

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF HALBERTON PARISH COUNCIL ON TUESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY 2007 AT 7.00PM AT HALBERTON VILLAGE HALL

188. Present

The Chairman (K Browse), Vice-Chairman (B Lane-Smith) Cllrs Cooper, Gibbs, Radford, Saunders, Mesdames Armstrong and Jepps, C.Cllr Des Hannon and one Member of the Public

189. Public Forum

Mr D Slack wished to raise the following points in connection with the speeding problems in Halberton. He believed that when the police recently carried out speeding checks in Halberton, they would, under Health and Safety Regs, have been required to wear fluorescent jackets. If this was the case, he was of the view that these jackets would have effectively pre-warned motorists and subsequently they would have reduced their speed accordingly. He therefore thought the survey results did not accurately reflect the speeding situation in the village. The Mid Devon Star had recently carried an article about Mid Devon being an accident black spot. Finally in this week's edition of the Tiverton Gazette, again the matter of speed was raised. It was understood that a paper boy had been killed by speeding motorists. Two parishes in Mid Devon had also expressed a wish for measures to be introduced to curb speeding motorists. Mr Slack advised that in Holland steps are taken to deal with this problem but this country didn't seem to have the expertise available to resolve it. The Clerk advised that PC Dodd had e-mailed her and he was again of the view that the method of solving the problem would be to extend the pavements in the village with a long term aim of having a pavement the whole length of the village. (This item would be discussed further, later in the Meeting).

190. Apologies

Cllr Mesdames Hull and Fisher and Cllr Constable and PC Dodd

191. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meetings of 9th January 2007 were approved and signed accordingly

Cllr Radford left the meeting at this point for another engagement

192. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- i. The Clerk had now received information concerning the Home Finder Direct - Choice Based Lettings Scheme to replace the current points based scheme in allocating its properties. MDDC had refused to post this to her and she had had to arrange for Cllr Mrs Hull to collect it on her behalf. Homefinder Direct was a simple way of finding a home for rent from most housing associations or local councils, Homefinder used a banding system – Gold, Silver and Bronze – to identify need, with those in the Gold band being given the highest priority and those in the Bronze band, the lowest.
- ii. The Clerk had been advised that Catherine Simmons was trying to arrange for Hastoe Housing to contact Mr Brown with regards to the safety concerns he had raised in respect of the Cordwents site, at the last PC meeting. The Clerk anticipated that Mr Brown should have now been contacted by Hastoe House.
- iii. Jim Fitzpatrick MP – Minister for Employment had send a very full letter explaining the reasons why the Government was planning to close 2,500 Post Offices. Apparently some 4 million fewer customers were using post offices each week, compared to just 2 years ago, due to people choosing to send an e-mail or text message; paying bills by direct debit, using the telephone and Internet for banking or to access information on Government services. More people paid for their car tax disc online and had pensions or benefits paid direct into their bank accounts. Of the 11 million pensioners in this country 8 1/2 million had their pensions paid into a

bank account. In view of the aforementioned this had inevitably taken a toll on the Post Office network and losses had risen to almost £4 million a week this year. Mr Fitzpatrick had advised that up to £1.7 billion would be available until 2011 to continue to support the national network and enable Post Office Ltd to modernise and rationalise the network to place it on a more stable footing.

iv. Maria Stainwright, MDDC's Planning Officer acknowledged the PC's comments concerning the Area Development Plan Documents.

v. Martin Harvey, Chairman of MDDC's Standards Cttee would be happy to attend the July PC Meeting to explain the work of the Cttee.

193. Chairman's Announcements

There was nothing to report

194. Police Matters

A complaint had been made by a parishioner at Pethertons regarding loud music being played at the bus shelter and noises of a sexual nature. Apparently, this unwelcome behaviour had been occurring in the early hours of three consecutive Sunday mornings. PC Dodd had advised that he was unaware of the problem as it had not been reported to him. He suggested that the lady concerned should contact the police at the time the behaviour was occurring on 0845 2777444 or 999 if a criminal damage was being committed and the offenders were still there. The Clerk had asked PC Dodd to arrange for officers to be in the vicinity during the next Saturday/Sundays but so far she had not received a response from him.

