

WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 21 APRIL 2008

Present

Mr Webb (Chairman), Mrs Lumber, Cllr A Bown, & Messrs Perry, Solomon, Brown, Western & Bagg

1) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the Parish Councillors, PC Tony Freeman, PCSO Nick Mizon & 2 members of the public to the meeting. The Chairman advised the members of the public that other than under the heading "The Views of Wembdon Residents" they were not entitled to speak at the meeting unless invited to do so.

2) Apologies for Absence

These were received in respect of Mr Harris, Mrs Riddle & County Cllr John Edney.

3) The Views of Wembdon Residents

A resident of Wembdon gave a 3 minute presentation, via a slide show with pictures, in respect of various issues in the village that were of a concern to him. These concerns included, graffiti, rubbish, dog mess on footpaths & the playing field, flooded footpaths & a poor quality footpath bridge.

Both the Parish Council & PC Freeman advised the resident that they had informed S.D.C. regarding the graffiti many months previously. The resident gave his apologies & left the meeting before the Council had an opportunity to explain the actions taken by them in respect of the issues raised by him & published in previous minutes that had been posted on the notice board opposite the entrance to Inwood Road.

Another member of the public highlighted his & other neighbour's objections to planning application 51/08/00012 & asked the Parish Council to take account of these when considering the application. The Chairman advised the member of the public that the application was to be considered later on in the agenda.

4) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting dated 10 March 2008 were agreed & signed.

5) Report from PC Tony Freeman

PC Freeman reported that the first "Partners & Communities Together" (P.A.C.T.) meeting for Sandford Ward was being held on 24 May at the Parish Centre. The meeting would incorporate the normal Beat surgery. A representative of the Parish Council was invited to attend. The meeting was open to the public.

PC Freeman reported that a group of youths had gained access to a field, owned by the developer, adjoining Old Oaks Close & created BMX ramps. As a result of concerns raised by local residents the youths removed the ramps & filled the holes dug under the supervision of the Police.

PC Freeman reported that there had been a flasher in the village & enquiries were continuing.

The Youth Club at the Parish Centre had been broken in to & some items had been stolen. There had also been the theft of lead from the Notaro development.

6) Matters Arising

6.1) Wembdon Boundary

This item had been raised at the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Clerk reminded the Parish Council of the advice given to the Parish Council by Sedgemoor District Council when this had been considered previously (**see minutes dated 14 February 2005**).

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would await the outcome of the Wembdon Vision questionnaire before considering this matter further.

6.2) New Notice board

A site close to the new footpath on the Notaro development had been identified as the most suitable place for a new notice board. The Parish Council had previously contacted Mr Notaro regarding this & it was agreed that a site meeting would be arranged once the footpath neared completion.

6.3) Verge on Wembdon Hill

As both Wadworth brewery & the Landlord had given consent for a tree to be planted it was agreed to proceed.

6.4) Quantock Parish Cluster Group

Mr Perry reported that the meeting had been poorly attended.

The meeting had covered planning matters. There had also been a discussion on the Sedgemoor in Somerset Partnership meetings & S.D.C. was hoping to have a representative from each cluster present at those meetings. Normally this was the Chairman of each cluster, however the Quantock cluster did not have a permanent Chairman. Therefore following the cluster meeting each Parish Council within the cluster had been asked if they either wished to nominate a Parish Councillor to become Chairman of the cluster & as such then attend the Sedgemoor in Partnership meetings or nominate a Councillor to represent the cluster at those meetings. No nomination was forthcoming.

6.5) Verge in Church Road

It was agreed to carry this forward to the next meeting.

7) Correspondence

7.1) Rubbish Deposited in Wembdon

The Chairman declared a personal interest & stepped down from chairing the meeting. In the absence of the Vice Chairman, Mr Harris, Mr Perry as the senior Councillor present took over Chairmanship of the meeting.

The Parish Councillors had been supplied with copies of the correspondence, including photographs, from a Wembdon resident, relating to rubbish situated on land close to a public footpath. The acting Chairman reported that the rubbish, which was only deposited temporarily, was on private land & had in fact been destroyed. It was agreed unanimously that as the rubbish was on private land the Parish Council had no right or authority to condemn what someone had done & it was therefore not a Parish Council matter. The fact that the land was viewable by the public was immaterial.

Some of the correspondence received referred to communications between the resident & S.D.C. in respect of graffiti on a footbridge on footpath BW 34/6. Within days of the resident contacting S.D.C. the graffiti had been removed. However, both the Parish Council & the Police had been in contact with S.D.C. on this same issue over a number of months without any action being taken. It was therefore RESOLVED that the Chief Executive of S.D.C. be asked to explain why both the Parish Council & Police had seemingly been ignored whereas the resident had received very prompt attention. The Parish Council then considered the tone of the correspondence between the resident & Clerk & the subsequent letter sent to the Chairman of the Parish Council. The Council believed that the Clerk had acted entirely properly & gave a unanimous vote of confidence in support of the Clerk.

