

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHRIVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, SHRIVENHAM
ON MONDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2010**

PRESENT:

Councillor R Bartle
Councillor Mrs C Dawson
Councillor Mrs S Day
Councillor K Downton
Councillor C Holman (Chairman)
Councillor S Howell
Councillor Mrs P Mullin
Councillor P Saunders
Councillor S Spencer
Councillor G Tidmarsh
Councillor B Watson

In attendance Mr D Pratt Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

Mr Lloyd attended to inform Councillors of the objections to a recent Planning Application to build a detached dwelling and garage to the rear of 1-3 Vicarage Lane. The application was outside the Village Curtilage, would affect the residents of Vicarage Lane and, the entrance onto Longcot Road was close to a bend. Cllr Tidmarsh informed the meeting that the Planning Sub-Committee had read the application carefully and were unanimous in objecting to the proposal as it was outside the current Village Curtilage. Cllr Saunders pointed out that the argument that a precedent had been set because of the Affordable Housing on Stainswick Lane was spurious as that development was on an exception site. Building in the Countryside was against Vale Planning Policies and having spoken with Planning Officers, he had been assured that this was the case. Cllr Tidmarsh pointed out that it was appropriate for Villagers to make individual objections to the Application.

The Public were asked to leave to enable Council to discuss the next item.

1945: APPOINTMENT OF CLERK:

Cllr Bartle explained that there had been 15 applications for the post which the Organisation & Finance Sub-committee had short listed to seven. One withdrew leaving 6 to be interviewed on Wednesday 27th January. The interviewing Committee had agreed on two Candidates but were unanimous in recommending a most experienced Candidate, Peter Anderson. Councillors had been circulated with copies of his cv and on the proposition of Cllr Bartle, seconded by Cllr Spencer, it was unanimously **resolved** to appoint Mr Anderson as Parish Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Secretary to the Trust. The rate of pay to be LC1 – LC2 and to commence at 1 increment below the top of LC2, with the first increase in April 2011. The appointment would be subject to a six months' probationary period and a Contract of Employment to be in line with the model contract, with certain local variations.

The public were readmitted, together with Mr Anderson, who was welcomed by the Chairman and introduced to individual councillors.

1946 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. There were none.

1947 MINUTES of the previous meeting held on 4th January were approved and signed.

1948 MATTERS ARISING:

High Street 20 mph speed limit. The Clerk reported he had been unable to make an appointment with County Officers until March.

Townsend Road Light. Cllr Downton had looked at the problem and in his opinion the two trees close to the light should be topped, which would allow sufficient light for pedestrians. The long term answer would be to move the light to the opposite side of the road but he was sure the cost would be prohibitive. Cllr Watson thought that a cheaper option would be to move the light approximately 20 yards towards The Green. Cllr Mrs Mullin observed that the allotment hedge was protruding onto the pavement and should be cut back by at least two feet. On the proposition of Cllr Spencer, seconded by Cllr Mrs Day, it was unanimously resolved to have the trees topped and the hedge cut back.

1930/1914/1900/1882/1867/1855. VAS speed sign. The Clerk had contacted Mr Cockbill at OCC and had been assured that he would address the matter as soon as possible.

1930/1914/1900/1882: Unauthorised sign, Rafu's Restaurant. The sign has now been removed.

1930/1914 Beckett Place Signs: It has been noted that a street name had been installed for Charlotte Close and that the Site Manager said that it would be unlikely that the advertising signs would be replaced before the completion of the development.

1938: Bugs Alley Lighting: An email had been received from Dr and Mrs Crockett stating that in their opinion there was no requirement for additional lighting. Councillors will bear this comment in mind when a reply is received from the County street lighting department.

1941 Acorn Centre: Together with Cllr Saunders the Chairman had attended a meeting in Watchfield to discuss the future of the Acorn Centre. The Day Centre in Faringdon was over-subscribed and there was a waiting list. The costs of re-starting the Acorn Centre had been evaluated in the light of information that the previous costs of running the Centre had been approx £40,000 with an income of £5,000. However, he understood that the Age

Concern administration costs were extremely high and would be discussed at their next meeting in mid-February.

1949 ACCOUNTS: The Accounts for January and for payment in February were approved.

1950 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that he had been extremely pleased with the village dinner and read a letter of congratulations from Lt Gen Graham.

