

DEDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at the Town Hall on Wednesday 19 February 2003 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Flux (Chairman), Mrs Harvey (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Spencer, Mrs Swash, Mrs Cox, Todd, Alton, Squires, Wood, Ellis, Watts, District Cllr O'Sullivan, Graham Pitts (Clerk), Sue Gibbs (Minute Secretary).

354/02 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Westley, Rollason, Haslam, Co Cllr Jelf

355/02 **Presentation from Walter Meagher**

Walter Meagher gave a brief presentation on the work he had done on the hedgerows in the Parish of Deddington and to which the Council had donated £500. The focus of the study had been to provide a database for the Parish and as an archive so that change could be assessed in the future. It had generated a massive amount of information regarding the age and species contained in all the hedges of the Parish, enabling comparisons to be drawn with what occurred elsewhere in the county. Many individuals and organizations had participated in the study and Mr Meagher thanked them for their contribution.

The Chairman thanked Mr Meagher for his brief presentation and the work which had been undertaken. It was felt that this was a very wide-ranging subject which would be of interest to many others in the Parish. **It was therefore agreed that the possibility of arranging a meeting later in the year, at the Windmill Centre, should be explored so that Mr Meagher is able give a full presentation**

356/02 **PC Clive Middleton**

PC Clive Middleton, who in January had taken over as Rural Beat Officer, outlined his experience over the last 27 years, working in Oxford and Banbury and, briefly, in Zimbabwe. He was looking forward to working with everyone locally. The crime figures for Deddington for the previous 12 months were low, averaging 1 a week, but this could change; in Adderbury for instance the figures were much higher. He felt that the presence of the police station had a beneficial impact, and it was agreed that visibility was a key factor. He confirmed that a Forum meeting would be held later this year in Deddington, but a date had not yet been set. He also gave his email address: clive.middleton@thamesvalley.police.net, stating that because of shift patterns etc, the worst case response time would be 2 days.

The Chairman thanked PC Middleton for taking the time to come and meet the Parish Council and looked forward to working with him in the future.

357/02 **Minutes of Last Meeting**

Cllr Rollason had requested that minute 246/02a. should specify which meeting was being referred to. It was noted that it was the Environment and Recreation Working Group meeting held on 12th November 2002.

Cllr Rollason also queried paragraph 246/02b. It was agreed that although this was what had been said it was inaccurate and would be discussed under matters arising.

Planning. The Chairman stated that following the publication of the report of the 15th January Parish Council Meeting in the Deddington News a complaint had been received from Mr & Mrs Wilson, owners of the property adjoining Castle Dene, Castle Street Deddington. This related to the proposed planning application reported by the Planning and property Working Group. Councillor Spencer declared her interest.

Mr & Mrs Wilson were concerned about the inaccurate reporting of events and the fact that CDC had not invited them to comment on the application. The Chairman explained that at the time of the last parish meeting no objections had been received. However, it was not correct to say that a councillor had visited the neighbours and that the confused reporting was largely due to the debate that took place about the previous planning application for Castle Dene that had been made in 1998. The Chairman then explained the chronological events of that application to ensure that the planning history was understood.

It was agreed that the circumstances of Mr & Mrs Wilson's complaint highlighted the issue briefly discussed at the previous meeting. This related to the timing of when a planning application was received, when it was considered by the Working Group and when letters of objection might be received. It emphasised the need to ensure that when the Parish Council respond with no objection and where no objection from neighbours had been received this was stated on the submission. The Chairman also stated that Planning was the responsibility of the District Council – Parish Councils are only asked to comment.

It was agreed that minute 347/02f should be annotated to refer to these notes.

Subject to the above changes, the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

358/02

Matters Arising

- (a) Stonepits: Ref. Minute 246/02b. Cllr Alton confirmed that the implication given at the previous meeting that the income from allotment rent would cover the cost of installing water was not correct and this needed to be borne in mind in the future.
- (b) Royal British Legion: Ref. Minute 352/02 Responding to Cllr Squires, the Chairman reported that a meeting had been held with representatives of the RBL at which the Parish Council had been supportive. It appeared that the RBL was now working with the County organisation to reach a situation where it was viable and was not intending to invoke the clauses contained in the Deeds.

359/02

Minutes of Meeting held on 22 January and Precept

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January were approved. The Chairman reported that there had been a question as to whether this meeting had been properly constituted. He confirmed that this had been the case, as 7 days notice had been given, but that this had not been printed anywhere. He had consulted CDC who had confirmed that the way to resolve this was for the Precept to be approved. **This was approved unanimously.**

It was agreed that the letter to be sent to Parishioners regarding the Parish Precept should be included as an insert in Deddington News. The only change to the suggested draft was the deletion of the final sentence of paragraph 4.

360/02 **Review of Budget Savings**

Cllr Todd said that the reminder to Working Groups to revise their budgets needed to remain as an agenda item for the current time.

