

MITCHELDEAN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

OF A MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 9th December 2013 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL,
AFTER DUE NOTICE HAD BEEN GIVEN.

Present

Parish Councillors:

Mr D M Scott (Chairman)
Mrs J. Fraser
Mrs S F Henschley
Mr A Edwards
Mr A Maliphant
Ms K A Wozencroft
Mr Huw Baker
Mrs S Gates

District Councillors:

Mrs J Fraser

Clerk:

Mrs Sandra Schwanethal

[Mr B Waddell, Mrs S Gardner, V Gardner, M Jones, Mr Parker, N Harrison, P Leslie & Mrs Beddis attended the meeting as Electors Mr A Kimber attended as an interested party being employed at VPBP]

Agenda Item 1 To Note Apologies for absence: Mrs K A Baker

Agenda Item 2 Members of the Public issues:

Mrs S Gardner spoke on behalf of several Townsend residents about their disappointment about not being consulted about the location and installation of new play equipment behind their properties. It was felt that the residents should be asked and consulted about any changes or developments that directly impact on their enjoyment of their gardens. After the complaint that was made by the same residents about not being consulted about the skate park the council had assured them that they would be consulted about any future developments, but this had clearly not happened.

The Chairman said he would respond.

Mr Waddell said the council are not communicating with the local people effectively.

Mr Parker asked for the council's views on the planning application for the Solar panel park on Breakheart Hill. Mr Parker went on to say he may be interested in becoming a parish councillor. The chairman asked him to apply in writing.

Agenda Item 3 Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests:

Cllr Edwards declared an interest as President of Mitcheldean Sports Club.

Agenda Item 4 To Confirm the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Mitcheldean Parish Council held on the 11th November 2013.

The minutes were deemed to be an accurate and true reflection of the Meeting, approved by Council and duly signed by the Chairman.

Agenda Item 5. Sub Committees:

Communications:- To discuss publicity requirements for new play equipment-LAG funding.

The committee were made aware of the contractual obligations they were subject to having accepted LAG funding with regard to specific wording required in any media/press release.

Planning: District. Cllr. J Fraser took no part in planning discussions.

To approve the alternative proposal 2 style houses on the Freemans Glos Rd Development. (Noted for the Minutes only)

The following applications were considered;

P1648/13/FUL Tarn House, Bradley Court Road

Erection of single storey rear extensions Decision: No objections

P1726/13/FUL 5 Ash Grove.

Single storey side alterations and extension. Decision: No objections

P1680/13/FUL Pool cottage, Wigpool common

Erection of single storey extension & 2 sun pipes. Decision: No objections

P1639/13/FULL-Land to the north east of Vantage Point Business Park

Proposed development of solar photovoltaic panels and associated works.

(Q & A from Bee Green).

Formal reply as given to FODDC.

While the Parish Council understands the need for renewable energy sources it is felt that the proposed site at Breakheart Hill, Mitcheldean is an unsuitable location for a large quantity of solar photovoltaic panels that will have a negative visual impact on the surrounding area. There is also the additional concern over the loss of a 'green field site' and the possible re-designation of the area in the future. The scheme appears to offer little or no benefit to the village and no compensation is proposed for the loss that will have to be endured on a daily basis by the local inhabitants. Noise pollution and glare are other areas of concern. As there are currently no official recommendations or guidelines from the Government or the District Council about the siting of solar panels, Mitcheldean Parish Council would ask that this application is deferred.

To discuss Silver Street as an Exception site

(Cllr Wozencroft took no part in the discussion)

Cllr Maliphant said this area would be looked at within the Neighbourhood Plan discussions along with other sites that have already been identified.

The clerk was asked to instigate a meeting with Strategic Housing and Severn Vale.

Playing Fields-

Correspondence received from Liz Lewitt indicated the Pyramid and Tetrahedron play equipment was due to be delivered and installed on the 20th December. The safety surface would be installed immediately afterwards.

The clerk was still waiting for quotes to come in for the safety surface around the climbing wall. Unfortunately, the contractors who had supplied the bark for the play area earlier in the year did not wish to quote for further works.