195. DCC Matters

i There had been a reorganisation in the way DCC managed its highway network. There would be three areas. The east area would serve the administrative areas covered by Exeter City Council, East Devon District Council, and Mid Devon District Council. Staff would be based at Little Moor House in Exeter. The Highway Superintendent for the Parish would be Nick Allen and he would report to Ian Hyde. The Public Rights of Way Warden would be unchanged. The Traffic Engineer for Halberton would be Paul Wilson. The Clerk had the contact details available.

ii. The Devon in Touch Roadshow `bus` would be visiting communities in 2007 to help people understand what causes climate change and to show people the simple changes they could make. It was suggested that the `bus` visit the Mid Devon Show and the Halberton Spring Fayre (26th May) The contact point for the Spring Fayre was Jan Johnstone.

iii. Cllr Hannon provided further information about the wall at 91 High Street. It appeared that there had been a lack of co-ordination between DCC and MDDC. However in conclusion MDDC had made the mistake in approving the planning application in the first place. Jeremy Guscott, Head of Planning at MDDC had offered to come to the next PC Meeting to offer an explanation, if required. He had also been to see Mr and Mrs Hawton, the occupiers of the property, to offer his deepest apologies. Cllr Hannon had spoken to Mr and Mrs Hawton who felt pilloried by the reactions of the villager for the planning decision which MDDC had effectively made. The Clerk would invite Mr Guscott to the next meeting. It was understood that the wall would be altered to ensure it was of a sensible height and all costs would be met by MDDC. It was also agreed that an article would be placed in the Halberton Newsletter in order that parishioners were made fully aware of the situation and that Mr and Mrs Hawton were not at fault.

196. High Street, which had raised various safety issues.

Mid Devon District Council

- i. MDDC was seeking views from the public as it needed help in improving the way the council worked. A public debate would be held on 27th February at 7.00pm at Tiverton Town Hall.
- ii. Information had been received about the forthcoming District Council Elections to be held in May 2007. A series of information and discussion evenings were to be held throughout the District for potential candidates in the Elections.

197. Traffic Speed Problems

The Chairman provided a history of the traffic problems in Halberton over the years right up to present day. He was of the view that the police should be contacted at regular intervals to check the speed of vehicles until such time as they considered that Halberton was a 'special case' whereupon they should then be prepared to take positive action to try and resolve the problem. It was also suggested that DCC be contacted again to see whether it was possible for sections of footpath to be laid in the village. It was understood that Dave Huxham of DCC, had previously considered the PC's request for a footpath. However this would have to be of a specific width and likewise the actual carriageway. It was suggested that if the carriageway wasn't wide enough for a footpath on either side, that traffic lights could be erected at either end of the High Street to allow for single line traffic and the provision of a footpath on one side of the High Street. However it was considered that this would create a backlog of traffic. It was finally concluded that the only positive steps would be to keep the pressure on the police..

198. Countryside Access Forum

The Devon Countryside Access Forum was seeking new Members. The Forum had 15 members who represented a balance between land managers and those with access interests (such as walkers, cyclists, horse riders, vehicular users and canoeists). The aim of the forum was to achieve a consensus view on priorities and policies affecting access provision, including development of proposals under the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (DCC 2005). The Clerk had contact details available if any member was interested.

199. The Recreation Ground

There was much discussion about this. It appeared that the proposed new play equipment would require 300mm of loose fill rubber granules. The requirement was in line with the critical fall height required for a slide. The current depth for the swings was 150mm which would not be acceptable for the new equipment. Various options had been explored to deal with this requirement. Advice from MDDC had been sought about replacing granules with 'wet-pour'. However it was considered that wet pour was not a good idea. A suggestion was made to remove the existing granules and replace them with a type of matting - 'Safagrass'. If the latter option was agreed it would mean that the surface would either need to be seeded or turfed. Approximately 150 – 160 sq metres would be required of 'Safagrass' to cover the area. It was suggested that consideration should be given to looking at alternative types of play equipment so that the depth of loose fill could be reduced. In addition it had been noticed that one of the wooden posts of the swings was in a poor condition. Cllr Hannon mentioned that he was provided with an allowance from DCC which he could use for "useful community items". He would give consideration for part of his allowance being used for new play equipment. It was suggested that a further Amenities Cttee meeting be arranged for Thursday, 1st March at Halberton Village Hall at 7.30pm to discuss these matters. In the meantime it was agreed that the Cttee would produce a template for the signs to go into the Rec`. The Vice-Chairman handed the

Clerk two keys for the lock to the Rec`. She would retain one key and pass the other to the grass cutting contractor. The Clerk had provided the Vice-Chairman with the Rospa Disability Access report which had been carried out some time ago.

