

WINGERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on 1 February 2006

Present: Councillor Mrs A Sainty (Chair)
Councillor SJ Ellis Councillor Mrs M Parker
Councillor T Fisher Councillor W Pickford
Councillor CE Hutchings Councillor RAC Scothern
Councillor K Moore Councillor T Snowdon
Councillor J Ollis Councillor R Stafford
Councillor PW O'Neill Councillor K Walker

016/2006 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

017/2006 Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2006 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

018/2006 Matters Arising

Further to minute 003/2006 there were a number of queries concerning the continuing problem of water flooding on part of Langer Lane. The Clerk reported that a representative of Severn Trent Water had that day given an assurance that a correlation machine would arrive in the area on Friday 3 February to try and pin-point the leak after which engineers would prioritise the repairs. However Councillor W Pickford reported the County Council view that problem may be more complex than a simple mains leak at the point where water surfaced. Members expressed dissatisfaction that the flooding had continued for nine weeks and was a potential safety hazard as well as a waste of water.

019/2006 Public Forum

Concern was raised over the general state of Longedge Lane and in particular over the stretch from 171 to the Church where contractors left the road and pavement in a poor state and had failed to relay grass. This had worsened the situation which was already difficult due to the narrow footpath and sunken kerbs. Concern was also expressed at the excessive speed of many vehicles using Longedge Lane.

A query was raised as to the impact on Central Drive of the proposed new residential development adjacent to the junction of Allendale Road and Central Drive. The Clerk read out a section of the conditions placed on the applicant by the Planning Authority, but the precise impact was not clear. It was noted that the planning approval included an aspiration that the developer, local residents and the Highway Authority might come to some agreement whereby the whole of that section of Central Drive could be upgraded.

Resolved: that the Clerk write to the Highway Authority expressing concern about the state of Longedge Lane with particular reference to the apparent failure of recent contractors to properly reinstate following major work at one stretch of the lane; that the Chair raise the matter of speeding vehicles during her next discussions with the Police.

020/2006 Police Matters

Apologies for absence had been received from PC Anderson who had been called away to duty in the south of the county. However crime statistics for the Parish had been forwarded and were reported to the meeting. There were ten reported incidents in December (six thefts, three of criminal damage and one Pub Watch incident) and eleven reported incidents in January (five thefts, five of criminal damage and one domestic assault).

Inspector Durham attended the meeting at a later stage and explained the demands on his officers which sometimes made it difficult for them to attend meetings. He also explained that his officers were having to devote more time to a neighbouring area where the level of criminal incidents was considerable greater than in Wingerworth. However he assured Members that his officers would always be available to investigate reported incidents in Wingerworth. There were expressions of appreciation for the support of the Police at the Remembrance Day service and in the investigation of damage to the Parish's Christmas Tree which seemed to have stopped the vandalism and could yet lead to the apprehension of one of the perpetrators.

021/2006 Planning Matters

Members on the District Council's Planning Committee did not participate in this section of the meeting other than to provide some information on procedural matters at District Council.

The following planning application was reported:

1454 Batemans Mill Caravan Park, Mill Lane Continued Use of Site

The application was noted.

The following planning decisions were reported:

919 R 27 Oak Crescent	Side Two Storey Ext inc Garage
1098 G Jnct Acclendale Road & Central Drive	18 New Dwellings & Road Works
1298 R Emmett Wood Farm, Swathwick Lane	Parking on Hardcore Area
1315 G The Old Woodhouse, Middle Rd, HWd	Two Storey Front Extension plus
1319 G 25 Wheatcroft Close	Kitchen Extens'n & Conservatory
1337 G 25 Longedge Rise	Two Storey Side Extension plus
1353 G 180 Nethermoor Road	Single Storey Extension to Front
1367 G 143 Longedge Lane	Widening of Existing Access

G=Granted R=Refused W=Withdrawn

The decisions were noted.

022/2006 Accounts

The Clerk presented the details of income received and payments made during the month of December 2005 and the budget position at the end of the third quarter.

Resolved: that the accounts be approved and the budget position accepted.

023/2006 Finance

The Clerk submitted bank reconciliations as at the end of December 2005.

Resolved: that the report be received and noted.

024/2006 Derbyshire Association of Local Councils

The following circulars had been received:

- **Circular 01/2006**
 - Index 2005
- **Circular 02/2006**
 - Land Registry
 - Freedom of Information – Offer of Assistance
- **Circular 03/2006**
 - Parochial Fees
- **Circular 04/2006**
 - National Salary Award for Clerks
- **Circular 05/2006**
 - Meetings of Local Councils
- **Circular 06/2006**
 - 2006 Awards
- **Circular 07/2006**
 - CiLCA Training – Quality Programme
- **Circular 08/2006**
 - Philip Whitehead MEP – Memorial Service
 - Pensions for Clerks
 - Clerk Vacancy – Hathersage Parish Council

The circulars were noted.

