

A Meeting of the Town Council was held at the Memorial Hall, Lechlade on Monday, 1st October 2007 starting at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Jones
Cllr Cawsey
Cllr Dover
Cllr Gillard
Cllr Gould
Cllr Roberts
Cllr Mrs Seale
Cllr Sullivan
Cllr Whistler
Cllr Mrs Wilson

GCC Councillor Theodolou and
CDC Cllr Mrs Carter attended later

5 members of the public

- 1 Apologies for Absence
Cllr Lambert, Cllr Mannall and Cllr Maskell.
- 2 Declarations of Interest
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 3rd September 2007
These were approved and signed.
- 4 Matters Arising from Minutes of Meeting held on 3rd September 2007
 - a) Cemetery
Figures quoted by New College for the purchase of agricultural land seemed high. The Clerk had therefore asked GAPTC to provide comparative figures and Mr Clarke was seeking similar information from local estate agents. Mr Clarke would write to New College.
 - b) New Footbridge
Cllr Gillard reported that the full feasibility study had now been completed. The group would meet soon to look at the report and Halcrow's recommendations. Cllr Jones said that key stakeholders would be consulted. Outline proposals would be brought to the next meeting.
 - c) Bledisloe Cup
Lechlade was the runner-up in the large villages section and the Chairman thanked all those who had helped with litter-picking and other efforts to enhance the appearance of the town.

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- d) **Lights - Faringdon Road**
The Clerk stated that a second letter had been written to County and a reply was still awaited. GCC were giving priority to works necessitated by the July flooding at the moment. CDC and the Town Council would contribute to the cost of the lighting as well as GCC.
- e) **Lechlade 2000+**
The Chairman had written to several organisations in the town seeking comments on proposals to widen representation on the group and also inviting them to a meeting on 23rd October.
- f) **Flooding and Emergency Plan**
Cllr Cawsey reported that CDC had selected Fairford as a pilot town to develop plans for dealing with future emergencies. Several groups were discussing similar issues and there was a need for co-ordination.
- g) **Speed Limits and Signage**
Gloucestershire Highways were not supporting the extension of the 40 mph speed limit west of Bryworth Lane. GCC Cllr Theodolou undertook to take the matter up with the police and CDC Safety Committee. Cllr Gillard suggested inviting a police representative to a meeting of the Town Council. In answer to a question from Cllr Roberts, the Chairman confirmed that it was the general view of the Council that there should be a 30 mph speed limit in Downington, but this had never been formally requested. The development at The Wern meant an increasing number of children were walking along the A417. Cllr Roberts proposed and Cllr Whistler seconded that there should be a 30 mph speed limit from the roundabout to the town, and a 40 mph limit from west of Bryworth Lane to the roundabout. This was passed nem con. Cllr Whistler referred to a recent accident and the unsatisfactory response from the Ambulance Service. Cllr Mrs Wilson emphasised that all accidents must be reported to the police or they would not be taken into account when speed limits were discussed. The Clerk would write to Highways. The VAS had still not been relocated. Cllr Roberts commented that the red asphalt and dragons teeth were urban gateway features and out of place in a rural setting.
- h) **Alcohol along the riverside**
Cllr Gillard said that he had raised this matter at a Safer Cotswold meeting. He and the Clerk would meet the police inspector for the area. Although the setting up of a restricted alcohol area would assist the police, there would still be enforcement difficulties. The area by the Roundhouse was causing particular concern. Cllr Cawsey said that the Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Thames Valley police forces were

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working together on problems with alcohol.

At this point a member of the public speaking with the permission of the Chairman suggested that the Chairman should write direct to the Warden of New College about the cemetery extension. Cllr Jones replied that the Council had approached the Bursar and the Vicar had written in support.

6. Meetings Attended

Cllr Cawsey had attended the AGMs of the Heritage and Development Trust and the Cotswold Canals Trust.

Cllr Gillard had attended the Safer Cotswolds meeting and raised the matter of a restricted alcohol zone. Those attending the meeting, including the police, were generally not in favour of the lighting saving proposals and doubts were expressed about any potential financial savings. Lechlade now has a dedicated Police Community Support Officer, Gemma Finch, and Cllr Gillard would contact her. She is based at Fairford police station and is available during daytime hours only. Cllr Gillard had also attended the Cotswold Local Strategic Partnership Group. European money was likely to be available for various rural projects, but this was not capital funding. However, Lechlade had been excluded from the map of the area that might potentially benefit. CDC Cllr Carter said that this was due to be discussed by CDC cabinet.