Agenda Item 6 County/District Councillors Reports

Report from - District Councillor Brian Robinson

Cabinet is considering the Council's draft budget this week. The Cabinet papers outline a balanced budget for 2014–15 with no increase in Council Tax. However the underlying position has deteriorated because extra provision needs to be made for past years pension liabilities and the investment income is less than predicted.

Further cuts in government grant in future years mean additional savings will need to be made in the medium term. Part of this will come from changes in senior management structure.

Leisure services are also under review. The council is considering investing in our leisure services to improve facilities and encourage more use by the public. This in turn would generate more use and increase income allowing the leisure facilities to run more efficiently.

Some changes to charging for car parks are outlined with substantially lower price for regular users through season tickets and a minimum stay period in the towns of two-hours. Mitcheldean will keep a minimum one-hour stay at 20p.

The council is also considering using capital funding to help build more affordable homes.

A public consultation on the draft budget will take place over the next few months prior to Full Council agreeing the final budget in February 2014.

Superfast broadband has finally arrived in Coleford and the work to complete fibre installation to telephone cabinets in Drybrook, Lydbrook and Cinderford will be completed in the next few weeks. There will be a short delay while service providers implement their service offerings to the public but over the next few months most people that are seeking faster broadband speeds will be able to sign up to get it. A high take up rate by individuals and business will bring funding back from BT and enable the very hard to reach parts of Gloucestershire to be included in the broadband roll out.

The Planning Policy Group that I chair meets regularly to review and develop planning policy and this month held a meeting in public to show the work of this group. We discussed the need for housing allocation across the Forest and the process for identifying suitable land. We also looked at the joint plans for Cheltenham, Tewksbury and Gloucester that are currently out for consultation and considered policy for Wind Turbines.

*Seasons Greetings to you all,
(Cllr Maliphant asked for a copy of the report to be forwarded to him)*

District Cllr Fraser reported that a subcommittee of the new car parking charges committee were embarking on holding a survey/questionnaire via the telephone and internet. Three hundred to five hundred responses were hoped for at a cost to the FODDC of £7000. It was suggested that MPC respond to the survey and this item would be put on the Agenda for January's meeting.

Agenda Item 7 Councillor resolutions

To approve Cllr Scot's resolution to re site the war memorial stone.

Approved in principle. No cost figures were available.

To approve Cllr Scott's resolution to re house the Xerox Museum and re organise the rooms at the Town Hall.

Approved in principle. No cost figures were available.

Agenda Item 8 Standing Orders

As an amended version of the NALC model standing orders had become available during the week of the 2nd December, it was felt prudent to review this latest version. Therefore, the decision to adopt the earlier version was deferred.

Agenda Item 9: Clerk's report –Matters Arising, Correspondence & Enquiries

(Each councillor had been supplied with a copy of the Clerk's Report at the start of the Meeting. Letters and some Emails received and sent were placed in a folder on the table. Emails sent and received from the councillors themselves are not included.

Only the items requiring a response or decision from the council were read out.)

Information

An arrangement has been made with Dene Magna school for Peter to dispose of the litter collected on the way up to the school to be left in a skip on the school grounds.

The Pavilion door is irreparable-ordered a replacement.

The Guide Group (Karen Eckley) has decided to stay with the Community Centre & not move into the Pavilion.

Meeting with Magaret Whally re LAG funding reclaim wed. 27 Nov.

Read out/Response required

Letter from Shirley Gardner & neighbours re lack of consultation over play equipment

Letter from Mark Harper re Post Office

Email from Pam Ambury re closure of the letter box in village.

Glos CC reply about reviewing parking restrictions at entrance of Recreational Fields

NALC re Council Tax Benefit Support Grant-no guarantee FODDC will pass on grant

Letter from Roger & Janet Pearce re objection to solar park application

Email from Martin Jones re objection to solar park application

Bee Green re private meeting & questions beforehand.

Letter from Mr Buck re ditch work at Glebe close.

Letter from FODDC re Silver Street-(planning)

Communications received

(The clerk had been asked by the chairman to only include emails of relevance/interest to the council.)