200. Car Park/Footpath Update

There was considerable discussion. It was understood that at the last Amenities Cttee Meeting that Mr Dalziel on behalf of the Church was supportive of the PC's proposals for a car park at Cordwents. However Mrs Onley-Gregson, on behalf of the School, thought that a car park in this location would not be well used as it would be sited too far away from the school. C.Cllr Hannon mentioned the provision of a travel plan for the school and would investigate the situation. It was agreed that to progress the matter further a site meeting be arranged for Monday, 19th March at Cordwents at 10.00am. Persons to attend:- The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr Radford of the PC, C.Cllr Hannon, representative from Midas Homes, Tony Mathews and Meg Booth of DCC. In addition, the Clerk to write to the Leader of MDDC to request that an Officer from Car Parks to attend the meeting.

201. Donation Request – Devon Wheels 2 Work

It was understood that Wheels to Work was a Community Interest Company whose aim was to assist all people with transport difficulties in rural areas of Devon with an emphasis on employment, training courses and job search. The Company would loan small cc scooters for periods of 1-6 months to people in areas where there was little or no public transport available. The PC was of the view that there should be more information made available to it before it decided whether or not to make a donation. The Clerk to ask whether any person in Halberton/Ash Thomas had so far benefited from the scheme and whether the scheme extended beyond the categories of persons, stipulated in the letter. . C.Cllr Hannon asked that the letter from the organisation be scanned through to him. The Chairman advised that he would speak to Julie Woolley as to whether TDCTA (transport provision for rural communities) was still reliant on donations, as no request for such had been made to the PC during the past two years.

202. Village Competition 2007

The Clerk had received details of the Calor Village of the Year. The closing date of the competition was 1st June 2007. The Amenities Cttee would deal with the completion of the application form at its next Amenities Meeting. It was noted that the equipment for the litter pick, which was carried out in readiness for last year's competition would be available for the forthcoming competition. Cllr Radford still had in his possession litter picking certificates which he would hand out shortly in respect of the litter pick which was carried out in October.

Cllr Radford returned at this point and chaired the Planning Section of the Meeting

203. Planning – Public Forum

Mrs Squires provided background information about the application (07/00008/FULL). The property had formerly been used as a `Granny-Annexe`. Mrs Squires now wished to let the property out as a separate unit to a couple or single person to alleviate the chronic housing needs problems in Halberton. At the moment as the property was unoccupied, it still required heating. She also understood that MDDC was opposed to the application on highway grounds. However in 1989 MDDC agreed that the `granny-annexe` could provide for the occupant to use 1 vehicle

204. Planning Applications for consideration

<u>Planning App No</u>	<u>Name/Address</u>	<u>Details</u>
25/06/2643	Mr & Mrs M Stanley, Sunnymead, 5 Bridges	Change of use of land to site 1 additional mobile home

PC's Decision: The PC opposed the applicants last application (06/00424/FULL) on the grounds that it was opposed to development in open countryside. The PC was of the same view in relation to this latest application. It also understood that there was an injunction obtained previously to restrict additional caravans/mobile homes on the site

25/07/00001/FULL	Mr & Mrs Manning, 42 High St, Halberton	Conversion of existing outbuilding to annexe
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PC's Decision: The PC opposed the applicants last application (06/01502 /FULL) on the grounds of size and access onto the highway and was objecting to this latest application on the same grounds

07/00008/FULL	Mrs D J Squire, The Annexe, 64 High St	Change of use of annexe to permanent dwelling
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PC's Decision: All the PC Members declared a personal interest. The PC unanimously supported the application but would require it to be `Called In` on highway grounds in order that it could be considered by MDDC's Planning Ctte and not delegated to Officers. The application was also supported by the Ward Member, Cllr Radford. The PC was of the view that any highway concerns relating to vehicle provision had already been agreed by MDDC when the applicants obtained permission for the `Granny-Annexe` in 1989, as MDDC at that time had granted permission for the use of one vehicle. In addition the property would provide much needed housing accommodation in accordance with the requirements of the Parish Plan. The PC also required to learn that if the application had already been refused by MDDC, why was this the case if the period for taking into account various submissions, had not expired ?