It was agreed that it was not the duty of the Clerk to provide on request, from residents, the identity of the ownership of land & property within the Parish & that in fact he had a responsibility to respect the privacy of individuals. The Clerk had therefore acted correctly when informing the resident that without the express permission of the land owner the ownership of the land would not have been given to the resident.

The Parish Council policy was that all initial contact with the Parish Council was through the Clerk & that was why his details appeared on the notice boards & not those of the Councillors, although they were listed within the minutes of each meeting. It was left to each Parish Councillor to decide as to whether they were content to share their address & telephone number with residents.

7.2) Accessibility Planning & Access to Key Services

The Parish Council had received a Somerset County Council newsletter on this subject & had been asked to highlight any concerns there were for local residents accessing hospitals & post 16 education. None could be identified. The newsletter was placed in the correspondence folder.

7.3) Local Action for Rural Communities

A newsletter highlighting a funding bid aimed at creating a carbon neutral environment was placed in the correspondence folder.

7.4) Community Council for Somerset

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council should continue subscribing to the Community Council at the cost of £25.

7.5) St Margaret's Hospice

The Parish Council will consider a donation to St Margaret's at a later meeting. A copy of their latest newsletter was placed in the correspondence folder.

7.6) How to Engage with the Community you Serve & Support

A training day was taking place on 25 April aimed at exploring & clarifying why community engagement was needed & to consider ways of achieving this. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would not be sending a representative & that it was already connecting with the community in various ways, not least of all through the Wembdon Vision questionnaire.

7.7) Other Correspondence

The following had been placed in the correspondence folder

- Thatch – spring edition

- Sedgemoor Area Working Panel Minutes dated 22 February 2008 – the next meeting is on 22 May
- Somerset Heritage Roadshow event leaflet
- A newsletter highlighting Highways changes at Area offices
- Local Councils Update newsletter
- Focus on Transporting in Somerset newsletter
- Countryside Voice – spring edition
- Standards Board newsletter
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment newsletter
- Fieldwork magazine

8) Report from Cllr A Bown

Cllr Bown reported that S.D.C. was considering changing the cluster group structure. Complaints had been received regarding parking on the pavement in Positano Close. As this area had not been adopted that matter had been referred to the developer.

The minutes of the Gerber Foods Neighbourhood Liaison meeting dated 8 April 2008 was placed in the correspondence folder.

Cllr Bown reported that the Children's Home was now not due to close until the early part of 2009 although the number of children in the home was being reduced.

9) Reports from Sub-committees

9.1) Footpaths

Mr Brown reported that the footpaths were generally in good condition. He also advised the meeting that new kissing gates were being erected in place of the stiles on the River Parrett trail.

Mr Brown had spent a lot of time speaking to residents of Wares Lane regarding the potholes there. A number of them had offered to tarmac the area near to their properties. The residents committee in Wares Lane was in contact with the developer & S.D.C. regarding the overall condition of the footpath in the lane. Somerset Rights of Way had also been approached & they had responded stating that there was ongoing work by one of the utility companies & until this was completed they were unable to take any action themselves. Mr Brown reported that one trench had been left unfilled for a number of months.

9.2) Playing field/Common

It was reported that the goalmouths would be repaired once the weather improved.

It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would enter the Playing field of the year competition at the cost of £5.

A sign had now been placed on the new gate advising that there was no public access to the field adjoining the playing field.

Two new seats, in the same style as the others purchased within the last 18 months, had been ordered at a cost of £1125.75 including VAT.

Mr Western was asked to investigate what was happening regarding the area of the Common dug up by the utility company.

A new street light had been erected on the Common, on the roadside close to the Parish Centre.

The Clerk reported on a conversation with the landowner of the field at the NDR end of the playing field where the Parish Council hoped to replace the footbridge. The landowner asked to be consulted before any work was undertaken.

Work on placing bollards around the parking bay by the Church was due to commence shortly.

9.3) Parish Plan

It was reported that more than 1000 completed questionnaires had been received & the data was being worked on. Work was also being undertaken on other areas that would form part of the plan to be published. These areas included the history, environment & wildlife of the village.

The Chairman of the Parish Council was asked to provide a statement to be placed at the beginning of the plan.

The results of the prize draw had been published but the prizes had not been claimed.

9.4) Allotments

The agent acting for the allotment field owner had stated that as the rental agreement did not expire until December 2010 they did not wish to discuss an extension or renewal of the agreement at this stage.

10) Planning

Planning Application 51/07/00016, Wembdon Reservoir. The appeal against the non-determination was to be heard on 29 April.

