

CAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD WEDNESDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2011 AT 6.30PM IN THE COUNCIL SHOP

PRESENT:

M Clifton (Chair), B Whatling, J Hudson	Upper Ward
B Powell, J Sherman, M Stevens	Woodfield Ward
N Ledoux, P Dutfield, D Andrewartha, J Fowles	Lower Ward
J Daniel, D Cornell, B Tipper, D Jones	Central Ward

APOLOGIES: M Nolder, D Pritchard

IN ATTENDANCE: P Denney (SDC Ward Cllr), S Hanman (Clerk)

11.100. Chairman's announcements

None made

11.101. To Receive Apologies for absence

Apologies as listed above were received and accepted

11.102. Receive Declarations of Interest

None received

11.103. To receive any questions, statements or submissions on any issue affecting the Parish from members of the public in attendance or from any Councillor in respect of any agenda item in which he/she has a Prejudicial Interest

None received

11.104. To Approve and Sign Minutes of the Meeting of 27th July 2011 as a True and Correct Record

It was RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair

11.105. To Note Matters Arising from the Minutes not covered by agenda items (for information only)

None raised

11.106. To note general correspondence received

Items as per attached list noted

11.107. To Receive Minutes of Meetings of the Following Committees

Minutes of the following were received and noted:

Planning & Highways – 6th July, 20th July, 3rd August, 17th August

Recreation & Leisure – 13th July

11.108. To confirm letting of contract for construction of Community Resource Centre and Cafe

It was unanimously RESOLVED that the contract be let to Snape Construction in the sum of £401,084.94. Authority to sign the contract was delegated to any of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council, Chair or Vice-Chair of Development & Premises Committee and the Clerk.

11.109. To confirm terms for lease of cafe to Berry Blue

An amended Heads of Terms document had been circulated. Some concerns were raised about the ability to enforce the issues contained in the associated Memorandum of Understanding, which would be raised with the Solicitor. Subject to confirmation of this, and to any further amendments considered by the Solicitor, it was RESOLVED to accept the Heads of Terms. These would now be referred to and discussed with the solicitor, who would draw up the lease between the Council and Berry Blue (Cam) Ltd. Authority was delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Committee, to agree any amendments necessary with the solicitor and to instruct him to proceed.

11.110. To confirm details of external landscape design for Community Resource Centre and cafe

It was RESOLVED to accept the attached plan, as amended, as the basis for the landscape design and to instruct the designer to proceed with a detailed plan and specification.

11.111. To confirm arrangements for Project Management for the construction of the Community Resource Centre and cafe and membership of the Project Management Board

It was agreed that the terms of reference for the Project Management Board and Project Manager, and other arrangements previously agreed, should remain in place for the duration of the contract. It was noted that some PMB meetings had been poorly attended and RESOLVED that Cllrs Cornell and Sherman should be appointed to the Board to try to ensure adequate representation at meetings. Meetings would continue to be scheduled weekly through the contract (being cancelled if not needed) at 2pm each Thursday.

11.112. To receive report from South of Stroud Youth Partnership and consider any necessary actions, including the release of previously agreed funding to the Partnership

Minutes of the meetings of the Partnership had been circulated. The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 1st September; Cllr Cornell (now secretary of SOSYP) reported that a very positive presentation had been received from Elin Tattersall of GRCC with reference to the Windsor Trust. It was considered that the project would meet the aims of the trust for funding; Ms Tattersall would discuss this further with trustees and would attend the next SOSYP meeting. The meeting had also been attended by Mark Stapleton, Youth Worker for the County Council, who reported on work currently being carried out at the Jubilee Field. It had been noted that various youth activities were currently being delivered by various providers, and agreed that this group needed to ensure that these are co-ordinated and that the various providers are aware of the wider situation. The next meeting would receive a presentation from young people on what they would like to see from a youth service in the future, following which it should be possible to progress the strategic plan and hopefully appoint necessary staff and/or consultants.

11.113. To consider provision of youth activities in Cam on a temporary basis until a strategic approach to youth provision has been produced.

It was noted that the SOSYP was working towards providing an overarching youth service for the areas covered at least by its currently participating councils, with the intention that this will include the employment of professional youth workers to ensure that the needs of local young people are addressed, not just the provision of specific activities. However, this would take some time to achieve, and, in the interim, it was considered to be important to try to provide at least some activities for young people, which will keep them engaged and diminish the potential for bored youngsters to resort to anti-social behaviour. As stated above, various activities were being delivered, which it was hoped would be better co-ordinated by SOSYP in due course. As some of these were only just starting, it was agreed to wait a few weeks to assess any need for further activities. A budget of £2000 was allocated from the Social Development Fund and authorisation given to either/or R&L Committee or the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair and Cllr Powell to put suitable arrangements in place if a need is identified.

11.114. To further consider the future management of facilities at the Jubilee Playing Field

The current position regarding separation of utilities etc for the two units was noted. Recreation & Leisure Committee was authorised to continue discussions with both football clubs with a view to a management agreement providing for use of one unit by each club. Committee was also authorised to progress a funding bid to Sport England for replacement facilities, if the support of the clubs can be achieved.

