

ST. IPPOLYTS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of St. Ippolyts Parish Council held on Monday 13th October 2008 at St. Ippolyts School.

PRESENT : Cllrs Mr. K. Holden (Chairman)
Mrs. P. Skeggs (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs. B. Thomas
Mr. P. Hobson
Mr. T. Smith
Mr. D. Blundell

In attendance : Thirty six members of the public with the Clerk Mrs. A. Powell.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from County Cllrs. R. Thake & D. Ashley and NHD Cllrs. A. Ashley & D. Miller.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8th September 2008, copies of which had been circulated to each member of the Council, were signed as a true record of the proceedings.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs signed the Declaration of Interests book and would abstain from discussion on website support under item 8 Chairman's report.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Over 36 members of the public attended this meeting. Discussions were raised on the following :-

- a) Planning application 08/02028/1 - see item 11 Planning. A letter from Cllr. Mr. Blundell circulated to residents of Mill Road on the subject was also discussed at this meeting.
- b) Football Clubs and Pavilion – see item 15.
- c) Budget – see item 16.

5. POLICE REPORT

There was no Police report.

6. COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS

There was no Councillors report.

7. MATTERS OF REPORT

a) Dell Field – bonfire & nature reserve

The Clerk submitted an application for an Area Committee grant for barriers at Dell Field to discourage unauthorised vehicles. The option to provide post and rail fencing with a large kissing gate and a lockable field gate for vehicle access at £1,060 + VAT was chosen. If successful, NHDC would provide half the funding with the other half paid for by the Parish Council. NHD Cllr. Mr. Miller is supportive of the application.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs received confirmation from Mrs. A. Forster of CPM that she would lead a working group one day during the week between November and end of February and that volunteers would be covered by CMS insurance.

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs reported that she was contacted by two residents about the condition of the paths. Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs had previously met with the grass contractor who was also given a copy of the Management Plan. It was agreed that the Clerk would clarify the situation with the grass contractor and Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs would provide a more detail plan to the contractor, if necessary.

b) Village greens

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs and the Clerk would prepare and submit the registration form for St. Ippolyts village green.

c) St. Ippolyts Post Office

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Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs reported that despite a vigorous campaign by the community, Post Office Ltd. has decided to close St. Ippolyts Post Office on 15.10.08. The Store will remain open. The Clerk informed the Store owner that they could contact Herts. Highways directly with assistance to put up signage to attract passing trades.

d) St. Ippolyts Parish Hall

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs attended the Management meeting on 23.9.08 and reported that the Guides had ceased to use the Hall from July because they could not recruit new leaders. Raffle tickets are available and will be drawn at the Christmas Fair to be held on 29.11.08.

Other matters

None.

8. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman attended a Police meeting on 9.9.08 at Hitchin Police Station. The following matters were discussed and action reports given – hare coursing, increase in thefts – lead, fuel, tools items from building sites, fly tipping, speeding – London road. There had been no reports on anti-social behaviour from St. Ippolyts. Cllr. Mrs. Thomas suggested that prior to attending the next Police meeting, the Parish Council could put together a list of items of interest to present to the Police for discussion. This will be included in the January agenda.

The Clerk instructed Betadec to carry out the repair to the Parish Information board canopy. Job start date has not been confirmed.

The Clerk sought advice from CPM on the following :- a) possible padding on the kickboard to soften noise. CPM suggested that padding was probably not a viable option. CPM was unaware of any repairs being carried out to the kickboard; b) a job quotation they provided to Jephson 7 years ago on play equipment relocation – they have no recollection nor record of this; c) big swings on the Recreation Ground being tied up with unsafe notice. Repair was carried out to the identified swing as a result of annual inspection. The notice was probably put up by CPM during repair. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact CPM to check if it would be unsafe to remove the kickboard with the 2 basketball posts remained.

The Clerk notified NHDC Election department about the resignation of Cllr. Mr. M. Hooper. A Notice of Casual Vacancy was displayed on Parish Notice boards and NHDC for 14 days. It did not result in a call for an Election and the Parish Council should co-opt a member as soon as is practicable

D&A Associate notified the Clerk that they could no longer provide support for the Parish Council website. It was agreed that the Clerk could contact Mr. M. Skeggs who currently supports the Parish Hall website. Mr. Skeggs had subsequently provided the Parish Council with a quotation. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Mr. Skeggs and take on the half hour free offer and request a written report to clarify future workload and costs.

