

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF HALBERTON PARISH COUNCIL ON TUESDAY, 11TH DECEMBER 2007 AT 7.30PM AT HALBERTON VILLAGE HALL

174. Present

The Chairman (K Browse), Vice-Chairman (B Lane-Smith), Mesdames Jepps and Johnstone, Cllrs Britton, Corden, Gibbs, Radford, Saunders and Wooding, CCllr Des Hannon and one Member of the Public

175. Public Forum

There were no questions raised

176. Apologies

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert and PC Dodd

177. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of 13th November 2007 were approved and signed unamended

178. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- i. Cllr Saunders would carry out the tree trimming in the cemetery this week.
- ii. The Vice-Chairman advised that due to pressure of work he had still not carried out the work to the cemetery gates but hoped to do so shortly.
- iii. Mr Stevens had not yet dealt with the overgrown trees at Halberton Court
- iv. The PC's entry for Village of the Year Competition had now been submitted by the Clerk. Thanks were expressed to everyone who had contributed to the entry form but particular thanks were given to Cllr Mrs Cuthbert for all her hard work.
- v. The Clerk had enquired of Calor as to whether they would be prepared to help with the cost of having signs made announcing that Halberton was the Devon Village of the Year. However Calor were unable to help. Loxhore PC advised that it did not have sufficient funds to purchase signs. The Clerk, at the suggestion of Calor, had also contacted Broadway, in Worcestershire who advised that its County Council had a policy of decluttering road signs in the county and were seeking advice from DfT. It was likely that funding for the signs would come from the village and local traders as they did not think their County Council would assist with funding.
- vi. The Clerk clarified the cemetery fees agreed at the November PC meeting. It was understood that the PC had agreed the following with regard to Exclusive Rights of Burial
 - Burial in a grave - £250 for parishioners and £500 for non-parishioners
 - Burial of cremated remains - £125 for parishioners and £250 for non-parishioners.
- vii. The Clerk had sent further e-mails to DCC Highways chasing up various matters. However no response had been received. CCllr Des Hannon advised that a site meeting should now be set up with Meg Booth, to address these issues once and for all. The meeting also to be attended by:- the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Cllr Wooding, before January PC meeting. The matters were:-
 - a. water was coming off fields and flooding the lane between Thurlescombe and Rowridge at repeated periods thus resulting in the condition of the lane deteriorating. This had been reported by Mr Butchers
 - b. Cllr Saunders had still not been contacted by DCC regarding the positioning of a sign for Brithem Bottom requesting large vehicles not to use the lane.
 - d. The works to the drain at Springfield Court had still not been completed.
 - e. The problems with the footpath surface between Church Path and Corner Lane has still not been dealt with satisfactorily.
- viii. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Britton for the provision of the Christmas tree. Unfortunately the electrical wiring on the tree had been deliberately cut by vandals but repairs were underway

179. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman advised of the 'My Devon' video and how informative it was.

180. Police Matters

The police were still carrying out investigations regarding the firework incident which had resulted in a serious house fire. It was understood that a parishioner exercising his dog late at night in the Parish had witnessed three vandals ripping a drainpipe from a property and then laying it across the main street in an attempt to cause serious harm to motorists. The parishioner removed the pipe once the vandals were out of sight. The PC repeated PC Dodd's previous request that any criminal activity be reported immediately in order that the police could deal with the issues as and when they arose. Good reports continued to come in about PCSO Mel Smith. She was proving to be a real asset in the Parish and was extremely popular. PC Dodd had advised by e-mail that as Halberton was not classed as a high vehicle crime area there was no possibility of the covert car being deployed at Manley Lane or anywhere else in the Parish.

181. 20mph Speed Limit

The Clerk had circulated information to members of the PC regarding the reluctance of Devon and Cornwall Police to enforce 20mph speed limits as the police considered it would place a significant demand on existing resources. They believed that 20mph speed limits should be self enforcing and routinely considered enforcement instead of engineering was inappropriate. It was understood that the concerns for this policy had been raised at DCC's Environment, Economy and Culture Cttee in September and it had been agreed that a Task Group on 20mph speed limit enforcement be set up. Nationally the Association of Police Officers had a policy that 20mph speed limits were not routinely enforced, backed up by Guidance from the Dept of Transport. In the meantime it was understood from CCllr Hannon that speed counters were being erected at various sites in the village which would count the speed and volume of traffic. In addition it was understood that from 4th – 8th February 2008 the High Street from the PO to the junction with the Barge would be closed to allow for re-surfacing works. It was suggested that to improve road safety in the village that steps should be taken to implement changes re the virtual pavement at the same time as the re-surfacing works. It was suggested that the Clerk e-mail CCllr Hannon with a request for Meg Booth to agree to a site meeting to consider possibilities for road safety improvements. Meg Booth to liaise with Clerk about dates etc. The matters referred to in Para 178(vii) above could also be considered at the same time. The Clerk to check whether she had retained any old plans which may be of assistance when considering road safety measures.

