

LYDIARD MILLICENT PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting June 7th 2007

Present: Cllrs T Pepperall (Chair), B Baker, J Bennett, S Burley, A Harris, J Holloway, A Pfleger, E Quartly Bishop, N Smith.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr M Groom
2. **Housekeeping.** Fire alarm instructions were given to the meeting.
3. **Co-option of Councillor.** Councillors were asked to continue to look for a suitable candidate. The position will then need to be officially advertised.
4. **Minutes of meeting** – minutes of 10th May signed as a true record with no amendments.

WCC Petition to save local post offices in Wiltshire was sent around the meeting.

5. **PC Report.** PC Singfield was thanked for coming. He reported that both he and other officers had carried out speed checks in various locations and times of day and night since the last meeting. Drivers who were caught speeding will be sent a letter reminding them of the speed limits and the penalties should they be caught again, together with one of the posters which the school children have been designing. Some of the drivers logged live in the parish. Selected posters will also be displayed in due course.

Further speed testing was requested by parishioners, in particular at Bagbury Lane area.

A problem was reported with speeding traffic on Sunday afternoons along Washpool, and of bikes overtaking speeding cars.

Cllr Bennett asked if there was a system of reporting HGV vehicles like the Clarence system for the highways. There is not, but we were urged to continue to report and log incidents to Wilts. Constabulary on 0845 4087000, as the speed control units would then be primed to activate the camera during a session.

PC Singfield had visited the JCH on a number of evenings but had not yet encountered any problems. He had also spoken to the Crime Prevention team who advise him that there are some plastic strips which can be placed on the corners of the building. They can be purchased from the Bobby Van, which he will ask to call on us.

The 7.5 ton sign at Washpool had recently been turned around, and had been readjusted.

An accident had been noticed by The Crescent on 2nd June approx. 2.p.m. PC Singfield will try and obtain some details, as it had been agreed the previous month to start a log of all accidents, attended or otherwise.

A parishioner had been seen actively leading an HGV vehicle through the village towards its destination - such an action is actively discouraged by the Council. The weight limit is intended to prevent HGVs entering the area except when they are delivering in the village. Toomers deliveries are asked to travel via West Swindon, past The Foresters, and to leave by the same route, although this is not a legal requirement. Parishioners are asked to report HGVs which travel through the area without making a legitimate delivery.

Additionally, an HGV vehicle had been reported as being unloaded from the side of the road early one morning outside Toomers, as another HGV driver was sleeping in his cab having parked across the entrance. This will be looked into.

PC Springfield needed to do a leaflet drop to parishioners, and the Council offered to organise this leaflet drop to the Parish on his behalf.

6. **County Councillor's report and questions arising.** – Cllr Groom was unable to attend the meeting but the Chairman read out her report on the EIP of the Regional Strategy. *Report in full at the end of these minutes.*

7. District Councillor's report and questions arising. – No report.

8. Parishioner's Question Time.

- a. It had previously been requested that a paving slab be placed at the end of the path from Chestnut Springs to Buryfields - this is still to be done. It was also asked if the adjacent Laurel bush could be cut back.
- b. Hedge overhanging pavement at bottom of 4 The Beeches - owner to be asked to trim it.
- c. A parishioner had seen signs which read 'no commercial vehicles to park' and suggested that a similar sign be used to deter the drivers parking on the Butts Bus Stop area overnight. WCC to be asked for guidance.
- d. The current Post Office sign was judged too small and ineffective, and prone to falling off. It was requested that the Council ask the Postmaster to complain to the suppliers about the poor quality, and to discuss replacement. It was also suggested that a secondary larger 'A' board on the verge may be agreed by WCC Highways.

9. Councillors' reports of Parishioners' queries.

- a. A young black Labrador has been seen off the lead on the Recreation Field, and that the owner was 'dismissive' when asked to put the lead back on the dog.
- b. A request had been made for a local youth touch-rugby competition to be played on the 22nd June from midday onwards on the Recreation field. No objection from the Cricket Club - however it was suggested that a pitch fee of £15 was appropriate.
- c. Park Lane road has finally been treated. A new drain was connected near the junction with the Street prior to resurfacing, and rain is awaited to assess its success.
- d. Cllr Harris brought a large chunk of Washpool road from near his house. The road edges are breaking up and need to be repaired. He was advised to telephone Clarence who will log the call and organise the repairs.
- e. A request was made to thank 2, The Street for cutting back their hedge, which now highlights the need for treatment to other Church Place hedges – letters to be sent.
- f. The hedge at Rose Hall, Washpool was reported to have been cut back.
- g. Cllr Bennett reported that the boundary fence had been replaced in the original position at 1, The Mews, following its extension.

10. Clerks Report on matters brought to her attention. No items reported at the meeting, however, she had been asked to establish which Councillor attended an 18th Birthday party at the school on the 6th May between midday and 4pm to complain about the noise.

