

Minute 33: Matters arising and matters of report

- 33.1 Bedding plants:** It has been confirmed that we can use the ESBC grant of £64.49 to purchase bulbs rather than bedding plants. Estimates indicate that we could expect to purchase at least two 25Kg sacks within this budget. (Exact prices not yet available until stock arrives)
- 33.2 Bulk waste:** Dates for future collections are 10th August, 21st September and 9th November.
- 33.3 Code of Conduct:** Clarification was received from Ken Birch following the questions raised at the last meeting. (Discussed under Local Government Act 2000 - minute 37).
- 33.4 Replacement floodlight:** MEB Contracting say that the maintenance contract covers only remedial work in rectifying faults and so the repainting of the control boxes is out of scope. However, in view of the long time they took to fix the last problem, they agreed to do it free of charge as a one-off concession.
- 33.5 Local Transport:** A follow up email has been sent to Ian Allred clarifying that a return trip to Burton on Saturday is considered desirable.

Minute 34: Planning

34.1 Applications

- (i) **HO/25284/005: Springview Cottage, Ashbrook Lane:** Erection of two storey side extension
- a. Date received: 220502
 - b. Date despatched: 050602
 - c. PC response: No objections, subject to use of matching materials.

- (i) **PA/27356/001: Sunrise, Northside B5234:** Construction of new access to highway
- Date received: 140602
 - Date despatched:
 - PC response: *Due by 3rd July*

34.2 Decisions

The following applications have been *AGREED*:

- (i) **RM/25481/004: Port Lane Farm:** Farm workers dwelling, septic tank etc
(*revised plans for previously reviewed proposal*)
- (ii) **HO/06587/011: Wilversall House, Yeatsall Lane:** Installation of observatory into outbuilding roof
- (iii) **HO/27276/001: 9 Needwood Grange:** Erection of two-storey side extension and single storey porch extension with pitched roof over
- (iv) **LB/05395/010: Maxstoke House, Bagot Street:** Installation of handrails to front steps

No applications have been *REFUSED* or *DEFERRED*.

34.3 Correspondence and other planning matters

A new form for plan circulation has been proposed and will be used on future applications. Follow up correspondence with ESBC Planning will now use email to save time and cost.

Minute 35: Financial Matters

35.1 Financial Statement for May

The Clerk explained that in the absence of a complete set of bank statements, he had generated a provisional report. A final June statement would be submitted to the July meeting for approval.

35.2 Report on payments made since the last Meeting: None.

35.3 Bills to pay

The Clerk introduced the following for payment:

<i>Voucher no/ Cheque no</i>	<i>Payee</i>	<i>Sum due</i>	<i>Details</i>
19/427	Abbots Bromley Village Hall	42.00	Part payment (for Mar-May)
20/428	SPCA	25.00	Clerk's training day
	TOTAL payments	67.00	
	<i>New Village Hall</i>		
049	Dave Waldron Carpets & Décor	273.77	Carpeting of gallery for acoustics

It was proposed (PC), seconded (RJ) and agreed that the above payments be made.

35.4 Section 137 payments: There were no requests outstanding.

35.5 Other financial matters

- 35.5.1 Given the offer by the Jubilee Committee to donate a bench, the cost of fitting would be borne by the Parish Council. A guide to the cost of fitting could be obtained from the recent similar work in the churchyard.

- 35.5.2 Verification of the calculation of the previous Clerk's gratuity has now finally been achieved (by the SCC treasurer) and permission to make the payment free-of-tax needs to be obtained from the Inland Revenue (SPSS). Clerk to follow up.
- 35.5.3 A proposal from the Clerk to obtain a computer software package for the accounts was discussed. Of the options presented, it was agreed that a local-authority-specific product should be obtained and that final product selection should take into account:
- Any additional information that could be obtained at the annual SPCA Clerks day
 - Clarification with the vendors that their products supported the new audit requirements
- It was proposed (MT), seconded (MM) and resolved that the Clerk make the choice and acquire a suitable product.***
- 35.5.4 ***It was proposed (MM), seconded (RJ) and resolved that finalisation of the Clerk's contract be carried out by the Chairman and Clerk with assistance and advice from MT.***

Minute 36: Group Reports

36.1 Recreation

Schoolhouse Lane still outstanding awaiting both grading of the path and conveyancing of the land. An issue was raised about the intentions for equipping, and it was agreed that it had been intended to equip for pre-school ages and not for 5-8 as minuted. There is also the need for a latch on the gate (which is wedged shut at present) and for some care over the hedge. These both need to be resolved prior to use being made of the site.

36.2 Village Property

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to both Paul Stamper (English Heritage) and Andy King (SCC) last week. Confirmation has since been received that the plans have gone to the Secretary of State for approval. Although everyone is still aiming to finish before the Horn Dance, they no longer seem so confident about doing so.

Clerk to check with Andy King that he knows about the lighting work required.