Freezone Internet notified the Clerk on the Parish website exceeding disk usage allowance and possible suspension of account. The Account has been upgraded to the next package (see item 12).

9. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES & GROUPS

a) Walk Leaflet Group

The Chairman reported that he has delivered a copy of the leaflet with an accompanying letter to all Parish Cllrs. and Clerk. He also had 1,000 copies of the covering letter printed at a cost of £20. The invoice, which had been paid by the Chairman, was passed to the Clerk for attention. It was agreed that the leaflet would be delivered together with the Parish & Travel Plan.

b) Parish & Travel Plan

Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs attended a joint Codicote and St Ippolyts Parish Plan meeting on 16.9.08. Our scheme dates are 4 weeks from 17 November to 19 December. The bus stop and shelter would be relocated to the north of their current location. The Parish Council would be delivering information leaflets to residents outlining the works and the schemes, including road closure dates.

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10. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence – by post (not all email items included in list)

A parishioner – on behalf of other parishioners, raised concerns about any possible increase to Parish precept.

Parishioners were invited to attend this meeting where budget would be discussed.

HAPTC – newsletter

A resident – contacted the Chairman re. land next to 20 Maydencroft Lane that the owner has built as far as he could within regulations and may appeal to the NHDC decision. The resident also suggested that the Parish Council should look into whether NHDC have any plans for the land between Mill Lane and Gosmore Road.

Moore S. (Miss) – a letter to the Chairman to thank the Parish Council for the time given to the planning application on land next to 20 Maydencroft Lane and remarks made at the meeting.

NHDC – Planning Control Committee agenda and minutes, Hitchin Committee agenda & minutes (to Cllr. Skeggs), what the media say, members info

P3 – Clerk to attend next Annual Work meeting 27.10.08 2:30pm. Next members meeting 26.11.08 7:30pm
Maydencroft Manor

SLCC – branch meeting 29.10.08 12:30pm Redbourne. Clerk to attend.

Standards Board for England – Town & Parish Standard

The following items were distributed at the meeting: -

Chiltern Society – newsletter, leaflet & Christmas brochure

HCC – Herts. Waste Development Plan documents: withdrawal of Core Strategy. More info on www.hertsdirect.org/envroads/environment/plan/hccdevplan/wasteplanning

Highways Agency – roadworks and journey planner leaflet (9-11.2008)

Intalink – August 2008 travel guide area 5

NHDC – what the media say, members' info

Correspondence – Conferences & Courses

NHDC, Stevenage Borough Council & Faber Maunsell – Stevenage Urban transport plan workshop 5.11.08
10:00-2:30pm Stevenage Leisure Centre. (Cllrs. Mrs. Skeggs and Mrs. Thomas to attend)

HAPTC – Cllr. Training 7.10.08 7-9:30pm at Woolmer Green. Cllrs. Smith, Thomas, Hobson & Blundell attended.

NHDC – Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs attended the N. Herts. Green Infrastructure Plan Stakeholder workshop on 9.10.08 at the Letchworth office. A presentation was given by Land Use Consultants followed by discussion. The Plan is long term with ambitious big ideas. Cllr. Mrs. Skeggs provided two draft plans for Strategic and SNAP with sketches for circulation.

Correspondence – Consultations & Discussions

Communities & Local government – The making and enforcement of byelaws (comments by 20.11.08) (Cllr. Mr. Smith to lead)

Correspondence – Finance matters

Freezone Internet – invoice for account upgrade (see item 12)

HAPTC – invoice for Cllrs. training (see item 12)

HMRC – Notice to Employer of employee's tax code for year to 5.4.2009

HMRC – future VAT 126 claims on play areas, etc. would require written ruling from HMRC to clarify entitlement. Clerk has emailed HMRC for further information.

Nat West Bank – bank statements for Current, Reserve, Liquidity Deposit accounts

NHDC – BACs information on grant 1585 (see item 12)

Correspondence – matters required discussions

There were none.

Correspondence – Play Area & Play Equipment matters

FT Gearing – brochure

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Monster Play systems - brochure

Shaws - catalogue

Tuttles Contract Services – cleansing and estate maintenance contact detail (0800-756-6855)

11. PLANNING

Planning decisions

NHDC have refused permission for a proposed erection of 2 two storey, 2 bedroom semi-detached cottages with allocated parking and access off existing drive serving Gosmore Nursing Home and Gosmore End House at land adjacent 20 Maydencroft Lane, Gosmore (08/01518/1).

