

Hemyock Parish Council

2nd March 2011

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held in the Forbes Lounge under the chairmanship of Mrs.H.Stallard.

Present – Mrs.H.Stallard, Mr.I.McCulloch, Mr.R.Brooke, Mr.R.Hart, Mr.J.Edwards, Mr.L.Povah and Mrs.L.Clist. Also present was Mr.F.Rosamond – District Councillor, Mr.R.Radford – County Councillor, P.C.Jeff Howley, P.C.Dave Waller and 12 members of the public.

Apologies were received from Pastor S.Reed, Mr.P.Steed and Mrs.S.Cartledge.

Police Report

P.C.Howley said that there had been 6 crimes reported in Hemyock in the last month; 2 of which were connected with the same domestic incident.

They are experiencing a lot of rural burglaries at present, sheds being broken into and theft of scrap metal. They have received 8 calls about suspicious vehicles; they asked those present to report to the police anyone coming to ask for scrap metal.

P.C.Howley said that the Police are able to supply alarmed padlocks for about £7 each – contact Cullompton Police Station for details.

Mr.Rosamond asked what impact the cuts in policing was going to have on our communities;

P.C.Howley replied that they have to lose 700 police in Devon and Cornwall over the next 4 years but it was not quite clear yet how it was going to affect us locally.

Mr.L.Bowden asked if the Neighbourhood Watch was now defunct; P.C.Waller said they were hoping to set up a meeting in the village soon. Mr.Bowden said he had only received one message through the Neighbourhood Watch network in the last month, P.C. Howley said that things have been quiet in Hemyock recently.

Mrs.P.Lowman asked if there was anyone in Downmead at the moment; P.C.Howley said he didn't think there was anyone there at present as he had been unable to contact anyone.

Minutes

It was proposed by Mr.Hart, seconded by Mr.Brooke that the minutes of the February Parish Council meeting be signed as a correct record – all agreed.

Matters Arising

- 1) Matters Arising No.2 – Mrs.Stallard said she had heard that someone in the village had been trying to get an elderly resident into the Old School Court but had been told they were not taking anyone at present and an application was going to be put in for change of use.
- 2) Mrs.H.Stallard asked Mr.Rosamond about the different I.T. Systems between Mid and North Devon; Mr.Rosamond said there was 6 different systems which made things a bit difficult sometimes.
- 3) A meeting had been held with Highways regarding the exit on to the highway from the new raised floodplain footbridge; they had said they would send us a consultants report. Mr.Radford said he had not seen or heard of one yet. There is to be a HATOC meeting on 14th March and he may hear something about it then.
- 4) Mr.Povah said the Environment Agency had approved a design for the cattle pen by the floodplain footbridge; prices now have to be sought.
- 5) Correspondence – the Forestry Consultation paper has been withdrawn.

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District Council Report

Mr.Rosamond included the following in his report:

- 1) The Council Tax has been frozen - no increase this year.
- 2) The District Council are still on target to achieve a £3 million budget – 15% cuts have to be made this year and a further 11% next year. Mr.Rosamond said that services must be maintained; he was also pleased that the voluntary services grants were to be retained; however, the distribution of the grants was going to be looked at. Mrs.Stallard said she was concerned that car parking charges are going up all the time. Mr.Rosamond said that 2 people from North Devon are looking at market regeneration.

County Council Report

Mr.Radford included the following in his report:

- 1) Mr.Radford had e.mailed the Highways report to the clerk, which the clerk had forwarded on to councillors.
- 2) The budget has been fixed and frozen – so no increase this year. DCC have to make big changes in order to save £55 million. There are now only 2 Directors instead of 4 and 25% has been saved on management costs.
- 3) Mr.Radford asked if the excess grit on the road at Symonsburrow has been swept up yet; clerk reported that no it had not.
- 4) Devon County Council has suggested that mini gritters be purchased to go behind 4 wheel drive vehicles. Mr.Radford had seen a demonstration and he said they looked impressive. If the Parish Council has to buy this equipment it would have to be decided where to keep it. It was suggested that perhaps part of the purchase cost could be covered by Mr.Radford's Locality Grant budget. Mr.Radford said he only gets £10,000 to go be divided between 11 parishes and the mini gritter cost £1,300 to £1,400 each. The parish council would have to buy the grit and the Environment Agency has to approve the site where it would be kept.

To get the best price an order has to be place by 20th April 2011. Mr.McCulloch asked what the criteria was for placement of salt bins; he said we need a written list. Mr.Radford said the main thing was that a salt bin would not be placed an a main gritting route.

Local Elections

Mrs.Stallard reminded everyone to pick up their nomination papers from the clerk. May 5th is voting day and Mrs.Stallard encouraged everyone to come along to vote.

Planning

There is to be a public open meeting on Saturday 12th March for people to come along with sensible ideas for what the old tennis courts site could be used for.

