

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT
THE LOWER SCHOOL, HIGH STREET, MEPPERSHALL ON 6 JANUARY 2010

PRESENT Councillor Chapman (in the Chair), Bryant, Castle, Collins, Crossley, Foskett, Merryweather, Parsons and Sykes

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillor Waite, Unitary Councillor Brown

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported to the meeting that Michael Foster had passed away on 30 December. Michael ran Polehanger Farm for many years before relinquishing the reins to his son Chris. During his lifetime he had been highly respected in the village and a good friend and benefactor. He had served on the Parish Council for many years both as a Councillor and as Chairman

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 6 January 2010 at the Lower School, High Street, Meppershall are attached to these minutes but not re-circulated

At this point, the Chairman closed the meeting to receive reports from the Unitary Councillors and to allow a period of up to 15 minutes to enable members of the public to question Councillors or make observations

The point was raised that some local residents have been observed taking salt from the bins and using the contents on their home pathways.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda for this meeting

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
Councillor Tony Brown hopes to be in a position to make a report to the this Council meeting. The matter remains outstanding
- ii. CB/09/06235/FULL/Methodist Chapel, High Street/change of use and conversion of church into single dwelling
RESOLVED - noted

5A(b) Approvals/Refusals/Withdrawals Received

Approval - CB/09/06287/FULL 39 Orchard Close pitch roof to single storey extension
RESOLVED - noted

5A(c) Appeals Pending

5A(d) Recent Applications

- i CB/09/07025/FULL - The Hollies Campton Road, = Change of use from industrial to residential with part demolition and single storey extension
RESOLVED - object on the grounds of it being outside the Settlement Envelope

5A(e) Other Planning Matters

- i **Central Bedfordshire Council Housing Strategy Consultation** event will be held on Friday 15 January at Chicksands 9.30 until 4.00 pm incl lunch -one person from each Council only. Confirmation sought that Councillor Crossley will attend
Councillor Crossley confirmed that he would attend
RESOLVED - noted

5B FINANCE

- i **Audit**
A meeting of the Finance Working Group convened on 29 October to consider the comments made by both Internal and External Auditors. These were of quite a minor nature. The Action Plan is in process of compiling
RESOLVED - noted

5C HIGHWAYS & LIGHTING

- i **Highway Parish Liaison**
Councillor Bryant reported that the problem with the drain had not been resolved and he would follow this up with Central Bedfordshire Council. On the same basis the light column outside the Village Hall - both he and Councillor Birt would take further steps
RESOLVED - noted

- ii **Salt Bins & Rubbish Bins**
Councillor Bryant reported that the salt bin in Fildyke Road contained more rubbish than salt
RESOLVED that two new salt bins should be obtained together with a new rubbish bin and the Caretaker should be required to clear the rubbish before the existing bin is re-filled
- iii **Shefford Hill Footpath**
Message received from Paul Makin, Mayor of Shefford suggesting no further developments at present.
RESOLVED - noted
- iv **Additional off road parking in Fildyke Road**
Clerk reported that the recent weather conditions had put the schedule back but that the work was still imminent
RESOLVED - noted

5D ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE

5D(a) Fosters Field

- i **Lighting of the teenage area**
The Clerk reported that ground conditions were still not suitable for a heavy vehicle
RESOLVED - noted

5D(b) Play Equipment Inspection & Maintenance

- I **Annual Inspection**
At the meeting in December it was agreed that all the medium risk items should be actioned and resolved. In fact all the defects are low risk although 'do-by-dates' have been suggested and some of these have expired
RESOLVED that the work be carried out but that a second quote for the work
- ii **Future Inspections and Maintenance**
The Clerk reported that the cost of producing the new Inspection form would be under £100
RESOLVED that the order be placed and the new system brought into use as soon as possible
- iii **Fosters Field Maintenance Work**
The cost of the repair of the seat by the new handyman went astray but has now been seen at £110. The repair will take place shortly and the clearance of the concrete dumped round the hedgerow will follow shortly.
RESOLVED - noted

5D(c) Old Road Meadow

- i Councillor Foskett had nothing to report

5D(d) Crackle Hill Land

Repairs have been completed and although some Councillors had expected to see a gate rather than a barrier, it was
RESOLVED to leave the barrier in position

6. OTHER MEETINGS

Central Beds Community Safety Partnership - Tuesday 19 January 6pm to 9pm
Councillor Chapman will try to make this meeting.
RESOLVED - noted

7, WRY CLOSE ALLOTMENT FIELD

i Tenancy Agreements and Renewals.

There have delays and the Clerk is chasing for outstanding amounts. Carry forward for report to next meeting.
RESOLVED - noted

ii Tanks and taps

Requirements and provision to be reviewed. Mr Carne agreed to renew the search for suitable tanks.
RESOLVED - noted

iii Track Licences

Following the discussion in November, this question was deferred to this meeting for a decision on the action to be taken with regard to the gate and the licences, The matter was discussed
RESOLVED that the new gate be moved further up the track and a height restriction barrier installed in its place. A green chain link fence should then be erected to separate the track from the allotments to preserve the security aspect of the Allotment Field

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

Councillor Castle had no aspects to refer that are nor contained elsewhere in this agenda
RESOLVED - noted

9. GRASS CUTTING

A summation of the Tenders received is attached to these minutes (but not re-circulated) for a choice of contractor for the next three years. Due to the financial spread of the Tenders the matter was subjected to considerable discussion, Contractor E was selected for the additional line management and supervision that would be employed.
RESOLVED Contractor E should be awarded the contract and the Clerk revealed the identity of the Company as John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd

10. VENUE FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

Councillor Bryant reported to the last meeting that for 3 of the meeting dates will not be available at the School. Whilst the regulations state that licensed premises should not be used, they can be used in the last resort
RESOLVED that the venue should be moved to the Village Hall if the Council's requirements can be met. Councillor Chapman to speak with the VHMC and report back

11 CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE DRAFT PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY

Copy letter attached re short notice request for consultation
RESOLVED - noted

12. **CLERK'S ANNUAL REVIEW**

Chairman to report on progress in establishing 'modus operandii'

RESOLVED this be carried forward to the next meeting

13. **ORDERS FOR THE PAYMENT OF MONEY FOR AUTHORISATION**

Schedule of payments for Authorisation and Approval will be distributed at the Council Meeting

RESOLVED that the schedule be approved and the Payments authorised but a check made on the VHMC accounts before their cheque is issued

14. **PRECEPT for 2010-2011**

The figures and calculations are attached to these minutes but not re-circulated.

After adjustment for the increased grass cutting costs it was

RESOLVED that the Precept be increased to £37,000

15. **VENUE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The next meetings of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 3 March 2010 and Wednesday 7 April 2010 at the Lower School