1951 MINUTES OF THE ORGANISATION AND FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th January were confirmed.

1952 VILLAGE PLAN GROUP

The Chairman asked members' opinions on the future relationship between the Council and the VPG. He believed there was confusion on both sides as to where the VPG was going in the future as the Plan was now complete and the balance of the ORCC grant had now been returned. He pointed out that the VPG was not mandated or elected and should not be treated as a platform for vociferous minorities who could use the group for their own agenda. The Parish Council had started the ball rolling by forming the Group and he was sure the Council would want to work with the Group in seeing action on the points raised in the Plan. There were some items which he believed the VPG would be able to continue without reference to the Council such as the proposed series of walk leaflets. He had attended the last meeting of the Group and had agreed that Council and VPG would meet in February to agreed terms or reference and cement relationships.

Cllr Watson, chairman of the VPG, was pleased Cllr Holman had attended the last meeting and agreed there was confusion as to where the Group would move in future. The action points agreed in the plan needed to move forward or they would just be a wish list. VPG had formed a number of sub-groups in an attempt to gather information and hopefully move forward. In his mind it was clear that the enthusiasm of the Group should be harnessed and he proposed that the Council form a sub-committee to include the Village Plan Group. This would address the issue of accountability. This had met with approval from some VPG members and would solve the problems as regards the fund raising and contact with outside agencies. The issues that were raised by the sub-committee could then be brought in front of full Council. Cllr Holman agreed stating that it was not the place of VPG members to meet with officers from other agencies and he was sure that by making VPG a sub-committee, this would not occur again. He invited members to attend a community led planning group in Oxford on 6th March.

Cllr Watson proposed that the existing four Council Members remain on the sub-committee together with three co-opted members from VPG. However, he did point out that any individual may contact Council officers but not as members of the VPG. He suggested that the VPG sub-committee would provide monthly reports for Council.

Cllr Mrs Dawson agreed but thought that guidelines should be laid down to enable reports to be placed before Council after meetings or actions had taken place. Cllr Bartle had some misgivings but would support a sub-committee provided there were clear rules in place to control individual members.

Cllr Howell agreed as he felt it was a good way to harness the enthusiasm of the Group, whilst Cllr Downton applauded the efforts of the group but stated there must be some measure of control. Cllr Mrs Mullin pointed out that it would be difficult to give responsibility to the VPG in its present form but that as a sub committee the ultimate responsibility would rest with Council. Cllr Tidmarsh believed it was a two way process with a work programme agreed by the Parish Council but not including such items as the walks leaflets, which could be 100% Village Plan Group organised. He had been disturbed to read an article in The News regarding lobbying the Co-Op to stock organic milk, as this point had not been identified in the Village Plan. Cllr Watson informed members that all sub-groups reported to him with any news items, and this one had not been of sufficient weight for him to refuse it.

Cllr Spencer believed there were a number of ways in which the VPG could involve village organisations and put forward a notion of a "village interest group". Cllr Bartle proposed that the majority of members of the sub-committee should be councillors and that the Council should set the terms of reference for the committee. The Chairman agreed that these terms should be set jointly.

Cllr Spencer proposed that the Organisation and Finance sub-committee set out the guiding principles for the terms of reference. Cllr Mrs Dawson asked that the VPG set out all the tasks they would like to see taken forward and where the Parish Council would be involved.

On the proposal of Cllr Watson, seconded by Cllr Spencer, it was resolved that the Organisation and Finance Sub-Committee investigate the formation of a sub-committee and look at terms of reference.

1953 VILLAGE DINNER

Cllr Bartle was pleased with the event and congratulated his team on the organisation. Cllr Mrs Mullin was concerned that the PA system had not been used and asked that for future events all speakers be prevailed upon to use microphones.

1954 GRITTING BINS

A request had been received for a Gritting Bin to be placed on Townsend Road, close to The Green. This area had been particularly icy during the recent cold weather. Cllr Howell was sympathetic but pointed out that Council would be unable to control the public abuse of this facility. It was unanimously agreed not to take any action.