07/0078/FULL	Mr K Broad, Middle Curham, Ash Thomas	Part reconstruction of barn to form residential dwelling
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PC's Decision: The PC would carry out a site visit on 20th Feb at 10.00am and would relay its comments to the Clerk

07/00111/FULL	Mr S Burge, 3 High St, Halberton	Erection of Extension etc to form additional dwelling
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07/00116/CAC	As above	Conservation Area Consent for demolition of outbuilding
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PC's Decision: Approved both applications. The Vice-Chairman declared a prejudicial interest and left the room whilst the application was being discussed.

07/00153/CAT	Mr & Mrs Nuttall-Owen, The Forge, Church Path, Halberton	Notification to carry out works to trees
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PC's Decision: Approved. The Chairman declared an interest

07/00221/FULL	D H Foot Ltd, Old Bridwell, Uffculme	Conversion of laundry room office and information area/dry store to provide 2 holiday lets
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PC`s Decision: Approved

07/00223/FULL As Above

Variation of previous p.consent condition to allow 9 properties as permanent residential dwellings

PC`s Decision: Approved in view of building lending itself to permanent use and will alleviate housing needs problem

205. Planning Decisions received from MDDC

<u>Planning Ref:</u>	<u>Name/Address</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>No. of Conditions</u>
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None had been received by the Clerk

206. Miscellaneous Planning Matters

06/01658/FULL – Town Centre Heritage – Erection of 4 dwellings and formation of access 26 & 26A High Street, Halberton

This application was now the subject of an Appeal to the Secretary of State, to be determined by written statements

207. Meetings Attended

There had been no meetings attended.

208. Future Meetings

6th March 2007 – Canal Advisory Ctte Meeting

209. Committee Reports

i. Amenities and the Cemetery

Amenity matters had already been discussed earlier in the meeting. The Clerk reminded Members, that Rospa would be carrying out its annual inspection of the play equipment in March. It was understood that South West Water had recently carried out an inspection of sections of plumbing at the cemetery. They were found to be in compliance with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regs 1999.

ii. Communications, Footpaths & Environment

The surveys of the footpaths were practically completed. The Chairman advised that he had another two footpaths to complete.

210. Clerk`s Report

The Clerk thanked the PC for the new office equipment, recently acquired. She now had a photocopier/scanner/printer which was making it far easier for her to carry out the work of the PC. She did point out however, that the machine was getting through ink cartridges quite rapidly so she was trying to use the machine as economically as possible. She had already adjusted the ink settings etc and was keeping an account of printed copies used, per ink cartridge.

Halberton Newsletter: Income for Period 1st April – 31st January = £1499.57 less expenditure of £1309.77 = £189.80 net profit

212. Miscellaneous Accounts Business

It was agreed that Henry Edgecombe should be paid £6 for the delivery of Newsletters. A cheque was made out to him. The Clerk to suggest to Judy Austin that if Henry delivered further editions of the Newsletters that the amount she reclaimed back from the PC for delivery costs, should be increased.

213. Members Business

Cllr Saunders advised of the problems of articulated lorries driving through Brithem Bottom and then finding that they couldn't turn round and having to reverse all the way back. He suggested that a sign be erected indicating that there was no access for large lorries. The Clerk to refer the matter to DCC.

214. Miscellaneous Matters

Tim Hugill would be prepared to host the Parish Web Site during 2007. An invoice had been received from him for his fees for 2007 and also 2006 which he had omitted to forward earlier.

ii.

iii. Hugill

215. Next Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday, 13th March 2007 at Halberton Village Hall at 7.00pm

The Meeting ended at 9.55pm

DATE

CHAIRMAN

Filename: 13.Ordinary Minutes - 13.02.2007.doc
Directory: D:\My Documents\Halberton\Minutes
Template: C:\Documents and Settings\Administrator\Application
Data\Microsoft\Templates\Normal.dot
Title: MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF HALBERTON PARISH COUNCIL ON
TUESDAY, 11TH OCTOBER 2005 AT 7
Subject:
Author: Christine McIntyre
Keywords:
Comments:
Creation Date: 18/02/2007 14:03
Change Number: 9
Last Saved On: 18/03/2007 18:37
Last Saved By: Halberton Parish Council
Total Editing Time: 2 Minutes
Last Printed On: 27/06/2007 19:38
As of Last Complete Printing
Number of Pages: 8
Number of Words: 3,834 (approx.)
Number of Characters: 21,856 (approx.)