

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 21st January 2008 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present:-	Chairman	Mr E Webb
	Vice Chairman	Mrs C Byatt
	Councillors	Professor A Milton, Mrs M Peyton, Mr P Neale, Mr L Ginger
	County Councillor	Mrs L Oliver
	District Councillors	Mr N Cathcart, Mr D McCraith
	Parish Clerk	Mrs Y Albery, Mrs G van Poortvliet
	Parishioners	3 present

The meeting was opened by the Chairman who welcomed the new parish clerk, Mrs G van Poortvliet and thanked the outgoing clerk, Mrs Y Albery.

1.0 Apologies for absence from Councillors – all Councillors present except Councillor Strudwick who has an agreed leave of absence until May 2008.

2.0 Disclosure of interests – the Chairman asked the Councillors to disclose any interests in the subjects on the Agenda. Councillors Peyton, Neale and Milton and the clerk (Mrs van Poortvliet) declared an interest in agenda item 6.2 – all have houses that are outside the Whaddon Village Framework.

3.0 Approval of minutes

Councillors all agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true record and the Chairman (Mr E Webb) signed them accordingly including one for the Main Notice Board.

4.0 Matters arising

4.1 PPP3 Kissing Gates.

Councillor Neale reported that the RADAR gates had been installed and were operational. An e-mail was read out stating that the landowners - Pete and Chris Coningsby - did not require any reimbursement for expenses connected with installing the gates. Thanks were expressed to Pete and Chris Coningsby and also to James Coningsby, George Allan Elbourn, Lee Ginger and Lee Ginger Jnr for their help in erecting the gates.

The potential installation of a second set of RADAR gates between St. Mary's church and the recreation ground was discussed and it was agreed that this should be done if there was no cost to the village. The gates should ideally be black to match the church railings. Councillor Neale undertook to follow this up with Andrew Stimson at the footpaths department.

The forms for the grant for the Parish Path Partnership had been received and need to be submitted by the end of February 2008. There is potential for replacing the stiles on the footpath from the Barn Shop to the Avenue and including these within the scheme for next year. Councillor Peyton commented that the gates from the Barn Shop were locked, preventing free access to the footpath. It was agreed that the clerk write to the footpaths department asking them to investigate the matter.

4.2 Whaddon roads and transport

Councillor Ginger provided an update on the Eternit landfill project. The lorry movements in connection with this had finished on Thursday 17th January 2008 but the road at the Metal Hill junction had been left with larger potholes and the verges were also in poor repair. County Councillor Oliver stated that Highways Agency had already filled in some of the holes but that additional work may be needed. County Councillor Oliver and District Councillor McCraith have a meeting with Eternit on Thursday 24th January and will follow this up after that meeting.

County Councillor Oliver has a meeting on Thursday 24th January at 12.30 p.m. regarding the coach/bus arrangements for school pick-ups and drop-offs in Whaddon and the proposed positioning of the lay-by. The coach companies will be bringing vehicles along to test the proposals.

The clerk read out two e-mails from Dennis Vacher (Highways Agency) giving a progress-update on the Skid Surface on the A1198 and undertaking to look into the footways on Meldreth Road and outside the Church.

4.3 Tree Preservation Orders

Further to the matter of removal of elm trees in a field adjoining the Church, District Councillor Cathcart had further researched into tree preservation orders relating to Whaddon and had found that there were in fact preservation orders on these trees (contrary to previous understanding minuted in meeting of 19th November 2007). One diseased elm tree had been removed (this was approved) and the landowner is discussing now suitable replacement trees with SCDC. The tree officer has been asked to write to the owner regarding the importance of trees and District Councillor Cathcart agreed to follow up on the status of this. He will also see if it is possible to obtain details of trees with preservation orders in Whaddon for the Parish Council.

5.0 New Correspondence

Letter received from the Audit Commission seeking feedback on the performance of SCDC in connection with their audit. The Clerk will coordinate responses from the Councillors for submission.

Minutes of the Petersfield School Governors meeting held on 15th October 2007 had been received.

6.0 Planning

6.1 Permission Granted

S/2107/07/F 34 Bridge St. Whaddon, for Mr P J Bringlow and Ms C Vivyett, for an extension.

6.2 Objection to the Village Framework – 129 Meldreth Road

A letter had been received from Mr and Mrs Harries of 129 Meldreth Road, seeking the support of the Parish Council in the objection they had made to the existing Village Framework. They wish their property (which abuts the Village Framework on the eastern border) to be included within the Framework so they might gain permission for development on their land. The final hearing for their objection is scheduled for 24th January 2008. There was much discussion on this subject and the Councillors were very concerned that the Parish Council had not been informed by SCDC about an objection to the Village Framework even though it had been ongoing since 2006. Mr. Harries was invited to speak and provided additional detail about his dealings with SCDC and that he was seeking approval to build one dwelling for his children. A motion was proposed as to whether the Parish Council could support the Harries' application. A vote was taken among the Councillors with four voting to support the Harries and two voting against. It was agreed that the manner of the support should be qualified and limited to sufficient land being brought into the Village Framework to allow the building of one dwelling only. The Parish Council would oppose any further development beyond this. The clerk would provide a letter of qualified support for Mr Harries to take to the hearing and would also write to Keith Miles at the planning department in connection with the Parish Council not being informed about the situation.

