

Ashton Keynes Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 9th June 2010

Present: Cllrs G Bridge (Chairman), M Carter, J Freeth, S Jefferson, M Seymour, A Stephanovic, R Thomas, E Tidmarsh and I Woods

PCSO S Walsh, Mr J Hughes and Mr G Clarke

2010/64 Update from Wiltshire Constabulary

The Chairman welcomed PCSO Sam Walsh to the Parish Council meeting and invited her to give an update on recent Police activity in and around the village. PCSO Walsh began by reporting that there had been articles stolen from two outbuildings recently in the village and a handbag was stolen from a car in the Waterhay Car Park. She went on to report that there had been a fourth burglary of tiles from the Church roof and the Police now have a suspect. She said that Ashton Keynes was not alone in suffering from this crime; there were 72 Churches in Wiltshire that had reported similar burglaries. PCSO Walsh said that the NPT is checking scrap yards every month, but she asked that anyone seeing a suspect vehicle, such as a white van or flat bed lorry, with scrap on it to report the vehicle registration number to the Police. She said that Farm Watch had been set up again following the theft of farm vehicles – anyone could join, the information is on the website. She finished her update by saying there was a recent incidence of an ASBO on the High Road Playing Field around the new shed; after speaking to the young children involved, she hoped they would heed the warning not to do it again.

Mr Clarke said that cyclists had been causing aggravation in the areas along Fridays Ham Lane and Waterhay, giving rude signs and verbal abuse. He asked why cyclists can race on the highway when cars are not allowed to do so, and why they do not give way on roundabouts? He said he has reported these incidents several times to the Police. Mr Clarke also complained that too many cars are parking on Kent End and on the corner of Park Place and the High Road. PCSO Walsh said she would look into both complaints. The Chairman asked Cllr I Woods to have a quiet word with the cyclists who use Bradstone and ask them to be more careful and tolerant. Mr Clarke warned that people were receiving phone calls from persons unknown who said they were with one of the Banks and asked for their details; he warned that these were scams and should be ignored.

The Chairman thanked PCSO Walsh for attending and giving her update on Police activity. At this point the PCSO left the meeting.

2010/65 To accept apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr C Soden and Cllr M Jackson.

2010/66 Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

2010/67 To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meetings held on 12th May 2010

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting and the Parish Council Meeting, both of which were held on 12th May 2010, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2010/68 Formal Complaints

The Clerk said the Parish Council had received two formal complaints from the public since the last Parish Council meeting, as follows:

1. Mr and Mrs K Phillips complained about the new Junior Football Club shed, in that it had been installed too close to their property fence and it was taller than that which was planned, consequently children were climbing onto the roof of the shed and peering into their windows. At a meeting of the Junior Football Club it was agreed that they would resolve many of Mr and Mrs Phillips' issues by the judicious planting of vegetation around the shed. Subsequently, Mr and Mrs Phillips have agreed to many of the proposed measures, but asked that the Junior Football Club consult with them in the first instance.
2. Mr R Lewis complained about the obstruction that has been placed across a piece of land known as 'No Man's Land', which is just to the north of Glendora. The Clerk said he had reported the situation to the Senior Rights of Way Warden in Wiltshire Council.

2010/69 Matters arising from the Minutes

The Clerk said the following matters were arising:

- He had received another letter from the Information Commissioners Office dated 17th May confirming receipt of his letter concerning the use of the Electoral Register to communicate Parish Council matters to the community. This time they said that they would assign one of their casework teams, which will then be allocated to a case officer. He had received nothing further from their Office on this subject to date.
- In answer to Cllr M Seymour's question at the May meeting, neither the gang mowers nor any other agricultural machinery, other than the Tractor, were insured last year. However, under the new Tractor insurance, machinery that connects to the Tractor is insured at no extra cost, which includes the gang mower and the Sitrex finishing mower.
- A letter was sent on behalf of the Parish Council on the Gypsy and Traveller Consultation, basically saying that Wiltshire Council should devote their efforts into finding sites in East Wiltshire to even up the site locations throughout the county. The Clerk said that he had received an e-mail from Wiltshire Council thanking us for our entry and they said it would be receiving their attention.
- Having spoken to the Environmental Health authority on Wiltshire Council about the Rat problem on and around the High Road, it was noted on the worksheet of Laura Brown, the Pest Control Officer. Laura came to the village, but could find no evidence of Rats, so she was given Cllr S Jefferson's phone number to speak to him about the problem.
- The Clerk had spoken to the Environment Agency (EA)) at Wallingford about the algie in the river and they have placed the item on their Incident Log, Reference No. 785764. The Clerk was unable to say that he had seen fish or other river creatures dead in the water, which lead the EA to take the attitude that it wasn't a serious problem. They asked us to keep an eye on the problem and let them know if it deteriorates. In the meantime, the EA might send someone to have a look at the river and, if necessary, take a water sample.

2010/70 Vacancy on the Parish Council

The Clerk reported that Mr Jon Hughes was the only person who had applied to fill the vacant position of Councillor and that the members had been given a synopsis of his more recent background. Having ascertained that Mr Hughes was still an applicant for the position, the Chairman proposed that Mr Hughes be co-opted onto the Council with effect from the meeting on 14th July. The proposition was seconded by Cllr S Jefferson and unanimously agreed by the members.

