

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
OF OGBOURNE ST GEORGE HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
ON THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2008 AT 7:30pm

Those Present: Mr K Wallace (Chairman)
Mr M Grove
Mrs C Mudge
Mrs C Manos
Mr P Rouse
Mr R Smith
Mr P Willis
Mr C Freeman (Clerk)
Mr C Humphries (WCC)
Mr D Hunter (Kennet)

6 residents were present

Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising: **Bell Field:** Cllr Willis believed that Andy Wall would be using the remaining small timber for a bonfire at a forthcoming event. He would check to ensure it was all used.

Street Lighting: Cllr Smith passed further quotes to the Clerk. The Chairman had read a letter regarding the Kennet Small Grants scheme which indicated all of the funds had been allocated. However the Clerk would make the application envisaged at the previous meeting.

Village Website: The Clerk confirmed he had written to Paul Scott and Tim Frost thanking them for their efforts in getting the website up and running.

Play Area: The Clerk had fitted the new swings and the RoSPA inspection had taken place, the report was available for Councillors to consider.

Unitary Authority: Cllr Grove apologised that he had been unable to attend a Parish Consultation meeting at the Ivy House Hotel.

Blocked Road Drains: The Clerk reported that the drains had all been checked and cleared as necessary by the Parish Steward. It was noted with gratitude that the grass adjacent to the path to the A346 had been cut.

Foul Water: The Clerk had contacted Steven Ibbotson at Kennet Environmental services who sent details of the investigations his department had carried out. They were satisfied that the water in question was not sewerage of any form but simply from a local spring that may have stagnated.

School Parking: Nothing further had been heard regarding the feasibility study so it was decided to simply leave the matter for the time being.

Poor's Land Charity: As Romaine Daw had indicated that she would be attending the next trustees meeting Mr Frost (from the floor) stated that the urgency of finding a new trustee was lessened.

Speeding Buses: Nothing further had been heard regarding complaints that buses were speeding through the village.

Motor Bikes: In order for the Police to do anything about motor bikes on the cycle path more information was necessary but it hadn't been forthcoming.

Chairman's Statement:

At the end of the previous meeting the Chairman, Cllr Wallace, had issued a document to the Councillors objecting to some statements made to him in emails from the Clerk. The Councillors had evaluated the complaints made by the Chairman, responding to him in a comprehensive report which carefully explained the reasons they rejected his complaints as well as the three demands he made. Mr Wallace said that he had decided to resign as Chairman at the end of the meeting. The other Councillors agreed to close the matter; the Chairman asked for an apology but only one Councillor thought he should receive one. It was agreed that at the next meeting the Clerk would distribute copies of documents setting out the roles of the Chairman and Clerk as well as the Council's Standing Orders. If appropriate Councillors will discuss the role of the Clerk and consider the introduction of an overall grievance procedure.

Vote of Confidence
in the Chairman:

As the Chairman had decided to resign at the end of the meeting it was agreed to shelve this agenda item.

Vote of Confidence
in the Clerk:

The Clerk specifically requested that this take place. Cllrs Manos and Grove requested that the vote be in secret on voting forms which the Clerk provided and then he left the room. Cllr Humphries (WCC) acted as returning officer counting the votes and reported the Clerk (who had returned to the room) had been successful by a majority of votes, verified by Cllr Hunter (KDC).

Finance:

Precept: The Clerk had provided details of expenditure so far this year as compared to the corresponding period last year. At present resources were approximately £250 more than last year. In the light of the current economic situation it was agreed that an appropriate gesture would be to reduce the precept by 10% to £4500.

A current statement of the financial position of the Parish Council was distributed by the Clerk. The following payments were made:

Southern Electric power	£161.89
Southern Electric Contracting	£64.50
Bawden – mowing	£275.13
Clerk salary & back pay	£273.50
Printing of Dragon – 2 months	£28.20
Playsafety	£70.50

Planning:

Applications for a loft conversion at Ashdown House, a replacement shed at 3 Hallam Cottages, a dormer window at Cotswold House and conservatories at Coome End and the Old Police House had been approved by Kennet. An appeal against refusal of permission at the replacement building in the High St had been rejected and a second amended application at the same site refused by Kennet. An extension to outbuilding at Home Farm, 18th fairway changes at the Golf Club, remedial timber work at 3 Hallam Cottages and a new satellite dish on Bytham Hill approved and returned to Kennet for consideration.

- School Hall: As the Planning Application for the school hall had now been received by the Parish Council it was agreed to have an informal meeting to review the application. The Clerk would arrange.
- Speeding: Cllr Smith had produced a final report ready for publication. It was agreed the first step would be to install gateways to the village at each entrance to the Old Marlborough Road and the Clerk would arrange through Peter Hansen at WCC. Cost was agreed at £330 plus VAT. The Clerk would write to the residents in First House and adjoining properties to inform and reassure that the gateways would not hinder their visibility. It was agreed that the document Cllr Smith had produced for consideration by the Council was excellent and he was complimented on it.
- Parking: Cllr Manos reported that vehicles were being parked in the circle in St George's Close. The Clerk would enquire of Kennet as to whose responsibility it was to deal with this problem. It was also noted that parking at the T junction between the High Street and Old Marlborough Road had increased mainly due to the building work taking place. It was agreed to revisit the matter when the building was completed.
- Rights of Way: The blocked bridleway adjacent to Meadow Cottage was again subject of discussion. As the Parish Council believes the electors, as well as walkers from outside the village, are keen to have an open route in this area it was suggested that having some local discussions may be result in a mutually acceptable solution. Cllr Rouse agreed to draft, in conjunction with the Clerk, a letter to Mr Illiffe and Cllr Grove would be willing to discuss the matter with the land owners.
The Clerk had visited the bridge which had been installed over the River Og close to the Church together with Esther Daly the RoW warden. She was delighted with it and considered it did not divert the route of the footpath but offered a practical alternative to the stepping stones. A Councillor thought it would become slippery in the wet and should be fitted with wire netting to offer more grip; it was agreed to monitor the situation. Another Councillor asked if it could be fitted with an additional handrail for smaller people. The Clerk would address the issue with Mr Tuckey. Additionally the new fence that had been installed near the stepping stones needed a stile to complete the path. It was reported that the stiles out of the Bell Field were in need of repair and that a stile on the way to the bridge over the river on Illiffe's land is also in a dangerous state. It would be investigated and the relevant landowner contacted to action as necessary.
- Parish Steward: It was requested that the Parish Stewards at their next visit sweep remaining leaves in places where they cause a hazard and ensure the track between the railway line and Jubbs Lane is cleared and accessible.
- There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:25pm. The next meeting would be held on Thursday January 8th 2009 at 7:30pm.