

MILBORNE PORT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 15th November 2011 at Milborne Port Town Hall at 7.00pm

Present: Mr E Davis (in Chair), Mr R Biss, Mrs R Douglas, Mr R Duckworth, Mr J Edmonds, Mrs W House, Mrs M Lock, Mrs S Shingleton
Mr J Farley, Mr M Ritchie, Mr E Watts and Mrs P Alexander arrived at the end of the discussion with Mr H Hobhouse, having been unaware that the start time had been brought forward to 7pm. Mr R Lockey arrived shortly after the start of the meeting.

Also in attendance: Mrs J Freeman (clerk)

Public Question Time (3 members of public in attendance; also District Councillor Henry Hobhouse, on behalf of SSDC).

Public Conveniences

The Chairman welcomed Mr Henry Hobhouse, South Somerset District Council portfolio holder for buildings and engineering who gave information on SSDCs decision to discontinue the funding of several public conveniences in the area (including Milborne Port), and to give the opportunity to town or parish councils to take them over. It was noted that public conveniences in Ilchester and South Petherton had closed, and that those in Somerton and Martock had been taken over by their parish councils; in cases where toilets were due to close, a consultation amongst residents had been carried out – in one village this resulted in only 5 replies, of which 4 suggested the toilets should be closed. The District Council were offering to give parish councils the equivalent of 3 years costs to keep the toilets open, following which parishes would need to fund the running costs themselves. Members also discussed with Mr Hobhouse the possibility of receiving SSDC funding not to retain the existing toilets, but to provide public toilets at the Memorial Playing Fields, which many members felt would be of more benefit to the residents of Milborne Port; Mr Hobhouse confirmed that SSDC may be able to offer funding for this, subject to negotiation. The Chairman stated that the Parish Council appeared to be faced with three options :

1. The Parish Council take over responsibility for the London Road public conveniences for a minimum of 3 years, with funding being initially provided by SSDC; 2. One of the High Street pubs be asked to provide toilet facilities for members of the public and 3. Build new toilets at the memorial playing fields which would be of more advantage to a greater number of village residents, for which some funding may be available from SSDC for up to three years; Mr Hobhouse also suggested SSDC may be able to help with a loan for the cost of building a new toilet block; other funding may also be available. It was confirmed that if the London Road toilets were closed by SSDC, the building would be sold off.

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

The Chairman then welcomed Mrs Clare King and Mr Andy Maidment who gave an outline of their plans for a large community event being planned for Saturday 2nd June 2012 – the aim being to bring the whole community together to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and to raise funds for St. Margaret's Hospice and the local community. The celebrations would take the form of a village fete, at which all village clubs / societies and businesses would be invited to take part, with all the activities associated with village fetes of years past, including a fancy dress parade through the village, competitions, tug-o-war etc, followed by a "party in the park" type event in the evening with live bands and a hog roast – all to take place at the memorial playing fields and village hall. An organising committee had been formed, with the next meeting due to take place on Wednesday 23rd November at 7pm at the Tippling Philosopher. Members of the Council expressed their support for the committee's plans and it was agreed that representatives from the Parish Council would sit on the committee; it was noted that for insurance purposes, the event should be organised under the auspices of the Parish Council; the clerk agreed to obtain further advice from the council's insurers on organising an event of this kind.

Reported Problems - clerk to contact relevant authority as required:

- Mrs M Lock reported a blocked drain in Rosemary Street

- Mrs Shingleton reported that the river at Kingsbury had not yet been cleared in spite of several requests to SSDC
- A car was being parked on the grass area outside Gainsborough play area; this was felt to be a possible hazard to play area users due to reduced visibility – *clerk to check and obtain details of vehicle owner from PCSO Mandy*
- The clerk reported receipt of an e-mail from Mr Mike Allen, SSDC asking to meet the Chairman and Vice Chairman to view and discuss present conservation areas and possible amendments. The clerk was asked to reply that neither the Chairman nor Vice Chairman were available on the date specified but that the Parish Council was very keen to be fully involved in any discussions/decisions regarding any suggested changes to the conservation area; in particular the PC sought assurance that a draft study prepared a couple of years ago was not taken forward as part of present discussions as it contained a considerable amount of inaccuracies and had been prepared without prior consultation with the Parish Council

