

CODSALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Council Meeting held in the Parish Chambers,
Station Road, Codsall

on Wednesday 11th January 2012 at 7.30pm. following Planning

PRESENT

District & Parish Councillors Matt Ewart, (Chair), Mrs P Campbell, J Michell,
Parish Councillors Mrs S Almond, Mrs M Barrow, Mrs V Chapman, R
Etheridge, Mrs E Forster, B Holland, P Kenyon, Mrs C Millar, L Stovin,
County Councillor R Marshall

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Fraser and Jenkinson

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Limited to 2 minutes per speaker and 15 minutes overall.

[redacted] referred to an item on last month Agenda where the Parish Council agreed to participate with St Nicholas Parish Church in an exhibition 'Celebration of Codsall' as part of Codsall Arts Festival. [redacted] commented that the Parish Council was intending to focus this exhibition around the Parish Plan and reminded the Parish Council that it would be prudent to call a Parish Plan Steering Group meeting to see what progress has been made against the plan and report that accordingly in the exhibition.

The Chairman Councillor Matt Ewart readily agreed and asked the Clerk to call a meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group as soon as possible.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th December 2011, approval proposed by Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Millar, unanimously approved by the meeting and immediately signed by the Chairman.

5. POLICE REPORT

The Police report was not available for the meeting, it was provided with profuse apologies on the morning of the 12th January and a précis is given below:

a. Police Report

| | |
|--|----------|
| Burglary dwelling | 0 |
| Burglary other | 4 |
| Theft of and from motor vehicle | 0 |
| Criminal damage | 1 |
| ASB | 1 |

Parking remains a concern as it is in all areas and we are in the course of drawing up a schedule whereby we should be able to service all schools on a regular basis.

The Police would like to point out that not only drinking in the village is not allowed, but the offence of depositing and leaving any kind of litter is actionable with a fixed penalty notice.

b. Update from Chairman on meeting instigated by Parish Council with Police and South Staffordshire Council regarding increase in burglaries to large premises in our Parish.

Chairman Councillor Matt Ewart advised the meeting that the Parish Council had sort an urgent meeting with the Police and District Council Officials to express the concern at the number of recent repeat break ins within the Parish.

Councillor Ewart advised that it was an extremely positive meeting with the new Inspector for our area Inspector Donna Gibbs being present and reassured the meeting that the Police had every intention of tackling this increased problem and various measures will be introduced by both the Police and South Staffordshire Council but it would be imprudent to make these public. The Chairman did however go on to say that the Police believe that a large element of these crimes are being committed by locals.

Councillor Holland commented, backed by many other Councillors, that he believes there are opportunist groups roaming the rural and urban areas continually looking for opportunities and reconnoitre buildings.

Councillor Forster advised that the Air Training Corp despite the recent set back and not being able to use their building currently are continuing to operate and will overcome this further set back.

Councillor Forster also advised that many other ATC Squadrons have also suffered similar incidents on repeated occasions.

The meeting agreed to invite the new Inspector Donna Gibbs to attend a future meeting and the Clerk will write accordingly.

6. URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

a. South Staffordshire Council Codsall Public Car Park (Co-op)

To receive, review, and if appropriate approve proposals negotiated between South Staffs Council and Mid-Counties Co-operative Society:

- Nothing to be done for 3 months but Co-op to be kept informed of developments in terms of the new railway station car park.
- That the time restriction be increased to 4 hours.
- That a contribution be made by Mid-Counties Co-operative to the funding of the railway station car park.
- Consideration to be given to permit holders but based on real need only.
- That a joint press release be issued.

The Chairman introduced the item reminding members of the advice received from South Staffordshire Councils Legal Officer and invited Councillors views.

Councillor Millar asked if the Parish Council's views in this respect will be heeded by the District Council in view of the Legal representatives comments relating to the terms of the lease.

The Chairman Councillor Matt Ewart confirmed that District Council was seeking the Parish Council's views and will, he believes, endeavour to recognise the Parish Council's proposal if it is legally able.

Following further discussion Councillor Stovin reminded the meeting that at the time the previous proposal was discussed and made, the Parish Council had not had the benefit of seeing the lease. Having now seen the lease, clause 3.6.2 states 'that at all times the car park remains available for use by the general public free of charge' should be interpreted that no restrictions should be placed on the car park which will cause disruption to villagers, traders, their staff and office workers. Councillor Stovin believed that the Parish Council should be fighting to uphold the interests of our residents and he therefore proposed, seconded by Councillor Millar ' to rescind the previous resolution of the 14th September 2011 and that the Parish Council write to Mr Steven Winterflood, South Staffordshire Council Chief Executive, to advise that the Parish Council

opposes any parking time restrictions on the Public Car Park and requests that Mr Winterflood writes to the Co-operative Society to advise that it is the Parish Council wishes that the Co-operative Society do not proceed with their outlined proposals.'

