

# CODSALL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Council Meeting held in the Parish Chambers,  
Station Road, Codsall  
on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2010 at 7.30pm. following Planning

### PRESENT

**Parish Councillors** M Ewart (Chair), Mrs M Barrow, Mrs V Chapman, R Etheridge, Mrs E Forster, P Kenyon, Mrs C Millar, L Stovin D Walls,  
**District Councillors** Mrs P Campbell, Mrs S Oatley **County Councillor** R Marshall

#### 1. APOLOGIES

**Apologies** were received from Councillors Owen, Holland, and Michell.

#### 2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

**None**

#### 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**Limited** to 2 minutes per speaker and 15 minutes overall.

Mr Stephen Skinner gave a brief report on the Codsall Clean Up weekend acknowledging the excellent support from the Air Training Corp and Bilbrook, Codsall Scouts. The weather was excellent and a considerable amount of rubbish was cleared away from the countryside footpaths. Mr Skinner extended his thanks to all those who volunteered and acknowledged the support of the Parish Council and the organisation by the Parish Clerk as well as the continuing support from Pet Stop.

#### 4. MINUTES

**The** Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March were received, unanimously approved and immediately signed by the Chairman.

#### 5. POLICE REPORT

- a. **There was** no Police report this evening.
- b. **The** written response from Inspector Chapman relating to Codsall Police Station opening hours advising that there are officers working from the station 24 hrs a day. Officers will respond to anyone visiting the station even though the doors are locked, providing they use the external telephone and providing an officer is available.

Inspector Chapman advises that there is no longer a formal opening time or enquiries staff employed. The focus has been to get the officers back out onto the streets.

## 6. URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

### a. Staffordshire County Council

- i. **Funding opportunity for 'grassroots' support for vulnerable people.**  
**Received and noted** with Councillors being asked to pass the information onto any contacts they consider appropriate.
- ii. **Mineral Madness – update**  
**The letter** from Councillor Marshall advising that County Council had won a reduction, reducing Staffordshire's proportion of West Midlands Sand and Gravel from 65% to 55%.

### b. South Staffordshire Council

**South Staffordshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy Policy Choices Consultation March 2010.**  
**Policy H4 – Gypsies, Travellers, & Travelling Showpeople.**

The District Councillors present advised that the District Council recognise that without a firm policy it could have been possible to set up a site and have it forced onto the area without Planning Permission. The District Council is therefore bringing a policy document into its Local Development Framework to ensure that its criteria are met. This consultation exercise is linked to that policy and any comments should be made to the District Council by Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> May.

## 7. ACCOUNTS

- a. **A** report on Council Finances for year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 was received, approval proposed by Councillor Stovin, seconded by Councillor Campbell and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- b. **The** schedule of payments to 14<sup>th</sup> April 2010 was received with a full explanation of each item given by the Clerk, approval proposed by Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Forster and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- c. **The** Annual Subscription to Staffordshire Parish Council's Association at £686.00 (£669.00), approval proposed by Councillor Etheridge, seconded by Councillor Walls and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- d. **The** Christmas Lights at £8500 + VAT (£8300) for Christmas 2010, approval proposed by Councillor Etheridge, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously approved by the meeting.

e. **Preliminary Income Expenditure Account to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.**

The Clerk gave a full explanation of the compilation of these figures, commenting on the reduction of expenditure during the year, notably on Open Spaces. He does expect the level to increase to projected figures this year.

Approval proposed by Councillor Chapman, seconded by Councillor Campbell and unanimously approved by the meeting.

Councillor Chapman proposed a vote of thanks to the Clerk for the production of these figures, particularly in the short time span available from the end of the year, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously approved by the meeting.

f. **To approve** expenditure on repairs and improvements at Leisure Garden as requested by Plotolders Committee.

