

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held at the Memorial Hall, Lechlade
On Monday, 6th April 2009 starting at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Jones (Chair)
Cllr Adey
Cllr Miss Coakley
Cllr Dover
Cllr Mrs Eatwell
Cllr Gould
Cllr Maskell
Cllr Pritchard
Cllr Roberts
Cllr Sullivan
Cllr Mrs Wilson

GCC Cllr Theodoulou

Clerk to the Council

4 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed Cllrs Adey and Pritchard to the Town Council.

1. Apologies for absence
Apologies were received from Cllrs Mannall and Mrs Seale, and CDC Cllr Mrs Carter
2. Declarations of interest
Cllr Andrew Pritchard declared an interest in agenda item 5b.
3. Approval of minutes of meeting held on 2nd March 2009
The minutes were approved and signed.
4. Matters outstanding
 - a) The Clerk had received several emails regarding the external painting of the Red Lion. It was agreed not to take action unless the Conservation Officer contacted the Clerk.
 - b) Cllr Eatwell stated that rumours circulating in the town that her activities had a 'political' slant were unfounded and she had no intention of standing for election as a CDC councillor as her priority was Lechlade Town Council.
 - c) Mr Witt, a resident, requested permission to make a statement to Council about the precept. This was agreed in advance of the meeting by the Chairman. He was allocated five minutes and spoke about his concerns regarding the increased precept in the new financial year and the over spend during 2008 – 2009.
The Chairman thanked Mr Witt and said that his comments had been noted. The Precept had been set after many difficult decisions on priorities, the need to fund additional commitments and to meet increasing maintenance requirements.

5. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 2nd March 2009
- a) Co-option of new Councillors
The Clerk had circulated notes of the closed meeting on 19th March 2009.
- b) Coln Park
A unanimous decision had been taken by Council at its previous meeting to write to the ward councillors requesting that the Coln Park application should go to CDC Planning Committee. However, the ward councillors felt that the concessions obtained were sufficient to warrant the application being dealt with by delegated powers and that these concessions might be lost if the application went to the Planning Committee. The Clerk also wrote to CDC Cllr Birch, Planning Portfolio Holder, who agreed with the ward councillors' decision. The Chairman reported that he had met with Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, MP, who had been sympathetic and taken the matter away for consideration.
A number of councillors felt that residents' views had not been adequately represented by the ward councillors. The Clerk stated that although the decision had been made Council could still write to the Chief Executive and the Portfolio Holder expressing the disappointment of residents. This was agreed.
It was agreed that the Clerk should organise a meeting with Philip Duncan, Coln Park through Cllr Carter and Mike Napper, CDC Planning.
- c) Allotments
Cllr Roberts reported that several sites were under consideration. He had met with Miles Tuely of New College, who had been very supportive.
6. GCC Councillor
- The re-constituted East Cotswolds Strategic Partnership had met on 31st March 2009. Gloucestershire Market Town Forum had partially funded the administrators' role.
 - Cllr Theodoulou was informed that footpath BLE05 (stile and bridge) near the balancing pond at Butlers Court Farm was unsafe and in need of repair. Due to a collapsed culvert the farmer had removed the culvert and gate and redirected the path over a ditch crossed by a plank. The Clerk agreed to forward details to Cllr Theodoulou.
 - Cllr Theodoulou agreed to chase Highways regarding the provision of sand and bags for residents to fill and store in case of flooding.
7. CDC Councillor
There was no CDC councillor present.
8. Committees
- a) Communications
- The deadline for items for the next newsletter is 20th April.
 - Several residents have sent in photographs of Lechlade for the website.
- b) Cycleways and Footpaths
The committee had met on 11th March and the minutes had been circulated.
- GRCC has offered excellent support for the multi-use path project and a training presentation will take place. Advice will also be sought on how to make the project attractive to potential funders.
 - There may be some funding available from South England Waterparks for the project.
 - Lechlade will lead on the project with support from neighbouring wards.
- It was agreed that the minutes be accepted.

c) Emergency Planning

The committee had met on 16th March and the minutes had been circulated.

- There are 7 Flood Wardens and all ditches are being regularly monitored.
- It is hoped to run a training event in the summer for volunteers.
- Cllr Jones said that levels at Green Farm had been surveyed and CDC were being urged to improve the currently ineffective flood prevention measures. Levels had also been taken at the Downington Ditch.
- Residents will be asked in the next newsletter to provide details of current salt bin locations and suggest new locations, subject to purchase cost. The Town Council is responsible for purchasing bins but Highways are responsible for filling them with salt.

It was agreed that the minutes be accepted.

d) Planning

The list of recent decisions had been circulated. The committee had met on 23rd March and discussed one application. The minutes would be available for the next Council meeting.

- The Clerk was asked to contact the History Society expressing the Town Councils support for the information board, but the Society should speak to the owners of the suggested sites and contact CDC about planning requirements.
- Cllr Theodoulou asked if Council was represented on the Sunhill Action Group. Council was not, but agreed to keep a watching brief. CDC will decide on the application for the extension of the mushroom composting facilities as this is now an agricultural rather than a waste disposal application. Cllr Jones said that the company was now delivering environmental improvements. It was agreed that the planning committee should discuss the application in the first instance.

e) Play and Recreation

The committee had met on 4th March and the minutes had been circulated.