025/2006 Correspondence

The Clerk reported on correspondence received during the past month:

- Parish
 - Wayne Bexton – Progress as Tree Warden
 - Kate Brailsford – Concern over Road Safety
 - Wingerworth Community Association – Annual Village Quiz 15 March 2006
 - Parishioners – Concern over Tree Obscuring Street Light

The Chair outlined the concerns over road safety at the junction of Joseph Fletcher Drive and New Road and the apparent inability of the Highway Authority to take steps to improve the layout so as to lessen the risk of accidents. The Clerk read out sections of a letter concerned with the obscuring of the street light on Pond Lane.

Resolved: that the Parish's Tree Warden be invited to a future meeting of the Council; that the Road Safety Committee be convened to consider the concerns raised about safety at the junction of Joseph Fletcher Drive and New Road; that the Clerk write to the County Council requesting that the problem in Pond Lane be resolved.

- North East Derbyshire District Council
 - Licensing Act – Premises Act
 - Arts Connections – Quarterly Newsletter

The correspondence was noted.

- Derbyshire County Council
 - Water Issuing on Langer Lane – Progress Report
 - Sleepers on Longedge Lane
 - Purchasing of Grit
 - On Board – Winter Edition
 - Parish Events within the Highway

Comments were made on the confusion over the ownership of some of the frontages on the lower section of Longedge Lane. The correspondence was noted.

- Other
 - Nottingham East Midlands Airport – Draft Master Plan Exhibition Programme
 - Zurich Municipal – Personal Accident Cover for Volunteers
 - Dogs Trust – Canine Care Card Scheme
 - Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service – Budget Setting Consultation

The correspondence was noted.

026/2006 Reports from Committees and Representatives

Councillor R Scothern informed Members of a meeting due to take place the following week between the Council and the Bowling Club.

Councillor T Snowden reported on improvements to Footpath 21 which included a new handrail and work in progress at the New Road end of the path. A meeting had been set up with the County's Rights of Way Officer on 24 February when there would be an opportunity to discuss some of the regulatory issues relating to footpaths. Members expressed appreciation for the work of volunteers in improving footpaths in the Parish and suggested agencies that may be able to provide assistance with future work.

The Chair reported on discussions with the Tennis Club. There was still some dissatisfaction from the Club over the quality of the surface of the courts and there was a request for some form of written agreement covering the use of the Parish facilities by the Club.

The Chair reported on two issues that had been raised at the recent Listening Service. One concerned the poor state of the pavements around Central Drive which included a raised manhole cover and a depression containing some form of stop tap. It was queried why the County Council was improving pavements in other parts of the Parish which had not been in anywhere such a bad state as the pavements around Central Drive. The second issue concerned the large quantity of litter at the shops off Allendale Road (which was due to be discussed as a later agenda item at the meeting in progress).

Resolved: that the Clerk convenes a meeting of the Finance Committee to consider an agreement or letter of understanding between the Council and the Tennis Club over the use of Parish facilities; that the Clerk contacts the County Council to emphasise the dangerous state of the footpaths around Central Drive.

027/2006 Clerk's Report

The Chair explained that this new agenda item was an attempt to provide Members with a broader summary of developments taking place in the Parish. The written report enabled Members to read through the report in advance of the meeting. The saving of presentational time at the meeting afforded more time for Members to raise any issues of particular interest.

Resolved: that the Clerk's Report becomes a standard agenda item and that Councillor K Walker investigates the possibility of placing the report on the Council's website.

028/2006 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Council was confirmed as 1 March 2006.

029/2006 Chair's Allowance

Councillor Mrs A Sainty vacated the Chair and left the meeting for this item. Councillor R Scothern, as Vice Chair of the Council, took the Chair.

Councillor R Scothern reminded Members that they had asked for a review of the Chair's Allowance at the annual Budget Meeting of the Council given that there had been no allowance for inflation during the life of the present Council. He briefly outlined the reasons for a Chair's Allowance and reported on the deliberations of the meeting requested by Members to consider the matter. At that meeting, he and Councillor S Ellis assisted by the Clerk had considered the matter fully and were recommending that the allowance be increased by 10% with effect from 1 April 2006. This would effectively reinstate the allowance in real terms to the level when the current Council took office three years ago.

