

Bickenhill Parish Council
Minutes of the Council Meeting held on
Wednesday 3rd December 2008
At 7:30pm in the Parish Hall Marston Green

Present

Councillors	Mr F Bunce	Chairman
	Mrs M Wilden	Vice Chairman
	Mrs V Jones	
	Mrs L Poulson	
	Mr T Hewlett	
	Mr S Mills	
	Mr C Hill	
	Mrs L Green	
	Mrs C Dowell	
Clerk	Carole Picken	
Public	4 members	

706 THE PUBLIC

706.1 Roads

Mr Southwick stated that the pot holes by The Fordrift were now quite deep and dangerous, the one by the Manse had been repaired.

706.2 Grass Verge in the Village

Mr Prust raised the issue of car parking on the grass verge by the roundabout. Cllr Wilden advised that she had spoken with Paul Tovey from Solihull MBC about the issue before and would contact him again

Action Item: Cllr Wilden to speak to Paul Tovey

706.3 Airpark Buses

Mr Southwick advised that the Airpark buses are still running through the village after 11:00pm at night.

706.4 Manhole Cover – Mills, Station Road

Mr Laight stated that the manhole cover had dropped by 2/3inches following the resurfacing and was quite dangerous.

706.5 Marston Green Library – Airport

Mr Laight advised that representatives from the Airport were going to be at the Library on Thursday 4th Dec 2008 between 10:00 and 13:00 to answer any questions from residents.

Cllr Bunce said that we would once again raise the relevant issues with Solihull MBC.

707 APOLOGIES

Cllr Jim Williams

708 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr Poulson and Cllr Wilden in relation to Marston Green Opposing Over Development and Cllr Steve Mills re quote from Universal Installations.

709 MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on the 5th November 2008

Cllr Bunce asked the members if they had read the minutes and if they could confirm that the minutes were a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Cllr Jones

Seconded: Cllr Poulson

- 710 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF THE 5th November 2008**
- 711 Minute No 672 & 677 Completed**
- 712 Minute No 678 The Pleck**
Carry forward: Cllr Williams has now received a quote which will be taken to Recreation Committee
Action Item: Cllr Williams to take quote to Recreation Committee Meeting
- 713 Minute No 679 Cricket Club Lease**
Cllr Bunce advised that this would be a slow process and there is much to discuss and develop if we were to have the correct document in place.
Action Item: Carry Forward
- 714 Minute No 680 Sign at Recreation Ground**
Work is still on-going
Action Item: Carry Forward Cllr Bunce
- 715 Minute No 682 Allotment Holder Prizes**
Complete letters to be sent out next week
- 716 Minute No 683 Marston Green Station – Bridge**
Clerk had raised the issue with Solihull MBC.
- 717 Minute No 684 Memorial Bench**
Clerk had written to the family.
- 718 Minute No 696 Freedom of Information Act**
The Clerk confirmed that this was now complete and the information was now on the Parish Council Website
- 719 Minute No 698 – The Pavilion – Electrical Testing**
A meeting with the Contractor who completed the report has indicated that to carry out all the work the approx ball park costs would be in the region of £10k. Therefore further quotes would be required and the financial position re-assessed in the New Year.
- 720 Minute No 702.3 Poppy Appeal**
Complete
- 721 MINUTES OF THE RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING Held on the 17TH November 2008**
- 721.1 Minute No 109 Grants**
Cllr Poulson updated the Council regarding the current position for applying for a Grant in relation to the Garden of Memory
- 721.2 Marston Green FC**
Cllr Bunce advised the Council that he had spoken with the Chairman of MGFC about the Gorse Farm teams training on the pitches at The Recreation Ground. This is creating problems with the state of the pitches for organised matches.
- Cllr Bunce had requested that the teams do not train on the pitches but on the allocated areas around the pitches or designated by the Groundsman. The Chairman of MGFC fully supported this request and asked for any problems to be reported directly to him.
- 721.3 Minute no 124.3 Procedure for Audit of Allotments**
Cllr Bunce advised that Cllr Hewlett had produced a procedure for auditing the allotment plots with a view to monitoring the upkeep and judging.

Cllr Bunce also advised that it was worth remembering that we do have a waiting list for allotments and it was important that we monitor the plots.
Cllr Hewlett asked all members to read through the procedure which was attached to the minutes of the Recreation Committee.
Cllr Wilden expressed her concern that inspecting four times a year is a bit too much in her opinion.
Cllr Green stated that surely it should be the Council that carried out the inspections and not the Horticultural Society.

There was much debate over the whole issue relating to judging and the up keep of the Allotments. The Clerk reminded everyone that the Rules and Regulations are sent out each year with the rental agreements. Cllr Bunce asked the Council if they wished to adopt a standard, bearing in mind that we do have people on a waiting list. Cllr Hill suggested that perhaps there should be two sets of rules one for up keep and one for judging.

