

MINUTES OF SHERFIELD-ON-LODDON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE GARDEN ROOM OF THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 9 DECEMBER 2003

Present

Bruce Batting (Chairman)
John Dodd (Vice Chairman)
Richard Gaiger
Ivan Gosden (Vice Chairman)
Harry Moore
Nick Robinson

In attendance

Lucy Marshall (Parish Clerk)
P C Andy Reid

Two members of the public were present during the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3856 Apologies for absence were received from WPC Mandy Jewell, Marilyn Tucker, Sandy Johnston and Chris Horton.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3857 None was reported.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2003

3858 The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true record of the proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

4. TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF LAW AND ORDER

3859 The Chairman welcomed PC Reid of Kingsclere to the meeting, and thanked him for attending in place of WPC Jewell.

The problem of the use and supply of crack cocaine in the village was discussed in detail and some criticism was made of the apparent lack of awareness of the scale of the problem. A member of the public related first hand experience of the situation and suggested that greater liaison and communication had to be made by local police and the community, a view shared by the Parish Council. It was strongly felt that when WPC Jewell cannot attend Parish Council meetings, arrangements should always be made for another police officer to attend. PC Reid accepted these points, and agreed to report back to his colleagues.

The Chairman reported that Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council have a Community Safety Forum but that, unfortunately, Parishes are not represented. He asked PC Reid for examples of how Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act might be implemented by Parish Councils and PC Reid agreed to ask the Chairman of Kingsclere Parish Council to discuss this with Bruce Batting. He reported a useful Home Office article available on the internet ("ruralcrime").

In addressing the need to provide facilities for young people, PC Reid said that shelters were useful, but stressed that they had to be sited where they could be seen clearly and consequently objections were sometimes raised by residents, especially in rural areas. Youth clubs were difficult to maintain. The Clerk had heard of a successful scheme run jointly between White Horse Vale District Council and its parishes, whereby a bus, fitted with pcs/internet access, visits participating villages at regular, agreed times.

ACTIONS

AR

AR/BB

With regard to deterring crimes, all were in agreement that having an obvious police presence in the village was crucial. Cllr Tucker had forwarded details of the Borough's Community Warden scheme, which was tabled for information. PC Reid suggested that consideration might also be given to providing an office in the village for part-time use by the police, which could have financial support from the police authority. Alternatively, Special Constables could be appointed or, more specifically, Parish Constables.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should discuss these suggestions further with a senior officer responsible for rural areas. It was recommended that Inspector Adrian Gatehouse of Whitchurch or Sgt Sean Stimpson of Tadley should be contacted.

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5. TO RECONSIDER POSITION OF BOTTLE BANKS

3860 Further letters had been received from two complainants, and were tabled for consideration. Bruce Batting agreed to contact the Environmental Health Department who were assessing the level of noise and gathering information from residents, to ascertain their progress. He would also contact Jayne Norman at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council for her views on a more suitable location.

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6. TO DISCUSS THE WELCOME PACK

3861 Ivan Gosden had not yet seen the welcome pack, and the document was passed to him at the meeting for consideration. Comments to be passed to Tracy Lander-Sims. A document from Sandy Johnston describing four local walks was tabled. It was confirmed that these would be included in the proposed new parish map, which would be distributed to new occupants at Sherfield Park, to accompany the welcome pack. Comments on this document should be passed to Sandy Johnston.

All
TL-S

All
SJ

7. TO DISCUSS THE PARISH PLAN

3862 As funding from the Countryside Agency had not been forthcoming, and a reply is awaited from Jo Dixon at BDBC, it was suggested that her colleague, Joanne Brombley, might be asked directly whether the Parish Council could receive funding from the Borough as part of the Rural Strategy. The Chairman reported that he had referred to this issue in his response to the recent Rural Strategy Review consultation exercise. His letter would be copied to Parish Councillors for information.

RG

LM

8. TO REPORT ON SLCC CONFERENCE ON QUALITY COUNCILS

3863 The Clerk reported that she and Tracy Lander-Sims had attended a regional conference hosted by the Society of Local Council Clerks. The Clerk had been disappointed that speakers had struggled to explain how Quality Status would specifically benefit councils. The underlying message seemed to be that, in due course, councils unable to attain Quality status would be disadvantaged, as those without accreditation were already being turned down for grant funding. Influence over planning issues could come through having a Parish Plan or Village Design Statement, projects for which most councils would require financial aid (see minute 3862 above).