36.3 Traffic, Parking, Highways

Trimming Daisybank hedge would help improve visibility for the extra traffic emerging into Goose Lane due to the closure of Mires Brook Lane. MM offered to ask Helen Grindley if this could be done.

It was reported that the plant sale and barbecue outside the Bagot Arms used the pavement and this has caused obstruction. John Emerson from Bromley Wood is the trader involved. This will be mentioned to him at the Show on Sunday by PC/RJ.

Parking adjacent to the Butter Cross is problematic due to the way that cars reverse so close in.

Work in Mires Brook Lane is ongoing with further unconnected culverts found. The current estimate is still another two or three weeks work to be completed.

Some investigations in Church Lane have led to the bringing in of a large jetting machine tomorrow in an attempt to clear roots from a drain and solve the local flooding problem.

Work requested by Ken O'Kell alongside the Market Place will not be done until after Mires Brook Lane is complete.

36.5 Competitions

Nothing to report.

36.6 Rural Housing

Still going ahead and mention is made of the houses on the Beth Johnson Housing Association web site.

36.6 Newsletter

Work on the newsletter has started and it should be out by the end of the month. Could it include reminders about the rules for use of the Millennium Green?

36.7 School Governor's Report

Nothing to report.

Minute 37: Local Government Act 2000

- 37.1 We have received a reply from Christopher Leslie (on behalf of Nick Raynsford) via Michael Fabricant which has been distributed to members.
- 37.2 A copy of the questions raised with Ken Birch and his reply had been distributed. This made it clear that any member not signing the new code would be automatically disqualified with effect from 24th June. The process thereafter would be that casual vacancies would be advertised. If more than ten electors request an election within 14 days of the vacancies being posted, then this will be arranged. Otherwise co-option can take place.
- 37.3 The Chairman expressed his appreciation for the work of Councillors Moore, Talbot and Tonking who would now cease to be members of the council. He went on to say how sorry he was personally, that they would no longer be members of the council.
- 37.4 It was also noted that DTLR have issued a consultation paper on the proposed procedure for local investigation of misconduct allegations. We have until the end of the month to comment. The Clerk will collate the comments and send off a response.

Minute 38: Village Plan

- 38.1 A grant of £11,025 has been awarded by the Countryside Agency. ESBC will also contribute and, with the amounts each Parish Council agreed to provide, this will provide a total budget of £15,000. Abbots Bromley Parish Council have agreed to act as banker to the project, and we will receive an initial payment from the Countryside Agency for just over £5,012.50.
- 38.3 There is a requirement placed by the Countryside Agency that the project must appoint a Village Agent by the end of July. This post is being advertised in the press, on the notice board and on the web site.

Minute 39: New Audit Arrangements

- 39.1 The Audit Commission have written to inform us that our external auditor will be District Audit, Chorley. The cost will be £120+VAT per annum, compared to £243 for last year. They also enclosed an eight page booklet "Statement of Responsibilities of local councils and their auditors".
- 39.2 There is still no guidance on offer about how we may select an Internal Auditor but it is hoped that progress on this will be made at the annual SPCA Clerks event on 2 July.
- 39.3 Our own review of the new audit guidance manual indicates some areas where we (and most other Parish Councils) will have issues. In particular, these new requirements include

formal annual risk assessment and valuation of assets. The Clerk will work with RJ/SW on the latter.

- 39.4 The recently received notes from SPCA indicate an awareness that the first that Councils have seen of some new requirements was in May 2002, and so this year will be treated as "transitional".

Minute 40: Correspondence, bulletins and reports

- 40.1 The draft Annual Review of the Staffordshire **Local Transport Plan** had arrived with little time or scope for comment. After review by LFe, PC and MT, comments were emailed before the deadline. Both the document and the feedback are available from the Clerk.
- 40.2 We have received an invitation to be represented at an **International Partnerships forum** in Burton on Tuesday 25 June. Finance to support local groups with overseas involvement is available. We are asked to reply by Friday 21 June. LFe agreed to follow up.
- 40.3 A **recycling incentives scheme** is proposed by ESBC as means of increasing the proportion of household waste that is recycled. In the "cash for trash" scheme, villages are required to appoint a committee to oversee the distribution of funds paid out six-monthly and amounting to £10/tonne. The make up of the required committee is defined. MM offered to be one of the "resident" representatives. ESBC estimates the scheme will potentially provide at least £200 per half year to Abbots Bromley. Feedback from members indicated that there were problems with existing "bring" operations that needed resolution before making a decision.

Minute 41: Items for agenda of next meeting

- Council vacancies
- Publicity for bulk waste collections 10 August and 21 September
- Christmas lights
- Street trading licences for Horn Dance day
- New Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Appointment of Internal Auditor
- Waste recycling - ESBC "RISES" scheme

Minute 42: Date, time and place of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday 31 July at 7.30 p.m. in the Memorial Room of the Village Hall. The Meeting concluded at 9.25 p.m.

Chairman Date:

Proposed: Seconded: