

Minutes of Whaddon Parish Council meeting held on 11th July 2011 at 7.35p.m. in the Village Hall, Church Street, Whaddon, nr Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5RY.

Present:	Chairman	Dr N Strudwick
	Councillors	Mrs K French, Mrs J Lewis (from 8.35p.m.), Mr P Neale, Mrs M Peyton (until 7.45p.m.), Mr C Rose
	District Councillors	Mr N Cathcart, Mr D McCraith
	County Councillor	Mrs L Oliver (from 8.45p.m)
	Parish Clerk	Mrs G van Poortvliet
	Parishioners	4 present

The Parish Council meeting started five minutes later than advertised due to over-running of the Planning Committee meeting which was held immediately beforehand.

- 1.0 **Apologies for Absence** – received from Cllr L Ginger. Apologies for early leaving received from Cllr M Peyton. Apologies for late arrival received from Cllr J Lewis and County Cllr L Oliver.
- 2.0 **Declarations of Interest** – none declared.
- 3.0 **Approval and Signing of minutes – from Parish Council meeting of 13th June 2011:**
Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.
- 4.0 **Co-option of Parish Councillor** – it was proposed and duly resolved that Mrs Kate French be co-opted onto the Parish Council (PC). A declaration of acceptance of office form was signed. (At this point Cllr Peyton left the meeting)
- 5.0 **Reports from Clerk and Cllrs on matters arising:** the Clerk and Cllrs provided verbal reports on the status of matters arising from previous Parish Council (PC) meetings:
 - Affordable Homes – Bedford Pilgrims Housing Association (BPHA) had written an informal inquiry letter to SCDC asking to vary some of the design elements of the Church Corner scheme. As yet no detail had been obtained from either BPHA or SCDC planning. Action: the Chairman to follow up with SCDC planning. A formal Ground-breaking Ceremony would take place on the site on Tuesday 12th July 12.30-1.30p.m. The Chairman and Cllr Peyton would attend. The neighbours at Rose Cottage had been informed. Building works were anticipated to begin in August and a community event held towards the end of September. District Cllr Cathcart expressed concern that BPHA may be able to increase rents to 80% of market value which would not make them particularly affordable. He advised the PC to keep an eye on this.
 - Speed camera signs: CCC had advised the PC that it would not be able to display speed camera signs without formal police monitoring checks or equipment in place. This was not the advice that the Speedwatch team had received from the police and another CCC representative. Action: the PC to query with County Cllr Oliver.
 - Road safety briefing event: many children had already been briefed on road safety at school events. The police would also be holding an open day at Melbourn Village College. Action: Mr M Monks to work with Cllrs Neale and Lewis to produce publicity leaflets.
 - Bridge Street Traffic Safety Signage: Action: Cllrs Lewis and Neale to work with Mr M Monks to produce a combined leaflet for distribution to Bridge Street residents about proposed location of safety signs and a road safety briefing (see above).
- 6.0 **District and County Councillor Reports:**
District Councillor report: a verbal report was given. There had been no meeting of SCDC since the last PC meeting.

- Sheltered Housing (SH) – District Cllr Cathcart was Chairman of a group looking into sheltered housing provision. SH was facing funding changes and the group were looking at ways to maintain service levels.

County Cllr Report: postponed until the arrival of County Cllr Linda Oliver:

7.0 Public Participation:

- A member of the public wished to bring up an item under agenda item 16.0.
- A member of the public wished to comment on agenda item 13.0
The Chairman would bring in members of the public during discussions of those agenda items.

8.0 Village Hall and Recreation Ground Trust (VHRGT):

it was agreed to postpone this item until the arrival of Cllr J Lewis (Chair of the VHRGT).

9.0 Planning

- 9.1 noting of Planning Committee recommendation re S/1158/11, 53 Bridge Street, Whaddon for two storey front and rear extension – refusal recommended.
- 9.2 noting of SCDC decision re S/0845/11, 5 Bridge Street, Whaddon for an extension – planning permission granted.
- 9.3 update from SCDC’s Parish Council Planning Policy Briefing – postponed until September meeting.

It was moved to make an appointment to the Planning Committee. The PC resolved that Mrs K French be appointed to the Planning Committee (to replace Mr W Burchett).

10.0 Finance:

10.1 Approval of payments: Resolved: that the following payments be approved:

Cheques to be signed today:

Cheque No. 100728, for £396.00, MD Landscapes, grass-cutting of recreation ground (6 cuts from 22nd March to 12th May).

Cheque No. 100729, for £78.00, Dr N Strudwick, reimbursement of newsletter printing costs.

Cheque No. 100730, for £50.00, Dr N Strudwick, Chairman’s expense allowance for qtr ended 30th June.

Cheque No. 100731, for £1091.25, Mrs G van Poortvliet, Clerks wages and expense allowance for 15 weeks to 11th July plus expense reimbursement for refreshments for Annual Parish Meeting.

10.2 Approval of costs for conversion of Bridge Street phone box to library facility: £250 was already ring-fenced for phone box refurbishment. Approval of additional costs postponed until September meeting when cost estimates should have been received. Action: The Clerk/Chairman to liaise to finalise who should be asked to do the refurbishment and conversion work.

11.0 Correspondence:

- CCC – copy of new speed limit policy.
- SCDC – notification re Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment call for sites (17th June to 29th July).
- Charter Development Group – request for comments on draft Councils Charter (agenda item 15).
- SCDC – invitation to Parish Planning Forum (20th July). Cllr Peyton to attend.
- BPHA – invitation to Ground Breaking Ceremony at Affordable Homes Site, Church Street Whaddon, 12th July, 12.30p.m. Chairman and Cllr Peyton to attend.
- CCC – background information details of Street Lighting PFI project in advance of consultation.