Resolved: it was unanimously agreed that the Chair's Allowance should be increased to £440 a year with effect from 1 April 2006.

030/2006 Items of Expenditure

The Clerk itemised two areas requiring expenditure in the near future. One was the replacement of the aging commercial vacuum cleaner at the Parish Hall. Although the cleaner was still working, it was feared that its life was limited and the Clerk needed to be able to make a prompt replacement when the time came given the importance of maintaining cleanliness at the Parish Hall.

The second area of expenditure related to a new VDU screen for the Council's computer system. The current screen was subject to a degree of interference that made it difficult for the Clerk who spent a number of hours a week on the system.

Resolved: that the Clerk be authorised to spend up to £500 on a new vacuum cleaner for the Parish Hall and up to £200 on a new VDU screen.

031/2006 Charges for the Parish Hall

The Clerk presented a schedule of revised charges for the use of facilities at the Parish Hall. These had been increased in line with inflation. The schedule had been discussed with the Lettings Secretary and was in keeping with the increases adopted at the Budget Meeting for the use of other Council facilities.

Resolved: it was unanimously agreed that the new schedule of charges for the use of facilities at the Parish Hall should be adopted for implementation on 1 September 2006.

032/2006 Discussions and Proposed Contract with Tates Lateshopper

The Chair reported on a meeting she and the Clerk had held with the Area Manager of Tates to raise various concerns about the state of the area immediately around the shopping complex at Allendale Road. The meeting had been positive in agreeing on the need for action to clean up the area and Tates had agreed to provide a second litter bin, to look at ways of cleaning up the graffiti on the shop walls and to repair the guttering. There had also been discussions on ways of cleaning up the litter that made the area such an eyesore.

At a more recent meeting, the Clerk had met with the Regional Manager of Tates and it was now proposed that the company should contract the Council for two hours a week of litter cleaning in the area immediately around the shops. Such a contract would be for a three month trial period, with the Council invoicing the company so as to recover all staffing costs, and would be subject to a review towards the end of the three month period. Members welcomed the willingness of the company to enter into a contractual partnership with the Council to try and resolve a long standing problem that was the cause of many complaints, although it was accepted that this new arrangement did not cover the County Council's premises at the Centre or the District Council's recycling area, both of which were beset with litter problems.

Resolved: it was unanimously agreed that the Council enters into a contractual agreement with the company as outlined by the Clerk whereby the Council commits two hours a week to cleaning litter on a full cost recovery basis.

033/2006 Donations

Relate Chesterfield and North Derbyshire. Following a request for a donation from this organisation, the Clerk had sought information regarding the extent to which the Parishioners made use of the service. It appeared that 47 people from the S42 6 post code area had been offered appointments during 2005, and even though this area was not co-terminus with the Parish boundary, Members were content that service was available to and used by Parishioners.

SAFE@Last. Given that the service covered such a wide area spread over parts of three counties, Members felt that more detailed information was needed on the availability to and use by Parishioners before making a decision.

Resolved: it was unanimously agreed that a donation of £50 be made to Relate Chesterfield and North Derbyshire and that the Clerk seeks further information on the availability to and use by Parishioners of the SAFE@Last service.

034/2006 Any Other Business

Councillor W Pickford reported on new guidance issued by the County Council on action that will be taken to cut back unruly hedges and trees.

Councillor J Ollis alerted Members to the possible benefits of installing CCTV to reduce vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Although Members had considered the use of CCTV in the past, it was accepted that it may be worthwhile looking at the matter again, particularly if external funding was available to help meet the costs.

Members of the Public were thanked for their attendance and asked to leave the meeting for the following item which was of a confidential nature.

035/2006 Staffing

The Clerk raised three staffing issues. One concerned the continuing absence of a member of staff who was still recovering from a broken bone in her leg. The Clerk had visited her and although she was recovering it may yet be some time before she was fit to resume duties. In keeping with local government practice, she was still on full pay and Members agreed that this should continue pending her anticipated return to work within the next couple of months.

There had been a request from the Church to employ a member of the Council's staff on an occasional and casual hourly basis. It was accepted that such an arrangement was in order provided that a clear division was maintained between such casual work and the full time post with the Council in terms of both hours and duties.

The Clerk request that a float of £50 be given to a named member of the Council's staff who was purchasing legitimate items for use in his work in the Parish but who was not reimbursed until the month end. The float would be helpful given that the Council did not operate a petty cash account and would be covered by a letter of agreement authorising the Council to reclaim the float by way of a deduction from the final salary of the member of staff. The allocation of float to the value of £50 was unanimously agreed.

The Chair thanked Members for their contributions and declared the meeting closed at 8.38pm.