

CODSALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

**Council Meeting held in the Parish Chambers,
Station Road, Codsall
on Wednesday 12th March 2008 at 7.30pm. following Planning**

PRESENT

**Councillors Mrs P Campbell (Chair)
Mrs M Barrow
R Etheridge
M Ewart
Mrs E Forster
P Kenyon
R Marshall
Mrs C Millar
Mrs S Oatley
G Owen
L Stovin**

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Michell, Chapman, Holland and Walls.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Limited to 2 minutes per speaker and 15 minutes overall.

Mr Stephen Skinner and Mr John Wolverson were present. Mr Skinner advised that he had attended an inaugural meeting relating to Speed Watch and would be pleased to give any additional information that may be relevant when the item came up for discussion.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2008 were received, unanimously approved and immediately signed by the meeting.

5. POLICE REPORT

a. A written report on Policing for the period 14/2 to 12/3 was received.

Statistics

Burglary Dwelling	2
Burglary Other	4
Criminal Damage	5
Theft of Motor vehicle	3

One of the incidents involved a car being left unsecured with the engine running.

Anti Social Behaviour	29
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There have been a number of thefts in recent weeks, Chapel Lane/Broadway and elsewhere and the Police would urge everyone in the area to be vigilant and to report any suspicious activity.

The speed laser device has been utilised to good effect with 37 drivers being dealt with for exceeding the prescribed limit. School parking has also been targeted and incidents of illegal parking is improving.

There is now a residents committee in place for Strawmoor Lane.

Watch Boxes are now in place and members of the public are encouraged to use them, awareness will hopefully be raised with the help of the press.

Information on good works done by the police are being looked at and being fed back to the people in the Parish.

The number of youths congregating in the village has lessened, although there are continuing problems, which the police are tackling. The police are encouraging people to report all gatherings.

Alcohol and cigarettes have been seized and parents are being spoken to.

- b. The written** report compiled by the South Staffs Crime Prevention Service covering the street meeting held in Church Road on 19th February 2008, was received and noted.

c. Speed Watch

The Clerk reminded members that following the Parish Councils interest in a Civilian Operated Radar Gun to reduce speeding vehicles in our area, it is now in a position to move forward.

P.C.S.O David Layton had been able to obtain seven to eight volunteers to operate the scheme and this could be brought in to

place fairly quickly following training. The only stumbling block at the present time was the cost of £1250 this covers the cost of the gun, jackets, training and report forms and currently this is a one off cost.

The Police need an acknowledgement of financial support from the Parish Council in order that these volunteers could enter a training programme during April for the scheme to become operational as soon after that as possible.

Mr Skinner advised that the Clerk had raised the question that Codsall & Bilbrook Parish Councils had purchased the current Police radar speed gun and whether this could be used as part of this volunteer operation.

It would seem that for licensing reasons it would need to be a separate gun and therefore there will not be any reduction on cost.

The Clerk asked for support for this initiative. Councillor Marshall proposed support to the full cost but recommended inviting Bilbrook Parish Council to join in the initiative and share the cost, but to indicate to the Police that Codsall Parish Councils willingness to proceed whether or not Bilbrook will give support. Seconded by Councillor Oatley, unanimously approved by the meeting.

- d. **The Chairman** welcomed Section Officer John Fownes, who is responsible for the control and the organisation of 'Special Constables' for Codsall and Bilbrook.

The Clerk advised members that discussions with Inspector Shannaghan concerning youth problems within the village currently prevalent on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings confirmed there are insufficient local police resources to tackle the problem. The Clerk had asked whether resident volunteers could be sought to join the Police Force as Special Constables to operate to cover both Codsall and Bilbrook. Inspector Shannaghan had advised that he would support this initiative, but there could be occasions when any local recruited Special Constables could be called to other areas should serious offences occur.

Special Constable John Fownes advised that the Police would very much like to see Special Constables recruited and he very much supported the Parish Councils initiative in this respect and that he would liaise with the Clerk in an endeavour to get the appeal publicised.

John Fownes advised that any one between the ages of 18 and 55, who were physically fit and able to give sixteen hours per month would be very welcome to apply. Special Constable Fownes advised that training is given before Special Constables

are allowed to wear the uniform and that they have virtually the same powers as a Police Constable and whilst there is no pay it is very clear that the Special Constables will increasingly play a larger part in policing our community, in particularly during the evenings.

e. **Response from The Midcounties Co-op Society.**

Mr Neil Maddox Manager of the Co-op Store came to the meeting to advise members of the procedure for the sale of alcohol and cigarettes in relation to the under age. Mr Maddox explained that the Co-op has a very robust procedure with regular training sessions and reminders to all of their staff. Mr Maddox did say that on occasions it can be difficult to determine someone who is underaged but his staff did challenge and require evidence of age.

Mr Maddox also advised that like many other businesses they do suffer from distraction burglaries particularly with groups of youths and he would appeal to any resident to bring their attention to these incidents as they occur.