- i. **Stone** & Equipment to resurface drive way at approx. cost of £800 + VAT
- ii. **Supply** and fit pipe runs and 2 additional taps at £340 + VAT

**The Clerk** gave a full explanation for the expenditure, congratulating the new Plot Holders Committee for their active involvement, and offering to carry out the work specified above. The Clerk also advised how the Plotolders Committee had improved the drainage on the top portion of the site that had been unworkable for years and how they had now cleared the area to provide six additional plots. Councillor Etheridge advised that he had visited the site and was very impressed with the enthusiasm and the improvement to the site, provided by the Plotolders Committee.

Approval to the expenditure was proposed by Councillor Etheridge, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously approved by the meeting.

8. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

**There** was no written report this evening; but County Councillor Robert Marshall advised the meeting:

- Unite Union were considering taking action over the Youth Action Programme reductions but this has now been shelved.
- Mr Nick Bell has been appointed as the new Chief Executive in place of Ron Hilton who retired at the end of March.
- A new Director of Education has been appointed
- Review of the Codsall cluster of Schools examining the 3-tier structure as children are being moved at 11 to elsewhere causing a problem with the numbers in Codsall schools.

- Federation of schools this is being tried where services can possibly be shared between two schools, possibly the Head to the school and other ancillary services such as music. this may also save money.
- Codsall High School has shown significant improvements in recent years to now become the best school in the area with a value-added bonus of 7% above the norm of 100%.
- Surveys of residents raised 4 major concerns under the headings of Age, Roads, Transport and lack of Youth Facilities. Surprisingly transport was number one of these concerns. Councillor Marshall has been appointed Chairman of the Transport Action Group and he is currently visiting all 8 District Councils to seek improvements to our transport system. Integration and money saving could possibly be achieved by the use of one contractor, these saving could be as much as £7 to £10 million per annum. This is early days and could bring objections from other contractors.
- Highway matters, the following issues are to be looked at in the very near future: the consideration to phase traffic lights at Histons Hill (requested for many years by the Parish Council), the resurfacing of the passage way between Lloyds TSB and Wolverhampton Road, the traffic signals at the A41, Perton lights, Parking at St Nicholas's School, Drains at Station Road.
- Consideration is being given to a permit scheme for contractors to use our various waste sites.
- The Police Authority is being reconfigured, reducing down to 9 Operational Units. There will be an impact on officers, officer numbers and this will be fully reported, when agreed.
- The Bilbrook Skate Park is being well used and it is believed is a contributory factor to the reduced number of youths on the streets in Bilbrook.
- County Council's switchboard number will change shortly to 0800 111 8000.

## 9. **CODSALL VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

- a. The minutes of V.H.M.C. meeting of the 15<sup>th</sup> February and attaching reports were received and noted
- b. **Invitation to** Kevin & Ed Arnold 24<sup>th</sup> April 2010, was received, regrettably no Councillors are able to attend but two tickets were offered and gratefully accepted by Mr Stephen Skinner, the two remaining tickets will be returned to the Village Hall.
- c. **Invitation to** AGM 19<sup>th</sup> April 2010 at 7.30 p.m. was received and noted, several Councillors will endeavour to attend.

## 10. **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

**Little to** report this evening other than the start of the Inter Parish Games. These have just commenced but this year the number of events has been reduced to 9 in an attempt to encourage greater participation.

## 11. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

- a. **Black County Core Strategy – Submissions Documents**  
Invitation by 4 Black County Local Authorities to view submitted document at various locations in Wolverhampton, Dudley Sandwell and Walsall.

**Received and noted.**

- b. **Shropshire Council**  
**Shropshire Local Development Framework**  
**Site Allocations & Management of Development Document**  
Consultation on Issues & Options open until Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June.

**Received and noted.**

### **NEXT MEETING**

**12<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

### **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. Village Hall Management Committee**

- a. To approve the Confidential Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Approval proposed by Councillor Stovin, seconded by Councillor Millar and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- b. To approve the Minutes of the Village Hall Support Sub Committee Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010. Approval proposed by Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Chapman and agreed by the meeting.
- c. Update on progress to date from Councillor Stovin and Councillor Ewart.

