

OVERSEAL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Council held at the Village Hall, Overseal on Thursday 1 February 2007

Present: Mrs G Edwards - Chairman
Mr I W Chester, Mrs E Evans, Mr M Hart, Mrs C M Knight, Mr G S Knight, Mr I A Neal and Mr M S Patrick.

In attendance: Mrs K Lauro (Derbyshire County Council).

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Several residents of Lullington Road and Valley Road attended the meeting and drew attention to the continual parking at the junction of the two roads, often including 4x4 vehicles parked exactly on the corner. This restricted both visibility and the width of the road at the junction and created a serious danger to drivers. It was pointed out that planning conditions required both hedges and fences at the junction to allow adequate visibility and the parking destroyed this. There had been a serious accident some time ago when two vehicles had been written off after a collision. It was agreed to contact the Police for assistance.

104 PROPOSED SURVEY – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr M King of Midlands Rural Housing attended the meeting and addressed the Council on a proposed survey of the village to determine whether there was a need for new affordable homes and, if so, the amount and type required. This was the third year of a 3-year programme of such surveys across South Derbyshire and the survey would consist of a questionnaire and a covering letter, which he hoped would be prepared by the Parish Council to demonstrate their support for the survey.

Depending on the results of the survey, it was possible that a small number of properties – perhaps 5/10 – would be provided. These would be either for rent or for shared ownership; as the funding mechanisms were different, the types needed would be determined at an early stage. The Planning Authority had power to require a proportion of properties on a development to be ‘affordable homes’ and they could also designate a site as an exception, thereby permitting development for this purpose only on land outside the village boundary. This would not act as a precedent for further extensions.

In answer to questions, Mr King indicated that the cost of either rented or shared ownership was kept low because of subsidies as the development was most likely to be carried out by a Housing Association with Housing Corporation funding. With shared ownership, the occupier could buy between 50% and 80% of the value and had to sell back to the Housing Association when they wished to move on. Although they would take advantage of any increase in property values, thereby enabling them to keep up with the market, the Association would then offer the property only to a suitable applicant, usually a local person.

Members supported the concept of the survey, especially as it was known that some young people in the village were finding it difficult to find housing which they could afford locally. It was agreed to provide a covering letter supporting the survey.

Mr King was thanked for his attendance.

105 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2007, copies of which had been previously circulated, were approved as a true record subject to correction of the first two lines of Minute No. 97 to read:

‘District Council. Mrs Hall reported that the high usage of the recycling facilities at Woodville Road was regarded as very good....’

106 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

106.1 Recycling facilities. It was reported that, while a new container for plastic waste had been supplied, the previous one had been removed and there was little or no increase in the volume available. The District Council would be asked to rectify this.

106.2 Post Office closures. The Government was consulting on the criteria for selection of Post Offices which should be closed. The suggested criteria included:

- 90% of the population to be within 1 mile of a Post Office and 99% within 3 miles;
- in rural areas, 95% to be within 3 miles and in urban areas, 95% to be within 1 mile unless the area is a ‘deprived urban area’, when the figure will be 99%.

Mr Mark Todd MP pointed out that this would mean about 2500 closures and he asked whether the Parish Council wished to express views on the criteria. He suggested that, as 1 or 3 miles could be meaningless if people could not get to the Post Office, the following additional criteria might be adopted:

- Access to public transport;
- Local geography – hills, lack of adequate footpaths;
- Facilities at the Post Office – how accessible is it?
- The wider community use of the Post Office;
- Is the business viable – how many people use it, are there other services such as a shop which can supplement the owner’s income?
- What does the Post Master want to do – do they want to retire?

In addition, the Government had decided to replace the card account to permit benefits or pensions to be collected in cash and intended to specify the contract terms so that the Post Office was well placed to win it.

Members supported the suggested additional criteria. However, there was considerable criticism of the proposed replacement of the card account system so soon after its introduction and the Post Office’s response to requests was extremely slow. For example, a request to supply a cash machine made three years ago had still not been complied with. Also, several services had been removed from Post Offices which were very popular e.g. television licences.