182.DCC Matters

- i. CCllr Hannon advised that there was to be a review of local government boundaries after Exeter City Council's bid for unitary status had been put on hold. CCllr Hannon indicated that DCC would not be complacent whilst the Review was taking place and would be looking at all options.
- ii. CCllr Hannon reminded everyone about MDDC's Planning Cttee Meeting which would be taking place on 19th December re the proposed development at Hartnoll Farm
- iii. Concern was being expressed about the motocross activities which were taking place at a venue next to the Parish boundary. Parishioners were complaining as to noise levels. It was understood that this activity was allowed to take place on a specified number of occasions per year and as such planning consent was not required. Concern was expressed that these events now seem to be attracting larger numbers and were not the low key events that they once were. The events to be monitored.

183. Mid Devon District Council Matters

- i. The Clerk had been chased by both Nick Sanderson of MDDC and Peter Friend of Hastoe Housing for the PC's chosen names for the new development at Pethertons. The Clerk had in fact e-mailed this information some weeks earlier to Mr Sanderson and he sent an e-mail of apology for this oversight.
- ii. Despite two e-mails being sent by the Clerk, Mr Hill of MDDC had not responded to the Clerk's request to remove the re-cycling banks sited on the Village Hall car park. The Clerk to pass this request to Cllr Radford as MDDC's Portfolio holder.
- iii. Cllr Corden agreed to have his name submitted to MDDC to be considered as a Parish Council representative on MDDC's Standards Cttee
- iv. A meeting which had been arranged for Parish and Town Clerks on 12th December had been cancelled as it was not particularly convenient to the majority of people. A new date would be arranged in the New Year.
- v. A letter had been received from MDDC advising that invoices would shortly be despatched in respect of election expenses. However those parishes which had not held elections were to ignore the letter.
- vi. Code of Conduct Training would be taking place at the Exe Room, MDDC Offices, on 22nd January at 6.00pm. All Members of the PC would be interested in attending, other than Cllr Britton who had already attended a recent session. The Clerk to let Cllr Mrs Cuthbert have the details.
- vii. MDDC wished to develop closer links with Town and Parish Councils. The PC was asked to complete an information sheet and submit any comments. The PC requested that the Clerk should inform MDDC that it would like to be kept up to date with correct information, presented on time and that it improved its communication standards overall

184. Emergency Plan

The matter to be discussed further at the next Amenities Meeting on 29th January at 7.30pm. In the meantime a request had been made in the Newsletter for donations of unwanted blankets which could be stored in the Village Hall for emergency use.

185. S.106 Monies Update

A meeting had taken place between Mrs Jan Shadbolt MDDC's Solicitor, Dave Scott and Kevin Finan MDDC Officers, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Cllr Radford and the Clerk. Mrs Shadbolt confirmed that the monies currently in the S.106 "pot" would not be touched by MDDC but would be used solely by the Parish of Halberton. However part of any future S.106 monies may be used to fund an Open Spaces Officer post. She indicated that the amounts of monies involved would be minimal and in any event the funding of the Officer post would be for two years only. Mrs Shadbolt maintained that the Supplementary Planning Guidance allowed for S.106 monies to be used in this manner. She did not refer to any relevant section of the Guidance which confirmed that MDDC was permitted to take this course of action. The Clerk suggested that MDDC charged developers a separate fee to cover additional costs so that the S.106 monies were used purely for the benefit of the Parish but Mrs Shadbolt did not find favour with this suggestion. It was understood that a consultation document regarding the provision of Open Space and S.106 contributions was available on line for Parishes which would also be sent out in hard copy format in the New Year. The PC would be given an opportunity to comment on the document and could raise again the issues surrounding the spending of the contributions by MDDC on an Officer post. The Clerk was not particularly happy with the outcome of the meeting, concluding that the PC may have won the battle but it hadn't won the war. CCllr Des

Hannon would carry out his own investigations in view of the fact that DCC was a party to S.106 agreements and therefore had a legal interest.

186. Greenway Sign

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert to update the PC at the next PC Meeting regarding the sign.