NHDC have granted conditional permission for the relocation of vehicular access with 2.2m high-gated entrance and provision of 2.2m high-gated pedestrian access at Pound Farm, London Road, St. Ippolyts (08/01549/1HH).

NHDC have granted conditional listed building consent for the alterations to boundary wall to create new vehicular and pedestrian accesses and continuation of boundary wall by infilling with matching bricks across current vehicular access at Pound Farm, London Road, St. Ippolyts (08/01550/1LB).

NHDC have granted conditional permission for a single storey extension following demolition of existing conservatory and detached building providing double garage and stabling with gym at first floor level (as amended by plan nos. 08/20/2B, 3C & 4A received 3rd and 5th September 2008) at Thistley Cottage, Thistley Lane, Gosmore (08/01595/1HH).

NHDC have granted conditional listed building consent for a single storey extension and detached replacement stable block with garage and gym facilities; internal alterations including removal of existing staircase and rear window (as amended by plan nos. 08/20/2B, 3C & 4A received 3rd and 5th September 2008) at Thistley Cottage, Thistley Lane, Gosmore (08/01596/1HH).

NHDC have dismissed appeal for an Outline Application for the siting, scale and access of three 4-bedroom detached dwellings with detached double garages (matters relating to external appearance and landscaping reserved) at Land to Rear of Little Court and Oakdene, London Road, St. Ippolyts (07/02996/1).

NHDC have refused permission for a single storey garage extension to side following removal of existing detached garage at rear 9 The Crescent, St. Ippolyts (08/01748/1HH).

NHDC have granted conditional permission for a first floor side and front extension and single storey rear extension at 15 Sycamore Close, St. Ippolyts (08/01612/1HH).

Planning applications

08/01941/1HH 51 Mill Road, St. Ippolyts. Single storey rear extension. No objection.

08/02028/1 land at the rear of Flint Cottage, London Road, St. Ippolyts and adjacent to no. 4 Mill Road, St. Ippolyts. Change of use from agricultural land to private equestrian use and the erection of stables, riding ménage and ancillary parking/hardstanding area with new vehicular access off Mill Road. Objection.

Reasons as follows -

Over 30 residents, including the applicant, attended the 13th October 2008 Parish meeting and expressed strong feelings about the application. The Parish Council considered the views expressed and object to the application based on the following reasons :-

- a) Proximity of stables to residential areas.
- b) Vehicular access off Mill Road would lead to increase in traffic and consequent safety issues.

The views expressed were as follows :-

- a) Residents suggested that the stables should be sited further away from the houses on Mill Road.
- b) Residents suggested that vehicular access should not be allowed from Mill Road. Horses and riders/pedestrians access on Mill Road would be acceptable.

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- c) There were general concerns about hygiene and smell of manure. The applicant said that manure would be kept in a container away from the houses on Mill Road and be emptied regularly.
- d) Concerns about changes to landscape (hedges & trees) for houses along Mill Road, especially if a large entrance was to be made there.

It appeared that if the residents concerns were adequately addressed then there were a number of residents who would have no objection to the proposal.

08/02138/1TD Lamp Post no. 176 (outside Tantallon, Millfield Lane), London Road, St. Ippolyts. Telecommunications Determination : Replacement of lamp post 176 with 12.5 metre column supporting 2 antennas together with two ground based equipment cabinets. Objection – to avoid clutter at this location, mobile telecom companies should work together to minimise separate installations.

08/02181/1AD 51 North West Junction of Stevenage Road and Arch Road, Wymondley, Hitchin. Advertisement Consent : Replacement post sign. No comment. Not within the parish area.

Planning appeals

There was none.

12. FINANCE

It was resolved that the accounts for payment amounting to £782.30 be approved.

It was agreed the request of £100.00 from HAPTC for Councillor training be accepted.

It was agreed the request of £37.89 (incl. £5.64 VAT) from Freezone Internet for website account upgrade be accepted.

It was agreed the request of £90.98 from HM Revenue & Customs for period ended 5.11.08 Tax and National Insurance be accepted.