9. TO REPORT ON COUNTRYWATCH MEETING TO DISCUSS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

3864 The Chairman and Harry Moore had attended a meeting of Countrywatch on Tuesday 3 December. The committee had discussed proposed revisions in detail and would be preparing a response which would be sent to participating/subscriber parishes. It was agreed that a meeting of councillors should be convened as soon as possible to agree the Parish Council's final response to the BDBC. If time permitted, members of the public would be offered the opportunity to see the PC response, to help

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with compiling their own, personal objections. It was noted that the closing date for comments is 22 December.

10. TO DISCUSS THE FORMATION OF A STEERING GROUP TO CONSIDER A NEW BURIAL GROUND

3865 Cllr Tucker had written to Roy Thompson, Head of Planning at BDBC, regarding the need for clearer guidance on Section 106 agreements for Parishes. Cllr Tucker had made specific reference to the Chairman's request that Croudace should make a contribution towards the cost of an extension to the parish's burial ground.

The Council discussed the need to acquire, possibly by compulsory purchase, a new burial ground, and agreed that the most convenient location would be an area of the field adjoining St Leonard's churchyard. This land belongs to the Gosden family, and it was agreed that, as he has a personal interest, Ivan Gosden would be unable to take part in future discussions.

A small group would be formed in due course, so that necessary financial arrangements and planning could begin. It was apparent from other parishes that such a project could take years to complete. The Chairman agreed to seek guidance from Ian Harris at the Borough Council.

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OPEN FORUM

The meeting was adjourned so that items not appearing on the agenda could be discussed.

11. PLANNING: UPDATE AND NEW APPLICATIONS

3866 There had been no new applications since the Planning Meeting held on 27 November.

In her response to the Parish Council's request for local names to be used for road naming in the Sherfield Park estate, Mrs Brewer had said that many of the suggestions had to be discounted as they had been used elsewhere in nearby locations. Councillors were asked to advise the Clerk within the next few days which of the place names suggested by Mrs Brewer were acceptable/unacceptable.

All
LM

12. REPORTS

(a) PLANNING COMMITTEE

3867 The minutes of the Planning Committee held on 27 November had been circulated. The decisions which had been reached were reported as follows:

BDB /57116: St Anthony's Cottage, Church End, Sherfield-on-Loddon.

Proposal: Erection of a two storey side extension with roof light on rear elevation. Replacing dormer windows from flat roof to pitched on front elevation.

PC Decision: No objection.

BDB /57198: 1 Bow Gardens, Sherfield-on-Loddon.

Proposal: Erection of a single detached garage.

PC Decision: No objection.

BDB /57178: 18 Northfield Road, Sherfield-on-Loddon.

Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension.

PC Decision: No objection.

Approvals

The Council grants planning permission for:

BDB/54753: Areas 1B and 1C, Phase 2, Taylors Farm, Sherfield-on-Loddon.

Proposal: Submission of reserved matters application in respect of Phase 2, Areas 1B and 1C for landscaping pursuant to outline planning permission BDB/40788.
(PC had not objected)

BDB/56713: Lance Levy Farm Cottages, Sherfield-on-Loddon.

Proposal: Erection of a two storey rear extension.
(PC had not objected)

(b) FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (FGPC)

3868 Next meeting Tuesday 6 January.

Council Tax - It was reported that, based on the precept required for next year, the Council Tax for Band D in Sherfield-on-Loddon will be £37.706.

Cricket Outfield – The Cricket Club had advised the Parish Council of the poor condition of the outfield. It was suspected that felled trees and vegetation which had been used to fill voids when the cricket ground was originally levelled had now decomposed, making the ground above unstable. It was recommended that, due to the severity of the subsidence, the area should be cordoned off to protect the general public. This was agreed. The Parish Council had been offered the loan of posts and barrier mesh and the Chairman agreed to produce warning notices. Quotations were awaited from two contractors to spread a quantity of good quality topsoil over the area, compacting the soil and reseeding. Although it could prove an expensive exercise, which would need to be repeated next year, it was agreed that the precept figure accepted at the last meeting should not be increased. The Chairman would ask Claire Wilkinson at BDBC whether Borough funds could be released.

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(c) VILLAGE GREEN COMMITTEE

3869 Next meeting 16 December.

Trees - Harry Moore reported that a parishioner had offered to donate a tree for the village green. No further action had been taken with regard to tree planting, and the Clerk would contact Vanessa Attwood.

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The Clerk was asked to arrange leaf clearance along Bramley Road. The condition of ditch 1 would be discussed at the Village Green Committee next week.