Cllr Dowell stated that if the allotments are not being kept to the standard that the rules and regulations require, then we should just send the holder a letter. The Clerk stated that consideration should be given to the fact that the rules have never previously been enforced by the Council and it would seem a heavy handed approach. The idea of introducing the new procedure is that it is a fair approach and the intention is to hold a meeting with all Allotment holders to advise of the new procedure before implementation.

After more debate Cllr Bunce stated that a decision is required. Cllr Poulson suggested that perhaps three times a year would be more acceptable. Cllr Wilden suggested that perhaps the inspections should be carried out by 2 members of the Horticultural Society.

It was agreed that Cllr Hewlett should discuss the current rules with the Horticultural Society and form a committee of two Councillors and two members of the Horticultural Society and arrange a meeting with the Allotment holders.

Action Item: Cllr Hewlett
All in Favour

722 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSE MEETING **Held on the 24th November 2008.**

Cllr Bunce clarified that both the Recreation Committee and F & GP had concentrated on the budget for next year, and hopefully everyone was now aware of the proposed budget, with the main criteria being that the increase to the Precept is kept to a minimum and the proposal is that the increase will be 4%.

722.1 Burial Fees

The proposal is to accept the increase illustrated as proposal four on the spreadsheet issued at the committee meetings.

Proposed: Cllr Poulson

Seconded: Cllr Wilden

722.2 Burial Fee in relation to a person under twelve

It was proposed by Cllr Green that the fee should remain the same as last year.

Proposed: Cllr Green

Seconded: Cllr Jones

722.3 Burial Ground Fee – Memorials

The proposal is to accept the increase illustrated as proposal three on the spreadsheet issued at the committee meetings.

Proposed: Cllr Poulson

Seconded: Cllr Wilden

722.4 Cricket Club Fee

The proposal is to increase by 7.7%

Proposed: Cllr Hill

Seconded: Cllr Green

722.5 Football Fee/ Pitch Fee Cricket

The proposal is to increase by 10%

Proposed: Cllr Jones

Seconded: Cllr Mills

722.6 Pitch Fee – Baseball

The proposal of the Recreation Committee is that no increase should be applied due to the fact that the baseball team does not use all of the facilities.

Cllr Wilden had suggested at F & GP that an increase of 2.5% should be applied.

After much debate it was decided to vote if the fees should be increased by 2.5% or 0%

2.5% - 4 votes

0% - 4 votes

Chairman's vote 0%

Cllr Wilden stated that another vote should now be taken. Cllr Jones thought that was not the case and the Clerk agreed, that Chairman's vote is final in the case of an even vote, but will seek clarification at WALC.

722.7 Proposal of Budget for 2009/10 and Precept

Cllr Bunce proposed that the budget as outlined be approved and also an increase of 4% increase to Precept.

Proposed: Cllr Hewlett

Seconded: Cllr Mills

ALL IN FAVOUR

**723 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUB PLANNING COMMITTEE
Held on the 14th & 28th November 2008**

Cllr Bunce asked if there were any comments regarding the proposals put forward by the Planning Sub Committee regarding the planning applications received.

The proposal is to accept the recommendations of the Planning Sub Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Poulson

Seconded: Cllr Green

The Clerk advised that the next Planning Meeting was scheduled for the 19th December 2008.

724 PLANT & EQUIPMENT REPORT

Cllr Hewlett informed the Council that as agreed seven items had been taken to the new supplier for assessment. The Husquvarna Mower (ride on) was as suspected the piece of equipment that required most attention and the cost to service and repair it would total £646. The other items were minimal and the total bill would be £1050.00 as long as the order was place ASAP to gain advantage of a 15% discount.

Cllr Wilden stated that we should get another quote from Global for comparison.

Cllr Hewlett expressed concern as to the feasibility of this as it would require the equipment being collected from Knowle and would incur an additional evaluation cost, which the identified supplier had agreed to waiver if the order was placed.

It was therefore agreed that as the requirements had been detailed, prices could be obtained from Global as a comparison and the cheaper option be pursued.

Proposed: Cllr Wilden

Seconded: Cllr Jones

725 ELECTRICAL TESTING – Groundsman's House

Cllr Bunce stated that while the house was empty it would be the ideal time to carry out the Electrical Period Testing required. It was therefore proposed that this is carried out as soon as possible.

Proposed: Cllr Green

Seconded: Cllr Jones

726 ALLOTMENTS – Provision of New Plots

Cllr Hewlett explained that he had been looking at the possibility of increasing the number of allotment plots. It was envisaged that once the car park work commenced in the New Year, we may be able to clear the bank on the Elmdon Lane Site to provide a new plot. Cllr Hewlett also stated that once we had taken the area which was the old sub station then it was feasible that the Amenity Land

plots could be joined to the Elmdon Lane plots; this would mean that some trees would need to be removed.

