

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT
THE LOWER SCHOOL, HIGH STREET MEPPERSHALL ON 16 JULY 2009

PRESENT Councillors Chapman (in the Chair), Bryant, Castle, Collins, Crossley, Foskett, Merryweather, Parsons and Sykes
Unitary Councillor Brown, 5 members of the public and the Clerk

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Councillor Waite

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from members, declarations and the nature thereof in relation to any item on this agenda.

- (a) **Personal interest**, where a decision on the matter in hand would affect the member, their partner, relatives or close friends, a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors. Any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £5,000 or any body in which such persons hold a position of general management or control.
- (b) **Prejudicial interest**, where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would view the member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 16 July 2009 at the Lower School, High Street, Meppershall are attached to these minutes but not re-circulated.

At this point the Chairman suspended proceedings to allow a period of up to 30 minutes to receive reports from our Unitary Councillors and to enable members of the public to question Councillors or make observations.

Councillor Brown commented on the relatively smooth transition of the County and District Councils to Unitary status and, with particular reference to Planning matters and the Fire and Rescue Services, promised that he and Councillor Burt would do whatever might be required to support the Parish Council at Unitary level.

Mesdames Bass and Wright re-affirmed their opposition to the erection of the gate on the access track to the allotment field, Mrs Wright suggesting that the Council, by erecting the gate, was acting unlawfully under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act and that the number of years that had passed since she had last paid the Licence Fee had given her a permanent right of way over the track

Mrs Crawford expanded on her letter to the Chairman (copy attached to these minutes) in regard to her mobile home at Woodview Nurseries which the Planning Authority are insisting should be removed.

Mr Ansell from the Village Hall Management Committee produced a regulatory blueprint for the controls to be implemented regarding Bonfire Night which were accepted by the Council.

Mr Carne referred to the concrete blocks that have appeared on the allotment field track, some dead trees on Cracklehill Road and the problems being experienced on the allotment field with the tenant on a neighbouring plot. (Councillor to speak with Bob Morwood – the arboricultural officer at Central Bedfordshire Council

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

5A PLANNING AND HOUSING

5A(a) Planning applications pending

- i. 05/01366/SE73 - Land between 92 & 112 Fildyke Road Removal of footpath provision

5A(b) Approvals/Refusals/Withdrawals Received

5A(c) Appeals Pending

- i. Land to rear of 82 Fildyke Road

5A(d) Recent Applications

5A(e) Other Planning Matters

- i A copy of a letter from the owners/occupiers of 'The Pigling' Woodview Nurseries is attached - see Public part of the meeting above.
- ii Councillor Castle raised the question of communal land identification and Boundaries (e.g. 'ransom strips') where the Council may be involved and he suggested that steps be taken to clarify the Council's position both now and for future reference.

RESOLVED that all the above planning items be noted.

5B FINANCE

- i **Audit** The accounts to 31 March have been approved by the Chairman and the Finance Working Group, signed by the Chairman and the Clerk and passed to the Internal Auditors
RESOLVED - noted
- ii **Neighbourhood Watch** . The re-establishment of this facility would benefit from the return of the funds put to general council use when the previous organisation was disbanded.
RESOLVED that the amount be established from the accounts.

5C HIGHWAYS & LIGHTING

- i **Highway Parish Liaison**
Councillor Bryant reported that, probably as a result in the upheaval in local government there had not been much liaison
- ii **Shefford Hill Footpath**
It was suggested that the signage for the temporary footpath down Shefford Hill should by now have been erected - Unitary Councillor Brown to check this through Central Bedfordshire Council.
- lii **Enhanced Parish Partnership Scheme 2009/2010**
Councillor Bryant produced a schedule of works to be carried out under this Scheme.
- iv **Additional off road parking in Fildyke Road**
No further news is available concerning a start date

RESOLVED that all Highways matters above be noted.

5D ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE

5D(a) Fosters Field

- i **Lighting of the teenage area**
The order for the ambient lighting has been passed to the suppliers
RESOLVED - noted

5D(b) Play Equipment Annual Inspection

- l A comprehensive 35 page report has been received from Digley Associates Ltd highlighting various defects attributable to 'wear and tear', installation defect, 'design defect', 'poor maintenance', or 'age'.
The report needs to be studied by the Environment & Leisure Group to establish the next course of action i.e. which repairs require immediate action (each defect has a 'resolve by' date) and a report made to the full council in September
RESOLVED that the report be passed to Clements Construction for implementing the necessary work within the suggested timescales

5D(e) Old Road Meadow

- Complete Weed Control have completed a course of spot weed spraying.
RESOLVED - noted

5E HEALTH & SAFETY & RISK MANAGEMENT

6. WRY CLOSE ALLOTMENT FIELD

- 6(a) The gate on the track has been erected
- 6(b) A copy of a letter from the owner and resident of 37 High Street is attached
- 6(c) Final decisions need to be reached on the Licence Fees and the type of lock to be fitted bearing in mind the advantages and disadvantages of keys against combination locks
RESOLVED that before further action is taken, both with regard to the above and to the points raised in the open part of this meeting, the legal position be established

7. PARISH PLAN

- With no further Councillor responses submitted, this will be an agenda item for the September when each of the points highlighted by Councillor Parsons when he was in the Chair, will be the subject of discussion.
Councillor Bryant requested that a hard copy of the schedule be sent to him.
RESOLVED notes

8. GRASS CUTTING/GROUNDS MAINTENANCE TENDERS

- The requested maps have finally been obtained from Amey
Members of the Environment & Leisure Group to report on their findings in the establishment of the Council's precise requirements for each area of grass within the tender document. The revised detailed tender documents will then be made available for the September Council meeting and tenders invited for the season 2010/2011
RESOLVED noted

Meppershall Parish Council meeting 16 July 2009

9. CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
A copy of a letter from Central Bedfordshire regarding a Review of Electoral Arrangements is attached
RESOLVED - noted

10. ORDERS FOR THE PAYMENT OF MONEY FOR AUTHORISATION
Schedule for authorisation of payments is attached for Authorisation and Approval

11. DATE & VENUE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
The next meetings of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 2 September 2008 and Wednesday 7 October 2009 at the Lower School