There were no reports from PCSO Mandy Forsey, District Councillor Lucy Wallace or County Councillor William Wallace. Members were disappointed to note that the District and County Councillors had been absent from several meetings and the clerk was asked to make contact.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Mr R Lockey for late arrival
2. **Declarations of Interest :**
Mr E Davis : Personal interest - Item 6.3 – payment to Mr S Davis (*related*);
Mr E Watts : Personal interest – Item 5.2 planning application 11/03498/FUL – Coombe Farm, Furlong Lane (*friend of applicant*); also item 6.3 – payment to Wheathill Garden Centre (*owner*)
3. **Minutes of the full council meeting** held on Tuesday 18th October 2011 were agreed following a minor amendment re members present and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. **Matters Arising**
 - 4.1 **Parish Plan**
 - The clerk confirmed that reports from recent meetings of the Action Forum and the Transport group had been received. There were no items to be brought to the Parish Council for decision at this stage.
 - **Transport** Mrs Lock reported that Philip Lock had spoken to the relevant authority regarding Sat Navs with a view to diverting traffic, particularly commercial, away from Milborne Wick.
 - A first meeting of the **Commercial** Group was arranged for Tuesday 22nd November at 7.30pm in the Town Hall.
 - **Communication** It had been noted that several “inappropriate” notices had appeared on the new village noticeboards – it was agreed that the boards would be restricted to events / clubs in Milborne Port as far as possible and that any other notices would be removed.
 - Information for a new welcome pack had now been collated by the Communications group – it was hoped that SSDC would help with the printing costs of an initial 50 copies. The clerk was asked to include a note inviting newcomers to obtain a prospectus from the primary school if appropriate; a leaflet recently produced by the **Transition** group would also be included.
 - 4.2 **Future of the Library** Mr Farley confirmed that the result of the Judicial Review was expected the following day.
 - 4.3 **Diamond Jubilee** Members were shown sample jubilee mugs; after discussion it was agreed to order 500 bone china mugs from Norfolk China Ltd, the aim being to give a commemorative mug to all children in the village, and to also have extra mugs available for sale at the jubilee event.

5. **Planning**

5.1 Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 1st November 2011 were received and noted.

5.2 The following planning application was considered:

11/03498/FUL Erection of a milking parlour, dairy and handling facilities and use of
(Amended Plans) existing storage building for livestock housing. (Revised application)
Coombe Farm, Furlong Lane
(Amendment : Change of red line to including existing building and
amended description) **No objection**

5.3 The following **planning approvals** were noted :

11/00071/FUL The erection of a cartshed with office space above and retaining walls
Manor Cottage, Milborne Wick

11/03100/FUL Erection of a garden room extension *School House, Goathill Road*

11/03411/FUL Installation of a PV array on barn roof
Seven Wells Down Farm, Corton Denham

11/03470/FUL Relocation of existing highway access, demolition of existing garage,
erection of a new single detached garage and construction of new boundary
wall (Revised Application) *51 London Road*

11/03618/FUL Erection of a single storey extension *The Croft, Wick Road*

5.4 The **withdrawal** of the following planning application was noted:

11/03599/FUL Erection of single storey and two storey extensions to dwellinghouse
12 The Meads

5.5 Notification of the appeal decision in respect of the following application was received :

11/01284/FUL Stopping up of existing access and creation of a new access
Land adjoining 94 Brook Street **(Appeal dismissed)**

5.6 Members noted correspondence between Mr R Tizzard and SSDC Planning officers re planning application 09/04978/OUT – the erection of 20 houses at Wheathill Lane

6. **Finance**

6.1 Minutes of the Finance Committee held on Tuesday 1st November 2011 were received and noted. Members were asked to note that the Friends of Milborne Port Library had provided some information regarding possible costs for keeping the library open, however some key costs were still unknown and the Finance Committee had agreed that although the Parish Council supported the principle of keeping the library open and would give careful consideration to committing funds, it was not possible to budget financial support until exact details of costs were available, which would not be until after the result of the Judicial Review was announced. It was therefore agreed to recommend a precept for 2012/13 of £46,000 based on the prepared budget, but that the request should not be submitted to SSDC until the deadline (31/01/12) to allow time for reconsideration and adjustment of the budget and precept if required. It was noted that a precept of £46,000 remained below the average for the size of village.

It was proposed by Mr Duckworth, seconded by Mr Biss and agreed unanimously to approve the recommendations of the Finance Committee and to provisionally set the precept at £46,000 for 2012/13, but to ask the clerk not to submit the precept form until the deadline to give the option to reconsider if required.

6.2 The clerk asked members to note receipt of the loan of £30,000 (minus an administration fee of £25) from PWLB for capital expenditure at the village hall. This would be repayable over 10 years by half-yearly annuities at a fixed interest rate of 2.36%. Mr Davis reported that the village hall committee had provisionally agreed that the hall should be closed from 23rd January to 4th February for internal works to be carried out and that efforts were being made to get the roofing work done as soon as possible.