11.115. To confirm application for Village Green status for land at Woodview Road

Following the appeal in the last Newsletter, a total of 20 completed evidence questionnaires had now been returned. It was now RESOLVED that an application for Village Green registration be prepared and submitted to the County Council. The application has to include a statutory declaration, which must be signed before a Justice of the Peace, Solicitor or Notary Public – Cllr Daniel volunteered to do this in her position as Justice of the Peace. The process for deciding the application was noted, including the possibility of objections from the landowner or others.

11.116. To receive and adopt report of external auditor for 2010/11 accounts

The report had been received, with no queries raised. It was RESOLVED that this be accepted and adopted by Council.

11.117. To confirm adoption of revised Financial Regulations

It was RESOLVED that the revised document be adopted. The document would be filed with the revision date for reference.

11.118. To consider re-investment of maturing funds

It was noted that the Guaranteed Investment of £39,629.04 was due to mature on 26th September and RESOLVED that this should now be transferred to the Council's bank account to make it available for build project costs. The remaining two investments accounts (total approx. £330,000) were due to mature on 4th and 14th October. A revised programme was expected from the contractor shortly, which would be used to calculate cashflow. Once this is done, authority was delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council and Chair and Vice Chair of D&P Committee to make the necessary withdrawals and reinvestments to ensure that funds are available as needed but that interest-earning potential is maintained as long as possible.

11.119. To confirm arrangements for the hosting of the South West Allotment Officers Forum and allocate budget

It had been agreed that this Council, jointly with Dursley Town Council, will host the South West Allotment Officers Forum on Wednesday 30th November at the Memorial Hall. Details of presentations were noted. It was agreed that a buffet lunch would be provided, with Berry Blue to be invited to cater. At the Chair's request, the Chair's allowance of £150 would be used to fund this, with an additional £50 to be taken from Contingencies if necessary.

11.120. To consider resolutions for the AGM of the Gloucestershire Association of Parish & Town Councils on 13th October 2011

No topics were identified.

11.121. To note progress of Transitions Dursley & Cam initiative and consider Council involvement

Information about the Transitions movement had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Andrewartha reported that he had attended a meeting of the local group, where people had been very enthusiastic about the cause. However, he felt that the group lacked focus in identifying issues that they could realistically address or local action that would have a positive impact. The group was being encouraged to become more structured and focussed, in which case it was agreed that this Council would consider an application for grant funding for activities such as energy information days. Another possible area for Council involvement was a project to link experienced allotment holders with new 'recruits' to productive gardening. It was agreed that a Parish Council representative at future meetings of the group could be useful – Cllr Jones was interested in attending subject to dates/times of meetings. An article in the Parish Council Newsletter would also be considered.

11.122. To consider response to consultation on Localising Support for Council Tax in England

Information on this had been circulated previously. Various concerns were raised, including the impression that central government was effectively transferring administration costs to local authorities, and potential difficulties in ensuring that locally administered schemes would offer a fair and equitable service across the country. The concerns would be referred and Councillors were also encouraged to respond as individuals if they have further concerns.

11.123. To consider response to Open Public Services White Paper Consultation

Information on this had been circulated previously, with briefing notes on some possible responses. It was agreed that this will be an important development for parish councils, which could be given significantly more power – however, if this is really to benefit local communities, it must be done with adequate funding and support. It was felt that, whilst there could be real benefits to communities through the local delivery of services, this should not be seen as a cost-saving measure – services should be better and more accessible, but this is not always achievable at less cost. These views would be submitted to the Government.

11.124. To consider renewal of membership of Local Council Advisory Service

It was RESOLVED membership should be renewed to this support service which provides information and assistance on health and safety issues, including regular bulletins, a helpline and a reserved place at the annual regional seminar. The cost would be £95.

11.125. To consider attendance at the County Council Highways Information Evening on Monday 10th October at 6pm at Shire Hall

Information had been circulated about this annual event to keep local councils informed about highways issues. The event would be attended by Cllrs Whatling and Tipper.

11.126. To note training opportunities available and confirm attendance

A list would be circulated when available.

11.127. To note and comment on Crime & Disorder issues and discuss possible actions

The report of the last SSCP meeting had been circulated.

From a Council perspective, there had been some continuing minor vandalism and anti-social behaviour at both the Jubilee Field and Woodfield Park, which seemed to be increasing slightly, although the summer period had been generally fairly quiet. There had, however, been an increase in anti-social behaviour in areas around the Jubilee Field, usually late at night.

There had been a rise in home burglaries of late, and the Police had included public awareness of home security etc as one of their priorities. They had asked for details of local groups where a talk might be useful – Golden Age, Woodfield Residents, the Carers Group and Ashmead WI were suggested.

11.128. To discuss County Council issues affecting the Parish and receive Report from County Councillors (if any)

a) To receive reports from County Councillors – Reports were received as follows:

Cllr Tipper - Reported that things had been relatively quiet; referred to the Bus Review, which it was felt to be having some success with rationalising county bus services.