106.3 Toilet refurbishments, Village Hall. The quotation of J Aylett Builders had been accepted subject to some modifications to reduce the cost slightly and work would commence at the half term break on 12 February.

106.4 Valley Road flooding. The County Council had cleaned the drain and this should remedy the cause of the flooding.

107 COUNTY, DISTRICT AND POLICE MATTERS

Mrs Lauro confirmed that there had been no new information about the third bridge. Main Street was to be resurfaced and Members anticipated that there would be considerable disruption of traffic. She was to meet Mr P Lee shortly on an unrelated matter but would ask him to look again at the problems of parking etc. around the supermarket at Burton Road.

While waymarking of other rights of way in the village had been carried out recently, the two footpaths at Valley Road had not been dealt with and it was impossible to say where the junction of the paths with the road was situated. Also, the flashing lights at Woodville Road had previously been reported as not working. Mrs Lauro agreed to chase both these matters.

Reference was also made to the amount of rubbish and litter accumulating in the verges and ditches of all of the approaches to the village, and it was obvious that some of it had been there for a considerable time. The District Council was the authority with most responsibility for litter collection and the Clean Team could be asked to assist.

108 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Permission had been granted for:

1336/7/8 Conservatory and single storey extension, plots B1, B2 and B3 , land adjacent to 29 Coronation Street

1259 Conservatory, 34a Main Street

Permission had been refused for

1360 Vehicular access to serve 70/72 Burton Road – no turning space within the site

Applications for decision

1397 Erection of a steel-framed agricultural building at 127 Burton Road (permitted development subject to confirmation). No objection.

1463 Conservatory at 9 Daisy Lane. As responses were required before this meeting, the application had been supported.

0033 Conservatory at 4 Forest View. Supported.

0066 Erection of a conservatory and an extension to form a granny annexe at 193 Acresford Road

The Parish Council objected to the application. The proposal is to create an entirely separate dwelling with no internal access to the main dwelling and its own front door. Given that the applicant is understood to own the adjoining field, it would be a simple matter to create sufficient space for a vehicular access and parking for the new dwelling, thereby creating backland development where it would not normally be permitted.

However, if the applicant were to enter into a S106 Agreement to ensure that the new dwelling is used only ancillary to the use of the main dwelling, the Parish Council would withdraw its objection.

(Mr M Hart declared an interest in this application, the applicant being his neighbour)

109 CORRESPONDENCE

109.1 Reorganisation of the Probation Service. The Council considered a letter from the Chairman of the County Probation Board (copy attached to the official copy of the Minutes). The writer opposed proposed changes to the Probation system and sought retention of the present arrangements, though with increased staff. The Council supported the views expressed.

109.2 Safer Neighbourhood meeting. The next meetings were to be held on 8 February at Linton and 11 April at the Church Hall, Overseal. Because of recent vandalism to the Village Hall and surrounding buildings, it was agreed to seek support at the first meeting for provision of better lighting around the Village Hall and CCTV cameras to allow offenders to be identified. Members did not support shutters at the front of the Village Hall because of their appearance.

109.3 Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The County Council invited comments on the draft Plan for improving paths and trails in the county. In particular, they asked for the highest priorities to be identified. The aims generally were supported, though it was pointed out that several previously well used footpaths were being damaged by horses being ridden along them, which made walking very difficult.

109.4 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill. This Bill had been published on 12th December 2006 and took forward a number of proposals set out in the Local Government White Paper published in October 2006.

The key points for local councils included:

- The process for creating parishes would be devolved to principal councils (i.e. it would no longer be necessary to seek central government approval).
- The power of well being available to principal councils under the Local Government Act 2000 would be extended to those local councils who had achieved Quality Status. This was a power to promote the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area.
- The introduction of a simplified procedure for making and enforcing local authority byelaws.
- Parish councils and parish meetings would be able to change the name of their area from parish to one of a menu of styles: community, neighbourhood or village (and retain the option of 'town').

