

AYNHO PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 3rd December 2007 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Chairman - Keith McClellan
Councillors – Anderson, Bradford, Brook, James, Macklin, Oakey and Phillips.

In Attendance: Steve Jones (RFO) and Peter Cole (Clerk).

The Chairman announced that the RFO had tendered his resignation to take effect from the end of December 2007. He thanked Steve Jones for his work over the last two years. The Clerk will take over the duties of the RFO until a successor can be appointed.

1 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllr. Bellamy, who was away on a course, which were accepted.

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs. Anderson and Brook declared an interest in planning applications.

3 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 1st October 2007

It was proposed by Cllr. Phillips, seconded by Cllr. Brook and agreed that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 5th November 2007 should be approved and signed, subject to the following amendments: -

Page 3, Item 7, line2 – Replace “2 Butts Close” with “2 The Butts”.
Page 4, last line – insert “as a tenant” after the word “pub”.

4 Matters Arising not on the Agenda

A start has been made on removing the graffiti on the Home Guard hut.

5. Finance (including a Review of the Budget and the Setting of the Precept)

The RFO reported that the bank balances at 30th November 2007 totalled £7,446.81.

The annual external audit has been completed, and it was it was proposed by Cllr. Bradford, seconded by Cllr. Oakey and agreed that this should be accepted by the Council. A completion notice is to be displayed on our notice board.

It was noted that an appropriate risk assessment had not been undertaken before the end of the financial year, in accordance with new 2006 Regulations. The Chairman said that we do have an agreed Risk Assessment Statement, but this now needs to be reviewed each year, and the results minuted. This will have to be included in our March agenda in future.

It was proposed by Cllr. Anderson, seconded by Cllr. Brook and agreed that the following cheques totalling £831.48 be authorised for payment: -

Cheque	VAT(£)	Cost(£)	Total (£)	Payee	Detail	Power
100443	3.45	69.02	72.47	Powergen	Sports field electricity	(d)
100444	0.00	91.40	91.40	J R Bradford	Administration expenses & mileage	(a)
100445	3.90	22.26	26.16	A H Contracts	Dog bin emptying	(f)
100446	0.00	271.61	271.61	P Cole	November salary & expenses (£36.41)	(b)
100447	0.00	39.20	39.20	S Jones	November RFO fees	(b)
100448	32.38	185.00	217.38	BDO Stoy Hayward	Annual audit fee	(a)
100449	16.87	96.39	113.26	ABB	Lighting maintenance	(d)

Code	Power	Regulation
(a)	Administration	Local Government Act 1972, s111
(b)	Salaries	Local Government Act 1972, s112
(d)	Electricity/street lighting	Parish Councils Act 1957, s3 & Highways Act 1980, s301
(f)	Provision of litter bins	Litter Act 1983, ss 5, 6

Regarding the budget and precept, details of a proposed budget, which had been thrashed out at a committee meeting on 26th November were circulated. In future the sports field will be treated as a separate cost centre. ASRA have agreed to pay £500 annually to the Council in return for our paying all the bills.

Powergen have just written to say that we have been on a fixed rate for several years, so our price for village lighting electricity will have to go up a little. The new annual figure will be £1,191.39, £50 more than budgeted for last week, but this will be offset by a similar increase in the grass-cutting grant. They have also advised that we now have a fixed-price Business Electricity Plan for the sports pavilion, with a standing charge of 35.23 pence per day, plus 6.76 pence per kWh for units used.

It was proposed by Cllr. Bradford, seconded by Cllr. James and agreed that based on a budget of £18,625, a Precept of £17,325 for 2008/2009 should be set.

Concerning the contribution to be made by ASRA to the pavilion work, the Clerk said that in his opinion the most ASRA should be asked to contribute to the Parish Council would be £5,240 (the final Whitehouse bill) less the grant received of £1,449 = £3,791, less the electrical bill of £1,599 = £2,192. Cllr. Anderson agreed that ASRA should pay this sum.

The RFO said that he had test-driven a computer package especially for parish councils, which he had found extremely useful. Accounts can be set up exactly as we want, and it will give us all the information we need. There is a one-off training fee of £165, plus £150 per year for the program. Council will consider this when a new RFO is in post, in case he or she is trained on another package.

Cllr. Phillips had been to a pensions information session at Brackley Library. She warned that after 2012 we may be liable to pay towards a pension if we employ a clerk under pension age.

5 Planning

S/2007/1426/P – 1.8 metre closeboard fencing at 11 Portway – Cllr. Anderson declared an interest in this application. It was agreed that this application should be supported, as the existing hedge is in poor condition. Both the fence and summerhouse would be in keeping with those in neighbouring properties.

