

# CODSALL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

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

on

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at 7.30pm. following Planning

### Present

**Parish Councillors** Mrs C Millar (Chair), Mrs V Chapman, R Etheridge, Mrs E Forster, G Owen, L Stovin, D Walls, **District Councillors**, Mrs P Campbell and Mrs S Oatley

#### 1. APOLOGIES

**Apologies** were received from Cllrs Ewart, Holland, Marshall, Michell and Kenyon.

#### 2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

#### 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

**Mr Wolverson and** Mr Skinner were present but made no contribution in public participation.

#### 4. MINUTES

**The Minutes** of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009, approval recommended by Cllr Forster, seconded by Cllr Owen and unanimously approved by the meeting and immediately signed by the Chairman.

#### 5. POLICE REPORT

**There** was no police report this evening, however Councillor Val Chapman, current Chairman of Bilbrook Parish Council advised that it had come to her attention that the Village Hall had allowed the facility to be hired by a jeweller for the purchase of gold jewellery which is currently in favour throughout the country in the current economic climate. It was believed that very low prices were being offered at this event and it is believed that many residents may have actually parted with valuable items. Cllr Chapman advised that both the police and Trading Standards have been alerted.

## 6. URGENT CORRESPONDENCE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

### a. **Codsall Parish Council - Strategy**

The meeting reviewed the document but it did not consider any amendments appropriate at the present time or appointment of committees but will further review this document following publication of the Parish Plan or Annual Review, which ever is sooner.

### b. **South Staffordshire Council**

Comments requested on application for a Premises Licence under Licensing Act 2003 – Off Licence, 2 The Square, Codsall.

**One letter of objection received.**

A lengthy discussion took place with many members commenting following closure a couple of years ago of the previous off licence two or three doors away from the this proposed location, that anti social behaviour in the village had reduced and it was believed that in part due to the reduction in locations where alcohol could be obtained by young people.

Cllr Chapman seconded by Cllr Owen proposed that an objection to the premises liquor licence be lodged with South Staffordshire Council on the grounds that the establishment of another facility for the purchase of alcohol is flying in the face of the efforts of the Parish Council, District Council and other agencies to reduce the anti social behaviour and alcohol abuse by young people. A vote was taken, for the proposal 7, against the proposal 2.

The Clerk was asked to write to South Staffordshire Council accordingly.

### c. **Community Council - of Staffordshire** Re European Social Fund Grants Scheme.

**Received** and noted.

### d. **Staffordshire County Council - Highways** **Introduction of Neighbourhood Highway Teams**

Received and noted

### e. **South Staffordshire Citizens Advice Bureau** Invitation to A.G.M. 22<sup>nd</sup> October, Wombourne Civic Centre.

**Received** and noted.

**f. South Staffs N.H.S**

Receipt of Annual Report for 2008/09

**Received** and noted.

**g. Winter Weather Contingency**

**Review Adverse Winter Weather Contingency Arrangements**

To review and if appropriate request amendments to Staffordshire County Council Highways adverse winter weather contingency arrangements.

The meeting compiled a list of roads where it is considered imperative to have grit bins for use by the public during adverse winter weather conditions. The meeting also requested the gritting of the main roads through the village, (which it is believed are already on County Councils list), but with the particular request that Station Road and Oaken Lanes is reinstated as a gritting route. It transpired last winter that they had been removed from County Council list without advice to any other authority.

**h. South Staffordshire Council**

**Revised Summer SUSSED Children's Activities 2010**

To receive details of new scheme and fully evaluate costs before agreeing to commitment.

Following a lengthy discussion the meeting agreed to support package upto a maximum of £1200 leaving the clerk to evaluate the best package that could be achieved, taking into consideration the cost of room hire and of course availability of suitable accommodation.

**i. Douglas Macmillan Hospice**

Donation request.

The Clerk advised that he contacted the association asking for details of any residents using the facility in the last twelve months or so, no information has been forthcoming.

Members confirmed that they had no knowledge of residents using this facility, following discussion declined to support a donation. It is recognised that many of our residents are referred to Compton Hospice and the Parish Council has made various donations to Compton Hospice over the years.

- j. **To receive** and consider a letter from Miss Darby regarding a memorial bench.

The Clerk advised the meeting that he had spoken to Miss Darby before receipt of the letter, she is seeking approval to replace the old bench in front of Blunts Shoe Shop as a memorial to Mr Kym Carpenter, who recently died from Cancer aged 47. Mr Carpenter was a very well known and respected member of the community. The Clerk further advised that the current bench is owned by County Council and he has written to County Council to obtain their permission for a replacement, if the Parish Council is minded to agree.

Following discussion the meeting agreed to the request in principle but with reservations.. The Parish Council would not wish to see a deluge of requests for memorial benches around the area, but would consider individual requests on their merits to replace existing benches as they wear out, with the replacements in the same style and standard as the benches recently introduced by the Parish Council in various locations.

