

AYNHO PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 5th March 2007 at 7.15 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Chairman - Keith McClellan

Councillors – Anderson, Gibbs, Macklin, Oakey and Phillips.

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

1 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllr. Bradford, who was away on holiday, and Cllr. Iannacci, which were accepted.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 5th February 2007

It was proposed by Cllr. Anderson, seconded by Cllr. Oakey and agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th February 2007 should be approved and signed.

4 Matters Arising not on the Agenda

The Clerk said that he had spoken to Central Networks about the power cut packs. No one is actually producing them for general use, but he was told that all the individual items could be bought at Millets shops. He had tried this and had found most items at a reasonable cost.

5 Finance

The RFO reported that the bank balances at 5th March totalled £11,868.97.

It was proposed by Cllr. Macklin, seconded by Cllr. Gibbs and agreed that the following cheques totalling £386.98 be authorised for payment: -

Cheque	VAT(£)	Cost(£)	Total (£)	Payee	Detail	Power
100379	0.00	278.53	278.53	P Cole	Clerk's salary 2/07 & expenses £44.33	(b)
100380	2.28	13.00	15.28	A H Contracts	Emptying dog bins	(f)
100381	2.57	51.40	53.97	Powergen	Sports pavilion electricity	(d)
100382	0.00	39.20	39.20	S Jones	RFO fees 2/07	(b)

Code	Power	Regulation
(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

As no invoice has been received yet from P & R Alcock Ltd. for the pavilion drainage work, it was agreed that a meeting could be called as soon as their invoice has been received to pay that and any other outstanding invoices. The RFO will transfer sufficient funds for this to be done.

The internal audit has not yet taken place.

Ron Sawbridge has asked if we could have new Neighbourhood Watch signs for Cartwright Gardens and The Glebe. The Clerk had noticed that there is another old one on the Deddington Road approach to the village. He was authorised to get another 4 signs, with one as a spare.

6 Planning

There have been no new plans this month, although there was an amendment to the Aynhoe Park application proposing that the exit should be right on the corner rather than as it is now. Although we made no specific recommendation about this, when we were discussing it, this was suggested as the only suitable compromise, so the Clerk had replied that we were happy with it. It was also stated that the gates would be the subject of a separate application.

As there are still delivery vehicles and a sandwich van parked in Church Lane, which is causing problems for Church visitors and funeral parties, the Clerk was asked to write to Robert Peace about this.

The following decisions have been received from S.N.C.: -

S/2006/1689/P – Increase width of drive by 1.5 metres and move hedgeline at Upper Aynho Grounds has been permitted.

S/2006/1690/LB – removal of 1no. dormer window and 4no. rooflights from rear facing roof, replacement with 3no. conservation rooflights at 3 Croughton Road has been permitted.

S/2007/0009/P – Replace cream wooden windows and french doors with cream UPVC windows and french doors at 7 College Fields (2nd application) has been refused.

S/2007/0040/P – 6 No. two storey semi-detached houses on land adjoining Aynho Wharf – has been withdrawn.

7 Highways and Transport

Cllr. Gibbs said that having spoken to Ron Sawbridge about our presentation to N.C.C., he had advised that now is not a good time to do this, due to significant changes in top N.C.C. personnel. It will also enable us to get more data to support our case.

Cllr. Macklin gave a report on the Speedwatch progress. Nine people are trained for this, and we now have five sites, including Charlton Road and Station Road. Monitoring devices will measure traffic movements, speeds and density, both before and after the campaign. Data will be shared with us, so that we can establish the effectiveness of the exercise. A report has to be written following it and sent to John McQuad. He will then support our efforts to get something done about it.

The Clerk said that he had written to Andy Preston, Head of Environment, complaining about the discrimination against some villages due to the restriction on bus passes to after 9.30 am, and asking for the decision to be based on the arrival time of the bus at its destination, so that everyone on the bus would be treated the same. This had been sent on 14th February, but nothing has so far been heard from S.N.C. This will be followed up.