Emails. (12 Nov-4 Dec rec'd 296 emails)

GAPTC-Training 'Being a Better Councillor'

FODDC-Evidence Gathering Workshop Toolkit

Environment Agency: Please check your heating oil tank campaign 2013

Highways-resurfacing work on A40 Huntley to Lea from 6 Dec for 4 nights

GAPTC-Budgetary considerations

GAPTC Budget & Precept setting-salary pay scales & subscription increases.

GAPTC rate for s137 payments rise to £7.20 per head in 2014
National Blood Service re posters
Highways reply about overgrowth to transformer unit Carrisbrook Rd
Highways reply about grit bin on Old Dean Road
British Legion Poppy appeal-acknowledgement of donation
Glebe Contractors-re start of Tree works 6 Dec
NALC re Council Tax Benefit Support Grant
Liz Lewitt-confirmation about the use of bark under the climbing wall
Glos CC-changes to Public Rights of Way provision from April 14
Mon CC unable to quote for work at playing field.
Letter from the Post Office re bus service

Communications sent

**Emails to (12 Nov-4 Dec 84 emails sent)
(excludes those sent to all councillors)**

Seb Adams re hedge clearance
Rugmans re ditch works x 2
Norman Stephens re lights & pavements
Pengethley Nursery re Christmas Tree x 4
Zurich Ins re Additional Assets x2
Scouts re use of pavilion & Agreement
Glebe contractors re gritting
Glebe contractors re Tree works-6 Dec
Steve Parslow re Community Centre Emergency meeting
Sports club re utility bills
Marc Potter re Pavilion door x2
AJ Steel doors
Dean Heritage re Housing photocopiers
Bee Green re public meeting
Neil Batt re paperwork from LAG funding reclaim x 6
Kompan re invoice, bank details & payment x 4

Agenda Item 10: **Accounts**

IN COMMITTEE

**To approve a donation to the Philippine Disaster fund.
Declined**

**To approve payment of GAPTC + SLCC subs
Approved**

To Approve clerk's additional hours

Clerk's request for payment of additional 8.5 hours-time sheets available for November was approved.

**To approve Adam's quote for hedge clearance
Approved**

Payments sent to:

Toolite
Grant thornton
British Gas
British Gas
npower
npower
magenta
glebe cont.
Hale of Drybrook
P Adams
Yurtviva
Viking
Severn Trent

To approve the formation of a Staffing committee

Approved

Its structure, members, budget & powers etc to be decided later.

To Agree payments in accordance with the budget as listed in the attached schedule.

3851

Bank reconciliation to the end of November was submitted to each councillor.

Budget figures showing last year's budget, Actual spend 2012/3, 2013/14 budget, expenditure to date,(Net & Gross), anticipated spend to year end & draft budget for 2014/15 along with anticipated income for the year to come, was also submitted for discussion.

A further finance meeting would be necessary before January's monthly meeting where the precept figure would have to be approved.

Councillors Information Sharing.

Cllr Wozencoft: Many people pleased with Christmas lights. Damage to road & drains near Montrose, Stenders. Question about bedroom tax-does it apply to private tenants on benefits. Social housing states that a child under 10 yrs old does not need own room. One Christmas light is faulty. Dog fouling generally. Problem with fallen apples along School Lane. Confusion about the Post Office arrangements and the blocking off of the post box. Broken path surface between Community Centre and Glebe Close. Damage to the rope bridge on rainbow unit at park.

Cllr H Baker & Cllr. A Edwards had arranged to meet with the Sports Club on Tuesday 10th December and will update the Council in January of any progress.

Cllr S Gates reported that a sign had been damaged at the bottom of The Crescent. The Community Centre requested written confirmation from the Council as to its ownership status as reported in the November meeting.

Cllr Edwards reported that he had heard that a burglary had taken place locally.

Cllr Scott reported that he had spoken with a local farmer who may be willing to help clear snow and grit the roads when necessary.

Cllr Maliphant presented the council with a draft proposal of the areas of responsibilities that individual councillors may be asked to take on.

It is hoped that with the formation of these committees that a large part of the administrative duties associated with community projects could be completed by the councillors themselves.

The proposal to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Staffing Committee were approved.

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The clerk left at 9.45pm for further discussions by the council concerning her contract.

Dated this day 13th Day of January 2014

Signed

CHAIRMAN-Douglas Scott

3845