Approval is of course subject to adequate funds being raised to not only cover the purchase of the bench but also the installation. It would also be the requirement of the approval that the bench is purchased through the Parish Council and that installation is made on behalf of the Parish Council by South Staffordshire District Council to ensure compliance to the required standard. The Clerk was authorised to write to Miss Darby when formal approval has been received from Staffordshire County Council.

- k. **South Staffordshire Council**

South Staffordshire Rural Transport Partnership – Best Practice Event – 28<sup>th</sup> October – Council Offices 2 p.m.

**Received** and noted.

## 7. **ACCOUNTS**

- a. **A report** on Council Finances for year to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 was received, approval recommended by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Stovin and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- b. **The** schedule of payments to 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009 was received following a full explanation of each item by the Clerk, approval proposed by Cllr Campbell, seconded by Cllr Walls and unanimously approved by the meeting.
- c. **Data Protection** Act 1998 – To approve Annual Renewal fee of £35, proposed by Cllr Etheridge, seconded by Cllr walls and unanimously approved by the meeting.

- d. **The Audit Commissions External Auditors Certificate** was received with no comments what so ever, The Clerk advised that the Statuary Notice is already displayed on the Notice Board.

## **8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

**A written** report from County Councillor Robert Marshall was received this evening.

County Council will hold a formal cabinet meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> October, some of the issues detailed below will be discussed.

The financial situation of County Council is not good!, overall figures suggest an overspend this financial year of approximately £7.5 million.

In addition to this the Revenue Support Grant (the amount of money that the Government gives to the Councils) will be cut – probably by a significant amount. Today the Innovation and Efficiency Board will hold their first major meeting and the subject for everyone is where can savings be made without compromising services.

One manifesto commitment that is being introduced this cabinet meeting is the introduction of the Staffordshire Business Support Fund. This will enable County to make loans to Staffordshire firms at interest rates significantly less than other financial institutions. This will help Staffordshire firms be successful and in some cases the difference of staying in business and not. Staffordshire has been hit much harder than the rest of the country and also it is the hardest hit authority in the West Midlands region.

This week is Local Democracy Week, where various schools spend some time at their local council; pupils are shown how local authorities work and how they can affect the process if an issue emerges that is important to them, hopefully inspiring some to get involved with their local authority.

The next meeting of Development Services scrutiny Committee will take place 29<sup>th</sup> October; the main subject under discussion will be street lighting in Staffordshire.

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

**The minutes** of V.H.M.C. meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> September had not been received. The Clerk apologised for the non-appearance and advised that they had been requested again.

## 10. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

**There** was not a written report this evening, Cllr Campbell advised the meeting that District Council had recently had some lengthy discussions and debates the major one being the Contingency Arrangements for Major Incidents and Revised Permitted Development Proposals for planning.

It would appear that significantly more development will be allowed under commercial development and this could have an impact on the planning department which will be reviewed in due course to see if a reduction in resources can be achieved.

District Council have also been advised that the rules of 'Predetermination' are getting ever stricter and it could well be that in future it will be inappropriate for District Councillors to sit on Parish Councils to discuss any item on which they may subsequently have to make a decision at the District Council. It is presumed that this will also apply to County Councillors.

There was discussion around this topic with Councillors recognising that on many occasions our District Councillors have been part of our quorum for both Planning meetings and Main meetings. It is also recognised that District Councillors regularly represent the views of residents following consultation both at the Parish Council and District Council and it would appear that District Councillors may have to decline this role to the residents they represent in future. It is also recognised that currently any objections to a planning application can only be referred to the Scrutiny Committee by a District Councillor. It would appear that the District Councillor may not be able to make that representation in the future, which means under the current South Staffordshire Constitution the objections raised by Parish Council will not be referred to the Scrutiny Committee.

Many other similar issues were briefly discussed, the Clerk was asked to write to South Staffordshire District Council firstly seeking guidance relating to the continued role of District Councillors on Parish Councils and whether in future they will be allowed to stand for the Parish Council and secondly a request for Consideration to a change to the South Staffordshire Constitution to allow objections from the Parish Council to be automatically referred to the Scrutiny Committee.

## 11. OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

### a. South Staffordshire Council

Gambling Act 2005  
Pagebet, 24, Station Road, Codsall

Approval of betting licence was received and noted.

### b. South Staffordshire Council

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Draft Interim Policy Statement

Response & Comments requested by Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009.

The Clerk advised that copies of this policy document were available, whilst it has only just been received it will be brought back to a future meeting, for any comments to be made to South Staffordshire Council before the 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

c. South Staffordshire Community Safety Partnership  
Staffordshire Police - Prevent Strategy

Request for information was received and noted.

**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**

**11<sup>th</sup> November 2009**