Concerning the long-running flood under the railway bridge just before the Great Western Arms, the Clerk said that he had telephoned Richard Woodhouse at N.C.C./Atkins to complain about the delay in clearing this. Mr Woodhouse had indicated that the problem was on land that Atkins could not access. He had arranged a site meeting with representatives of Birse Rail for 19th February. As a result of this the problem was sorted, and when the Clerk phoned Mr. Woodhouse to thank him, he learned that the two drains under the bridge both ended with a metal grille, only accessible from Birse Rail's land. The recent heavy rain had cause leaves and mud to completely block the grilles. These had now been removed, and both drains are working perfectly.

Ron Sawbridge has asked what has happened to Green Lane. It used to be a pleasant walk, but it is now like a war zone. This appears to be mainly due to the extremely heavy rain, but there is little we can do, as Green Lane is a Byway Open to All Traffic.

Cllr. Macklin mentioned problems on the small lay-by at the end of Little Lane, which is allegedly being clogged up by people parking to work at Aynhoe Park House. The Clerk was asked to mention this in his letter to Mr. Peace.

Cllr. Macklin asked Council to formally take up the problem of the road surface outside College Fields, as his neighbour has got nowhere. The Clerk will write after getting details of earlier correspondence.

The Chairman noted that the sign at Souldern Dip on the Souldern side has had the top taken down. This will be investigated.

At this point the Chairman suspended Standing Orders to enable members of the public to speak.

9 Farming and Footpaths (including a meeting with farmers)

Farmers present were John Belcher, Alex McLaren and Charles McLaren. There were apologies from Tim Boswell, but he said that he would be pleased to accommodate anything that the meeting came up with, David Belcher and Jerry Stephenson.

There was discussion about whether the Walk should be held the day after the Village Fete, or the following weekend.

John Belcher said that the Belcher family were a little fed up, in that the walk was supposed to inform and educate people in countryside ways, but they had experienced several instances recently where local people on finding a problem, instead of telling them about it, had reported them to the R.S.P.C.A. three or four times, who are then obliged to hold an investigation. An example is that they were reported for allowing sheep to be in a field with water. The family has

farmed here for over 70 years, and they know far more about local flood conditions than anyone else. There have also been instances of people leaving gates open and wandering over land well away from footpaths, and claiming that there is a right to roam, which does not exist in any part of Aynho parish.

The Chairman said that all the walks have been very well supported, but we cannot be responsible for everyone in the village. One problem is that few people know who farms which fields. It was suggested that these points could best be put over at the Annual Village meeting, and that this could be followed up with an insert in the Newsletter, and in future Welcome Packs.

After discussion it was agreed that this year's walk should start at the Sports Field, go down the tunnel path towards Souldern, stop off for a sheep presentation and possibly something from Upper Aynho Grounds, then across to Nigel's wood, and on to Tim Boswells. It would then return along Millers Lane, across Station Road and over to the lay-by, with a tractor return from there to the pavilion for the usual barbecue. The majority wish was for the walk to be on 17th June. There will be a shorter quiz, with three questions from each farm, incorporating questions to emphasise responsibility in the countryside. Alex McLaren agreed to provide the beefburgers again. The Chairman agreed to ask Angie Benbow to liaise with Penny Oakey regarding the refreshments. As usual a bouncy castle will be booked.

Gill Phillips has prepared and sent off the annual Parish Path Wardens Scheme report. A copy will be circulated.

8 Playground Matters

Cllr. Phillips drew attention to several playground matters. These will be looked at.

P R Alcock & Sons Ltd. are proceeding well with the drainage and septic tank work, but they have not been able to complete it in time for an invoice for this meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk should arrange a special meeting as soon as an invoice is received to get it paid if possible by the end of the month.

Work has been further delayed because they lost a valuable digger, stolen from the Sports Field, possibly by someone with a low loader who may have taken the gate off its hinges.

10. Grass Cutting (Tenders for 2007/2009)

Three tenders had been invited. One person had later called to say that he had decided not to take the job on. The two tenders received were opened at the meeting. The cheapest tender was from Mr. M Dempsey.

It was proposed by Cllr. Anderson, seconded by Cllr. Phillips and agreed that the grass-cutting contract for 2007-2009 should be awarded to Mr. Dempsey.