Chairman Councillor Matt Ewart advised the meeting that significant progress had been made subsequent to the meeting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> March Minuted above. Councillor Ewart and Stovin had now met the Village Hall Management Committee and Councillor Stovin had prepared and discussed with the Village Hall Management Committee an Action Plan.

Councillor Stovin then advised the meeting of the progress of the meeting with the VHMC and subsequent developments. Councillor Stovin advised that point A to C of the minutes needs to be addressed but the barriers to success would come only into play if the Action Plan were unsuccessful. Councillor Stovin advised how he has spoken to Village Hall Management Committee and Alison Braithwaite, a member of Wire Forest District Council, who has been mentoring and advising the VHMC in recent weeks.

Councillor Stovin pointed out to the VHMC that they were not marketing themselves at all well and recommended to them the process by which they can not only improve their marketing skills but also how to incorporate and integrate this into the business plan. Councillor Stovin has provided them with the blue print for the Action Plan and the VHMC are moving forward in this direction with the aim of having this business plan formulated and presented to the Parish Council by the 1<sup>st</sup> of June.

Councillor Stovin believed from his meeting with the VHMC that there were members on that committee who probably were not willing or capable to be involved in the work required to bring this business plan to fruition. In recognising these difficulties Councillor Stovin and

Councillor Ewart had contacted Mrs Marjorie Tunnicliffe the Headmistress of Codsall High School and sought the High Schools involvement with their Six Form Members to formulate a project to work in tandem with the VHMC in not only producing the research work required for the Business Plan but also drawing up and formulating the Business Plan. This was readily accepted by the Headmistress and received her full blessing.

The VHMC were very agreeable to this approach and can see the benefits of working alongside young and active people in particularly as part of there A level project. It is hoped that the meeting will take place as soon as the schools recommence after the Easter break and Councillor Stovin will keep the Parish Council informed of the progress in the production of the Business Plan.

Councillor Stovin is also trying to get as much publicity as possible for this Business Plan working alongside the High School and has approached the BBC and if unsuccessful will also approach Central TV, it will also be appropriate at some point to make sure that all of our local newspapers are fully informed.

The report from Councillor Stovin and Councillor Ewart was well received by the meeting and indeed the feedback so far is encouraging and clearly the improvement of the VHMC's finances will not be for lack of effort.

## **2. Open Spaces Committee**

To approve the Open Spaces Committee Minutes held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010 and to seek members views on Public Consultation Meeting to discuss improvements to Wheel Field, as outlined.

Councillor Paul Kenyon the Chairman of the Open Spaces Committee commented briefly on the minutes but in particular on the suggestion of calling a Public Meeting with residents to discuss the use of the Wheel Field tying in with the South Staffordshire Open Spaces Audit report which showed this field as at the lower end of the scale and not accessible to all members of our community.

There was a lengthy discussion on the current use of the Wheel Field which is basically used by dog walkers as the field itself forms a harrow and trough ploughed field and is only rough cut and cannot be easily used for play or other activities. There is however a desire line around the perimeter of the field which is well used by dog walkers. It is the Open Spaces intention to seek views of the General public to see how improvements can be made to make this space more accessible to the general public.

**10.00 o'clock suspension of Standing Orders proposed by Councillor Campbell seconded by Councillor Marshall and unanimously approved by the meeting.**

It was recognised by members whilst we are seeking the views of the Public it will be sensible to have some suggestions to hand in case nothing is forthcoming from the general public.

The Open Spaces Committee has agreed to meet again prior to the Public Debate to formulate several options to which the field could be used. None of these would be extreme.

Councillor Kenyon proposed moving forward with the Public Meeting on Wednesday the 19<sup>th</sup> of May at 7.00 p.m. in the Parish Council Chambers providing this date proves acceptable in light of current events and planned meetings. This was seconded by Councillor Etheridge and unanimously approved by the meeting.

It was left to the Clerk to review the date and to advise a future meeting if this date is acceptable.