187. Hastoe Housing Update

The Parish Council was very upset at the manner in which applicants had been selected for housing allocation by Hastoe. It appeared that local connections in some instances had been ignored despite strong representations made by the PC and in other cases properties appeared to be allocated to applicants with only very vague local connections. The PC considered that it had been misled by Hastoe. Catherine Simmons was mentioned as the point of contact at MDDC but it was understood that 50% of her time was spent working for MDDC and the remaining 50% for Hastoe. It was considered that there was a clear conflict of interest and that this must create problems when formulating decisions regarding allocations. It was also understood that Hastoe did have an Appeals system that the PC could use if it was dissatisfied with any of its decisions. It was resolved that the Clerk write to the appropriate officer at Hastoe requesting a representative attend a forthcoming PC meeting to answer the concerns and issues that the PC had. In addition Hastoe to confirm whether or not as a matter of course it carried out CRB checks on prospective tenants in order that it complied with its own requirements eg reserving the right not to offer properties to anyone with a record of anti-social behaviour etc. It was noted that some of the housing allocations had caused considerable upset in the Parish with the PC being held responsible in the eyes of some of the parishioners for the allocation decisions. The remainder of this item was discussed as a confidential item

188. Car Park/Footpath Update

The Clerk advised the PC of the meeting arranged for 17th January at 3.00pm at the Cordwents site to progress the project. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Alison Fisher MDDC, Mark Copleston of Midas Homes, Tony Matthews DCC, CCllr Des Hannon and Sue Warren Conservation Officer would be attending.

189. Meetings Attended

There were none

190. Future Parish Council Meetings

Tuesday, 8th January 2008 – 7.00pm Planning Cttee Meeting

Tuesday, 8th January 2008 – 7.30pm Ordinary Meeting of Halberton Parish Council

191. Committee Reports

There was nothing to report

192 Clerk's Report

The Clerk had nothing to report

193. Accounts

RECEIPTS FOR PERIOD 1ST - 30TH NOVEMBER 2007:

Bank Interest	48.09
Newsletter	233.32
S.106 Money	4900.00
TOTAL	£5181.41

PAYMENTS MADE FOR THE PERIOD 1ST - 30TH NOV 2007 £21,330.38

PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED

Cheque No	Amount	Vat	Total	Details
SO	23.00		23.00	MDDC – Cemetery Rates
1155	16.37		16.37	Mrs McIntyre – repayment cost of cartridges
1156	4.25		4.25	Mrs C McIntyre – repayment of postage stamps
1157	8.01		8.01	South West Water – water charges for cemetery
1158	14.89	2.61	17.50	Mrs McIntyre – repayment cost of stationery
1159	395.00	69.13	464.13	Playsafety Ltd – play eqt check
1160	314.19		314.19	Mrs C McIntyre – salary Dec/Jan
1161	40.00		40.00	Mr K Browse – repayment of cost of damaged security fence panel
1162	298.00	52.27	350.27	Education Matters – Newsletter production costs
1163	15.00		15.00	Mrs J Austin – Newsletter delivery costs
1164	226.16		226.16	H M Tevenue & Custons Income Tax Oct – Dec
1165	40.00		40.00	Mrs C McIntyre -Internet/Tel Costs Nov- Dec

The above amounts were approved for payment

Balance of bank accounts carried forward	34093.38
Plus Receipts for period 1 st – 30 th Nov	5181.41
	TOTAL £39274.79

Minus Payments made for the above Period	21,330.38
	TOTAL £17,944.41

Made up as follows:- High Interest A/c	10898.75
Current A/c	7045.66
	TOTAL £17944.41

VILLAGE HALL FUNDS	353.25
PARISH PATHS FUND	1753.79
PARISH PLAN FUND	433.54
CAR PARKING	850.00
GENERAL FUNDS	14553.83
TOTAL	£17944.41

Halberton Newsletter: Income for Period 1st April - 30th Nov 2007 = £1553.68 less expenditure £1032.39 = Profit £521.29

194. Bank Mandate

The Clerk advised that the Bank Mandate had now been delivered to HSBC Bank. Cllrs Mesdames Cuthbert and Johnstone, Corden, Britton and Wooding would need to attend the Bank, when convenient (any branch would be able to deal with the matter) to produce forms of identification eg passport/driving licence and verification of address eg utility bill.

195. Members Business

There was nothing to report

196. Miscellaneous Matters

The Vice-Chairman advised that he would be pleased to attend an evening reception at the Woodbury Park Hotel on 15th January 2008 at which a presentation by the Army Presentation Team would take place to promote awareness and understanding of how the Regular and Territorial Army operated.

The Meeting ended at 9.30pm

DATE

CHAIRMAN

Confidential Item

In response to information requested by Hastoe, the following was provided by the PC:-

Miss J Fisher had a known local connection

Miss N Caunter and Mr B Newson and Miss Weeks had no known local connection

Hastoe believed that Mr Maunder and Miss Davy had not had their names put forward by MDDC and they did not know whether they had in fact applied for a property. It was understood however from Cllr Mrs Johnstone that they had applied .

Hastoe also advised that Mr and Mrs Heath had not been put on the list for the three bedroom property by MDDC and thought that they had not bid for the said property. However, again certain members of the PC were certain that Mr and Mrs Heath had applied. The PC considered that they were the most deserving applicants and that no one could have a stronger local connection than them. It was considered beyond belief, that they had so far not been allocated a property by Hastoe.