11. Report on matters arising from 10th May 2007 not on the main agenda.

- 8.b. The lopping of the Chestnut tree outside 6, Chestnut Springs has been a talking point. It was lopped by experts from Lydiard Park, who confirmed it was done at the correct time of year, and state it was cut in a way that normal growth will restore its shape in due course.
- 9.b. We are advised that Rev. Skinner is applying for closure of the Old Cemetery, and a price will be obtained, in due course, for keeping it tidy.
10. The rabbit holes in a cemetery grave have gone.
19. Thanks were given to Mrs Bennett & Mrs Pepperall for doing refreshments at the APM, and to Mr Ray Akers for his fascinating talk on bees.
(The above items are for information only).

12. Planning Applications

07/01129/COU Change of use of agricultural land to garden at 'Springfield', Greenhill.

Oppose on the basis that countryside guidelines apply also to creating new gardens out of agricultural land. There are many landowners who would be interested if this was approved.

07/01245/FUL Side garage and rear extension at 27 The Street.

No adverse comments except that the neighbour in Tudor House, Park Lane has concerns over the closeness of the extension to his boundary, which looks to overhang their garden.

07/01227/FUL Erection of four detached dwelling and two semi-detached dwellings with associated parking/garaging and access at Walnut Tree Gardens, Lydiard Millicent.

Opposed unanimously on similar grounds to previous applications.

Late Planning

07/01151/COU & 07/01415/LBC Change of use of cottage from residential to meeting room and toilets, with internal alterations. The Lodge, Church Place (Maggie's Cottage). **Support.** Donations are sought to help fund this project, contact Mr J Halstead, Church Treasurer.

Amended plans

07/00924/FUL Proposed vehicular access alteration at 2 Lydiard Green, Information only.

Withdrawal of Application

07/00933/FUL Garage at 2 Park View Drive.

NWDC Consent granted

07/00991/TCA Fell one oak tree at Honeywood Lodge, Church Place.

13. Accounts (*incl. VAT)

		£'s
Mrs R Leckie	Wages	243.75
Inside Out Ltd	Groundsman	267.80
LMP Hall	Rental for meeting	32.00
In Touch Services	50 Walking Guides	44.75
Scribe 2000	Annual licence renewal	195.00
Goodhew	Refund of fee paid for cemetery plot	65.00
King	Refund of fee paid for cemetery plot (another)	65.00
Bobby Van Trust	S137 Donation	25.00
Ken Manning	JCH Notice Board	100.00
Mrs R Leckie	Replacement cheque Feb 2007.	243.75

Southern Electric will refund £100, as we are currently in credit.

Replacement Lloyds Bank Mandates for signature. – held over to July.

Cllr Burley was thanked for putting up the new notice board in The Street, his invoice for parts to be added to July Agenda.

Rural Payments Agency have paid the 2005/6 grant for Lydiard Plain £396.59.

The Groundsman's pay was queried as he has been off work sick for 2 weeks – payment is due 'on account'. He is wished a speedy recovery.

Mr A. Richards has again managed to sell nearly all of the walking guides. Walkers have been seen using them. The Council agreed to order a further 50 at the same price.

Accounts approved by Cllr Baker, seconded by Cllr Bennett, and approved.

Income received April and May: SFC (pitch hire) £407, Lydiard Plain (Rent) £750, Admin £10, Cemetery £75, Millennium Walking Guides £101.

14. Committee Reports:

Recreation Field and JCH had been reported on in item 5.

The Play Area report was given by Cllr Quartly Bishop, who reported that gate had a catch missing, the depth of the chippings are low and grass is growing within it. Parts of the perimeter fence had been damaged. The replacement Mews Area sign is awaited, and the wood surrounding the play horse had been damaged, leaving nails sticking out of it.

Cllr Baker offered to go out the following morning to remove the nails.

The groundsman had spoken to the Clerk recently and recommended changing chippings to rubber chippings. Quotes needed.

Cemetery, see Item 11, 9.b.

NCAP See Item 19.7 – your NCAP Public meeting on Jun 12 includes a talk on Parish Plans.

Highway Sub Committee Report – Park Lane had been resurfaced.

A letter had been received with a photo, showing an HGV stuck in Washpool. The company had been emailed and PC Singfield had been passed the details.

15. Parish Plan Report – no report.

16. Parish Steward - next visit 19th & 20th June 2007.

Buryfield footpath – laurel bush to be cut back.

The verge from the Oil Co, toward the Foresters, needs tidying and making safe.

HGV sign on Brooke Farm Roundabout collar to be tightened.

Mud to be removed from footpath at the Washpool junction.

17. Junior Councillors. This topic was met with very mixed reactions from the Councillors. However, it was agreed for the Clerk to contact the 2 local secondary schools to see if any LM children are interested, or whether they would like to take this opportunity to do a school research project on the Parish Council. It was agreed that should Junior Councillors be confirmed, then they would need a slot early in the meeting.

18. Correspondence.

Wiltshire Rural Housing Association – Success story 1984-2006 – info only.

North Wilts Core Strategy Dev Plan – second issues and options. www.northwilts.gov.uk/ldf.