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HM

Football Car Park railing - Quotations for railings along the football club car park had been tabled. Due to the ongoing problem of cars regularly parking on the Green, the Parish Council had been asked, at the last meeting, to bring forward this project as there had been no provision for it in the precept for the current year. After discussion, all were in favour of accepting the quotation of £600 presented by the Bulpitt Brothers.

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Ditches - Dave Miller had provided a quotation of £1,442 + vat to repair Dove Cottage Ditch, and he had agreed to remove the crack willow saplings which it was thought had damaged the drainpipe. All were in favour of accepting his quotation and the Clerk would write to Mr Miller. The Chairman reported that he was confident that there would be little or no charge to the Parish Council for the work being carried out by the Highway Authority in an attempt to prevent flooding in the ditch by Cheshunt Lodge.

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(d) ALLOTMENTS

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Skip hire – The Clerk had tabled quotations for skip hire. Basingstoke Skip Hire had suggested an alternative arrangement for a 660 ltr lockable bin which they would empty each week and was comparable in price to hiring and emptying a 6 yard skip every 6 months. However, many of the allotment plots required clearing and it was unanimously agreed that a 6 yard skip would be hired from Basingstoke Skip Hire.

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(e) TENNIS COURTS

3871 Nothing to report.

(f) CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA

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Replacement swing seats – The Chairman reported that Sandy Johnston wished to defer the purchase of replacement swing seats and refurbishment of the swing unit until other playground equipment is purchased.

(g) BRAMLEY SCHOOL

3873 Nick Robinson agreed to continue to investigate the possibility of free bus transportation to the Hurst School and to seek a review of the secondary school catchment area for children in Sherfield. Reference to this had been made in the Parish Council’s response to the Rural Strategy Review.

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(h) VILLAGE HALL

3874 The Village Hall is awaiting confirmation on whether all or part of the car park will be resurfaced free of charge by the Borough Council. With regard to the £2,000 Parish Council Grant, the Chairman reported that he had advised Esme Ward that a third estimate is a required, together with confirmation that the Environmental Health Department is satisfied with the kitchen plans.

(i) CRICKET PAVILION

3875 It was reported that Joe Bate had repaired the pipework and manhole cover as agreed at the last meeting. Further information was awaited regarding an application for a Borough Amenities Grant.

BB/TL-S

(j) FOOTBALL PAVILION

3876 Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on 25 November had been circulated. The Football Club had produced a revised design, and plans were being drawn up. John Dodd and Harry Moore said that they were opposed to the suggested resiting of the pavilion on the village green. Harry Moore said he would prefer the new pavilion to be sited at the Bramley Road end of the Football Club car park, avoiding damage to the jubilee tree. It was noted that Sandy Johnston had been against the site favoured by the Planning Department, ie; the village hall side of Hennis Ditch. (After the meeting, he clarified that he did not object to a pavilion being built on the village green side of the ditch.)

13. ROADS, TRAFFIC AND FOOTPATHS

3877 It was agreed that the Clerk would ask James Holt to increase the size of the reflectors on the traffic calming posts. He would be asked again for a “local access only” sign to be installed at the slip road entrance from the A33. The Chairman confirmed that the pinch point outside the Four Horseshoes had been removed by public request. Instead, there would be a raised, cobbled area on either side of the Reading Road, close to the Bramley Road junction.

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14. FINANCE REPORT

3878 The Clerk had tabled a finance report, showing balances of all accounts at 30 November 2003.

	HSBC A/c	General Investment A/c	Consols	Grand Total	Uncleared HSBC
Balance B/F Q3	19,033.14	21,575.55	24.17	40,632.86	
Income Oct/Nov	704.20	0.00	0.00	704.20	0
Outgoing Oct/Nov	5,933.56	0.00	0.00	5,933.56	4059.78
Balance C/F to Q4	13,803.78	21,575.55	24.17	35,403.50	

HSBC Bank statement at 30/11/03: £17,863.56

Approval of Payments

£519.00	Acorn Services (Just Lawn Mowing, Mike Barnes): £119 more than budgeted, as Mr Barnes has been additionally cutting play area.
£16.23	Petty Cash (stamps and archive boxes purchased in the month)
£10.00	Sherfield Village Hall (VGC 16/12/03)
£72.00	SLCC annual subscription
£137.28	Litter Warden
£496.54	Clerk's salary (salary plus £200 allowance for previous quarter)
£225.06	Inland Revenue - Tax (£153.90) and NIC (£71.16)

Payments were proposed for acceptance by Ivan Gosden and seconded by Harry Moore.

15. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT NEXT MEETING

3879 Not discussed.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

3880 The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held in the Garden Room at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 13 January 2004.

Meeting closed 10.20 pm.