

Henstridge Parish Council

Clerk: Rachel Walker, Westcombe House, 48, Bowden Road, Templecombe,
Somerset, BA8 0LF, Tel: 01963 370388
e-mail: clerk@henstridgeparishcouncil.org.uk

Approved minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Henstridge Village Hall Lounge on Monday 8th September 2008.

Present:

Councillors: Norman Symcox (Chair), Paul Brighten, Pete Crocker, Jim Fitch, Geoff Jarvis, David Nichols, Jean Oswick, Malcolm Stobart, Adam Temperton, Mickey Vincent, Paul White

Clerk: Mrs Walker

There were 4 members of the public in attendance at the beginning of the meeting, 3 of whom left immediately following open forum.

1. Apologies.

No apologies had been received.

2. Declarations of Interest.

Mr Jarvis stated that he felt that he had no interest to declare in item 6 (iii) as while he was directly involved in the planning applications from which he considered to be blatant harassment had arisen, he did not feel this to be pertinent to the grievance issue and would not declare any interest on this basis.

Mr Crocker declared an interest in items 4a and b and 7 c and d.

The Clerk advised that she had become aware through here say that some members may have been involved in discussions regarding a possible new village hall. She requested all members to think very carefully with regard to whether they had been involved in this and that they therefore had an interest to declare, particularly in relation to Mr Stobart's proposals which involve a financial element. She emphasised that at the very least, Mr Stobart and Mrs Oswick would be unable to stay and vote for those proposals, being, as they are, the Parish Councils representatives to the Village Hall management committee. She urged other members to consider whether they may be affected in the same way.

Mr Stobart and Mrs Oswick declared a personal and prejudicial interest in items 4b, 7c and 7d as representatives on the village hall management committee. Mr Jarvis declared a personal interest in these items. On the advice of the Clerk he later declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting.

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11.08.08.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

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RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that in order to accommodate visitors to the meeting, that the agenda should be adjusted to take item 7a first followed by items 4a, b, d and 7 c, d in a block, followed by items 4c and 6(iii) with the exclusion of the press and public for these two items as appropriate.

7a. To receive a visit from Andy Pritchard, Area Inspector.

Andy Pritchard and Fiona Wilson (PCSO) were welcomed to the meeting.

Inspector Pritchard explained that he was the community inspector, responsible for all community policing in South Somerset with the exception of the Yeovil area.

He provided a brief explanation of his history before going on to explain that while the priorities are obviously reducing and detecting crime, the fear of crime often exceeds the reality and they want people to feel more confident and reassured and hope that the new style of community policing (rather than the previous geographical policing system which was led by government directives) where the community are able to influence the agenda will help to do this. This was also behind the introduction of PCSO's with the hope being that by giving restricted powers the PCSO's will be able to stay focused on communities rather than being drawn in to other areas which other officer's deal with. He explained the system of tasking meetings where priorities are set and emphasised the importance of feedback being given via the PCSO and the website in order for them to be fully informed in doing this, and he also stressed the greater importance now given to the police feeding back to communities on what has been done to address issues which have been raised.

He explained that crime generally is reducing although there are one or two anomalies and one of these is the effect of the current financial climate which always brings with it an upturn in opportunistic crimes. Funding has just been received for 4 deployable CCTV cameras which can be used to target hotspot areas and will help in both prevention and detection of crime. The strength of Community Speedwatch in South Somerset was raised and a community speedwatch day is to be held on 16th September. He also issued an invitation to Councillors to go out on patrol with officers and stated that he would encourage them to do this. He then invited questions.

The issue of speeding and the jumping of the A30/A357 traffic lights was raised and disappointment expressed that this has been repeatedly raised and nothing ever appears to happen. The Council were asked whether there was a community speedwatch group in the village and stated that there was not. Fiona Wilson offered to arrange a presentation regarding this, The existence of HALT was raised and the concerns that other areas seem to be able to access electronic speed signs and have a periodic police presence to deal with speeding but that Henstridge seems to be struggling to access this. Inspector Pritchard stated that he was happy to take this away as an issue.

