

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON **4 March 2003** IN THE JUBILEE ROOM OF THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Councillors C Dickinson (Chairman), J Hobson, L Wilcox, C Prout, D Poole, M Burgess, S Smith (Clerk)

REF

ACTION

OPEN FORUM

The Chairman welcomed representatives of Gloucestershire County Council Highways Maintenance Division to the meeting. Liz Kirkham addressed the meeting and explained the background to the requirement to make changes to the bridge at Ford Farm.

Proposals to complete the work during the winter had been reviewed and it was felt more cost effective to complete the job during the summer months. A revised proposal for road closure for 6 weeks during school holidays was currently under discussion. She confirmed that under this proposal a footbridge would be maintained for pedestrians and cyclists during the works. The Railink bus would not be operational for the duration of the road closure and the more flexible Village Link bus service would be substituted. The alternative route for motor vehicles wishing to enter or leave Coaley would be Elmcote Lane. The tender process for the bridge scheme to be completed during school holidays would be underway shortly.

The Chairman invited comments from the floor on the road closure issue.

Cllr Hobson objected to the proposal to make Elmcote Lane the alternative route stating that this road was totally unsuitable to take Coaley traffic.

A representative from the Fox & Hounds pointed out that closure would make commuting to Cam & Dursley railway station very difficult for residents and that the starvation of the main artery into the village would cause concern to businesses, particularly the perceived loss of business to the village pub. Elmcote Lane was not suitable as an alternative route due to its narrowness and use by horses. There would be extra pressure put on small country roads.

A resident enquired why the works timescale had reduced from 20 weeks to 8 weeks. It was confirmed that the whole job would take 12-14 weeks with road closure for 6 weeks only.

Cllr Wilcox spoke on behalf of the farming community with land at Slimbridge and beyond. She drew attention to the fact that heavy goods vehicles would be hauling hay, silage and straw at the time of the proposed works and Elmcote Lane would not be suitable as an alternative route. She emphasised the danger to road users when the HGV's were travelling in convoy to and from Coaley.

Mr Dauncey, GCC Highways Department, stated that he would look at Elmcote Lane with a view to putting in passing places along the road. Mud on the road would not be so much of a problem in the summer months.

Mr Billett asked if the Ford Farm bridge could be straightened out as part of the works. Mrs Kirkham replied that this would not be possible. He asked if Elmcote Lane flooding could be resolved and this point was taken on board.

Cllr Poole raised the issue of cost believing that GCC wished to save £60,000 by completing the works to the revised proposal. He enquired of Mr Dauncey the cost to improve Elmcote Lane? Mr Dauncey estimated approximately £20,000 for 2kms of road resurfacing. Cllr Poole suggested that the net cost saving would not benefit the council

tax chargepayers of Coaley and that the funds would be diverted elsewhere within GCC. Mr Dauncey replied that he would prefer to use alternative routes rather than inconvenience the chargepayers of Coaley however diversionary routes would be short and the time scales on journeys were not great.

County Cllr Nolder agreed that Elmcote Lane would not be suitable especially for farm vehicles.

The Chairman summarised the points raised during the Open Forum confirming that residents did not wish the main road to be closed. Problems had been drawn to the attention of the GCC representatives and the matter would be discussed later in the meeting along with a petition from the pub against road closure.

Mr Billett raised the issue of traffic calming throughout Coaley and was advised that the implementation of a 30mph speed limit was imminent. He also requested clarification of the rules and penalties in connection with dog fouling.

Mrs George Chairman of CoSPA read out a statement in which CoSPA appealed to the Parish Council to help resolve the impasse between it and the Village Hall Committee over the lease. She also requested Council's support for an alternative plan to utilise a surplus terrapin building from Coaley School on the site in the Village Hall car park.

District Cllr Wood drew attention to the council tax bills that would shortly be delivered to residents. The average increase was 14.8% with SDD 3% and the Police Authority 52%. The remainder of the increase had been levied by GCC and parishes. She understood the Police Authority increase was necessary to maintain pension funds. The Rural Project Grant scheme recommendations were accepted by SDC's Cabinet as predicted.

County Cllr Nolder said there was no change in the way in which Central Government devolved funds to shire counties. Therefore the shortfall had to be met through the local council tax system.

She had been in discussion with rail providers over changes to the timetable at Cam & Dursley railway station. Subsidies for rural bus transport would be geared toward the urban areas in future. The Dursley/Gloucester bus route operated by Stagecoach would remain.

