

## 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008

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.P.Steed, Mr.R.Hart, Mr.J.Edwards, Mrs.L.Clist, Mrs.S.Cartledge, Pastor S.Reed and Mr.L.Povah. Also present were 4 members of the public, Mr.R.Radford – County Councillor arrived during the meeting.

**Apologies** were received from Mr.F.Rosamond – District Councillor.

It was proposed by Mr.McCulloch, seconded by Mr.Povah that **The Minutes** of the August meeting and Planning meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> August be signed as correct records, agreed by all those present at each meeting.

### **Matters Arising**

- 1) It was reported that Sally Tovey was interested in an allotment.
- 2) Matters Arising No.3 – The decision whether or not to erect “No Diving” signs by Millhayes footbridge was discussed. It was pointed out that children have jumped into the river at this point for as long as anyone could remember – no one had ever heard of any accidents. It was decided to recognize this as a “low risk”
- 3) Reminder that the “State of the District Debate” will be held on 10<sup>th</sup> September at Tiverton Town Hall.

### **District Council Report**

Mr.Rosamond was unable to be present but had sent a written report; he said that the council continues in a state of flux, under its impending demise proposed by the Boundary Committee. There is concern about the need to attract and retain employees, the most important resource of the council. The council needs to retain key employees, whilst recognizing that at some time in the future with the implementation of the Local Government Review the workforce will need to be managed in a different way that reduces its overall size, with the aim of avoiding compulsory job losses.

Mr.Rosamond went on to say that there are continuing issues with the potential outsourcing of the Leisure facilities, and the consequent reduction in internal support service costs, as well as the implications of introducing a suite of new and complex IT systems in Finance, Housing and Housing Repairs and Maintenance all creating uncertainty and extra pressure on staff. Other important objectives are inevitably on hold until the picture clears, and there will be the need to avoid the danger of inertia creeping in, in the light of so much uncertainty.

There is a proposal to improve the reception layout of Phoenix House to make it more accessible and “customer friendly”.

In respect of waste and recycling, benchmarking with other local authorities has shown that our refuse and organic waste collection schemes are performing well, but with regard to dry recycling, the scheme is falling short of other councils and at higher cost-issues-

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which are being addressed.

There is a new proposal being considered for free swimming for the Over 60's with the additional possibility of free swimming for the under 16's.

The Walronds Trust has requested a grant of £100,000 over 2 years from the council to lever in funds from English Heritage to preserve this Grade 1 listed building as "at risk" from collapse.

The council is considering the development of the choice based lettings scheme to include a Local Preference Label that would reserve specific housing for local people, to reinforce the commitment to build sustainable communities.

In the budget preparation for next year, the first draft to be circulated to Service Managers targets a reduction of 5% in net expenditure in order to meet the continuing demands of efficiency savings and government grant considerations. The council has a duty to consult with the wider community on its budget proposals and the effects of any changes in the levels of service provision. This will include parish councils, following the Executives initial consideration of the budget for 2009/10.

Mr. Rosamond said he was hoping some action would be forthcoming, after the summer leave period, with regard to the road surface problems in South View.

### **Planning**

#### **Approvals**

08/01246/FULL – 5, Conigar Close.

08/00654/FULL – Healthy Living Centre.

### **Boundary Commission**

- A meeting had been held on 26<sup>th</sup> August with representatives from other parishes interested in forming a Blackdown Hills Rural Communities Unitary Council. Notes from this meeting are attached to these minutes.
- The Boundary Commission has said that Devon must be Unitary.
- Quite a lot of parishes are worried about their linking with a market town.
- Within the Blackdown Hills we already have several linked partnerships – the A.O.N.B. structure, the Blackdown Support Group, the Blackdown Practice and the Blackdown Hills Business Association.
- Sue Craythorne had attended the meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> August and thought we had a good case.
- Mrs. Stallard thanked A.V.M. Attlee and Graham Langford for all the work they have put in on this project. Graham Langford is drafting out a letter to be sent to the Boundary Commission.
- It would appear from the initial meeting that all small parishes are very concerned.
- Pastor Reed said that we ought to let the Blackdown Hills Somerset parishes know what we are doing. Mrs. Stallard said that once the letter that Graham Langford is drafting has been agreed it would be a good idea to send them a copy – all agreed.
- Mrs. Stallard said that the A.O.N.B. has been very supportive with this suggestion.