11. Spring Clean 2007

The Clerk said that he was getting everything prepared for 31st March. He was concerned about the location of a skip, as if it were placed where it was last year, there was a risk of damaging the new manhole covers. Also the road is a bit of a quagmire, so even cars turning round by the pavilion might have problems. Cllr, Anderson suggested that it could be located inside his driveway. The Clerk will organise the exercise from the Portway gate of the field, and the

Charlton Road gate will be kept closed so that no one drives down to the pavilion. A decision on the provision of refreshments will be taken at the Ward Meeting on 26th March, depending on the condition of the field.

It was agreed that a layer of hardcore would be needed near and behind the pavilion to enable cars to turn and park there in future. The Clerk was asked to get some quotes for this.

12. The Annual Village Report and the Annual Village Meeting 2007

It was proposed that the meeting should start at 8 pm this year, as Lady Juliet Townsend has organised a party at Aynhoe Park House that evening starting at 6 pm for those who have supported the Archive Trust's appeal. This is likely to include many who would also attend the AVM, so by starting later they could come on to our meeting. This was agreed.

Letters have been sent out to the village organisations as usual, and reports are already coming in.

It was agreed that in addition to James Perkins as a speaker, John Belcher should talk about farming problems, and that there should be reports on the Sports Field and Speedwatch programme. The exact timetable will be finalised next month.

13. The Parish Plan

The Chairman said that the new Council after May ought to revisit this, and assess where we are.

He would like to start a History Group in the village.

14 The Cartwright Papers

See item 12.

15. Meetings and Conferences

The Chairman asked if anyone wished to attend a funding workshop on 20th March.

The Clerk issued a reminder about the Ward Meeting at Evenley Village Hall on Monday 26th March. The two items suggested by Aynho for the agenda are: -

Discrimination against bus pass holders living in Little Brook Ward.

The possibility of getting a cheaper deal on grass cutting by having tenders for the whole ward in future.

16. Correspondence.

N.C.C. has sent two Reception Centre Information sheets, one for the Village Hall, and one for the Sports Pavilion, for us to update in case they are needed to cope with any emergency.

S.N.C. produced a Supplementary Planning Document, Consultation Draft on Energy and Development just after our December meeting, with a response deadline of 12th January. It

is actually a very good document, as it contains detailed information and comparisons of all types of energy efficient products, such as wind turbines, solar panels, etc. and their effectiveness, all in one paper.

N.A.L.C. has sent the usual subscription renewal, Next financial year it will be £138 plus £14 for copies of the Local Council Review = £151 (exactly the same as last year, as the number of electors has gone down by about 20). They have also indicated that there would be no increase in the charge for the Internal Audit Service fee. It was agreed that our N.A.L.C. subscription should be renewed next month, and that we should continue to use their Internal Audit Service. The Clerk will complete the necessary forms.

They have also sent an Update, details of training courses and a Legal Topic Note about Local Council Elections.

Communities and Local Government has issued a Consultation document on Amendments to the Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members.

The Standards Board has sent the 9th issue of Town and Parish Standard.

The following have been received and will be circulated: -

Croughton and Evenley Parish Council Minutes, Clerks & Councils Direct, Local Council Review, Oxfordshire Magazine, Play Activity Today and SutcliffePlay are two new organisations offering play equipment. The Playing Field, Village Viewpoint and Voluntary Action in South Northamptonshire.

Finally the Clerk mentioned one more item, which he felt very strongly about. On 6th February he received glossy copies with coloured maps of the Northants Waste Local Plan and the Northants Minerals Local Plan, setting out the policy for each up to 2016. Now in fairness it did say in the covering letter that both plans would be progressively replaced by the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework. On 14th February (just 8 days later) he received glossy copies with coloured maps of the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework – Issues and Options and the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework – Statement of Community Involvement, together with a questionnaire asking for our comments and response. These were delivered by courier van. His immediate reaction was not to comment on the detail of the documents, but to say that to issue two almost identical documents within just over a week seems a complete waste of our money.

He consulted Ron Sawbridge for his view on seeking the cost of producing all these plans and printing and distributing them under the Freedom of Information Act. Ron suggested writing to the Leader of N.C.C., Jim Harker.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed with his reaction, and instructed him to proceed as he had suggested.

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

Cllr. Macklin suggested that next year we should consider entering the Calor Village of the Year.

18 Date of Next Meeting – Monday 2nd April 2007 at 7.30 pm

This date was agreed.

The Meeting closed at 10.05 pm.