Planning Application 51/07/00024, land to the South of 24 Wembdon Hill, erection of dwelling. **The appeal had been dismissed.**

51/08/00005 – 1 Inwood Road, Wembdon. Erection of front porch.

Permission granted.

51/08/00007 – 43 Inwood Road, Wembdon. Erection of single storey extension & conservatory to rear elevation, front porch on site of existing (to be demolished) & erection of garden wall to Western boundary.

Permission granted.

51/08/00008 – 2 Risedale Close, Wembdon. Erection of front porch, on site of existing (to be demolished).

Permission granted.

51/08/00009 – (Tree Preservation Order Regulations 1999). Land to the West of 66 Wembdon Hill. Fell Beech Tree, crown thin by 10% Beech Tree & Oak Tree & re pollard Lime Tree.

No objection from Parish Council sub-committee.

51/08/00010 – Sandford Lodge, 140 Wembdon Hill. Erection of single storey extension partly on site of existing (to be demolished).

Permission granted.

51/08/00011 – 1 Brantwood Road. Erection of porch to South elevation.

Submitted to Parish Council sub-committee.

51/08/00012 – 7 Wembdon Orchard, Wembdon. Erection of four-storey dwelling, with triple integral garage & formation of access. (Mr Perry declared an interest & took no part in the discussion).

The Parish Council objected to the application on the following grounds

- **The scale of the development is not in keeping with the surrounding houses**
- **The proposed building is too ambitious for the site within a quarry & is only 1 ½ metres from the cliff side, it is not shored up in any way & will expose the facing “White lawns” to collapse**
- **Due to its height it will overshadow its neighbours & intrude on their privacy & will overlook the bedroom windows of all the houses on the road below**
- **Its visual prominence is out of keeping with the surrounding area**
- **Due to its height Its closeness to the quarry wall will make it an objectionable feature when walking along the ridge path**
- **The addition of a modern brick & tile finished property would detract from the Wembdon character of the existing skyline**
- **The quarry has been untouched for many years & it is understood that it is the home to the wall lizard, which is very rare & with only 8 known colonies in the country. There is no evidence of any ecological or environmental impact study in the submitted plans**

51/08/00013 – Harp Lodge, Perry Green. Erection of two-storey extension to North elevation, partly on site of garage (to be demolished) & replacement front porch & conservatory to South elevation.

Submitted to Parish Council sub-committee.

51/08/00014 – 45 Wembdon Rise. Erection of double garage & alterations to access.

Submitted to Parish Council sub-committee.

11) Finance

11.1) Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2008

The Finance sub-committee & the Internal Auditor had reviewed the accounts & there were no concerns.

Copies of the Income & Expenditure Account & Balance sheet along with the end of year bank reconciliation were made available to the Parish Councillors. Due to the purchase of the new play equipment during the year expenditure had exceeded Income by more than £7000. However, the reserves built up in the previous years, for this purpose, were more than sufficient to cover this. It was therefore RESOLVED that the accounts be formally approved.

The Clerk reported that the following payments had been made since the March meeting

- Room hire £100.80
- Dog waste bin emptying £146.03
- Graffiti removal £28.20

Allotment income of £30, Bank Interest of £86.72 & half the precept, £7,000, had been received.

It was RESOLVED that the following payments be made

- Internal Audit £10.00

- Ground maintenance £265.00
- Royal Mail Response plus service £41.50
- Clerk's salary & Income Tax £709.42 (this took account of the £100 credit received for filing the End of Year Return on-line)
- Clerk' expenses £16.72
- Photocopying costs £13.20

A claim for the refund of VAT paid during 2007/08 totalling £370.08 had been submitted.

The Chairman reported that County Cllr John Edney had made a further grant of £750 available to the Parish Council.

Balance		£11802.49
Precept		£ 7000.00
Bank Interest		£ 86.72
Allotment Rent		<u>£ 30.00</u>
		£18919.21
Less		
S.C.C. (Room hire)	£ 100.80	
S.D.C. (Dog waste bin emptying)	£ 146.03	
S.D.C. (Graffiti removal)	£ 28.20	
Greenslade Taylor Hunt (Allotment Rent)	£ 200.00	
Purnell's (Parish Plan Questionnaire)	£1505.40	
Clerk' expenses	£ 84.60	<u>£ 2065.03</u>
Balance		£16854.18

12) Any Other Business

12.1) Fly Tipping

There had been several instances of fly tipping in Perry Green. Mr Bagg had reported these to S.D.C. & within a day they had been removed.

12.2) Damage to the Highway

The Clerk was instructed to contact County Highways regarding damage to the edge of the carriageway by Barton Farm, Perry Green.

Date of next meeting – Monday 12 May 2008