Disappointment was expressed at what was felt to be a lack of police presence around the village. Inspector Pritchard suggested that just because they are not always seen does not mean that it is not happening, as you would have to be in the right place at the right time, and he offered to provide feedback regarding the amount of patrols that have gone on in Henstridge to a future meeting. It was felt that this would be valuable

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information. He also explained that they need to patrol “smartly” to ensure the best use of the resources. It was suggested that key issues within the village were vandalism at the village hall and the jumping of the traffic lights but PCSO Wilson advised that there are four other hotspot areas which she regularly patrols which not highly visible area but are trouble area, particularly for the neighbours and emphasised that the Parish Council may not be aware of things that they have not been advised about.

Inspector Pritchard and PCSO Wilson were thanked for their attendance at the meeting and the information provided.

Pete Crocker left the meeting.

4. Matters deferred from previous meetings:

4a Sports Club - To agree a response to the plans for the proposed changing room development and the request for support from the Sports Club, in the light of the presentation and information received from Savills on behalf of Inwood Estates regarding the covenants on the Recreation Ground land.

4b 19.07.08 VHMC To discuss a request for support in assessing the feasibility of providing a replacement village hall and agree any actions arising from this.

4d To provide feedback received in relation to the Council’s intention to organise a youth club facility and agree any actions arising from this.

7c A proposal that the Parish Council submit plans for a new village hall in the village.

Malcolm Stobart

7d A proposal that the Parish Council fund the planning application.

Malcolm Stobart

Prior to discussion of the proposals, the Clerk advised that she felt the proposals to be premature at this stage because:

- there has been no decision of the Council to formally look into the provision of a new Village Hall and indeed a previous request for the Council’s support for the feasibility of such a project had been deferred for consideration at this meeting, these additional proposals prevent this from being fully addressed.
- the Council have not received any information about:
 - the body who will be responsible for this project whom the Parish Council are being asked to put in planning permission on behalf of.
 - where the funding is to come from or evidence of a feasibility study as recommended by the Community Council
 - what is potentially being proposed for the village hall,
 - where it is to be positioned,
 - advice that has been sought from the Community Council or other groups who have recently been involved in similar projects
- speculation is rife in relation to the possible new village hall and the Clerk advised that even on this basis three complaints had been received with regard to the supposed proposals, and clarification requested. The Clerk advised that this had put her into an awkward position as she had no information but was also unclear as to whether this was a matter being dealt with by the VHMC or whether a separate

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committee had been set up, but she emphasised the importance of consultation for any proposed building which is meant to be for the village.

- any consideration of drawing up plans would have to be put through Inwood first and agreement to put in for planning permission prior to drawing up something which Inwood would be happy with is clearly rash at this stage. Consideration would be given by Inwood to any comments which had been received in relation to the proposals, particularly by the adjoining residents, and again consultation at the early stages is therefore very important.
- there has been no agreement of any plans with the Council and no agreement to lease any land and the implications of any such lease, which is of course linked to Inwood's agreement. Such expectations have been made of the Sports Club prior to the Parish Council agreeing to support their planning application and therefore it would seem only right that a similar expectation is made in relation to a potential new village hall.

It was suggested that meetings that had gone on to date with reference to the needs of the Sports Club and for a Youth Club facility suggested the need for a singular building which facilitates the needs of the whole community. Comment was invited from Steve Penny from the Sports Club who agreed that Plan A would always be to have the changing rooms in the Village Hall and expressed the belief that in his conversation within the community he was under the impression that there was a desire for a new Village Hall but that the Sports Club had gone down the route of looking at Changing rooms for practicalities sake in time scale of getting something achieved.

The Clerk was asked to provide the feedback on the Youth Club at this point and reported that she had made enquiries as to the availability of the hall as instructed and the hall is currently available on a Wednesday evening, although the costs of hiring the whole hall are quite high. She had also had contact with Kerry Gray, the area youth worker and with Jay Lewin, the Young People's officer at SSDC and understood that there would be quite a lot involved in setting up a Youth Club, for example, insurance needs (which would not be covered by the village hall's insurance), need for a constitution, CRB checks, First Aid at Work, Health and Safety etc as well as the bits of interest to the children such as purchasing of equipment (although storage would be an issue). There would be help available for setting up a Youth Club but there does not appear to be a regular availability of someone to take the lead with this. The recommendation from Jay Lewin is that a Committee would be needed to take responsibility for the running of the Youth Club and that this should be a Committee of those involved in the Youth Club, rather than being a committee of Parish Councillors for example. She suggests that the way forward is to hold an open meeting making the proposal of a Youth Club and seeking volunteers, and she advised that the Rural Youth Project would probably be able to send someone to such a meeting to advise further on all of the implications, but that without sourcing willing regular volunteers, a club would be unlikely to be able to be progressed. Disappointment was expressed that the feedback had not been more positive. It was suggested that in relation to 4a the Sports Club seemed to be in agreement with a Village Hall project provided that they would be likely to see some movement