361/02 **Village Plan**

The Chairman reported that at a recent meeting of the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership it had been apparent that the Government was pushing for all villages to develop Village Plans. The Clerk had subsequently phoned ORCC for further information and the person co-ordinating this had offered to come and talk to the Parish Council. **It was agreed that the Working Group should continue looking at this and consider in due course, once feedback from the village precept letter has been received. The Parish Council should then take this forward and decide whether such a meeting would be helpful.**

362/02 **Planning and Property Working Group**

Cllr Harvey reported as follows:

- a. A list of approvals, subject to conditions was read out.
- b. 03/00041F 03/00042/LB The Cottage, Philcote St, Deddington. Demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of a two storey extension. Cllr Haslam had asked that his interest be declared. **No objection**
- c. 03/00097/LB Greenstone Cottage, 4 New St, Deddington. Formation of internal ground floor toilet and first floor en-suite bathroom. **No objection**
- d. 03/00269/TCA Castle View, Goose Green, Deddington. Fell 2 Leylandii. The applicant had stated their intention to plant 2 fruit trees, but in a different location. **No objection**
- e. 03/00092 TCA Mullions, Castle Street, Deddington. Fell Conifer. The conifer had grown too large for the garden. **No objection, but the Parish council would like to suggest that the applicant plant a replacement tree.**
- f. The Chairman expressed concern about the building that was taking place at 2 Hempton Road by the walkway between the road and the Daedings. **It was agreed that the Clerk should look into this to ensure that the building was not encroaching on the walkway.**

363/02

Highways Working Group

Cllr Wood reported as follows

- a. Highways had confirmed that the speed limit changes would be implemented by April.
- b. No response had yet been received from OCC regarding the other outstanding matters.
- c. Cllr Cox asked whether it had ever been ascertained as to who was responsible for the trees opposite St Thomas St. The Clerk stated that Highways had confirmed that these were the landowner's responsibility and it was assumed that the landowner was undertaking the current work on these trees. There was some concern as to whether this was in the conservation area and if so, whether CDC had been consulted. **It was agreed that the Clerk should follow this up.**
- d. Cllr Cox also expressed concern that the Deddington Arms sign was getting closer to the traffic lights and jutting out from the pavement. **It was agreed that the Clerk should phone expressing concern.**
- e. Cllr Cox asked whether the traffic lights had been rephrased as traffic seemed to be waiting longer from the Hempton Road. **It was agreed that the Clerk would check this.**

364/02

Finance and General Purposes Working Group

Cllr Todd reported as follows

- a. **Freedom of Information Act, 2000.** The Information Commissioner had acknowledged the Parish Council's declaration which will remain in force until 28 February 2007.
- b. **Use of Coat of Arms – Changes.** It was proposed that from 1 April 2003 the current charge for using the parish coat of arms (£100 for commercial use and £50 for voluntary groups and organizations) be supplemented by an annual charge of £25 for commercial use and £10 for others payable from 1 April following the grant of use. **This was agreed.** The Clerk was also requested to produce a list of current users to enable the PC to review the current use of the coat of arms.
- c. **Town Hall – Venue of PC Meetings.** A questionnaire was circulated to all PC members and those normally attending to ascertain opinions about venues for PC meetings.
- d. **Town Hall – Insurance.** A reply had been received from Lester Land giving the basis for the valuation of the Town Hall for insurance purposes. The insurance value of £105,000 remained. **It was agreed that the Clerk should be asked to write to Deddington Charities Estates forwarding a copy of the letter and advising the trustees that the PC accepts the valuation given earlier and that the Town Hall is insured for the sum advised by Lester Land.**
- e. **Castle Grounds.** English Heritage had invited the PC to renew its agreement to

maintain certain areas of the Castle Grounds, offering £1,700 for the current year with an index linked increase for the following four years. Previously the Parish Council had considered only renewing for a year. However, these terms would cover expenditure and provide a supplement to cover additional cost such as litter picking. **It was agreed that the Parish Council should renew its agreement on the terms offered.**

- f. **Budget 2003/04 - Precept.** The Clerk had advised CDC of the Parish Precept for 2003/04. If the West Bromwich interest rate fell by 0.25% in line with the Bank rate, the Parish Council will received £1250 less interest in the coming year on its investment.
- g. **Savings on F&GP Budget.** In order to make savings it was proposed that the Steward would revert to their original hours unless extra hours were needed to effect savings in other areas of PC work. **This was agreed.**
- h. It was also proposed by Cllr Todd, and seconded by Cllr Alton, that the library book grant be cut to £500 now that Oxon County Council book funding had increased. Cllr Todd confirmed that this increase was substantially more than the proposed reduction in grant from the Parish Council. **This was agreed.**
- i. **It was also agreed that the Parish Council should negotiate with the church concerning the church lighting payed for by the Parish Council, particularly the promotion of alternative forms of sponsorship.** The Clerk was asked to discuss this with the Church Wardens.
- j. The Working Group proposed that student loans and grants to outside organizations should continue as these had been beneficial to local residents
- k. **It was agreed that an application for funding from Child Line West Midlands should be declined as it did not originate locally.**
- l. The Working Group recommended declining an application from Victim Support Oxfordshire in view of the Parish Council's anticipated high level of spending this year and budget constraints for the next. However, there was some concern that this would not be in line with the Working Group's statement in paragraph j above and although Victim Support had not written for a couple of years, the Parish Council had supported them in the past. **It was agreed therefore that this should be reviewed after 1 April 2003.**
- m. Cllr Ellis reported that the telephone box in the village still had a sign showing that it was a card phone although it was in fact a normal pay phone. The Clerk was asked to phone BT and ask them to change this.

