

MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT
THE LOWER SCHOOL, HIGH STREET, MEPPERSHALL ON 3 FEBRUARY 2010

PRESENT Councillors Chapman (in the Chair), Bryant, Castle, Foskett, Merryweather & Parsons, Unitary Councillors Birt and Brown, 4 members of the public and the Clerk

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE received from Councillors Collins, Crossley, Sykes and Waite

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman invited P C Busby to speak to the meeting. There were only 2 items on the monthly crime figures and the Community Policeman went on to introduce the new Sergeant in charge of the area Sgt Russell Goldsmith who enquired as to the most important aspect of local policing. He was advised that parked cars and speeding cars were the major problems and of those two the major concern was speeding. This would become the priority for the local force..

The Chairman then introduced a representative from John O'Conner (Grounds Maintenance) Ltd who were awarded the village Grass Cutting contract at the last meeting. The Agreement was signed by the Clerk for the Council and by Mr Shaun Nicholls, the Regional Manager for the Contractor. Mr Nicholls hoped for a long and rewarding relationship and promised that both he and the John Marlow, the local Contract Manager would make every effort to ensure satisfaction

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
RESOLVED that the minutes be adopted and they were signed by the Chairman

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

Councillor Brown advised the meeting that, inevitably, the overall Precept would have to be increased for 2010/2011. There was also a discussion on the availability or otherwise of salt for the roads, the number and siting of bins and the removal of their contents by residents for their own properties.

The Editor of the Messenger requested details of the various Chairmen of the Parish Council over the past 25 years which detail the Clerk will obtain

There followed some discussion on the single site selected by the Unitary Planning Authority out of the 18 submitted sites submitted in Meppershall under the Local Development Framework for recommendation to the Secretary of State under Central Government's Housing Policy for the period 2005 – 2026.

The question of the erection of the fencing along the side of the Allotment Field Track – now necessary to ensure the security of the Allotment Field following the re-siting of the gate and its replacement at its present location with a high level barrier at considerable extra cost to the Council - was raised by Mrs Beryl Wright who was concerned that the run of the fence might make parking difficult. The Chairman assured her that her concern would be considered and accommodated if possible.

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
Councillor Tony Brown reported on this long outstanding matter for which it appears that there is no solution -- a copy of an email from David Lamb of the Planning Authority is attached
RESOLVED that a letter be sent to the Planning Authority regretting this unsatisfactory outcome
- ii. CB/09/06235/FULL/Methodist Chapel, High Street/change of use and conversion of church into single dwelling. Councillors understood that this application had been withdrawn.
RESOLVED that the Clerk should ascertain the current situation
- iii. CB/09/07025/FULL - The Hollies Campton Road, = Change of use from industrial to residential with part demolition and single storey extension
RESOLVED - noted

5A(b) Approvals/Refusals/Withdrawals Received

Approval

5A(c) Appeals Pending

5A(d) New applications received

A new application NOT received is a revised submission for a bungalow at 30 Shefford Road

RESOLVED that enquiries be made

5A(e) Other Planning Matters

- i **Central Bedfordshire Council Housing Strategy Consultation** event
Councillor Crossley was to have reported on this consultation - in his absence this is put forward to the next meeting..
RESOLVED - noted
- ii **Local Development Framework**
Chairman to report
This agenda item was covered in the 'open' part of the meeting
RESOLVED - noted

- lii **Planning Enforcement Policy**
Central Bedfordshire Council has produced a booklet bearing this title and suggests that each Councillor downloads his/her copy from the website
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 on the number and the hazards relating to potholes that have appeared since the snow and frost. He further reported no progress with either the street light column outside the Village Hall or the drain in the High Street
RESOLVED - noted
- li **Shefford Hill Footpath (Open agenda item)**
Nothing to report
- iv **Additional off road parking in Flldyke Road**
The work to make the additional parking spaces available has started
RESOLVED - noted

- 5D **ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE**
- 5D(a) **Fosters Field**
- i **Lighting of the teenage area**
The suppliers have been advised that the ground is still too wet to accommodate any heavy vehicle and the installation will need to be further delayed
RESOLVED - noted
- 5D(b) **Play Equipment Inspection & Maintenance**
- i It is expected that the new weekly forms will be available to be used from the beginning of March, by which time a review should have been made of the Village Caretaker's contract.
- li Quarterly inspections by Digleys will be scheduled for February August and November each year commencing, if possible this month and subject to both Council and Digleys approval
- iii Annual Inspection by Digleys in May each year
- iv Actual maintenance work to be put out either to Clements Construction Ltd or to Setter Play Equipment
RESOLVED - noted
- 5D(c) **Old Road Meadow**
- i Councillor Foskett had nothing to report

6. **OTHER MEETINGS - already held**

- I **Central Beds Community Safety Partnership** - Tuesday 19 January -
The Chairman had been unable to attend this meeting
RESOLVED - noted
- li **Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan Workshop**
No Councillors had attended this Workshop/Meeting
- lii **Meppershall Green Infrastructure Plan Workshop to be held** at the Village Hall
on Thursday 21st February and the Chairman requested that Councillors make
every effort to attend this
RESOLVED - noted

7, **WRY CLOSE ALLOTMENT FIELD**

- i **Tenancy Agreements and Renewals.**
There are some rents due that have not yet been paid - Councillor Collins is
aware of the current availability o report
- ii **Tanks and taps**
Requirements and provision (Mr Carne?) to be reviewed
- 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,
RESOLVED that a high level; barrier be installed at the current location of the
gate which should be moved up the track and as fence and gatwes be installed at
trackside

8. **HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES**

Councillor Castle had no issues to raise./

9. **VENUE FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Councillor Chapman reported that there were some issues with existing regular
bookings at the Village Hall
RESOLVED - that the item be carried forward to the next meeting when the
possibility of amending Standing Orders and changing the Council regular meeting
dates from the first Wednesday to the Second Monday of each month

10. **CLERK'S ANNUAL REVIEW**

Chairman to report on progress in establishing 'modus operandii'
Marked forward to the next meeting

11. **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 payments be approved and payment authorised

12. **PRECEPT for 2010-2011**

Documentation submitted for £37,000
RESOLVED - noted

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

The next meetings of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 3 March 10 and Wednesday 7 April 2010