



MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD ON 28TH APRIL, 2009 AT 7.30 PM, IN THE SMALL HALL,
VILLAGE HALL, PLUMPTON GREEN

PRESENT: Mr. R. Taylor Chairman
Mrs B Watson Acting Vice Chairman
Mrs. S. Angel
Mrs. S. Akers
Mr. T Thompsett
Mrs. C Eastwood
Mrs K Wride

County Councillor Mrs M. Stroude
District Councillor and Chairman of VAP Mr T Hawthorne
Sergeant J Vitler
PCSO's Julie Whittaker Jones Steve Knowles

58 Members of the Public

- 1. APOLOGIES:** None
- 2. MINUTES:** The Minutes of the Meeting on 22nd April, 2008 were signed as a true record. This was proposed by Mrs Russell and seconded by Mrs Burgon
- 3. MATTERS ARISING:** It was reported that it had been agreed to reduce the leylandii (at the Racecourse) hedge height by the Racecourse manager.
- 4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT:**

Mr Taylor thanked the Vice Chairman Mr Speirs (who had resigned recently), the Clerk who has served the Council for 20 years this year, Councillors, Mrs Stroude and Mr Hawthorne for all their hard work. He also thanked Mr R Young, Neighbourhood Watch, Sergeant Vitler and PCSO's Julie Whittaker Jones and Steve Knowles.

He reported that Mr Speirs and Mrs Nicholson had resigned as Parish Councillors.

Mr Taylor reported the sad deaths of two Councillors, Mr Moorhouse who had served on the District and Parish Council for 40 years, and Mrs Ridley who had been a Parish Councillor for 24 years, and since her retirement as Tree Warden.

It had been agreed to plant trees in memory of Mr Moorhouse and Mrs Ridley, sites to be considered in the future.

Mrs Eastwood had enhanced the village by planting daffodil bulbs in various locations in the village.

PC had liaised with Network Rail and Southern to obtain more parking at the station, and this was ongoing. A revised timetable was in force. A meeting had taken place with Mr Baker MP, Mr Hawthorne and representative from Southern as well as commuters. Mr Ramsay is to represent Plumpton on behalf of commuters.

Insurance costs had been reduced but with the same cover, with another insurance company.

PC had participated in a Footpath Survey.

PC continue to work with PCSO's who keep them updated on crime issues in the parish.

PC continue to enjoy a good relationship with ESCC Highways. One pothole was repaired within two hours of being reported by the Clerk. There were ongoing discussions about the problems at the Half Moon junction.

PC had a meeting with LDC regarding an Agricultural Determination application on land adjacent to the Old Brick Works. PC and residents were not informed about this application. Even though this was not a planning law requirement, the PC felt it would be courteous to inform them and residents near to the application site. Mr Baker was asked to look into this. Further meeting would take place on 1st May, 2009 with Mr Baker, LDC Planning, Mr Hawthorne and Councillors to ask LDC to inform PC and residents on potentially sensitive issues with agricultural applications.

The Waste Minerals Plan is under discussion.

PC had a Parish Emergency Plan in force, with a cascade telephone system in place, identified areas where residents could go in cases of emergency, and contact numbers of all emergency services.

A water supply at the allotments had been requested and was looked into, but this would cost £10,000, so was prohibitive.

Complaints from noise at the skateboard park. Meeting had taken place with LDC, concerned residents, Mr Hawthorne and Councillors. Ways were being looked into how the sound from the equipment at the skateboard park could be reduced.

Sandpit:

Q What can the PC do to make sure landfill does not happen.

A Mr Nicholson answered these questions: Talk to County Council; Government policy to excavate sand; consultation process in September with various bodies. It was extremely remote that there would be landfill. There could be an application for an extension of time to dig sand, and Novington area extended across the track going eastwards.

5. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Mrs Stroude said she was not allowed to give a report because of the imminent County Council elections. She referred to Your County magazine, with a pink page with help line details (such as the CAB) for those experiencing difficulties in a credit crunch. She said the CC had put funding aside to help.

Q ESCC council tax 3.7% to spend – are you going to achieve that?

A Cannot assure you but CC are working on this, cutting costs, staff, use of IT etc.

Q What about keeping the CC central and not moving to Polegate?

A Colleagues come from all over, as far as Camber Sands and Rye so have to consider everyone. Brighton and Hove were now separate. This is a long project for the CC to meet centrally.