365/02

Environment & Recreation Working Group

Cllr Swash reported as follows:

- a. **Deddington Colts.** A very useful discussion had been held with S Kaye and M Hovard from the Colts, at which it had been established that 2 large pitches and 2 small pitches would be required within a 3 year time scale. A sub-committee had been established, to include S Kaye, M Hovard, M Squires and J Watts and an initial, mostly brain-storming

meeting had been held. 4 options had been identified: a new green field site; more efficient use/expansion of existing facilities; use of neighbouring area facilities; re-location of club out of area. The aim of all options was to be financed by grants, the Colts were not expecting the Parish Council to provide any funding. A further meeting is to be held on 13 March.

- b. **Cemetery Sign.** Environment Services had confirmed that there would be no problems with installing a verge side sign. The cost would have to be borne by the village, however. The Clerk was asked to look into what this was likely to be.
- c. **Best Kept Village.** **It was agreed that the Village should enter the Best Kept Village Competition.**
- d. **Castle Grounds.** Cllr Swash had met F Powell from English Heritage. It was proposed to modify the gate to improve access, to which there was no objection. However, English Heritage also proposed to move the large information board and the Working Group was concerned that this would be unsightly and might require planning permission. **It was agreed that this needed further consideration and the Clerk was asked to speak to English Heritage.**
- e. **English Heritage Free Village Sign Competition.** **It was agreed that there was insufficient time to enter this competition.** It was also felt that the Coat of Arms would provide a suitable sign should one ever be required.
- f. **Satin Lane Allotments.** A request had been received to construct a pond. **It was agreed that this should be refused on safety grounds.**
- g. **Stonepits Allotment.** The ground had been cleared and ploughed and the Clerk was asked to write to ten interested tenants with contracts. The installation of water was being pursued. Cllr Squires confirmed that it was thought that the installation of a tap would result in less water loss than a trough. It was agreed that the tenancy agreements should include a provision prohibiting the use of hosepipes.
- h. **BMX Track.** Cllr Swash and the Clerk had met both K Larner from Cherwell Grants Department and then R Davies, Community Development Officer. They felt that the current design was not appropriate but their advice was that grants were available and that applications should be made by the end of March. A radical redesign of the area was required, including the use of community labour to construct. **It was agreed that an application for a grant should be made, following their advice, to cover the costs of fencing, topsoil and shelter, and that the Clerk should find out what these costs were likely to be.**
- i. **Weekend Skip** This service was to be withdrawn at the end of March. **It was agreed that the Clerk request CDC to erect an “No Tipping” sign at the current site.**
- j. **Dog Fouling.** This continued to be a problem and **it was agreed that Deddington News should be asked to include a notice with a get tough message. Also, that the Clerk request the Dog Warden to visit the Windmill site at weekends as a visible deterrent.**

- k. **Grass Cutting.** The Working Group was to undertake a feasibility study over the next six months to determine whether this service could be further reduced or whether tasks be undertaken by the Stewards. It was recommended that in 2003 existing contracts be renewed for a further year but the number of cuts be reduced to a bare minimum.

366/02 **Invoices for Payment**

Invoices totaling £3646.06, in accordance with a schedule circulated at the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes, were approved for payment.

367/02 **Investment of Councils Funds**

At the close of business on 19 February 2003 the balances were as follows:

BANK BALANCES AS AT 17/02/03

ACCOUNT NUMBER	BALANCE	INTEREST	NOTICE
60858471	4683.83	1%	14 Days
60708569	3918.24	.3%	Overnight
70012564	NIL		Overnight
70708526	1703.94	.1%	Imprest
70708542	500.00	.1%	Current
TOTAL	10806.01		
Bradford & Bingley	1000.00	3.25%	120 Days
W. Bromwich Building S.	511819.43	3.75%	Overnight
TOTAL	<u>523625.44</u>		

368/02 **Correspondence**

A list of correspondence was circulated at the meeting.

369/02 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 19 March at the Town Hall commencing at 7.30pm

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 May commencing at 7.30pm at the Windmill Centre.