Applications

All plans were carefully inspected before decisions were reached.

11/00194/FULL – Replace felt roof with corrugated roof sheets at Ashculme Stables.

It was proposed by Mr.McCulloch, seconded by Mr.Brooke that approval be recommended – all agreed.

11/00236/FULL – Erection of single storey extension and porch after demolition of existing at 8, Eastlands.

It was proposed by Mr.Hart, seconded by Mrs.Clist that approval be recommended – all agreed.

11/00215/FULL – Erection of porch, veranda, enlargement of roof, insertion of flu, alterations to windows following demolition of existing conservatory, porch and chimney at Lower Ashculme.

It was proposed by Mr.McCulloch, seconded by Mrs.Clist that approval be recommended – all agreed

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11/00020/FULL – Erection of 8 flats and associated works at the old tennis courts (revised plans). Councillors could not make a decision on these plans as a decision had been made at the last Parish Council meeting to recommend refusal of this application.

Challenge to Imposed Charges

Archaeological Digs

Because of the finds made at the Churchills Farm development Hemyock has been designated as an Archaeological Site; any proposed developments have to have an archaeological dig carried out before applying for planning permission. Mrs.Stallard said she thought this was over interpretation of the guidelines.

Mr.Rosamond said he would take it up with the Senior Planning Officer but it would be a good idea if the Parish Council wrote to him as well.

Floodplain

Mrs.Stallard said the floodplain for Hemyock has been greatly extended which will affect everyone's insurance policies; she felt this was “going over the top”.

Mr.Brooke suggested we ask the Environment Agency what their criteria is in setting the floodplain; he went on to say that it can be challenged. This had been done when it was proposed moving the Cameo Club to the Blackdown Healthy Living Centre and the Environment Agency had refused permission as it was in the flood plain, but the decision was challenged and the floodplain status was lifted.

Mr.Bowden said that when the bungalow had been built by Hemyock Motors a flood bank had to be put in.

Air Pollution

Mrs.Stallard said that because of air pollution in Cullompton, where the road goes to Tiverton from the Bullring, when applying for planning permission everyone with a Cullompton postcode has to pay thousands of pounds towards the air pollution. It was suggested that if the planners insist on the payment to ask exactly what the money is being spent on.

Mrs.Clist said that generally no one from Hemyock shops in Cullompton.

All those present agreed to challenge the above three items.

Mr.Rosamond said that S106 has been replaced by an infrastructure levy; but the coalition government is changing it all again.

Garages Update

Mr.Brooke reported that the grant application to Viridor had been successful. This money was going to be for the gym equipment; if Tone Leisure pulls out of the project then we would still have the gym equipment.

Building wise things have come to a stand still at the moment.

Snow Wardens

Mr.McCulloch reported on a Snow Wardens course that he and Mrs.Stallard had attended at Honiton; they are both now able to train up volunteers in Hemyock to be Snow Wardens.

One person would be the main point of contact with Devon County Council and we have to keep them informed if we go ahead with the scheme. Mr.McCulloch was concerned that if we start to use our own volunteers someone has to co-ordinate them and all have to be healthy and over 18 years of age; once trained volunteers will be covered by DCC Public Liability insurance.

If a local farmer uses his own vehicle to clear snow and the Parish Council paid him he would have to have his own insurance and would not be covered by DCC Public Liability insurance;

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but if he did it voluntarily he would be covered by the DCC Public Liability insurance. Devon County Council are only concentrating on primary and secondary routes, their particular concern is the filling of salt/grit bins which costs £140 per bin. They are thinking of dying the salt so that people who take it to clear their driveways can be easily identified.

Salt will be available from DCC suppliers which, now that Supply Zone has gone out of business, are at Newton Abbott or South Molton; councillors thought it would be easier to get it from a local builders merchants.

DCC will not provide salt bins adhoc they have to fit the criteria and could be part funded by Mr.Radford's Locality budget.

Any salt bins the Parish Council buys have to be filled by the Parish Council and a place would have to be found to store and mix the salt and grit.

If we get enough volunteers each one would have a designated area to clear e.g. area by the Post Office or path down through the Recreation Field.

Mr.McCulloch said it was a big commitment for anyone to take up and he was not sure we would get enough people to volunteer as they would all be busy clearing their own paths.

The training needs to be given before the next fall of snow.

Mrs.Stallard said that small push-a-long gritters are available at various prices which might be useful.

Mr.McCulloch said that Hemyock's Emergency Plan needs up-dating and it might be a good idea to incorporate the snow clearing in the Emergency Plan; perhaps this could be sorted out by the new council after the elections in May.

Mr.Brooke said that when he has cleared the road down to the village he has received a lot of complaints and if volunteers get the same treatment they will not keep clearing the snow.