S/2007/1256/LB – Retrospective application for removal of oak timber lintel over front elevation archway and replacement with two steel beams. Replacement of windows to front elevation, removal of lath and plaster ceilings and replacement with metal lath ceilings at The Cartwright Arms –

Cllr. Brook declared an interest in this and the following applications.

It was agreed that this retrospective application should be fully supported, as the works listed are long overdue. The Oak timber lintel above the arch was very decayed and the wall above had started to sag. It was only by taking the actions related to this application, that the archway did not collapse completely. The archway forms part of a public thoroughfare so Health and Safety issues had to be taken into consideration. The replacement with RSJ's and the beefing up of the floor joists stabilised the area and it is now a safe access to the Cartwright Arms Public house and the Public Footpath. The windows currently installed to the building are suffering from decay and maintenance to such an extent that the only feasible course of action is to replace them with like for like windows, which ideally should be made in hardwood.

S/2007/1465/P – Conservatory linked to rear entrance, clock tower feature and rooflights, replacement porch and walled external patio at The Cartwright Arms –

And

S/2007/1466/LB – External alterations including new and replacement door and window openings, new rooflights, new boundary walls, extensions and alterations to outbuildings, clock tower feature, removal of bay windows and rear timber entrance structure and replacement with new conservatory linked to new rear entrance structure with glazed lantern and flat parapet roof. Internal alterations associated with installation of new bar, kitchen and restaurant. Alterations to internal partitions, new glazed lobby and installation of bathroom facilities at The Cartwright Arms –

It was agreed that both these applications should be supported, as they will be of benefit to the village, but that the following observations should be made: -

The building, which is currently closed, has been badly neglected for several years, and is in a very poor condition. It has been subject to several add on projects, none of which are in keeping with a building of this type, and their removal will benefit the appearance of the building.

The replacement of the windows will be of benefit to the building. The proposed relocation of the kitchen possess a concern as to the method and location of the ducting from the kitchen equipment, and it is suggested that consideration is given to ensure that it is taken back to the proposed clock tower to be vented out. We are particularly concerned that it may be vented out onto the neighbouring property, 2 The Square, where it would be adjacent to the sleeping accommodation.

The proposed restaurant has a capacity of 60+ diners and together with the rear accommodation it is extremely unlikely that the internal parking arrangements will be adequate for the unit. This will entail vehicles being parked in the street outside the building, and probably along the main road through the village, which would need to be regularised.

It is proposed to provide an area in the rear courtyard for smokers, as the premises will have a No Smoking ban. The provision of a sign adjacent to the entrance door to the bar/restaurant requesting and directing smokers to the relevant area would be advantageous, and could alleviate the perceived problem with cigarette butts being deposited outside this door.

In respect of the upper loft space there is concern as to the future use of this area, as with the provision of toilet facilities it could be used as a function room, and as such there could be a problem with noise pollution, to Number 2, by virtue of the proposed Velux windows in the west facing roof of the area. It is suggested that the west-facing rooflights are inappropriate.

It is assumed that adequate soundproofing will be provided to ensure that the neighbouring properties are catered for on the connecting walls.

There was discussion about the possibility of parking along the main road through the village, perhaps with protectors such as those in Croughton and Clifton. Cllr. Macklin suggested that we should move forward on this.

S/2007/1462/NA – for information only we were sent amended plans for outline application for new settlement of 1075 dwellings, together with associate works and facilities including employment uses, community uses, school, playing fields and other physical and social infrastructure at Heyford Park Camp Road.

S/2007/1193/P new agricultural building for livestock at Nellbridge Farm has been permitted.

Cllr. Bradford reported on a Parish and Town Council's Planning Forum held on Thursday 8th November at the Council Chamber, S. N. C. He stated that we are now part of West Northamptonshire, so far as planning is concerned. We will still send planning responses to S.N.C., but planning decisions concerning more than 50 houses will be decided by West Northamptonshire.

He added that there is currently a dispute between the Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire Ambulance Trusts, so that they will not cross county boundaries. Therefore if we telephone for an ambulance from Aynho, it will go to Northampton. Cllr. Macklin observed that it is preposterous that we have an ambulance station about four minutes away from us, which sends ambulances through our village at least every day, yet apparently they would not be able to call in at Aynho, even if there is an extreme emergency. It was agreed that we should write to both ambulance trusts, saying that we are very concerned about this, and asking them to clarify the position exactly, asking for copies of relevant minutes under the Freedom of Information Act, before we take this matter further.

7 Highways and Transport

Cllr. Macklin said that the speed monitor at the Croughton end recorded 14% of vehicles exceeding 35 mph, but this dropped to only 2% after the temporary vehicle-activated sign had been in operation. So this proved the effectiveness of such a sign. We are still waiting to hear if it is going to be good news from Northamptonshire County Council about possible traffic calming measures. He had recently appeared on Radio Northampton giving details of our traffic problems.