Cllr Whistler had attended the Fairford and Lechlade Business Club. He was disappointed that apart from himself there had been only two other people from Lechlade, although over 100 people had been invited. Cllr Cawsey, supported by Cllr Whistler and Cllr Mrs Wilson, suggested inviting local businesses to meet with the Town Council in an effort to discover the reasons for the apparent apathy. The Healthcheck had shown that the retention of businesses in Lechlade was a priority for local people. However, many businesses in the town were run by people who did not live here.

Cllr Mrs Seale had attended the AGM of the Market Towns Forum.

Cllr Mrs Wilson had attended a meeting of the East Cotswolds Strategic Partnership with Cllrs Lambert and Sullivan. Plans for a footpath network to join Lechlade, Kempsford and Fairford were progressing, although slowly. Kempsford was well advanced with emergency planning. There was a wish among the representatives of the three parishes to work together and help each other.

Cllr Jones had attended a meeting at RAF Fairford on 6 September. Representatives from the base had reassured local councils that they had mitigated the effects of the flooding. They admitted that two

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simultaneous failures of their control systems had caused a pollution incident but steps had been taken to reduce any future risk. He had been unable to attend the Flood Forum with the EA, but Cllr Mrs Carter had attended and she would be meeting with Cllr Jones, the EA, Atkins and Highways. Cllr Jones suggested that Cllr Roberts should also be involved.

7. GCC Councillor

Cllr Theodolou reported that the entire annual road maintenance budget had been wiped out in one day with the July flooding. £25 million had been requested from the Department for Transport, and up to £10 million would be provided now as an interim payment to enable priority works to be done. £500,000 had been allocated to the A417. The County's insurance claim had to be submitted by February 2008 and they were hoping for £2-3 million. GCC was examining the response to the flooding emergency. There was a need for co-ordination between all the local groups that had been set up for the same purpose. Uncertainties over government funding levels and the cost of flooding repairs were affecting medium-term planning. GCC has subscribed to the Nottingham declaration on carbon reduction. Substantial savings should be made by the lighting saving scheme, but there were security concerns. GCC was negotiating to buy a waste disposal site near the M5 and decisions needed to be made soon about waste collection systems and disposal arrangements. Safety on the A417 was a major concern in the light of recent fatalities. Speed and carelessness appeared to be major factors and a road safety campaign should be considered.

8. CDC Councillor

Cllr Mrs Carter reported that the results of the survey of flooding victims were still being analysed. Some £600,000 had been made available by the government but it had not yet been decided whether this should be spent on the victims or on future prevention. CDC did not compare well with other councils with regard to new home efficiency measures. SITA had confirmed that they had no objection to waste disposal lorries being parked outside employees' homes on Gassons. CDC would have eight parking wardens but was not allowed to make a profit out of civil parking enforcement. A working party was looking at threatened post office closures, including the question of who should bear the cost if residents are able to pay Council Tax bills at post offices. A group was looking into ambulance response times.

Cllr Carter and Cllr Palmer had met with Mike Napper and looked round the Coln Park development at Claydon Pike. The developers wished to involve the Town Council. Complaints had been received about the proposed location of the bus stop for Coln Park, but Highways were unlikely to move it. The PCSO had been working with Highways towards a multi-agency approach to oversized lorries on Ha'penny Bridge. Cllr Gillard referred to part of the Convent wall that remained damaged and Cllr Carter undertook to look into this. The Enforcement Officer had written to The Crown about people drinking on the pavement as a result of the smoking ban. Cllr Carter said that

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she frequently followed up complaints about the appearance of the Marina, and the Chairman said that the Council would write to the Enforcement Officer on this matter.

9. Planning Applications and Decision Notices

The application for change of use of land to create new vehicle access and extend the garden at Priory Cottage, Kelmscott Road had been withdrawn. The Clerk had contacted CDC about the continued receipt of retrospective applications, particularly at The Wern. Cllr Carter said that the EA would not support CDC on individual matters and applicants' appeals were likely to be upheld with consequent costs for CDC. Cllr Whistler asked why CDC do not refer back to the conditions imposed by the planning inspector. Cllr Carter said that this would happen at a certain cut-off point. The Enforcement Officer has now written to all residents of The Wern. Cllr Gould expressed concern that this problem would not be resolved for a very long time. Cllr Gillard said that retrospective applications were now becoming normal practice throughout the town and CDC was not properly carrying out its planning responsibilities. Cllr Theodolou agreed that the practice was very irritating, but the CDC Planning Committee have to assess whether or not they are likely to win at appeal.