WCC – Speed Limits 2007/8. Proposed plans for 30 mph in Washpool/Common Platt and Holborn, for consideration – this was debated hotly and it was agreed to disagree with the proposals and stand firm for the original request, which covered more road where needed.

NWDC – Dog Control Order by District Council will come into effect on 4th June 2007.

Letter from Peatmoor resident, who enclosed photos of a 40' lorry, stuck at the bottom of her garden along Washpool. Email to company has been sent.

NCAP Notice of Public Meeting on 12 June.

Post Office – Petition re closure of rural post offices – circulated at the beginning of the meeting.

Date of June meeting Thursday 7th June 2007 at 7.30 p.m. at LMPH.

EIP AT EXETER MAY 2007

For the benefit of those who have not taken part in an EIP, participants sit around a table and a fast-moving debate takes place. Fortunately participants are allowed to have advisers sitting behind. I found this extremely useful because whilst I was speaking in answer to one question Richard was kindly penning a response to the next.

There was a better ratio of participants to developers than in previous years.

THE FUTURE ROLES OF SWINDON AND CHIPPENHAM LOOKING BOTH EAST AND WEST

The Panel recognised that a huge leap in growth is planned for Swindon. CPRE pointed to a 5% decline in economic activity since 2000 and asked for reference to a national growth centre to be declined. This was met with some concern since that designation carries the hope of Government funding which would be necessary to enable the huge leap. SBC made a point of asking GOSW for substantial contributions.

The developers were keen to provide a mass of housing for Chippenham and leisure facilities. Contrary to what WCC had stated, Chippenham was not a dormitory town of Swindon but was an ancient town. Transport 2000 confirmed that it looked towards Bath. Lachlan Robertson for NWDC said they were about to produce their Core Strategy. He thought 5,500 more houses would be the limit.

PERIPHERAL SETTLEMENTS

There were fewer commuters to Swindon from settlements such as Malmesbury and Devizes, there were more from those nearer, labelled dormitory settlements: these needed their own jobs. Lachlan Robertson, NWDC, volunteered that there were limits to growth in Malmesbury but Calne might be the next town to grow after Chippenham. In his view Wootton Bassett was a suburb of Swindon – which view drew a sharp retort from CPRE who advised that the inhabitants would hate to see it so described. Devizes, where the developers were keen, was defended because traffic is already grid-locked.

APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

The developers argued for much higher housing numbers. However the Panel had taken on board CPRE's case that job numbers were aspirational. SBC stood firm and GOSW pronounced that development would not go anywhere else; only to Swindon. SBC, WCC and SWRA were supportive about strategic gaps to protect existing communities and for the 50 houses a year in North Wilts to be more flexible to allow for them to be in North Wilts or Swindon – such flexibility had originally been suggested by NWDC.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF SWINDON TOWN CENTRE FOR OVERALL GROWTH

There was unanimous agreement that this is important. SBC even let slip that the lack of a flourishing town centre had made it difficult to recruit for jobs. There was a difference of opinion about how the renewal was to be achieved with NCAP and CPRE saying it needed to be achieved before further polycentric development and others saying that it should be developed in tandem in order to achieve the required number of houses – 1700 pa. GOSW produced a new policy for the town centre, which includes affordable housing.

HAS ENOUGH CONSIDERATION BEEN GIVEN TO DEVELOPING TO THE WEST?

The developers with land banks to the west redoubled their efforts in saying that they could build immediately and pointed to existing infrastructure. NCAP refuted this comment and pointed to gridlock on country lanes built for horses and carts and through which 26 buses and coaches passed, many of which transported students from Swindon to Bradon Forest School. There was also a severe flooding problem since the building of the Northern Expansion – a number of fields being flooded which previously had not suffered; Cricklade, Purton and Lydiard Millicent being cut off from each other; the Link Centre being flooded and out of action for several weeks; and houses backing on to fields beneath Lydiard Park experiencing their highest level of flooding.

SBC explained that the study into where the houses would go was nearly finished and would be released in June; schools were full and there was a need for infrastructure. The RSS was not site specific and that should be left to the LDDs. The HA said that J16 was at capacity. If there was development it should go to the east. NCAP and CPRE stressed the importance of protecting communities. Flooding had become a huge problem since the building of the N. Development.

DELIVERY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SBC gave a glowing account of how they could help delivery. The Environment Agency made a brief declaration that all was well.

The Panel asked the HA if improvements would be needed to the M4 Junction and were astounded when the HA said that they had not yet reached a conclusion. More modelling was required. The Panel thought that three years since the Structure Plan EIP should have given time. CPRE queried major road improvements in the light of climate change.

In summing up the SWRA defended their Plan, saying it created a step-change. It would seem that strategic gaps and green lungs, rather than the Rural Buffer, will appear when the RSS is adopted.

I asked the last question of the Chairman – I requested that a strategic gap should appear as a policy and not just in the text of the document, and then referred to Bristol's 'Green Lungs' alongside the M32, which had achieved policy status. Here's hoping!

Mollie Groom, 6.6.07.