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forward with this, and that the Parish Council should support the VHMC in looking into feasibility and drawing up plans to put forward to Inwood for approval. However concerns were raised as to who would be drawing the project together and that it would be being bounce between groups. It was stated that lots of work had been done toward such a project previously and that plans had already provisionally been drawn up and suggested that the Parish Council should take the lead in submitting plans as they are able to do this at a reduced rate. The Clerk emphasised that she was unclear as to who was taking the lead as the advice received had been that the Parish Council could not do this for funding reasons and while we could still put in the planning permission we would be doing this on behalf of someone else (as advised by SALC) in the same way that we could potentially have done for the Sports Club. The Clerk reminded Mr Stobart and Mrs Oswick that they had a prejudicial interest and as it would appear to be moving into discussion rather than information giving this would seem an appropriate time for them to leave the meeting. The Clerk raised concerns as to whether Mr Jarvis could also be perceived to have a prejudicial interest due to his involvement in drawing up the plans. Mr Jarvis also declared a prejudicial interest.

Mr Jarvis, Mr Stobart and Mrs Oswick left the meeting.

The Chairman stated that it would appear to be a general consensus that the Parish Council are in favour of a new village hall and would support the Village Hall Management Committee, or other appropriate group, in taking this forward but emphasised that while we do not want the impetus to be lost we also need to ensure that we progress the matter in the correct way so that the needs of the village are fully met. Mr Penny expressed that the Sports Club would be happy to be involved. Further discussion occurred regarding the best way to progress the project and the best way in which to deal with the proposals.

RESOLVED: In relation to item 4a, it was proposed and agreed that as the Sports Club have expressed that they are happy to participate in the investigation of a new Village Hall, that the Parish Council will not be supporting the plans for the proposed changing room development at the current time.

In relation to item 4b, it was proposed and agreed to write to the Village Hall Management Committee expressing the Parish Council's support for assessing the feasibility of providing a replacement village hall once the Committee have sought advice from the Community Council with regard to the information required to move such a project forward, having liaised with other user groups and interested parties and agreed whether this will be moved forward under the banner of the Village Hall Management Committee or a new committee.

In relation to item 4d, it was proposed and agreed not to pursue the issue of a youth club at the current time until such time as the position of the Village Hall is agreed.

Items 7c and 7d did not have a seconder.

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RESOLVED: It was agreed to move to consider items 4d and 6 (iii) together. It was proposed and agreed that due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, that the press and public be excluded. The Clerks were requested to remain in the meeting.

4d. To agree changes necessary to the existing Clerk's contracts in the light of the report received from the working group set up to review the Clerks terms and conditions in the light of the "Guide to Good Employment Practice in Local Councils" (SALC and SLCC) (Norman Symcox, Mickey Vincent, Paul Brighten).

RESOLVED: The Chairman apologised for not having dealt with this item.

31.08.08 Rachel Walker To agree a response to a letter with regard to a possible grievance issue and agree actions arising.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that the matter was blatant harassment of employees of the Council and it must stop.

IT WAS PROPOSED AND UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT A VOTE OF FULL CONFIDENCE AND APPRECIATION OF BOTH OF THE CLERKS BE CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THAT SUCH BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES IN BOLD PRINT.

It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Chair should write to the member of the public, clearly pointing out that the Clerks will not be subject to that which the Council considers to be harassment, and that any future contact will be in writing, response to which will only be given after full consideration by the Council, and that only in the event of emergency should telephone contact be made and then only to the Chairman.

It was agreed that the exact wording of the letter should be at the Chairman's discretion but that such should clearly convey the proposals agreed.

It was further proposed and agreed that in the future, the subject should be reviewed monthly and in the event of any repeat, the Council should apply to the Courts for a restraining order.

4e. To receive an update with regard to the planning of the additional consecrated cemetery plot and agree any actions arising.
The Clerk reminded the Council of the information provided at the previous meeting.

RESOLVED: Mr Jarvis agreed that he would redraw the map.

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4f. To advise Councillors of issues with maintenance of footpaths at Old Station Gardens and actions taken.