Mr Maddox further advised that the Co-op has been experiencing problems with large groups of youths, particularly on the car park and that they have now employed a security guard to cover the main entrance and is particularly looking for incidents of intimidation by youths seeking the purchase of alcohol and cigarettes by members of the public on their behalf. This is a concern to the Co-op as clearly this is a risk to their business should shoppers determine to go elsewhere. The Co-op is planning a revamp of the store including signage and more importantly new CCTV cameras which in due course will help evidence incidents to the police.

The Chairman thanked Mr Maddox for taking his time to coming to talk to the Parish Council and requested that he keep the Parish Council informed of any on going problems and like wise Mr Maddox offered what ever support the Co-op can give to contain problems being experienced in the Village particularly by the large group of youths.

6. URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

a. **Parish Plan**

With Cllr Brain Holland being unable to attend this evening due to illness this topic was held over to the next meeting.

b. **Open Spaces Committee**

Councillor Paul Kenyon, Chairman of the Open Spaces Committee gave a brief outline of their recent meetings and sought permission from the Council to remove the conifers to the

rear of the Lone Singer Gardens to open up the area and allow light to the garden allowing re generation of the grass and shrubs. A quote of £1050 has been received and Councillor Kenyon proposed that the Council except this recommendation and approve the payment of £1050, or lower if a more competitive quote is received, to allow the felling of the trees to take place. This was seconded by Councillor Oatley and unanimously approved by the meeting.

Councillor Kenyon further advised that the committee was looking to submit a grant application under the County Council's Community Paths initiative to improve the access to Oaken Drive Field with a suitable surface being laid for the lower path way. This is subject to this scheme being accepted by the County Council.

7. ACCOUNTS

- a. **A report** on Council Finances for year to 29th February 2008, was received and approval proposed by Councillor Etheridge, seconded by Councillor Kenyon and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- b. **The schedule** of payments to 12th March 2008 was received with an explanation of items by the Clerk, approval proposed by Councillor Oatley, seconded by Councillor Etheridge and unanimously approved by the meeting.

c. Staffordshire Parish Councils Association

The Annual Subscription for 2008/09 of £645.00 was received, approval recommended by councillor Stovin, seconded by Councillor Etheridge and unanimously approved by the meeting.

- d. **To 'Keep Codsall Clean'** weekend, being led by Mr Stephen Skinner and supported by many Councillors, received a request from the Clerk to purchase twelve litter pickers and other small items of equipment to support this weekend up to a total cost of £100.

Approval recommended by Councillor Oatley, seconded by Councillor Stovin and unanimously approved by the meeting.

8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

A written report from County Councillor Sonja Oatley was received by the meeting.

Cllr Oatley reported that County Councils part of the Council Tax will increase by 4%.

The proposal to award 4 years of back pay to those that are eligible and 3 years pay protection for those who's pay is going down, has been put forward to the 3 Trade Unions.

The 14 Household Waste Recycling Centres in Staffordshire, seven of these operate five days a week, (including Bilbrook), of the other seven, one will lose one day, and the other six will lose two days opening a week.

Bilbrook House will finally close on 31st March, there are currently 4 residents yet to be re housed.

The decision on County Farms will be made by the cabinet on Wednesday 19th March.

A site meeting was held with the Development Services concerning the situation at Dam Mill where there have been many accidents in the past few months with two requiring the services of the Air Ambulance.

Cats eyes and danger signs are to be installed at the sharp bend in Codsall Wood.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue held their first Staff Awards at Keele University. Brian Cox of Brewood won "Safe Driver", Dev Dubli from Codsall won "Working with Young People" and Ian Hemsley, who recently moved from Codsall to Pirehill for "Professionalism".

9. CODSALL VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The minutes of V.H.M.C. meeting of the 18th February 2008 and attaching report were received and noted

10. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

There was no written report this evening but Councillor Marshall advised that the performance indicators for South Staffordshire Council had just been formulated and the majority of the indicators were in the good category.

Councillor Marshall advised that negotiations were on going between the District Council and the County Council regarding the split of costs for running Codsall leisure Centre. Council Marshall promised to advise members of the result of these negotiations in due course.

The District Council had just received a presentation from the Community Learning Partnership which has approximately £185,000 available over the next 3 years to help various initiatives within our area.

The Clerk advised that whilst the Parish Council had not been invited to this presentation he had heard of this initiative and had met with Mr Paul Woodcock, the Chairman of this initiative, to see if there are common areas in which the Parish Council could offer support and receive assistance. Mr Woodcock advised that there should be areas of co-operation, particularly evolving out of the Parish Plan and that he would ask one of the co-ordinators Imrey Tolgyesi to make contact.

Councillor Marshall further advised that Paul Woodcock would be very pleased to attend a Parish meeting. Members asked the Clerk to make a suitable arrangement.

Councillor Marshall advised that the Sussed out and About summer programme has now been finalised and would be circulated shortly.

The Choice based letting scheme is currently being reviewed to make the scheme more manageable, easier to understand and more in tune with the requirements of our residents

11. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

a. South Staffordshire Sports Council

The Inter Parish Games 2008, schedule of events was received and noted.

b. Staffordshire County Council Development Services Directorate

Rights of Way Improvement Plan was received and noted, with a copy of this large document available for perusal at the Parish Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

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

NEXT MEETING

9th April 2008