There was scope for young people in Coaley and Slimbridge to use the facilities of Cam Youth Club although transport would need to be considered.

The Chairman thanked residents and visitors for their input into the Open Forum and confirmed that Council would follow up any points raised.

239/03 **Declarations of Interest by Councillors**

There were no declarations made.

240/03 **Apologies** were received from Cllr Chalmers. District Cllr Wood and County Cllr Nolder and four parishioners attended the meeting.

241/03 **Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2003** were approved as a true and correct record by those present at the meeting. Proposed Cllr Hobson; seconded Cllr Poole and agreed by all.

24203 **Matters Arising**

Minute 233/03 SDC Green Spaces Strategy. Council's composite reply to the consultation had been acknowledged and Councillor's comments regarding difficulty experienced in completing the form had been recognised.

Minute 236/03 Grants from Coaley Parish Council. Questionnaires had been issued to two organisations within the village but only one had been completed and returned.

Minute 236/03 Planning permission Sage Cottage S.02/387. A possible breach of approval was currently under investigation by SDC's Planning Enforcement Officers.

243/03 **Planning**

Council discussed:

S.03/100 5 Betworthy – erection of an extension

Cllr Dickinson proposed that Council object to the planning application; seconded Cllr Poole; 4 votes in favour; 2 abstentions.

Reasons for objection were that the extension as shown on the plans would contravene policies H12 and G1 of the SDC Local Plan: Draft for Deposit November 1999 in that it would increase the size of the property by more than 25% and was not for the purpose of providing basic amenities. The proposed extension would have an overbearing effect on the adjoining property no 4 Betworthy and there would be a loss of privacy, loss of daylight and sunlight. Concerns were also expressed about vehicular access onto the highway as the site is close to the junction of Betworthy with The Close.

Council received permission for:

- a) S.02/486 Westfield Farm, Frocester Road – change of use of barn to dwelling
- b) S.02/520 Westfield Farm, Frocester Road – Listed Building Consent for change of use of barn to dwelling

Conditions attached to the permissions were summarised at the meeting.

244/03 **Accounts**

245/03 **Correspondence**

- a) Market & Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) survey – As the Chairman was involved in the initiative it was felt unnecessary for Council to complete a survey form. Minutes of the meeting held in Coaley on 18 January were circulated in the monthly folder.
- a) A summary of a statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs concerning the new Licensing Bill was read out by the Clerk and a copy issued to the Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee.
- b) SDC Transfer of Council Housing – a letter from the Director of Housing and Environmental Services gave details of the programme to possibly transfer housing stock to a different Registered Social Landlord and a tenants conference to be held in Dursley on 8 March. Further details were circulated in the monthly envelope.

The Clerk drew attention to Stroud & District CVS newsletter and Members Forum meeting on 12 March at Wotton under Edge prior to circulation.

An envelope of magazines and journals was circulated amongst Councillors

246/03 **Correspondence received since agenda issued**

- a) Notification from SDC of removal of a number of recycling sites across the District. Council noted the possibility that the Village Hall site may be next.

247/03 **Highways Repair and Maintenance**

Council discussed the advice given by Mr Dauncey and Mrs Kirkham during the Open Forum and concluded that answers given to questions were glib and dismissed lightly. The Clerk was instructed to write to GCC, enclosing surveys, indicating the depth of feeling expressed by residents at the meeting. Council agreed that a far safer corner would be made by rebuilding the bridge completely and straightening the road at that point, buying the land adjacent if necessary.

Clerk

Council had received copy letters from residents addressed to GCC Highways Department drawing attention to works required to the highway at Lapley Lane and at the Box Road junction with the A4135.

The Clerk confirmed that the measuring exercise carried out in Far Green during January was in connection with improvements to the pavement network. Mr Portlock had indicated that the pavements from Far Green bus shelter to the junction with Severn View and from Laburnum Cottage, Hamshill to Applegates, The Street would be replaced during financial year 2003/04.

The Clerk had written to residents of Pinnells End Farm to advise of works to be carried out in Pinnells End Lane during April.

Footpath report CCO48 – stile at the junction with Trenley Road in disrepair. Cllr Prout had erected a warning sign and the landowner was aware of problem.

Cllr Poole reported that the junction of Far Green and Tickshill required pothole attention.