2010/71 Clerk's Report

The Clerk gave the following report:

- He said the Parish Council had received £75.03 from HM Revenue and Customs as a repayment for the Clerk submitting the Council's P14 and P35 on-line. The sum has been deducted from the current payment of Tax & NI to HMRC, which was shown below.
- Regard the Parish Council and Playing Fields Committee insurance premiums, the lowest quotation was for £1,332.07, which came from Community First. After the receipt of £1035.96 from the Playing Fields Committee, the cost to the Parish Council for the annual insurance premium was £296.11, which is £167.75 lower than last year's premium.
- The Clerk said he had spoken to Miranda Gilmour and she had not yet fixed the date and time of the "Tea and Talk" meeting with Cllr M Carter and himself to discuss the needs of Parishes.
- He had booked his place at the annual SLCC Conference, which will be held in Durham this year; he was giving advance notice of his absence at the Conference from Friday 15th to Sunday 17th October 2010.
- Matthew Millett of CWPS has offered to give an update on the Cleveland Lakes project to the Parish Council. The Clerk asked the members whether they would like him to give a presentation on the subject at a future meeting. There was an affirmative answer and the Clerk was asked to invite Matthew to attend a future meeting.

Action: The Clerk

- He said his last item was, as usual, to ask for the members' wish list of work for the Parish Steward to undertake next month, which would be recorded and passed on to Wiltshire Highways Partnership. There were three items reported to him, which he would forward to Highways for action.

2010/72 Financial Transactions

a. Payments Received

The Council noted that the following payments had been received:

▪ AK Playing Fields Committee (Insurance Premium)	£ 1,035.96
▪ Wiltshire Council	£15,000.00

b. Payments Made:

The Council noted that the following payments had been made:

▪ Community First (Insurance Premium)	£ 1,332.07
▪ Aeshton Services (Grasscutting)	£ 800.00
▪ Village Hall (April Room Rental)	£ 17.00
▪ CPRE (Subscription)	£ 29.00
▪ Community First (Subscription)	£ 36.00
▪ HMRC (Quarterly Tax & NI)	£ 629.67
▪ Clerk's Salary (May)	£ 599.24
▪ Clerk's Expenses (May)	£ 131.34

2010/73 Committees, Working Groups and Representatives' Reports

Cllr A Stefanovic said she had nothing to add to the Minutes of the two meetings that she had attended in May, which had been distributed to the members.

Cllr I Woods reported that he had received the Inspection Report on the play spaces and apparatus, which showed nothing of concern; the problems with the small items identified would quickly be resolved. He said the Rabbit problem had been reduced due to pressure being applied to their habitat. Cllr Woods said he would like to draw up a formal contract to employ the man who is currently dealing with the Rabbit and Mole population. Having discounted the cost of £600 to employ a man to use gas, which was not acceptable, he said the annual remuneration would fall between £1200 and £1500. Cllr Woods asked that the Parish Council to consider sharing the cost with the Playing Fields Committee. The Chairman said that they would first like to see the exact sum involved and suggested that the cricket and football clubs should be asked to shoulder some of the cost. Cllr Woods said he would bring the schedule of work and costs to the meeting in July. He finished by saying that the School had a similar problem with moles and they might consider sharing some of the cost to employ the same man.

Cllr M Carter reported that the plans that were circulated last month are on schedule. He said he had a fruitful meeting with the members of the Village Website team; among other things, they had discussed the transference of news between the two sites.

2010/74 Path from Church Walk to Churchyard

The Clerk gave the background to the Agenda item and referred the members to item 7 in the Minutes of the last Footpaths and Roads Working Group meeting. He said that Brian Marston had done a considerable amount of work talking to four Construction Companies and obtaining quotes to repair the surface of the path. He said the cheapest quote was £5,545 plus VAT from Thornbury Surfacing, which the Working Group had asked him to recommend to the Parish Council. After some discussion on how to obtain Section 106 money and other approaches, it was decided that the first action is to identify who owns the land from Church Walk to the Churchyard, which the Clerk will confirm. Secondly, the Chairman asked the members to think about how to turn the path into a park and report their thoughts at next month's meeting.

Action: All Councillors and the Clerk

The Chairman agreed to the following subject being raised:

Cllr S Jefferson reported the lack of a cycle path from the village to connect with the National cycle Network spanning the country. The Clerk said he had brought the subject up with the Wiltshire Rights of Way Officer, Barbara Burke, at the Footpaths and Roads Working Group meeting, who said she would talk to the Improvements Officer, Michael Crook, about it. The Clerk said he had spoken to Barbara to obtain an update and was told that Michael Crook was on a cycling holiday in Scotland and would be looking at the situation on his return. Cllr I Woods suggested that the Cotswold Water Park should become involved. He further suggested that the Thames Path crossing Bradstone Sports Field should perhaps be made a cycle and foot path, although this could be expensive, and would need the agreement of 'Fields in Trust' and Wiltshire Council Planning Department.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 9.05pm.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 14th July 2010 at 7.45pm