- The Play Space project has been selected to receive Playbuilder funding and the amount should be known very soon. Match funding is not required for this part of the project. The Chairman stressed that the funding included in the 2009-2010 precept is essential to acquiring further funding.
- Council agreed large VAT payments would be taken out of reserves and claimed back.
- A play space open evening for residents has been arranged for 20th May.
- A second set of designs is awaited from selected suppliers. The recent consultations had shown that landscaping detail and the natural environment of the play 'space' is very important to children. The Clerk confirmed that the Council had no tree policy and suggested that the Conservation Officer should be consulted nearer the time.
- There is no legal requirement to carry out an archaeological dig. It was agreed to have a watching brief, ie inspection as the installation and landscaping is being done.
- From 29th April, the Play Rangers are running weekly activities (including the school holidays) at the recreation ground for young people.
- The Clerk will contact the original skateboard park provider for a repairs assessment.
- The clerk will re-organise the presentation about a town youth council.

It was agreed that the minutes be accepted.

f) Highways

The committee had met on 18th March and the minutes had been circulated.

- The Oxford Brookes report is being used as a discussion document and checklist. Several objectives have already been achieved and specific requests sent to Highways.
- A residents' petition asking for a pedestrian crossing from Londis to the Market Place is gaining significant support from residents. A similar request a number of years ago was refused on safety grounds due to the location on a dangerous bend.

- The Clerk confirmed that Highways had been asked to improve road markings in the Market Place, but no discussion had taken place about other areas in the town.

It was agreed that the minutes be accepted.

g) Christmas Lights

The committee had met on 10th March and the minutes had been circulated.

- There was a profit from the Big Band Night and the event will be repeated on 6th March 2010.
- Lechlade and District Society have offered to sponsor the Christmas Tree this year. The Crown has also offered sponsorship.
- Gala Lights are to come to inspect the lights and offer advice.

It was agreed that the minutes be accepted.

h) Cemetery

- The Clerk reported that planning permission is unlikely to be granted for the north-west area as it falls within a Scheduled Ancient Monument site. The south-west area is outside the site, but special permission is likely to be needed for each burial, causing delay. It may be necessary to purchase a different area of land. The Clerk will contact English Heritage to investigate options.
- The Clerk has responded to two letters residents who were concerned about the state of the cemetery. A considerable amount of debris has now been removed.
- Cemetery rules and regulations will be drafted in the near future. These will be provided to funeral directors and a notice will be displayed on the cemetery gates.

It was agreed that the minutes be accepted.

i) Footbridge

No meeting had taken place.

j) Hall and Recreation Trustees

There had been no recent meeting.

k) Finance

To be discussed in the closed session.

9. Correspondence

a) **Roundhouse Rave**

The PCSOs are aware of possible parties arranged at this site, but these are unlikely to be raves.

b) **Fairford Health Check**

Comments to be sent to the Clerk.

c) **Footpath Lights**

It was agreed that the email from a local resident should be forwarded by the Clerk to Highways and Fosseway, asking for trees and shrubs to be cut back.

d) **Application for Street Trading Consent**

There were no objections to the application.

e) **Burford Street Parking Permits**

The Clerk will contact the resident and inform him that his letter had been passed to CDC.

10. Meetings attended.

Details had been circulated.

11. Finance Committee (Closed Session)

- Council agreed, in principle, to fund a pension for the Clerk that would be back dated to 1st April 2009. The Finance Committee was asked to investigate this further and report back at a future meeting. An incremental step (subject to appraisal) and annual cost of living increase would be awarded to the Clerk from 1 April 2009.

- Draft (unaudited) Income and Expenditure Report for 2008-2009 was discussed and agreed prior to the Annual Town meeting (22nd April 2009). It was proposed by Cllr Eatwell and seconded by Cllr Maskell that the draft financial report be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

- **Committee Structure**

A streamlined committee structure for 2009-2010 was discussed. It was agreed that there will be 6 committees. This new structure will be implemented after the Council's Annual Meeting in May. Membership of these committees, detailed contents and reporting will be discussed and agreed at the May Council meeting :

Finance and Management
Communications
Planning
Highways
Environmental Works and Services
Emergency Planning

- Ad hoc working groups will be established as necessary and report to the Town Council meeting or relevant committee as appropriate. Working groups will include:

Footbridge – report to Highways
Cycleways and Footpaths – reporting to Highways
Play and Recreation – reporting to Environmental Works and Services
Christmas Lights – reporting to Communications
Allotments – reporting to Environmental Works and Services

- Lechlade 2000 would be used for forward planning and consultation and involve outside bodies.

12. **Date of next meeting**

- Monday, 11th May 2009 at 7.30pm. This will be the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- It was agreed that Town Council meetings will take place on the second Monday of each month with effect from May 2009. There will be no meeting in August.