With regard to the Claydon Pike application, Cllr Gillard asked if there was a distinction between holiday homes and second homes. Holiday homes are restricted to limited occupancy and cannot be primary residences.

10. Correspondence

Copies of relevant letters had been circulated and the actions recommended confirmed.

11. Library

Cllr Mrs Wilson reported that there had been a good response to the questionnaires. Cllr Theodolou said that there was no intention to close any libraries in Gloucestershire, but usage was declining. The hope was that more services could be provided and new ways of using the space could be found. Constructive ideas would be welcomed.

12. Children's Play Area at Recreation Ground

The Clerk confirmed that all work required by last year's inspector's report had been carried out. Rubbish is picked up daily and weeds are treated from March onwards. The Clerk had taken photographs of the structure and taken these to Playground Services. Repairs would cost £750, most of which was labour costs. The rungs on the ladder should be replaced with metal rather than wooden rods. Fencing is required to keep dogs out. It would cost at least £400 to replace the chain-link fencing. Playground Services had suggested a hooped metal fence at a cost of £79/metre. The ground had been re-barked last year at a cost of £4,000 as it was an existing surface. Relocating the playground would be very expensive as specialised surfaces are now required.

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Cllr Mrs Wilson suggested setting up a sub-committee involving the whole community to look at the wider issue of youth and play as there was the possibility of funding for new projects rather than the replacement of existing facilities. The Clerk said that any sub-committee must include two Town Councillors, one of whom should be chair. The play area was due to be inspected again in January/February 2008.

Cllr Cawsey suggested that repairs to address health and safety issues should be done now and longer-term projects could be discussed later. He proposed and Cllr Whistler seconded that the equipment should be repaired at a cost of £750 and the fencing should be replaced with chain-link fencing. This was passed nem con. The Chairman suggested that Cllr Mrs Wilson and Cllr Lambert should pursue the matter of moving the area. Cllr Cawsey asked if moving the play area was a decision for the Town Council or the Trustees. The Council is responsible for the play area and associated repairs, while the Trustees are responsible for the playing field. Moving the play area would therefore be a decision for the Trustees. The play area had been placed in its current location so that children were not playing near the road and to avoid noise to adjacent houses.

13. **Representative on Allcourt Meadow Trust**
Cllr Whistler had volunteered to act as Council representative on the Trust, and he was thanked by the Chairman.
14. **WI Seat**
The WI had offered to replace the seat situated on Town Council land on the corner of Allcourt and wished to know the costs involved. A similar design to the seats at the Free Wharf would be suitable. The Clerk and Cllr Whistler would make enquiries and give a quotation to the WI.
15. **Grass Cutting**
A list of areas cut by the Town Council was circulated. A contractor cuts other grassed areas in the town, but other tenders would be sought.
16. **Matters Outstanding**
Cllr Gillard expressed disappointment that there was no regular coverage of Council meetings in the Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard. The Clerk said that the reporter for the area is sent agendas and he had recently spoken to him on the phone. The Chairman said that he also provides information to the Standard.

The planning application for the replacement of the hut at the Town Wharf had been withdrawn and Cllr Roberts undertook to speak to Mr Lloyd regarding any future action. Cllr Whistler said that repairs to the bridge near the vets' surgery had still not been completed. The Clerk commented that flooding repairs were taking precedence. Cllr Whistler also said that the bank of the drainage channel in Downington was unstable and the footpath might become

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unsafe. Cllr Mrs Carter offered to meet with Cllr Whistler about this. Cllr Carter also said that action would be taken on the bin outside Londis. The illegal shop front and the Market Square sign at Apsley House were mentioned. Cllr Mrs Seale said that the ditch at Downington was choked with plants. The Chairman remarked that ditches were usually cleared of vegetation in the autumn.

An email had been received from a resident about the possibility of recycling facilities being sited outside the Memorial Hall. CDC had asked for suggestions for a site for a cardboard recycling facility. Cllr Sullivan mentioned that a resident of St Birinus had fallen on the path at the edge of the recreation ground and there was also overhanging vegetation. The Clerk said that although CDC HAD originally laid the path, responsibility had been transferred to Fosseyway.

17. Date of Next Meeting
Monday, 5th November 2007.

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