Q Would you be in support of it being in Lewes

A No I would not

PCSO Julie Whittaker Jones gave the Police report.

Plumpton had 48 crimes during the period 1st April 08 to 31st March 09, this is an increase of 10 crimes in the last year. Burglary dwelling, 1 more, criminal damage 4 more, vehicle crime 3 more, public place violent crime, none in 2008/09 timespan.

PCSO now have high visibility hours, which have been increased recently.

There is a Community Intelligence Box in South Chailey Stores, which members of the public can use to pass on information anonymously.

Operation Crackdown – initiative to tackle road safety and anti-social driving, and allows the public to report instances of anti social driving via a web portal or dedicated phone number.

Mobile phone complaints and speed complaints have risen in recent months.

Sussex Police website and community updates are available regularly.

Q Are you finding the SID helpful.

A Yes, providing people slow down.

Q Any plans to do something about parking, especially outside the shop?

A PCSO's are actively looking at parking throughout the village. They can issue enforcement notices.

Q What about tagging bikes, there is a new scheme out.

A Equipment is at Police Station and can be done.

Q Crime is low in Plumpton, does that mean cover will be reduced?

A. No there is now twice the cover. Plumpton and East Chiltington has two designated PCSO's.

Q What about Smart Water project which is used in Brighton.

A No funding for this.

Mr Hawthorne said he enjoyed serving on committees within the District Council and RVRC, he had been the Chairman for a long time on that committee, but was no longer. He said he had spoken to the Chairman of LDC to see if costs for the election could be reduced because there were other elections on that day, the European and County Council elections.

Mr Taylor said that there hadn't been an election for 16 years and the costs had gone up a huge amount, and even though it had been budgeted for, this wasn't enough. SALC and LDALPC were also looking at the cost of elections; some councils don't charge for

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT:

elections.

Bus passes could now be used from 9am.

There had been a meeting with train commuters, Mr Baker and a representative of Southern, in answer to commuters being dissatisfied with the timetabling.

Mr Hawthorne gave a presentation of the VAP and what had been achieved over the last year in answer to the questionnaire that 82% of residents had completed.

Committees had been set up, and were working on many areas. A Green Fair and a Clubs and Societies Day had taken place.

Q The starting up of the Sunday school was actioned by the Church. Not one family who answered the questionnaire has used the Sunday school since it started up again.

Q Was the steering committee elected?

A No, Nominations came forward and there will be an AGM in October.

Q If enough people come forward will there be an election for the steering committee?

Can people on the VAP be Parish Councillors?

A Yes to both.

Q What about funding for the VAP.

A DEFRA gave £2000 which was for printing costs. The PC gave a £250 grant, but there was no ongoing money.

Q Which Councillors are on committees?

A Mrs Angel is on the Policing and Community Safety Committee, Mrs Akers is on the Communications Committee.

Mr Taylor said the PC are not against the plan, sometimes there is a small clash on certain points.

Mr Hawthorne said that everyone gets a chance to listen to what people are saying.

Q Is there a lot of feed in from the VAP which has to be looked at by the PC

A All actions are sent for noting.

Q There does not seem to have been an update of the last steering committee meeting.

A It's a bit too early for the March one to be circulated.

Q Why are there two separate groups in the village

A PC has a limited amount of time to deal with everything. Not possible to do everything that is asked of them, financially as well.

Councillors are elected, and the PC is a statutory body, chosen to work to do what residents ask of them,

Mr Taylor said PC do immediate things such as highway matters, footpath maintenance etc. but there are long term problems that need to be considered over time.

Mr Hawthorne said there was a need for community engagement.

Q Why are there kerbstones everywhere?

Why don't Highways do potholes etc.

A Kerbstones were put in as part of a drainage system in Plumpton Lane, it took 8 weeks, lorries often take areas off the verges.

Mr Taylor said that if there are problems with such issues, Highways liaises with the PC.

Drainage problems are due to lack of maintenance, CC have let grids grow over – you cant stop lorries from driving on the verges.

7. CHAIRMAN OF THE VILLAGE HALL REPORT:

Mr Taylor thanked Mrs Burgon, Mr Satchell, Mr Beard, Mrs Akers, Mr Thompsett, Mr M Beard, Mr Gilbert, Mr Upton, Mrs Donovan, Mr Bob Taylor, Mr Akers, and the village hall committee for all their hard work.

The WI had had a seat made for their 90th anniversary; it is still to be positioned. Mr Thompsett and Mr M Beard had made the base and the seat had been made by Plumpton College.