6.3 The following payments were approved:

S Davis	General maintenance	£ 124.67
K M Dike	Grounds maintenance – October 2011	£ 892.30
Lifestyle Landscapes	The Grove/Ball Court – monthly contract	£ 116.40
Shire Signs	Three signboards – supply and fix	£ 443.00
R S Oliver	Trimming hedge at Church Walk	£ 65.00
Southern Electric	Electricity charges – Town Hall	£ 32.43
Crackmore Garage	Fuel for mowers/trimmer	£ 20.17
Alan Gawler	Electrical works – Town Hall (2 invoices £600/£445)	£ 1045.00*
Stalbridge Timber Supplies	Timber for bench repairs	£ 21.45
Wheathill Garden Centre	Supply of trees/ties/guards for Station Copse**	£ 674.59

*Cheque to A Gawler – cheque for £600 to cover materials to be paid immediately; second cheque for £445 to be paid on completion of work.

* Mr Davis thanked all who helped plant the trees and daffodil bulbs at Station Copse and in particular thanked Mr Watts who prepared the holes with his digger, saving much time and effort

6.4 The following receipt was noted:

HM Revenue & Customs	VAT repayment	£ 1687.87
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7. **Public Conveniences, London Road** The Chairman gave a resumé of the discussion with Cllr Hobhouse during Public Question Time and the three options were discussed, following which it was proposed by Mr Lockey, seconded by Mrs Douglas and agreed by a majority (with one abstention) that the Parish Council should not take up the option to take over responsibility for the public conveniences in London Road, but should ask SSDC instead to divert the earmarked funding to building new public toilets at the memorial playing fields; this would be subject to receiving confirmation of funding from SSDC. The clerk was asked to obtain a “ball park” figure for building a toilet block, based on plans drawn up previously, as a basis for applying for funding from the Market Towns Investment Group as well as other possible funders.

8. **South Somerset Market Towns Investment Group Meeting** Mr J Farley gave a report on this meeting (also attended by Mr E Davis). Of particular interest he drew members’ attention to a combined bid from a group of local authorities for faster broadband and the need to encourage expression of interest through registration (see www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk). Milborne Port had been asked if it would like to produce a “Walk around Milborne Port” leaflet in line with others already produced in readiness for expected extra visitors resulting from the 2012 Olympics, however it was agreed that this was unnecessary as it would duplicate information already available on the WI/Parish Council produced walks leaflets

9. **Area East Annual Meeting with Parish & Town Councils** Mr R Ritchie and Mrs P Alexander gave a verbal report of the recent meeting.

10. **Playground Inspection Service** The clerk reported that SSDC would be bringing in a charge of £26.50 per playground per visit for their quarterly inspections, which had to date been provided free of charge. This would mean a total cost of £212 for 2012/3. Having established that there was no legal requirement for a quarterly inspection, and with a weekly inspection by a trained member of

the council, plus an annual inspection by SSDC already in place, it was agreed the interim SSDC inspections should be reduced to 6 monthly rather than quarterly, subject to the approval of the council's insurers. (Proposed Mrs R Douglas, seconded Mr E Davis, agreed by a majority)

11. **Grasscutting Contract** Two tenders for the grasscutting contract for 2012-14 were considered; it was noted that a third company had been invited to quote but had declined. It was proposed by Mrs House, seconded by Mr Lockey and agreed unanimously to award the contract to K M Dike Nurseries, with the contract to run for three years, subject to a satisfactory standard being maintained.
12. **Highways**
- 12.1 **Winter Weather Precautions** Requests for a grit bin in Bathwell Lane were received from Mr S Lockey and Mrs A Taylor (*Mr R Lockey declared an interest in this item as brother of one of the correspondents*). It was proposed by Mr Davis, seconded by Mrs Lock and agreed unanimously that the Parish Council should purchase two new grit bins, one to be sited in Bathwell Lane to aid local residents in that area as well as churchgoers; the other to be sited in Wheathill Lane to allow safe access to the cemetery to be maintained – both sites subject to the approval of Somerset Highways.
- 12.2 The clerk read out a letter from Somerset Highways reporting that due to budget constraints, any repairs/replacement of defective paving would in future be carried out with tarmac, but that Parish Councils were being given the option to provide additional funding if there were sites where it felt tarmac would not be appropriate. It was agreed not to take any further action on this at the present time as it was felt there would be little requirement.
- 13 **Correspondence:**
 - **R Bawtree** – reported on the latest Village Litter Pick, for which there had been a poor turnout, however attendees had been pleased to report a reduced amount of litter around the village. Mr Bawtree paid tribute to the work carried out by the SSDC team and also local residents who were known to help keep the village tidy by picking up litter whilst out walking.
 - **SALC** - notification of South Area meeting to be held in Donyatt Village Hall on Monday 12th December 2011 *Noted – J Farley to attend*
 - **N Cruse, Somerset County Council** - consultation on Somerset's Draft Countywide Parking Strategy *Noted – clerk to obtain copy / website link and to include on December agenda*
 - **South Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau** – request for grant *Grant of £30 agreed*
14. The date of the next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 20th December 2011