It was agreed that the request of £20.64 (incl. £3.07 VAT) from Tiscali for Parish October Broadband & phone be accepted (paid by D/D). Note – payment to Tiscali on 7.4.08 @ £21.07 (incl. £3.14 VAT) has been included in the October finance calculation. Although the amount was included in the April minutes and deducted from the account by D/D, the amount was erroneously omitted from the finance calculation.

Grant (re.1585) at £420.00 (£249 + £171) for the repainting of swings has been received from NHDC.

Cllr. Mr. Hobson suggested a monthly finance report detailing up-to-date spending against budget to be used at the meeting. The Chairman stated that all Cllrs. have a copy of the budget which should be brought to the meeting for reference and that to produce the suggested report may lead to an increase in the Clerk's hours and pay. Cllr. Mr. Smith suggested and agreed by everyone that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk could consider the matter and report on this at the next meeting.

13. 2007-8 AUDIT REVIEW

The Chairman prepared a draft response to BDO Stoy Hayward on the issues they raised for the 2007-8 audit. The key points of the Chairman's draft response were agreed. Cllrs. Mr. Hobson and Mr. Smith suggested that the issue report from BDO should also be included in the letter.

The Parish Council was disappointed that the BDO report was written without any consultation with the Clerk or the Chairman to check the points raised were based on correct information.

A brief summary of the Parish Council response is as follows :-

- a) Budget monitoring process – the Council disagrees and considers our procedures as more than adequate.
- b) Level of Fidelity guarantee – comments noted.

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- c) Comparatives restated – BDO stated no further action necessary. The Council considers comments unnecessary.
- d) Risk assessment – already carried out by the Council but will formalise the report.
- e) Effectiveness of Internal Audit – the Council disagrees and considers internal audit carried out by a Chartered Accountant is more than adequate.

The Clerk has sent the audit fee payment, updated contact detail and proposed audit date for next year's audit to BDO (notice display 4.5.09-17.5.09, reports availability 18.5.09-15.6.09, audit – 19.6.09).

14. RISK ASSESSMENT

This has been deferred to the next meeting.

15. FOOTBALL FACILITIES

Members and Secretaries of St. Ippolyts and Roebuck Wanderers Football Clubs attended this meeting. The Clubs stated that by working together, they have improved the interior of the Pavilion and the pitch. They offered to paint the interior and the Parish Council has agreed to provide the paint. The Secretary from Roebuck Wanderers would send the Parish Council a breakdown of costs.

The Secretary from Roebuck Wanderers mentioned that the door was being vandalised and padlock damaged but the matter was not reported. The Clerk asked for written detail and requested that all future incidents should be reported to the Police and the Parish Council. The Secretary also asked for a new door and locks for the Pavilion. Cllr. Mr. Smith explained the grant situation and that he would be making an application to the Community Aggregate Fund for match funding for the possible fencing and Pavilion work.

The 2008-9 Contract was due for renewal on 1.9.08. It was discussed and agreed that the rent for the two Clubs would be at £200 each. Cllr. Mr. Smith would look into formalising the contract by the next meeting.

16. BUDGET 2009-10

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk attended three budget preparation meetings. A draft 2009-10 budget was sent by email to all the Cllrs for comments. The draft version was presented at this meeting for discussion. Several items were adjusted and the Chairman agreed to make the changes and forward update to everyone. It was agreed that the budget would be submitted to the November meeting for approval.

The Chairman explained to a parishioner present at the meeting that the funding for the possible fencing at the Recreation Ground / Townsend Place and Football Pavilion external work would be paid for by grants. 50% of the grant has already been approved by NHDC and Cllr. Mr. Smith has been looking into match funding from another grant (see item 15).

17. PLAY AREAS & EQUIPMENT INSPECTION

The insurance play areas and equipment weekly visual inspection book was signed at the meeting. No fault was reported.

18. DATES OF MEETINGS

The next meeting will be held on Monday 17th November 2008 at 7:30pm in the School. Planning applications will be available for viewing at 7:15pm.

Date of future meetings are as follows –
Mondays of January 12th 2009, February 23rd, March 30th, April 27th *.

All meetings will start at 7:30pm at St. Ippolyts School, Ashbrook Lane. Planning applications will be available for viewing at 7:15pm.

* 27th April 2009 – Annual Parish Meeting starts at 7:15pm followed by the April meeting. Planning applications will be available for viewing at 7:00 pm.

Any Other Business

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There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 11:15pm.