Finance

Income

£35.72 – Stonehenge Masonry – cemetery fees.

£123.04 – W.H.Squires & Son – cemetery fees.

£14,823.04 – 6 months reclaimed VAT.

Payment

It was propose by Mr.Brooke, seconded by Mr.Edwards that the following payment be made:

£24.50 – Hemyock Parish Hall – rent for meeting on 29th January 2011.

Mrs.Stallard informed those present that Mrs.Anne Kingston, parish clerk, had resigned from her position and given a month's notice. A finance committee meeting had been set for next Monday to sort out an advert, job description, pay etc.

Mr.McCulloch proposed a vote of thanks to Mrs.Kingston for all the work she has done over the years.

A letter had been received from the Audit Commission to say that Jackie Bellard had been appointed as our External Auditor; councillors could not see any problems with this; clerk to write to confirm Councillors agreement.

Highways

- 1) Water coming up in the road by the entrance to Culm Davy Farm – water eroding the road.
- 2) Shutlake still blocked in Station Road.
- 3) Mr.Povah asked if South West Highways was subject to competitive tendering; Mr.Radford said they get a contract for a 6 year period.

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Cemetery

The cemetery policy was amended by adding the sentence that “the cemetery caretaker has authority to remove any items deemed to be unsightly or dangerous. It was decided to keep the 5% increase each year for cemetery fees. Sign to be made for cemetery showing the “Cemetery Terms & Conditions” and the “Cemetery Management Policy”.

Housing Survey

Mrs.Stallard said that the Housing Survey questionnaires are being delivered tomorrow – this time it includes Clayhidon as well; there are about 900 to be delivered. The people who deliver the “Parish Pump”, who were present at the meeting, said they would be happy to deliver the questionnaires – several other people volunteered to help if needed. The questionnaires do not need to be collected as they have to be posted back to the Community Council's Rural Housing Enabler in Exeter.

Footpaths

The application for this year's grant has been sent in; Mr.Povah said he was meeting with a DCC representative next week to discuss special projects that need to be done.

Dates for Annual Parish Meeting & Annual General Meeting

APM

It was decided to set the date for the APM for 14th April at 7.00pm, if the hall is available. Cheese and wine for refreshments after the speakers. A representative from Tone Leisure was suggested as a speaker. Clerk to contact local organisations for reports, also invite P.C.Jeff Howley and P.C. Dave Waller if they are free to come along.

AGM

Due to the elections on 5th May it was decided to hold the AGM on 18th May and have the normal May meeting on 4th May.

Correspondence

- 1) Blackdown Parishes Network – 2 open meetings have been arranged to discuss the things that Catherine Bass has come up with for the co-ordinated parishes. The dates are 8th March at Bishopswood and 16th March at Luppitt.
- 2) MDDC – consultation on electronic planning applications. Mr.Brooke said we are all voluntary and should not have this inflicted on us; Mr.Povah asked how we would do a planning site visit with no paper plans to refer to. Clerk to write to say we would like paper plans as long as possible as councillors did not feel they could do a worthwhile consultation without them.
- 3) Culmstock Parish Council – Re-opening of the old railway line for walking. Culmstock PC asking if villages can get together to try to take this forward. Hemyock councillors felt this was something they could leave for the new council in May; maybe members of the public could be included as well.
- 4) Reminder – Census on 27th March.
- 5) Community safety Partnership meeting on Wednesday 13th April at Broadclyst.
- 6) MDDC – Initial Consultation – Mid Devon Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 7) Neroche Project - “Along the Wild Edge” book being published; about human and natural history in the Blackdown Hills. It was suggested that perhaps someone may like to come along to the APM to talk about it.

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- 8) Wellington Medical Centre – Invite for councillors to attend the Grand Opening of the new Medical Centre on 12th March at 11.30am.
- 9) Vacancy on the Standards Committee – training provided.
- 10) DALC – Meeting “Making it Work Locally” on Tuesday 15th March at Exeter City Football Club.
- 11) DALC - Information on new courses coming up.
- 12) Came & Co. - information from our insurance company.
- 13) DCC – Minerals Core Strategy - Options Consultation Paper.
- 14) Playground Inspection Training.

PR

- A.P.M.
- Elections
- Challenges to imposed charges
- Snow Wardens – volunteers to be trained.

Chairman's Business

- 1) Mr.Hart reported that 3 people had complained to him about the colour of the pointing on the wall that has been repaired by the War Memorial – wrong colour sand has been used.
- 2) Mr.Povah said he felt we should take up Mr.Bowden's suggestion of making a donation to the Cricket Club towards their work of keeping the Recreation Field mowed and maintained. Mrs.Stallard said that the Cricket Club and Parish Hall Committee will have to write to the Parish Council to request a donation.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.10pm.

Signed.....

Date.....