Cllr Wilden thought that this would be expensive and would not provide many further plots and that she was against the removal of some of the trees. Cllr Wilden also went on to say that approval would need to be sought from the Airport.

It was agreed that further plots would be a good idea and Cllr Hewlett should carry on the investigation in to providing further plots.

727 THE PARISH PLAN

Cllr Poulson had carried out some investigation on the idea of a Parish Plan: she felt that although this would be a lot of hard work and probably would take two years to complete the benefits would be worth while. Cllr Poulson advised that in November 2000 the Government's Rural White Paper 'Our Countryside - The Future ' launched the concept of Parish and Town Plans whose purpose is "to set out a vision of what is important, how new development can best be fitted in, the design and quality standards it should meet, how to preserve valued local features and to map out the facilities which the community needs to safeguard for the future".

Plans should "identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved"

Cllr Wilden and Cllr Dowell did not feel that this was the right thing to do; Cllr Dowell stated that she thought there is too much apathy about the Parish Council.

Cllr Poulson advised that the Community would be involved with the plan and thought this was an opportunity to change that apathetic view.

The Clerk stated that it was a way that the Council could be proactive and not reactive.

Cllr Wilden asked what would be the next stage to find out more about the plan, Cllr Poulson stated that she had spoken with WALC who had directed her to Linda Ridgley, Senior Field Officer, WRCC who would be pleased to come to a Parish Council meeting to give a presentation on the benefits of a Parish Plan. It was agreed that this option be pursued

Action Item: Cllr Poulson to arrange

Cllr Dowell asked if there had been any positive feedback from the Newsletter, Cllr Poulson said there had, Cllr Green had also received good feedback and the Clerk stated there had been a few phone calls to the office and the hit rate on the website had increased.

Cllr Mills had circulated a note to the residents of Bickenhill Village asking if there were any issues. Cllr Green stated that she thought Cllr Mills should be congratulated for such a positive move and what a good idea it had been

728 AIRPORT MATTERS

Nothing to report

729 INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cllr Wilden and Cllr Poulson had attended the Solihull Area Committee Meeting where a talk on the Environment had been delivered and this was available to Parish Councils.

730 FINANCE – PAYMENTS FOR AUTHORISATION

See attached sheets detailing the payments for authorisation.

The proposal is to authorise payment of the detailed expenditure

Proposed: Cllr Dowell

Seconded: Cllr Green

Minute No 730.1 Quote Christmas Tree

Due to the Recreation Committee concentrating on budgets the following quotes required approval.

To assist the Groundsman to put up the Christmas trees and dress with lights, test and connect to mains, also to remove from sites after Christmas, the cost would be £250.00

Proposed: Cllr Wilden

Seconded: Cllr Hewlett

Minute No 730.2 Remedial work to Ashes Plot

Cllr Bunce advised that the coping stone had come loose and required to be replaced. Cost £370.00

Proposed: Cllr Wilden

Seconded: Cllr Hewlett

Minute No 730.3 The Pleck

In order to progress with the planting of the Aubrietia there was an amount of work required to repair to the wall. The quote was to remove the top layer of bricks to enable repairs to the rest of the wall. Quote is for £750.00.

Cllr Wilden stated that another quote should be sourced.

Action Item: Clerk to arrange

731 CORRESPONDENCE

Minute No 731.1 E-Mail from Resident re Remembrance Day

The Clerk outlined that an e-mail had been sent via the website regarding the fact that you could not hear the ministers at the service in the Garden of Memory. Cllr Wilden stated that she had responded to the e-mail and that next year it was the intention to have a PA system.

Minute No 731.2 Communities & Local Governments

A Consultation paper of the Code of Conduct – No takers

Minute No 731.3 LCR Magazine Article

The Clerk issued each Councillor with a copy of an article re the White Paper and possible changes to Parish Council responsibilities.

Minute No 731.4 CPRE - Stop & Drop

Campaign Pack for Parish Councils - To address the issue of litter and fly tipping. Cllr Dowell was issued with the information with a view to proposing an action plan for discussion at the next Parish Council Meeting.

Action Item: Cllr Dowell to report back to Parish Council with proposed action plan.

Minute No 731.5 Charity Commission News

Cllr Jones took this information

Minute No 731.6 Countryside Voice Magazine

Cllr Green took this information

732 ROADS & RIGHT OF WAY

Issues raised by the public

733 BUS & TRAIN SERVICE

Cllr Dowell stated that the Metro Magazine was reporting that there would be three trains per hour from Marston Green to Birmingham New Street in the near future.

734 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 7th January 2009 at the Parish Hall, Marston Green

Meeting closed at 21.45