- 12.0 Village Newsletter – agreement of format and approval of costs:** Format – it was resolved that the format of the newsletter be changed to A5 leaflet style with a card cover. An electronic version would be produced for the website. Costs – a quote had been received of £137 per issue (£548 per year) using a printed coloured-card cover and for £185 per issue (£740 per year) using a more elaborate colour-printed cover. It was hoped to reduce net costs by increasing advertising income – a resident with experience in advertising sales had offered to advise the PC. Resolved: to authorise a full colour-printed cover version (£185) for the next issue of the newsletter and review this again at the October PC meeting. Actions: the Chairman to authorise the printers to produce the next edition of the newsletter and to speak with resident re progressing advertising income. The Clerk to schedule agenda item for October PC meeting.

Cllr J Lewis joined the meeting (8.35p.m) and declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 8.2. as Chair of the VHRGT.

- 13.0 Bridge Street Stream – discussion re water level and agreement of actions** – the stream in Bridge Street had recently completely dried up, apparently overnight. Advice had been sought from the Environment Agency – the ‘stream’ is actually a drainage ditch so not of concern to the Environment Agency when it dries up. However, the ditch had dried up suddenly because the pump which serves the borehole at Holland Hall had been struck by lightning and had broken. The borehole provides the water for Whaddon Brook and the pump is used to keep water levels up in dry weather. Members of the public commented that although it might only be a drainage ditch it was important to residents of Bridge Street as it was picturesque and attracted wildlife. Actions: District Cllr Cathcart to speak with the SCDC Ecology Officer to see if any practical advice was available for maintaining water levels. Mr M Monks/Cllr Peyton to write something for the village newsletter advising residents of the situation regarding the drainage ditch.

County Cllr Oliver entered the meeting and it was agreed to return to agenda item 6.0

6.0 Reports from District and County Cllrs

County Cllrs Report – a verbal report was given:

- Gamlingay Village College – CCC Cabinet had decided that pupils would be transferred to Stratton Upper School and Community College, Biggleswade and not to Bassingbourn Village College.
- Southern Cross Care Homes – although Southern Cross Healthcare had ceased trading, the care homes continued to operate and residents continued to be looked after. The Administrators had a duty to operate the homes as well as finding new owners.
- Subsidised transport – recent reports in the Royston Crow were wrong and there would be no changes to subsidised transport in the area.
- Wi-fi trial site – Virgin Business Media were interested in finding a trial site for wi-fi. The PC confirmed that Whaddon wanted to be considered for a pilot scheme. Actions: County Cllr Oliver to speak with Virgin Business Media.
- County Cllr Oliver was no longer performing her Cabinet member role for CCC due to other work commitments.
- Speed camera signs – under current legislation it would not be possible for Whaddon PC to put up speed camera signs on the basis that Speedwatch checks were being carried out.

It was agreed to move to agenda item 8.0

8.0 Village Hall and Recreation Ground Trust (VHRGT):

8.1 Update from VHRGT – a verbal report was given by Cllr Lewis.

- VHRGT grant application – this had not yet been completed as the Trustees had been focussing on compiling a consultation questionnaire.

- Consultation Questionnaire – up-to-date consultation information was required for grant funding applications and it was important that residents completed them. Questionnaires were in the process of being distributed and could either be returned to the VHRGT stall at the Church Fete or would be collected door-to-door.
- Grant funding applications – VHRGT would be going back to the Big Lottery Fund on 12th July to review their application. They were likely to reapply at the end of Summer. Other grant sources were also being considered. Cambridgeshire ACRE had been very helpful.

8.2 Consideration of grant application from VHRGT – postponed until September.

14.0 PPP3 Grant – update on status of Pickering Woods works and discussion of alternative uses for grant funding if applicable – it had not been possible to get a status update about the proposed works on the permissive paths through Pickering Woods. Actions: Cllr Lewis to speak with Mr Huffer to get an update. The Clerk to schedule an agenda item for September. All Cllrs to consider alternative uses for the grant funding. Cllr Neale to put together a proposal for the September PC meeting.

15.0 SCDC Councils Charter – agreement of PC comments on draft Charter – the draft Charter was discussed. It was considered to be too long and members of the PC struggled to see the added value. Actions: the Clerk/Chairman to co-ordinate a response.

16.0 Village Upkeep and Maintenance – reporting of issues:

- A hedge in Bridge Street, bordering Fountains Farm, was overgrown onto the highway. Action: the Chairman to speak with the tenant farmer.
- Members of the public queried how often the verges were cut and a member of the public offered to overlook the quality of the cutting. The PC usually contracts for four cuts a year but had requested five cuts this year. The cuts had started later this year as the grass had not been growing. Action: the Clerk to contact the contractor and find out when the next cut is due.
- A member of the public reported that the trees in Bridge Street, on the verge between number 55 and Dyers Green were overgrown. Members of the PC were unsure who was responsible for looking after these trees. Action: the Clerk to speak with Cllr Peyton to try to establish responsibility for the trees.

17.0 Items for next meeting

- Election of Chairman/consideration of leave-of-absence – the Chairman announced that he had accepted an overseas teaching assignment for a year starting in August. He would resign as Chairman but would ideally like to continue to be involved with the PC via a leave-of-absence.
- Update on SCDC's Parish Council Planning Policy Briefing
- PPP3 grant
- VHRGT grant application
- Accounts for qtr to 30th June 2011
- Approval of costs for conversion of adopted phone box to library facility
- Review of village newsletter format and costs (October meeting)

18.0 Date of next meeting – 12th September 2011

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.25 pm