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- Mrs.Stallard asked councillors if they were happy that we go ahead along these lines. Councillors agreed but asked that the draft letter be circulated to councillors as well as the Somerset parishes.

### **Police**

Community Support Officer Dave Waller attended the meeting and was welcomed by councillors; he said that P.C. Jim Purkiss was still our Neighbourhood Beat Manager. He said he had come along to the meeting to inform everyone of the “Tour of Britain” cycle race coming through Hemyock next Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September.

Dave Waller said that they are trying to encourage young people to use the new sports hall at Uffculme Comprehensive School – but this is in the hands of the School Governors at present.

There have been a couple of shed break-ins recently – the stuff stolen has mainly been items that are easy to get rid of at carboot sales etc. he asked that members of the public are made aware and take down serial numbers of their property, have shed alarms fitted and use special pens to write their post codes on items. If there are any problems inform the police immediately or if anyone notices any vehicles acting suspiciously make a note of their registration numbers.

Mrs.Stallard said the parish had been experiencing some problems with a group of 10 – 11 year olds just generally hanging around; the gents toilets had been vandalized twice to the extent that basins/toilets have had to be replaced – which the District Council were not happy about.

### **Calor Village of the Year Competition**

The parish gave an excellent presentation to the judges when they came in August. Everyone that was asked to help was pleased to do so; we made it to the last 6 but did not win this time. The winners were Kingston in the South Hams with Kentisbeare the runners up.

Mrs.Stallard said she was going to try to get some feedback from the judges.

### **County Council Report**

1) HELIC’s request for funds from “Investing in Devon” will be discussed again on Tuesday. Mr.Radford said an A4 sheet with a few notes would be useful; Mrs.Stallard said she would try to contact Mr.Brooke about this.

2) Mr.Radford said that the Devon Association of Parish Councils had had a meeting with urban clerks regarding the Boundary Commissions proposals; Mrs.Stallard told him about the meeting of the Blackdown parishes.

### **Millhaves Project**

Mrs.Stallard said that there are legal problems at the moment over the change of use for the garages.

### **Longmead**

The fencing behind the Station Road properties is finished but the hard standings have yet to be completed.

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## **Finance**

### **Income**

£150.00 – Culm Vale Gun Club for the use of the Turbary Common.

### **Payments**

It was proposed by Mrs.Clist, seconded by Mr.Povah and all agreed that the following payments be made:

£316.49 – Clive Jones Architect – Millhayes project

£209.39 – Shaw & Sons – Register of Burials

£10.00 – DAPC – Quality Status training

£800.00 – South West Stump Grinders – clearing the BMX track etc.

£260.25 – Mr.I.Pike – cemetery & village grass cutting

£940.00 - Bussell Plant – ground preparation for the footbridge over the stream in Longmead.

£35.50 – Mr.R.Calcraft – petrol for mowing around Millhayes Hall.

£528.00 (approx) Stevens & Scown Solicitors – interim payment for legal costs regarding the land transfer for 3 houses in Station Road (land in front of their homes given for a pavement in exchange for a rear entrance and hard standing for their properties

Retrospective payment

£204.00 – Mr.I.Pike – cemetery grass cutting.

## **Highways**

- Many potholes have been filled and hedges trimmed back on The Tour of Britain Route.
- The hedge is overhanging the highway forcing vehicles out into the road from the top of Pencross to Sunny Corner. Mr.McCulloch felt something should be done about this; if we ask Highways to sort it out it will take too long. Mr.Radford said County would contact the owners then if nothing was done about it County would cut it themselves and send the owners the bill.

## **Cemetery**

Work has not yet started on painting the railings along the front of the cemetery; clerk to contact the contractor.

## **Footpaths**

Cost of insurance for the raised wooden footway to be looked into – if the Parish Council were to take over its responsibility.

## **Correspondence**

1) MDDC – Consultation by BT on proposed removal of certain public telephone boxes – Final decision.

2) A Unitary Council for Devon – Your Questions Answered.

3) Newsletter – R D Express.

4) Mid Devon Talk – leaflet.

5) P3 Scheme – Drop in Day

6) MDDC – State of the District Debate.

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- 7) CCD – Swan Training – various courses.
- 8) CCD – Rural Health Conference – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October at Bridestow.
- 9) DAPC – Annual Report & AGM on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September.

**PR**

- Boundary Commission – proposal for the Blackdown Hills
- Calor Village of the Year Competition
- Overgrown hedges affecting the highway.

**Chairman’s Business**

None.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

***Signed***.....

***Date***.....

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