Jumble Sales had made £2047.50, and thanks were given to Mrs K Beard and the Jumble Sale Ladies.

Acoustic panels had been damaged at the rear of the main hall and the fan controller for the stage had burnt out. There was a hole in the small hall floor which had been repaired.

Car park lines and kerbs and steps had been repainted. Dead trees had been cut back.

Waste water charges for village halls, pavilions and other charities were to be increased.

OFWAT had decided that exemption for these bodies would end from 2010; costs may escalate from £700 to £4000 (example). Mr Baker had been asked to look into this.

Fire alarms were checked twice a year, and main hall lights have been cleaned and some

replaced.

Work to be done this year: Additional outside light to cover entrance door. Outside light switch to be moved to cloakroom. Wall heater installed in committee room, lighting control equipment and sound control box to be moved to rear of stage. Large hall floor to be recoated.

Member of Public: Donation given by WI to Plumpton College for the seat.

Q Could there be a large notice to turn off lights in the Hall.

A Yes

8. CHAIRMAN OF PLAYING FIELD REPORT:

Mr Thompsett thanked Mr Speirs on behalf of all the committee for the hard work and enthusiasm over many years. Mr Thompsett had taken over as acting Chairman of the Playing Field. The facilities continue to be used by various sports groups, Honeybees and private parties. The Football Club had given the Pavilion a make over and other items of internal and external maintenance had taken place.

The skateboard park was well used, and a 'one off clean up' of graffiti had taken place. It is the intention of the PC that any future graffiti, as long as it is not offensive will be allowed to remain.

Mrs Eastwood had applied on behalf of the PC, and received a grant of £10,000 from Awards for All.

It is intended the court will be used for basket ball, netball and other activities and a planning application has gone in. Mrs Eastwood was looking into revamping the play area taking into account the new court and will report to future PC meetings.

Following a meeting with the PF committee and a sub committee of the VAP, it was agreed that the VAP would actively look into the provision of a new Pavilion.

The PF committee have agreed to a six month trial for a cardboard recycling scheme organised by the VAP to be housed within the existing recycling area.

Fund raising events have taken place and a Family Fun Day would take place on 28th June, 2009.

The car park is in need of repair and this is actively being addressed by the PC. A barrier is to be installed to stop parking on the grass adjacent to the existing car park.

Additional parking is actively being considered on the grass adjacent to the existing car park.

Mr Thompsett thanked all those who helped keep the Playing Field and Pavilion in good shape and well used facility for the village.

Q It was proposed that a vote of thanks be given to Mr Speirs.

A All agreed to this.

Q The basketball court – how does the PC know what the village want.

A Mrs Eastwood had received a number of requests (prior to the results of the Action Plan) asking for a hoop at the PF. The PF Committee had also been asked by Honeybees for a tarmac area for the children to ride their trikes.

Q Will the basketball area be part of the children's play area.

A Correct

Q Will this be at the far end? Will it take up 25% of the area?

A Yes, this is the area the PF committee decided on initially but will probably be determined by the LDC planning.

Q I gather there will be a fence.

A A 6' fence behind hoops; this will be determined by LDC planning.

Q You will have 15 year children and younger children all playing in the same area. What about refurbishing the whole area?

A Under consideration

Q Where is this money coming from?

A Awards for All £10,000, looking into other grants. S106 coming from the new development from the old garage site.

Q That wont cover the all the play equipment Is there a master plan?

A Mrs Eastwood had met with Mr A. Frost LDC who is working alongside the PC to incorporate the basketball court and further developments in the play park

Q Could you play basketball in the village hall?

A No, not very practical - would have to put up guards on the lights.

Q Both the VAP and PFC are looking at facilities at the Playing Field.

A Yes

Q What percentage of the village asked for a basketball area?

A On marking the Youth VAP questionnaire, the overall feedback was for more sports facilities/clubs, including a new swimming pool, skateboard park for bigger children. Some are more achievable than others.

It was noted by a Member of the Public that the playing fields are PC owned land; the PC is an elected statutory body that has delegated powers to make decisions about the use of this land.

Q There is a donation box at the station for the improvements to the car park.

A Mr Taylor: Southern are looking into having extra parking. PC are in touch with them and Network Rail about this. You will have to be patient, PC will get back to you about this.

Q Siting of basketball facility could be a problem with a single entrance. What about leaving the play area the same size?