The rescinding of the previous resolution was supported by a letter, signed by 9 Councillors in accordance with clause V.2.ii of the Parish Councils Standing Orders.

A further lengthy discussion took place with Councillor Holland advising the meeting that the lease in affect gave control of the car park to the Co-op and it is therefore the Co-op's Car Park not a Public Car Park. Councillor Holland also reminded the meeting that rescinding the previous resolution did not help resolve the parking problem which is getting worse and that our previous resolution did suggest a way forward for negotiations in the future.

Councillor Michell stated that we should try to do what it is believed to be best for the village and its residents and that Parish Council should challenge the Co-ops intentions. If the Co-op then determined to proceed we as a Parish Council have done all we can, Councillor Michel reflected that it was unfortunate that the clause within the lease was not more robust.

Councillor Marshall believed that if we simply say 'no' to the Co-op's proposals without offering a way forward, they will probably do it. Councillor Marshal believed the Parish Council should agree a proposal that will offer guidance to allow District Council to a negotiate a satisfactory way forward. Councillor Marshall believed that a time restriction on the car park will be helpful to shoppers as long stay parking is becoming a nuisance and probably driving shoppers elsewhere. Councillor Marshall also believes that a 4 hour time limit would be satisfactory to allow all shoppers to complete their business within the village, but that workers who are genuinely working within the village centre should be given a free permit to park all day on the car park. Councillor Marshall believes the Co-op think they are losing customers as a result of the blocked places by commuter parking and this is also a problem for other traders.

Chairman Councillor Matt Ewart wondered what the impact would be on commuters and commuter parking should these restrictions be introduced.

Councillor Kenyon wondered what would happen if penalties were imposed on people who contravened the parking restrictions should they be introduced. He felt that the individuals could well challenge the Co-op through the Courts and thereby the validity of the clauses within the lease.

The Chairman then called for a vote on the proposal made by Councillor Stovin the vote was:

| | |
|-------------|---|
| for | 8 |
| against | 4 |
| abstentions | 1 |

b. St Nicholas Parish Church

To agree details and members rota for exhibition in 'A Celebration of Codsall' as part of Codsall Arts Festival 2012, 9th to 11th March. (From December Meeting).

Members had seen the Clerks letter to the Church confirming participation in 'A Celebration of Codsall'. It had already been determined that the exhibition will focus around the Parish Plan and progress to date. Requests for details of the exhibition times had not been provided but the Chairman asked for volunteers to man the exhibition which will take place on Friday the 9th, Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th March on a rota basis, Councillors Campbell, Chapman, Holland, Ewart, Marshall and Michell volunteered.

Some further thought to the exhibition details will be given following feedback from the Parish Plan Steering Group relating to progress.

7. ACCOUNTS

- a. **A report on** Council Finances for year to 31st December 2011 were received, acceptance proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Chapman and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- b. Schedule of payments to 11th January 2012 were received following a full explanation by the Clerk, approval proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Millar and unanimously endorsed by the meeting.
- c. **To receive** and approve Budget/Precept for 2012/13, as approved by the Finance Committee.
The Chairman and the Clerk advised the meeting that the budget had been reviewed by the Finance Committee which showed a small increase in the precept of 1.17% giving a precept requirement for the coming year of £139,539. Following some clarification from members Cllr Etheridge proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr Holland and unanimously endorsed by the meeting.

Councillor Chapman proposed a vote of thanks to the Clerk for his time in preparing the budget and the professionally presented document, this was endorsed by the meeting.

8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

A written report from County Councillor Robert Marshall was received.

The bus issue in Bilbrook/Codsall seems to be heading towards a conclusion, which will be very satisfactory to the majority of our residents. The number 5 will now 'alternate' when it gets to the top of Birches Road, between going straight along Wolverhampton Road or going along Duck Lane.

Personal thanks are given to all councillors for their help in this matter, especially Cllrs Ewart, Chapman and Oatley.

In the early part of the next financial year a total road resurfacing, from Chapel Lane island right upto the Square, including pavements, will take place.

The following pavements will be sorted out before the end of March 2012: Roseville Gardens, Slade Gardens, Chillington Drive, Sherbourne Gardens, Birches Road, Blythe Gardens, Poplars Drive and Cottage View.