248/03 **Village Maintenance**

Replacement gates had been installed at Far Green allotments in spite of Mr Morgan's recent debility. No further works required to make them secure.

Limb from tree in churchyard in village hall car park requires removal.

Clerk

No-one had stepped forward in response to the appeal in the newsletter for a working party to prepare for the Bledisloe Cup competition. Cllrs Wilcox and Burgess offered to be responsible for the School. It was agreed that a newsletter article would invite residents to take part in a tidying exercise on a Saturday morning date to be fixed in May. A map showing the route to be judged may help residents focus on the competition. Dog fouling – SDC's animal welfare officer, Lesley Swain, had visited the school and been extremely impressed by the quality of questions she received. She issued some promotional literature for the children to take home. The Clerk had challenged several dog owners on the Recreation Ground and met with a positive response towards the problem. Sadly, the problem persisted. Consideration might be given to requiring dogs to be kept on a lead whilst crossing the Recreation Ground.

Clerk

Overhanging hedges – the Clerk had been requested by a resident to draw the attention of others to overgrowth from gardens which affects clear passage on pavements and footpaths. The hedge at Little Paddocks to be drawn to the attention of owners. District

Cllr Wood advised that GCC have a person specifically employed to deal with hedge issues. Cllr Poole offered to walk the village and report on hedge egress.

DP

249/03 **Parish Plan meeting – 8 March 2003**

The Chairman gave an update on how the meeting would run and who would be in attendance.

250/03 **Traffic Calming**

The Chairman reminded Council of the issues raised by members of Coaley School Council at the previous meeting. It was agreed that Council should follow up the request for a zebra crossing on The Street and that the children should write separately to GCC Highways Department regarding their request.

Clerk

Cllr Poole proposed that Council might consider funding the production of pre-printed signs to be attached to the School railings thanking drivers for not parking; following discussion it was agreed that Cllr Poole should request the community policemen to attend at school closing time with a view to discouraging parking in that area; the question of a 30mph speed limit was already in hand with GCC.

DP

Cllrs Burgess and Wilcox agreed to represent Council at a meeting of Coaley School Council the following day.

MB/LW

251/03 **Annual Assembly 2003**

The Chairman proposed that the Parish Plan Steering Group be invited to address the Assembly and use it as a platform for encouraging greater participation in the project. It was also proposed and agreed that the number of reports should be restricted to the Chairman's review of the year, the Clerk's financial review and the report of Council's representative on Coaley School Governor's. The date was agreed in principle as being 29 April subject to availability of accommodation.

Clerk

252/03 **GCC Structure Plan 3rd Alteration – Deposit Draft**

The Chairman reported on a meeting of the Structure Plan Forum group held in February. He felt that the issues were well reflected in the document under discussion and commended it to Council. There were no objections and no further comments made.

253/03 **Village Hall Golden Jubilee Celebrations**

Cllr Hobson advised that the foundation stone for the Village Hall was laid in 1953. The Village Hall Management Committee planned to celebrate the opening of the Hall in 1954.

254/03 **Civil Contingencies in Coaley**

The Clerk drew attention to disruption of the water supply to Coaley on 9 February. Cllr Poole commented that advice to residents could have been more helpful, particularly in terms of when the supply was likely to be restored. In terms of emergency arrangements by the utility companies, Cllr Poole proposed that Council could be notified by the relevant authority and then undertake the notify residents via a cascade system of communication. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Severn Trent about this particular emergency and that the general issue of communication should be reviewed at a later date.

Clerk

255/03 **Queen's Golden Jubilee Award 2003**

Three nominations had been circulated previously to Councillors. Councillors considered the nominations and declared the winner to be Frances Randall.

It was agreed that the award would be presented at the Annual Assembly.

256/03 **Matters for Forward Consideration**

- a) Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Equal Opportunities Policy to be adopted by Council
- b) Cattle crossing signage for Waterend Farm
- c) Civil contingencies

257/03 **Items for Press Release and publication on the website.**

Council agreed to publish on the website minutes of meeting held on 4 February 2003 with the exception of minute number 226/03 relating to accounts.

For the next newsletter there would be articles relating to the road closure at Ford Farm bridge; 'Know Your Councillor' – Marion Burgess; general article from Coaley School and an update on the wildlife project; Queen's Golden Jubilee Award.

JH

Clerk

258/03 **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 1 April 2003

The meeting closed at 10.05pm