A Could make additional parking space for the playing field. Committee decided that there was nowhere else to put facility. It could not go on the pitches as this is very wet ground. May not be 100% suitable for everyone, it has to be a self drainage surface.

Q What about different heights for basketball? Small children using facility will be jeopardised.

A A lot of thought has gone into this – a fence will be provided.

Q What about large balls and older children running around. Need to have a Health and Safety report. What about noise?

A This will be taken into consideration within planning permission

9. CHAIRMAN OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT REPORT:

Mrs Watson as Acting Chairman of Public Transport said that there had been changes to the timetable on Sundays to summer timetable. Bus passes can now be used after 0900. Please be aware that the bell must be rung at all stops should you wish to alight. The bus will not automatically stop at bus stops.

10. CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT:

Clerk reported that the precept for 09/10 would be £30,631. an increase of £4319. this was because of increased utility costs, maintenance, dog bins alone cost £1800 each year. A tree survey has now to be carried out every three years required by insurance company, and associated works as a result of the survey had taken place.

Election costs of £3000 had been imposed on the Council, and PPC was the first to query these costs, and they had been reduced slightly Salaries had also increased.

There had been no increases in S137 (grant) money, no Councillors take expenses which they could do, and there was no budget for Councillor's courses, which were expensive; £1200 had been spent on the results of vandalism.

Grants had been awarded to: Happy Circle, Sussex Air Ambulance, SOCS, Care Club, British Legion, Victim Support, Village Action Plan, Activity Scheme.

The Clerk reported that the balanced accounts were in front of her if anyone wished to look at them. These had been examined by the Internal Audit and were confirmed. No summary would be available (as laid out in government requirements) until after the Audit is called later on this year.

Q What about the cost of postal votes? Does LDC hire the VH at local rates.

A Yes, Government pay European and County Council election costs.

Mr Miller thanked the Clerk, in response to a request from him, had sent a letter with a very comprehensive breakdown of how the precept had been spent, and explaining the increases for the next financial year.

Q Disappointed that only 10 electors have to request an election

A It is their right to do this. There has not been an election for 16 years, there has usually been a co-option when the need has arisen.

Q 72 people had requested an election.

There had been shock that two councillors had resigned.

A There had been a request for a copy of the resignation letter from Mr Speirs. Mr Speirs did not want the contents of his letter revealed. Clerk had checked with the Freedom of Information Office and also Mr Leggo SALC and Mr Speirs' request was in order, and upheld. Member of Public requesting the copy of the letter had been informed.

Mr Nicholson read out two statements from the two councillors that had resigned. He said he had a personal interest because one was his wife.

Mr Taylor asked for order as Members of the Public were talking over one another.

Mr Gethen asked to discuss the subject of the Councillor's resignations further. He had asked for a copy of Mr Speirs' resignation letter, but Mr Speirs had requested that it was not made public.

Mr Taylor said the subject was now closed. Mr Gethen asked for a vote, Mr Taylor said votes were not usually taken at an APM, but asked for a show of hands. These were not counted.

11. TRAVERS TRUST REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT:

Mrs Watson said that Mrs Ridley who had died recently, had been Co-Trustee of the Trust. There had been an oversight and Mrs Ridley had taken out a personal account under the name of the Trustees of the Travers Trust, and funds remained in this account. Clerk had contacted the Solicitors of Mrs Ridley Estate, who had contacted the Bank, and monies would be forthcoming shortly. Mrs Angel had agreed to be a Co-Trustee. There was no intention of winding up this Trust.

Mr Taylor presented the Clerk with a bunch of flowers on behalf of the Parish Council and thanked her for 20 years of service to the Council.

Clerk responded with thanks to everyone and how it had been a privilege to serve Councillors over many years, which had included many changes of Councillors. She had worked with Mr Taylor for the whole of her 20 years and had a great respect for him.

Mr Taylor said that if there was no further business the meeting was closed.

Mr Nicholson said 'Point of Order'. Mr Gethen said 'Because you didn't answer my question, about the resignations, I have here a Vote of No confidence against the Parish Council, with a signed list of 8 names'.

He brought the letter to the table and gave a copy to the Clerk requesting a copy be sent to him of the list of those in support of the vote of no confidence. Mr Hawthorne asked for a copy also and said this was a very serious matter. Clerk said she would copy these letters.

CHAIRMAN

THESE MINUTES ARE IN DRAFT FORM AND WILL BE RATIFIED AT THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING IN 2010
(Date to be decided)