The Chairman said that we hadn't mentioned to N.C.C. that in their original plans there had been a pelican crossing. Cllr. Macklin pointed out that these make quite a considerable noise every time the crossing is activated, which might disturb nearby residents. It was agreed that a zebra crossing would be preferable.

The Highways Agency has replied to our letter about a possible new M40 junction on either the B4100 or B4031 road near Aynho. It states that there are currently no plans to provide an additional junction on the M40 to serve Banbury. There is a general presumption that there will be no additional accesses to motorways. This should be reviewed occasionally.

A broken manhole cover on the verge of the main road by the corner of Church Lane has been reported to the Street Doctor.

A resident of Bowmens Lea has complained about cars being parked on the grass outside the Almshouses. Noticing the signs on the two village greens he is asking if we can place a sign there. It was decided that this verge belongs to N.C.C. Cllr. Bradford offered to write to the residents of the Almshouses about this.

8 Playground Matters

The playground inspection report is still being circulated.

The Clerk said that he had cut off the corners of the angle bracket on the slide, and had filed off the edges, so that it was much less of a hazard. He will try to get some matching blue paint to repaint the whole area, and that should do.

9 Farming and Footpaths

Cllr. Oakey said that the Sports Field hedge would be cut shortly.

The Clerk has still not yet received a quote to trim the Bowmens Lea trees. To avoid having to call another meeting before February, Council authorised him to accept the lower of two quotes, or one if only one is returned, as long as it didn't exceed £350, to include the other tree obscuring a light.

He has applied for and been granted the grass-cutting grant for next year.

P.E. & J. M. Walsh from Clifton have asked if they can be included to quote when our grass-cutting contact next comes up for renewal.

10 Aynho Village Hall Matters

Cllr. Phillips said that the Village Hall Committee has enquired if it is possible for the Council to purchase curtains for the Committee in order to save VAT. It was agreed that as we are only Trustees, this was not legally correct.

It was noted that there may be a temporary curtain on a rod with a stanchion to enhance certain plays. The Chairman will look at this.

11 The Village Plan

The Chairman reported that both grants that we had applied for had been successful.

An invitation to villagers to join the Committee will be put in the next newsletter, so that the Committee can meet in January to make arrangements for the Needs Day towards the end of March

Cllr. Brook reported on the successful Public Shop meeting. Regarding the possibility of a post office there, it was confirmed that no changes are planned to any Northamptonshire post offices within a range of six miles of Aynho.

Cllr. Brook said that with his involvement on the Shop Steering Group, he was unable to stay on the New Plan Committee as well. The Chairman thanked him, and mentioned that his shop presentation had received a good many favourable comments.

12 Meetings and Conferences

The West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit is inviting us to a workshop to discuss rural issues at Daventry Council Chamber on Thursday 24th January 6.30 to 9 pm. Cllr, Bradford agreed to attend.

13 Correspondence

N. C. C. has sent leaflets and a DVD about Direct Payments for people with a community care assessment, and also a leaflet about protecting vulnerable adults from abuse.

An email has been received from Danny Moodie, who has replaced Christine Moore at N.A.L.C. in Northampton. Until now it has been somewhat confusing that N.A.L.C. stood for both the National Association of Parish Councils and Northamptonshire Association of Parish Councils. It has now been decided that our local Association should in future become N.C.A.L.C. – the Northamptonshire County Association of Parish Councils.

N.C.A.L.C. have sent an Update for November – December.

Powergen has advised that their name will change to E-On from 3rd December.

The South Northants Volunteer Bureau wishes to consult with the local community and agree priorities for South Northamptonshire. The only nomination was for rural sustainability.

The Chairman will circulate a reply to the letter he sent to the Chief Executive of N.C.C. about the Sustainable Communities Act.

The following have been received and will be circulated: -

Clerks & Councils Direct, Croughton Parish Council minutes, Policing in Your Community and South Northants Volunteer Bureau magazine: Link Up.

14 Any Other Business (at the Discretion of the Chair)

Cllr. Macklin reported that the History Society had taken off really well.

Cllr. Anderson said that ASRA would like to make a donation of £50 to the Church to mark Sybil's 40 years of preparing the village newsletter.

Cllr. Phillips reminded Council that an advert should be put in the newsletter for an R.F.O.

The Clerk said that he was having problems with space in his filing cabinets due to the volume of correspondence received. He inherited old minute books that run from 1971 to 1999. He has gone through these and listed what he considers to be all the relevant decisions and details of work done, and changes of Chairman and Clerk, etc. He asked if there was any objection to him depositing these minute books with the Northamptonshire Records Office for safekeeping. This was agreed.

15 Date of Next Meeting - Monday 4th February 2008

This date was agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm.