

WALFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Walford Parish Council on Wednesday 9th June 2010 at 7.30 pm
in Bishopswood Village Hall.

Present:

Frank Myers – Chairman

Councillors: Simeon Cole, Heather Evans, Marc Thomas, Geoffrey Symonds, Derek Allen, Bridget Vine, Michael Downey (arrived at 8.15pm) and 4 members of the Public.

In attendance: Clerk – Catherine Murray

1. Apologies for absence

John Jarvis, Eric Drummond, Phillip Heath, Sandra Cole, Alan Whitlock, Luke Freeman, Michael Downey for anticipated lateness.

2. Declaration of personal / prejudicial interests – Councillor Bridget Vine declared that she was a neighbour of Berrington Cottage. With reference to Planning application DMSE/ 101090/F.

3. Open Session: The Chairman introduced the West Mercia Police representative – Paul Leighton, and invited him to speak:

3.1: To receive a verbal report from West Mercia Police: Items to note –

3.1.1 Fuel and heating oil thefts are on the increase, as are thefts from parked lorries, the officer asked the public to report anything suspicious, providing vehicle registration numbers if possible. The Chairman reported that batteries had been stolen from buggies at South Herefordshire Golf Club, the officer replied that the price of scrap metal had resulted in thieves targeting batteries and catalytic converters.

3.1.2 There has been an increase in distraction burglaries near to road works, where thieves are using ID cards and information gained from road contractors, in order to gain access to local houses with the excuse of checking the premises. Again, the public are asked to report to the Police if they notice anything suspicious near to road works.

3.1.3 In hot spells, where householders are leaving their windows / doors open, opportunistic thieves are taking advantage, the public should take care at such times and be vigilant.

One of the Councillors reported that some elderly local residents had been targeted by people claiming to be from the TV Switchover company, who parked outside their houses and asked to gain access to the premises. The Police Officer advised residents not to allow them in but to ask for a card to arrange a visit at a later date. The Police are aware of these scams and are willing to come out if called.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions from the public – none were offered – and the Police officer was thanked for his report.

3.2: To receive a verbal report from Ward Councillor John Jarvis: In the absence of Ward Councillor John Jarvis there was no verbal report.

4. Adoption of minutes of previous meeting – 12/05/10 RESOLVED: To accept as a true record.

Alteration to Agenda:

Item 6.1 (Brought forward) The Chairman asked if the Agenda could be altered to bring forward item 6.1 to ratify the decision to approve a footpath diversion requested by a local resident, Mr Hurley. One of the Councillors asked if there were any associated maintenance cost implications, Mr Hurley said that maintenance would be carried out, but that no expense should fall on the Public purse. The decision was ratified.

5. Finance:

5.1 To consider and ratify the report of the Finance Committee: The Chairman of the Finance committee stated that all payments had been approved and the Accounts had been agreed, that the 1st tranche of the Precept had been received and the Accounts were all in order. The invoice for the ROW officer was to be discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk was now responsible for Finances.

5.2 To adopt Accounts for 2009/10:

RESOLVED: The accounts for 2009/10 were unanimously adopted. Cllr Thomas stated that the Finance committee had proved good for scrutiny, the accounts were up to date, that a reconciliation had been done and everything balanced. He briefly summarised the Accounts – stating that the total expenditure for 2009/10 was £19,000. No Cllrs wished to see copies of the accounts. The Chairman asked if there were any questions – none were offered.

5.3 To appoint an Internal Auditor:

RESOLVED: To appoint Jayne Dunstan as Internal Auditor.

Jayne Dunstan, a local book keeper, who is AAT qualified was put forward as a candidate for the position of Internal Auditor and as other avenues of enquiry had not been successful, was duly approved. The Clerk explained the deadline for the submission of the Accounts to the External Auditors was 29th July, which gave Council time to approve the Internal Audit at the next meeting to be included on the next agenda.

5.4 To consider contract for Computer support:

RESOLVED: To accept the quotation from TCT to supply Computer support. One Councillor asked whether other quotations should have been submitted, but the Chairman suggested that as TCT had already been providing this service and had been very helpful, it was sensible to go with them and re-consider the contract next year, it was agreed that £150 was very reasonable.

6. Rights of way:

6.1 - To consider footpath diversion requested by a local resident: (Item already dealt with after item 4.) The decision made at the previous meeting was ratified.

6.2 - To receive an update on footway from School car park to the local Church: Cllr Symonds said that he had heard only that the footpath is due to be done this year and said that the man doing the kerbs is due to do the work, that the footpath would be made wider and more accessible – as the walk to school initiative had proved that it was difficult to negotiate. Thanks were given to Andrew Middlecote for mowing the grass before the walk to school. The Clerk was instructed to e mail thanks to Andrew Middlecote. It was stated that the road side lighting board had been repaired.

7. Planning Applications

7.1 To comment on planning applications:

7.1.1 DMSE/ 101038/F - New portal framed agricultural building. RESOLVED – To support the application provided an appropriate planting scheme was put in place to screen the building. There were no objections.

7.1.2 DMSE/ 101090/F - Change of use from garage / workshop to holiday accommodation. RESOLVED – There was a unanimous decision to reject the application – as it was a new dwelling in open countryside – all Councillors objected.

7.1.3 DMSE/ 100829/FH - Conservatory and Gym extension. RESOLVED – To support the application with no objections.

7.1.4 DMSE/ 101045/F - Disabled access to existing canoe launch. RESOLVED – To support the application with comment that the provision of suitable signage to protect the village hall car park would be appreciated.

7.2 To consider setting up a Planning working Group:

The Chairman read out the proposal document to the Council, after which it was decided that it was not necessary to set up a Planning Working Group, as the current system worked well – the Clerk agreed to circulate all Planning Applications to Cllrs between meetings.

8. To consider sign provision at Arbour Hill:

8.1 Dog Fouling: A Cllr stated that the existing Dog Fouling signs had rotted away. It was suggested that new signs should be made which would not deteriorate so quickly. The Chairman said that Royal British Legion Industries could make the signs, Cllr Allen agreed to e mail the quantity required to the Chairman, who would supply a quotation. A discussion was had about what should be shown on the signs.

8.2 Weight restriction: It was stated that no weight restriction signage exists at the moment. A Cllr suggested that vehicles were already within the weight restriction area once they had reached Arbour Hill. It was asked whether the Highways Agency could provide reminder signs. It was stated that E C Drummond already had signs in place to prevent vehicles from turning left. It was decided to discuss signage with E C Drummond as further information was required before decisions could be made. To be included on the next Agenda.

9. Website:

9.1 To reconsider management of the Parish council website: RESOLVED: To retain Allan Kitto to provide support for the website, based on the Clerk having complete control over all information displayed thereon.

9.2 To consider contact information for the website: A discussion was had about what contact details should be displayed on the website. The Clerk agreed to send a questionnaire round to Councillors asking for their views

9.3 To consider the display of the Parish Map on the website: The Footpaths officer explained that the Map had been taken down because the license didn't cover its use, Ordnance survey have since confirmed that the Map can now be displayed. Alex Perry had stated that he will re-do the map so that it can be displayed on the website. It was agreed that the Clerk should make sure that the Map is retrieved to be used on the website and would talk to those concerned, in order to clarify the situation. Results of enquiries to be on next Agenda.

Additional item for next Agenda: A Cllr suggested that Jackie Perry should have a letter of thanks – to be drafted by the Clerk and signed by Councillors at next meeting and that she could be paid for the work she has done in her mentoring of the new Clerk. All Cllrs were in agreement.

10. **To receive an update on land at Forest Green:** No further information was available but the matter should be included on further Agenda until resolved – as a parishioner had phoned to ask about it. A member of the Public commented that someone used to drive cattle through the land around 20 years ago.
11. **To note correspondence received:** All relevant correspondence was considered and in response:
 - 11.1 Cllr S Cole was appointed as the Parish Emergency co-ordinator.
 - 11.2 It was agreed that the Clerk should send thanks via Eric Drummond to George Smith of Walford Timber for offering to re make the Parish notice board by the school.
 - 11.3 It was agreed that Cllr S Cole should liaise with the Clerk re: the location of Council salt bins by 25th June.
 - 11.4 It was agreed that the War memorial society should be given permission to use Cllr Vine's photographs if they wished to.
12. **To receive Councillors reports on local matters:** A Cllr reported worsening pot holes and it was decided that the Clerk should speak to the Highways Agency through official channels about action to resolve this issue. The footpaths officer said that if any paths needed strimming that he should be advised as soon as possible. A Cllr commented on the cutting of hedgerows and the Footpaths officer said that he would speak to those concerned. Cllr Symonds said that he had e-mailed the Lengthsman's officer about the hedge damage and stated that Ruth Kinsella at Amey was always in a meeting when he tried to contact her. A Cllr expressed concern about a water diversion at Deepdean into someone's shed which was caused by the same operatives.
13. **To raise matters for the next Agenda:** A Cllr asked about the status of the War memorial repair at Bishopswood? It was suggested that the Clerk should check the previous minutes as to what was decided – this should be included on the next Agenda.
14. **Open session for views & queries from local residents:**
A local resident commented on hedge trimming, stating that it was illegal to disturb nesting birds during this season and suggesting that landowners should be more aware of their responsibilities. He also spoke of the confusion over the naming of footways and footpaths, he mentioned similar confusion over black plastic usage in connection with recycling and stated that the flashing road sign was displaying the wrong mileage. He also expressed an opinion that Cllrs should not have to display their personal email details on the Website. A member of the Public said that the Lengthsman had cut ivy on private land, and asked if he had the Council's authority to do it. No Cllrs knew who had cut the ivy, it was suggested that investigating whose line of sight the ivy was interfering with might explain who the perpetrator was.
15. To note the date of the next meeting: Wednesday 14th July 2010 at Walford Village Hall.

SIGNED DATE