1955 HIGHWAY MATTERS

Cllr Tidmarsh reported several potholes on Highworth Road and had not seen any action on the road subsidence entering the village from Swindon. Cllr Bartle reminded members that the NAG Group encouraged people to report potholes to OCC and Cllr Mrs Mullin asked that the telephone number be reported in the News. Cllr Tidmarsh enquired whether Cllr Bartle had taken photographs of the High Street potholes. Cllr Bartle replied that he had taken some prior to the fall of snow but the holes were now in a worse state. Cllr Mrs Dawson enquired whether the railway bridge by the Fat Dog was still closed for repair. Cllr Tidmarsh replied in the negative, but had seen that some repairs had been carried out. Cllr Downton was concerned at the state of the village pavements particularly after the recent snowfalls.

1956 DISTRICT CORE STRATEGY

Cllr Spencer had attended a meeting with Vale officers and VPG representatives to discuss the best way of obtaining accommodation for elderly folk who wished to downsize their properties. He had downloaded some information from the Vale website which had highlighted a shortage of smaller dwellings in the village. He believed that some form of development for the elderly in terms of one and two bedded properties, close to a day centre or similar, was the ideal. He understood that a development at Letcombe Regis centred on an existing care home had been built. He would like to see a village development, possible outside the existing Curtilage as there were insufficient large properties to demolish and re-develop ideal accommodation. Should such a scheme come to fruition he wondered if an age restriction could be brought in to allow properties to be purchased over the age of 60.

Cllr Saunders pointed out that any such development would not qualify as an exception site and that householders who sold their properties for downsizing would need to look at properties on a commercial development. He proposed that Council urge the District Council to include in the Core Strategy that the curtilage be extended for commercial development of residences for the elderly.

Cllr Watson had been impressed by the Letcombe Regis development and if an age restriction of 60 to 65 could be brought in, then he would support any development of fixed use. He also wondered whether any future development could use Section 106 monies for a day care centre. Cllr Saunders was not sure whether an age restriction covenant would last longer than five years but was reasonably sure that it would be possible to exclude permitted development rights. Cllr Tidmarsh pointed out that there was a great number of bungalows in the village but most had been extended and he wondered if it would be possible to stop any new bungalows from having extensions. Cllr Bartle had discussed the possibility of developing land on the Recreation Ground and the other Trust's land for accommodation for the elderly. Cllr Mrs Day reminded members that the flats on Vicarage Lane were developed as "flats for life" with electrical points for stair lifts and wide door for wheelchairs. Cllr Mrs Mullin was concerned that houses originally built for locals could be bought by outsiders and, added Cllr Tidmarsh, bought to let. Cllr Spencer suggested that there was sufficient space at the Alms Houses on Martens Road for warden controlled accommodation.

Cllr Spencer believed that the proposed reservoir near Abingdon was necessary for the future and that this Council should not interfere with the Faringdon request for 400 houses. Cllr Saunders added that the reservoir would be well landscaped. With regard to the Faringdon housing proposal the District Council were experiencing a lot of pressure to increase the housing stock and it was much better to develop them where local councils had made a request. Cllr Tidmarsh proposed that Council support the Faringdon request but only if the A420 is improved to take additional traffic. With regard to the proposal to alter the Affordable Housing provision on private developments from a development of five to three, he believed it would deter builders from developing.

It was agreed that Cllr Tidmarsh would continue with his co-ordination of a Council response to the District Council using points from Councillor Mrs Mullin's letter and with reference to a planned green buffer zone on the boundary with Swindon.

1957 PLANNING MATTERS:

The following applications were received in January

10333/2	31 Vicarage Lane	Convert existing garage & rear extension to form annexe & garage for two cars	No objections
10333/3	31 Vicarage Lane	Convert existing garage & rear extension to form annexe & garage for three cars.	Object
21091	7 Curtis Road	Loft Extension	Awaited

The following decisions were received

19636/2-X	Land adjacent 28 Colton Road (Site 1)	Outline application to erect one dwelling	PERMIT
19636/1-X	Land adjacent 28 Colton Road (Site 2)	As above	PERMIT

AOB

1958 Death of Ex Councillor Peter Allen: The Chairman referred to the recent death of Peter Allen who had been a Councillor for more than twenty years and who had given loyal service to the village.

The Meeting closed at 9.00 pm