Cllr Andrewartha – Referred to the following:

Glos. Waste Partnership – The important aim was to reduce landfill, not just increase recycling. Stroud District is not currently represented in the Partnership as its existing waste contract does not expire until 2016. The intention was to deliver a rationalised service for waste collection and disposal across the County.

New Fire Stations – Several were being provided, one of which would include a Life Skills centre equipped to teach life skills to young people and others.

Highway Works – Concerns were voiced regarding the forthcoming road closure for surfacing works at Taits Hill, and the impact of this on Woodend Lane, which would be likely to be used as an alternative route. County Councillors were asked to raise concerns at that level.

11.129. To Discuss District Council Matters Affecting the Parish and Receive Reports from District Councillors (if any)

a) To receive reports from District Councillors – Reports were received as follows:

Cllr Denney – Reported on the following:

Council Housing - forthcoming changes to the way council housing will be funded prompted concerns that this will mean initially that the District Council has to borrow very significantly to 'buy out' the current scheme. As this would apply across the country, he was concerned about the impact of such a high level of borrowing in an unstable economy.

Energy Strategy – This had been reviewed and was considered to in general be a good document. Reports would in future reference results against tangible records and evidence. There had been a debate about fuel

poverty and how this should be addressed.

Housing Review – Next meeting on 27th September

Ward Work – Had been working with tenants on issues including problems with heating and removal of a shed. The Labour group was working with CARE on a petition against 2000 new houses in Cam, which would be submitted to Full Council at its next meeting.

Cllr Tipper – Noted that District Council had no choice with regard to the housing transfer, and that the cost of borrowing would be offset by the removal of the negative subsidy that it had been paying to central government.

Cllr Andrewartha – Reported on the following:

Council Housing – Noted that it might be possible for the District Council to borrow sufficient funds to reinvest in the housing stock, providing the potential for building new homes.

Petition against 2000 homes in Cam – Explained that the Planning Strategy Advisory Panel, which consists 1 member from each political party + the Cabinet Member as Chair, meets regularly to consider the strategy, including where new housing should be allocated. He stressed the importance of regular attendance by each Member, to ensure that they, and their political party, have an input into the process. Plans had been drawn up showing the possible location of housing, which would be brought to the parishes affected (including Cam) as part of the consultation process. It was also hoped that this Council would assist in the circulation of a leaflet to all homes in the parish explaining the proposals and encouraging public participation in the consultation exercise. It was expected that a decision would be made towards the end of the year or possibly early 2012, and it was considered vital that solid information is available to the public as soon as possible. The land identified in Cam was, as expected, fields from Box Road, parallel with the High Street to around Tesco. Attempts had been made to include land at Aston Down in the housing allocation, as this could take a considerable number of houses without threatening the environment in existing settlements. However, the landowners had indicated that they are not interested in residential use, but would support employment – thus the site could be used to provide employment opportunities for residential development in the Stroud valleys. There followed further discussion on the housing allocation process, including the need for employment to accompany any new homes, the level of influence that local communities might have under Localism proposals and the fact that a certain number of homes would be needed to generate infrastructure improvements. Cam's willingness to accept a limited number of new homes was viewed positively, as most parishes had opposed any development. It was noted that provision for employment to accompany new housing could only be made through developers including a land allocation for employment use – the Planning Authority has no power to actually bring forward employment on the site or to insist on a certain number of jobs being provided, as this would not be in the power of the developer to provide.

Cllr Hudson – Agreed that Cam's willingness to accept a limited number of homes was viewed positively at District; expressed a view that the change in finance of council houses would be a positive measure that would benefit tenants. The substantial saving with regard to removal of the negative subsidy would be used to meet the cost of borrowing.

- b) **To receive report of Neighbourhood Warden** – Circulated – there were concerns that very little time appeared to be being spent in Cam. One result of this was that previous regular checks on The Delkin watercourse were no longer carried out and rubbish was thus not being cleared regularly, which could result in flooding – The District Council would be asked for the inspections to be reinstated.

- c) **To consider response to Car Park Review consultation** – Information circulated. The following response would be sent:

This Council's response is based on proposals for Dursley and the impact it will have there, but the situation will probably be similar in other communities in the District. It is considered that the introduction of parking charges will have a significant negative impact on trade in the town, at a time when traders are already struggling due to current economic conditions. It is felt that the District Council has a responsibility to consider the financial well-being of the entire District, not just ways to address its own financial position. As further charges are not required to sustain the car park service, their introduction amounts to an additional tax on local people, which is not considered appropriate or acceptable.

- d) **To consider response to Polling District and Polling Place Review** – It would be suggested that, from next year, the new Community Resource Centre could be used for one or more polling stations, which could reduce costs.

11.130. To receive monthly financial reconciliation report

Circulated prior to the meeting and now approved.

11.131. To note accounts for payment, sign cheques and note additional payments made

Payments as per the attached list were noted and agreed and cheques signed.

11.132. To appoint internal controls Member for September accounts

Cllr Clifton would undertake this.

11.133. To note items for information or referral only

Concerns about passenger capacity on trains to and from Bristol, and a query as to why the number of carriages on the return journey is lower than the outbound, would be passed to the train operator.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 8.30pm.