Councillor Milton made his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

All Councillors agreed to postpone discussion of the Mary Course Prize and Neighbourhood Watch agenda items until the next meeting due to time constraints.

7.0 Finance

Cheques already signed on 29th October 2007:

Cheque No. 100562 for £2,136.25 to Mr V Skuce for Village Hall wall

Cheque No. 100563 for £146.88 to Mr V Skuce for M/H cover for Village Hall.

Cheques already signed on 3rd December 2007:

Cheque No. 100564 for £50.00 to Mrs D M Charles, for Village Newsletter

Cheque No. 100565 for £105.20 to Mr E Webb, for Chairman's expenses and daffodils
 Cheque No. 100566 for £1,059.36 to Mrs Y Albery for Clerk's salary and expenses

Cheques already signed on 8th December 2007:

Cheque No. 100568 for £575.75 to L Parncutt (Quantity Surveyor)

Cheque No. 100569 for £253.00 to D W Docwra for General Maintenance on Play Area

Cheque already signed on 19th December 2007:

Cheque No. 100570 for £75.00 to P E Coningsby for cutting Church Grass

Cheque already signed on 31st December 2007:

Cheque No. 100571 for £235.00 to Mr V Skuce for collecting and burning leaves at Rec. Ground.

Receipts:

A cheque for £125.00 from the Village Hall Committed for work on the man-hole cover.

A cheque for £883.25 from HM Customs and Excise for VAT reclaim.

7.1 Parish Precept

The Parish Precept has been set at £15,500 for year 2008/9. All Councillors agreed this figure. The increase of £500 was to cover the costs of the Parish Council election due in May. The Village Hall floor was now regarded as dangerous and in urgent need of repair. It was believed that priority should be given, from available finances, to the replacement of the floor. Additional funds could not be given to the children's playground at this stage but the situation would be reviewed at the end of the financial year. The precept is to be published on the main notice board.

8.0 Children's Play Area

The chairman read out an e-mail from Mr Neil Gallery stating that £20,808.89 had been raised to date.

Mr Neil Gallery provided an update on the status of the Play Area Project. In order to meet the deadlines for receiving the grant, work must have started on the playground by June 2009 and the grant must be claimed by December 2009. The Project group now need to concentrate on raising the additional £9,000 required over the next 12 months. They have many fundraising ideas. A letter was requested, in support of the funding application, to say that the Parish Council would cover the additional insurance costs for the new playground equipment. The Councillors agreed to this.

9.0 Village Hall

Councillor Ginger provided an update.

The main hall floor needs replacing as a matter of urgency. An unsafe floor could lead to the closure of the hall. Costs are being obtained for the floor and also for wall and ceiling insulation. Grant application needs to be made by the end of March 2008. Councillor Ginger will work with Clive Hough (architect) to ensure the stages and deadlines are in place to meet this timeframe.

A quiz night is taking place on Saturday 26th January 2008.

10.0 Comments from the Public

A member of the public commented that the length of the grass at the recreation ground was too long to play football. The Councillors explained that there were funding restrictions to the number of cuts possible but that they would see what could be done.

11.0 Any Other Business

Chairman Webb commented that it was necessary to undertake an annual review of the Standing Orders. It was agreed that this should be put on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

Councillor Peyton reported fly-tipping at the Whaddon Gap car-park and suggested that another litter pick be organised. The suggested date is Thursday 3rd April 2008.

District Councillor Cathcart gave an update on the septic tank at 154 Bridge Street. This is an environmental issue rather than a Building Control issue. He will continue to look into this.

District Councillor McCraith reported that SCDC had been reinspected. SCDC are being asked to approve a plan, by the end of January 2008, to sell their housing stock to housing associations – the final decision will be made by the tenants.

County Councillor Oliver stated that the initial indication of the governments 2008/9 settlement to the County Council was an increase of 2% which was below inflation (the average increase was 5.5%). Consequently, although there had been increased efficiency, the County Council was in a cut situation. Council tax would increase by 90p/week (approximately 4%).

Cambridge County Council can apply for funding to improve transport but on the condition that they trial congestion charging – this is proposed for Cambridge along with a doubling of the Park and Ride schemes. It is important that as many people as possible respond to the consultation, details of which can be found on the County Council's website under Congestion Charges.

The new scheme for free bus-passes begins on 31st March 2008. Application forms need to be filled in and details can be found on the County Council website. Passes will be valid from 9.30 a.m. rather than the current 9.00 a.m.

Speed-checks had been carried out on Meldreth Road . No verbal warnings or tickets had been issued.

Councillor Peyton stated that Whaddon Parish Council would continue to request speed restrictions in the village.

County Councillor Oliver reported that the County Council had now ratified the appointment of a new Chief Executive.

Chairman Webb expressed thanks to Mr Chris Rose for planting three sacks of daffodil bulbs along the grass verges around the village.

There being no other business the meeting was now closed at 10.05 p.m.

The date of the next meeting will be 18th February 2008 at 7.30 pm.