DEFERRED: The Clerk advised that she had not heard back from Mr Wallace and was therefore unable to provide the update at this stage.

5. Matters arising from previous meetings:

- a. to provide quotes for water troughs at the allotments and agree how the Council wish to proceed with this.

The Clerk provided several quotations and advised that a further quotation is awaited from Mole Valley Farmers, along with an update from Wessex Water as to when the water will be connected.

RESOLVED: It was proposed to defer the decision to the Clerk on the basis of the cheapest option which met the previously discussed criteria.

6. Correspondence

20.08.08	SALC	To agree if a representative is available to attend the SALC AGM on 27.09.08 (Saturday) at Woolavington
<u>RESOLVED:</u> Mr Symcox agreed to attend the meeting.		
28.08.08	SSDC	To provide a response re the possible attendance at a workshop event re Flood Awareness, the possible hosting of such an event and the possible establishment of a local sandbag store.
The matter was discussed.		
<u>RESOLVED:</u> It was proposed and agreed that the Council would be interested in sending a representative to a workshop dependent on dates and that the Council would be interested in providing a sandbag store but would need additional information on the requirements of this in order to be able to look for a suitable site.		
01.09.08	Somerset Road Safety Partnership	To respond to an invitation to host a Driver Awareness Course within the Parish
<u>RESOLVED:</u> It was proposed and agreed that the Council would be willing to host an event in the village.		
02.09.08	Somerset Strategic Housing Partnership	To agree if a representative is available to attend Housing Strategy Seminar Event Thursday 25 th September, Taunton Racecourse 9:45am – 4:30pm
No members were available to attend.		

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7. Council Matters

b. To carry out annual review of Council policy documents:

- (i) Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 resolution
- (ii) Equal opportunities policy
- (iii) Health and Safety Policy
- (iv) Model Publication Scheme
- (v) Financial Regulations
- (vi) Financial Risk Assessment and Management
- (vii) Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee
- (viii) Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee
- (ix) Code of Practice for handling complaints
- (x) Dignity at work/Bullying and Harassment Policy

The Clerk advised that she was not aware of any changes necessary other than those which had been made through the year.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to maintain the policies in their current formats.

- e. To agree any charges to be made for the advertisement of local events on the web page

DEFERRED: It was agreed to defer the item to the Finance committee for discussion and recommendation.

- f. To receive an update with regard to tree planting in and around the village. Malcolm Stobart

Mr Stobart advised that he was looking into quotes for the proposals and would bring these back to a future meeting.

- g. To advise the Council of the date for the next finance meeting.

The Clerk advised that the finance meeting will be on 20.10.08 following the planning meeting.

- h. As a continuation of the recreation ground hedge laying project, to approve the trimming of the hedge and any additional planting as deemed necessary.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to approve the additional work as needed.
The opportunity was also taken to make a note of thanks to Westree for the work that had been carried out on the Leilandii trees.

- i. Playground Inspection Reports.

The Clerk reported that she and Mr Temperton were liaising on the outstanding issues.

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- j. To receive reports from Representatives (VHMC, HALT, Footpaths, Other) and provide guidance as appropriate:

Mr Brighten reported that HALT would like pressure put on Highways for flashing speed signs to be made available.

There were no other reports to make.

8. Finance

- a. To approve the following accounts for payment:

Madasafish	Line 2 DD Internet & Telephone 06/08/08-05/09/08	£34.58
Madasafish	Line 1 DD Internet & Telephone 24/08/08-23/09/08	£38.65
Rochford Garden Machinery	Mower for use at Ash Walk rec.	£399.00
Data protection	Registration	£35.00
R Walker	Salary August	£240.37
T Watson	Salary August	£283.97
G Edwards	Salary August	£45.49
T Pulling	Salary August	£22.74
Inland revenue	NI & Tax Contributions	£93.20

The Clerk advised that Mr Stobart had had the opportunity to purchase a mounted map of the Parish for the Council which it was felt would be useful for planning matters and so on and that this had been at a cost of £20.00.

RESOLVED: The above accounts, including the additional item, were approved for payment.

- b. Income –

T Watson	Line rental	£8.50
WD Collins	Double Plot Purchase ref req. in 07/08	£230.96

9. Date of Next meeting – The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Monday 6th October 2008**. All items for inclusion on the agenda and all items to be listed under issues arising from previous meetings must be received by the Clerk by **9.00am on Thursday 25th September 2008**.