109.5 Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Section 3 of this Act came into force on 5th December 2006. It introduced Section 49A into the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 which imposed a general duty on all public authorities (which included parish councils) in carrying out their functions to have due regard to:

- The need to eliminate discrimination that was unlawful
- The need to eliminate harassment of disabled persons that was related to their disability
- The need to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people
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- The need to take steps to take account of a disabled person's disability even where that involved treating disabled persons more favourably other than persons
- The need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- The need to encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

Parish Councils were not however required to issue a Disability Equality Scheme.

109.6 Data Protection. The Data Protection Registrar had confirmed renewal of the Council's entry.

109.7 Leicestershire Statement of Community Involvement. The Statement had now been formally approved.

109.8 Youth Shelter. A letter from a local resident supporting retention of the Youth Shelter was read to the meeting.

109.9 Gala Committee. The Gala Committee had submitted the Annual Report and Accounts for 2006. Mr Patrick reported that the Committee was considering donating certain equipment for use in the Village Hall and the Council indicated that this would be very welcome.

109.10 Bowls Club. The Clerk reported that the Chairman and he had attended a meeting with representatives of the Bowls Club that day at the Club's request. The Club had recognised that certain projects were necessary which they could not fund from subscriptions etc and which the Parish Council could not fund. They were intending to seek grant aid for a watering system for the green, which had suffered severely during the 2006 drought, and for extension of the pavilion to provide changing rooms, toilets and storage for the watering system reservoir. They sought support from the Parish Council in the form of assisting with applications and/or letters of support.

Members considered that both projects were worthy of support, with priority given to the watering system to ensure the continued viability of the bowling green. It was agreed that the Council would support the projects by submitting or endorsing applications for grant, planning permission etc and generally offering support for the Club's proposals.

110 ACCOUNTS

110.1 Accounts for payment

Payment of the following accounts was authorised:

No	Supplier	Description	Net	VAT	Total
1165	South Derbyshire District Council	Litter picker & protective clothing	20.25	3.54	23.79
1166	L Baxter	Caretaker + painting	495.31		495.31
1167	J M Summerfield	Litter	64.20		64.20
1168	T Stewart	Litter	128.40		128.40
*1169	Powergen	Gas to Village Hall and changing rooms	710.04	124.26	834.30
1170	A&J Bartlett Ltd	Repairs to fire alarm system	119.40	20.90	140.30
1171	Powergen	Electricity to old changing rooms	48.80	2.44	51.24

1172	Powergen	Electricity to Village Hall	343.91	60.19	404.10
1173	Paul Topliss Ltd	Repairs to heating system and disabled wc at the Village Hall	50.00		50.00
1174	Fire Control UK Ltd	Service/replace fire extinguishers	124.00	21.70	145.70
D/D	Eclipse Networking Ltd	Internet service	24.99	4.37	29.96

* This account had been paid between meetings as the due date was before the meeting.

110.2 Receipts

The following amounts had been received since the last meeting:

L Baxter	Village Hall Lettings	513.00
Overseal Pre-school Playgroup	Use of Village Hall	1164.00
HM Revenue & Customs	VAT refund	462.93
St Matthew's FC	Use of pitch & changing rooms	100.00

110.3 Old changing rooms. The Clerk drew attention to the fact that virtually all of the cost of the electricity to the old changing rooms was the standing charge and asked whether it should be disconnected. The Council agreed to the supply being disconnected.

110.4 Audit. The Council's financial records were inspected.

111 ITEMS FOR FREE FOR ALL

Adoption of Edward Street

Request that people parking vehicles do so in a sensible and safe manner

112 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

112.1 Play equipment. Work had started on provision of the new equipment and was expected to be complete in about three weeks.

112.2 Litter. The Clerk was asked to arrange for litter to be cleared from the alley between Lullington Road (near the Post Office) and Bramble Walk.

Concerning the litter and rubbish on the approach roads to the village, it was agreed to ask the Clean Team to start at Lullington Road from the village boundary towards Netherseal.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm

Chairman