There will be Street Lighting upgrades in the following roads: Hazel Gardens, Suckling Green Lane, The Square and the A41 by Kingwood Common (plus some roads in Bilbrook).

Suckling Green Lane will be part of the Speed Indicator Safety Programme near to the "S" bend. There are two other speed reduction issues that are being looked at in Keepers Lane and at the bottom of Moatbrook Lane where cars turn off Wood Road into Moatbrook Lane at high speed.

Road safety campaigns will be run in all seven of our schools in 2012/2013 ranging from Walking Buses, Cycle Training, Crossing Patrols inter alia.

Public Health priorities highlighted by South Staffordshire District Health and Wellbeing Board are: Obesity (all ages), Mental Health, Access to all services and the Ageing population.

9. CODSALL VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

a. **The minutes** of V.H.M.C. meeting of the 21st Nov 2011 and attaching reports were received and noted.

The Vice Chairman Cllr Megan Barrow passed comment about the recent break-ins which is so disheartening and resulting in further costs to the Village Hall Management Committee as inevitably not everything can be claimed against insurance. It is so disheartening after only just only completing the major improvement programme.

However on a positive note the Village Hall Management Committee is extremely pleased with the improving operation of the Village Hall and its improved financial position.

- d. **To receive** an invitation for all Councillors to attend a Celebration with Veolia on the completion of the improvement programme. Monday 20th February 6.30 p.m. at the Village Hall.
Received and noted, with the Chairman encouraging as many members to attend as possible.

10. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

To receive a written report from District Councillors.

Nothing to report this evening.

11. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

- a. **Community Council of Staffordshire**
 Letter re Best Kept Village Competition 2012
Received and noted

12. HIGHWAY ISSUES?

To raise any concerns with County Council Highways

- a. **Letter from Mr Andrew Gayler** re previously raised Road, Pavements and drainage issues.

Councillor Marshall confirmed that he had previously met with Highway Engineers and a programme of improvement had been agreed for the Drury Lane problem. He will investigate with the Highway Officers as to what exactly what has occurred. Other comments relating to Highway and Pavement problems have all been noted and will be actioned as time and budget allows. Councillor Marshall did undertake to advise the next Parish Council meeting of the situation in Drury Lane.

NEXT MEETING

8th February 2012

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

In pursuance of the powers contained in Section 1 of the above Act I move that the press and public be now excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the business about to be transacted is of a confidential nature and that publicity will be prejudicial to the public interest.

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Wheel Field residents survey August- September 2011.

To receive an independent auditors report on residents responses and have the opportunity to examine the detail of the responses, before bringing the results for discussion and agreement in open public meeting. **It cannot be stressed enough the importance of keeping this report and results confidential until the debate in the public meeting.**

The Chairman and the Clerk advised the meeting that Councillors had been given a copy of the independent auditors report, together with an analysis of the suggestions that had been prepared by the Clerk.

The Chairman asked members to take these reports away, keep them confidential until the discussion in public which is anticipated as being at the next Parish Council meeting on the 8th February, when Councillors can decide the way forward.

2. Wages and Salaries Increases w.e.f. 1st January 2012.

To receive and approve Clerks proposal.

Staff on minimum wage (4) have been paid increases 2.24% and 2.53% over the past 2 years. (2 year equivalent to 4.82% compound if not implemented annually).

C.P.I. in these periods were 3.1% and 5.2%, (Equiv. 8.46%)

R.P.I in these periods were 4.6% and 5.6% (Equiv. 10.45%)

All other staff (4) have received no increase what so ever either incremental or cost of living. **No incremental awards have been made for 8 years for staff, 4 years for the Clerk.**

To compensate for this anomaly I intend to implement a 2-unit incremental scale increase (with the exception of) to remaining staff.

This will mean the following percentage increases

The Clerk 4.42%

Clerks Assistant 6.89% (**Including incremental increase overlooked last year**)

Foreman 8.4%

The Assistant Foreman (deceased) will be replaced by an existing employee, on NALC's incremental scale 4 rising to 6 after 2 years.

It is **not** intended to recruit a replacement providing the reduced village tidying is satisfactory.

These increases will cost £2453 p.a. the reduction of 1 member will save £5500 p.a., an estimated net reduction of approx. £3047 p.a.

The Clerk left the meeting to allow members to fully discuss these recommendations in private.

Members were unable to make a decision this evening and have deferred this item to a future meeting.