

# MINUTES OF THE ERLESTOKE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2008      DRAFT

**Open Forum:** The issues around parking on the Secret Garden were brought to the council's attention by Erlestoke Cricket Club and members of the village. The Post Office Closure was also raised by a member of the village.

**Present:** Councillors, Mr S Jonik (Chairman), Mr M Gilbert, Mr R.L. Smith, Mr A Pinnington and Mrs D Oram, Mr L Grundy OBE (KDC) and Mrs P Rugg (WCC).

**01/08 Apologies.** Apologies were received from Cllr Chapman.

**02/08 Resignation of Cllr Whatley.**

The Chairman advised the council of the resignation of Cllr Mrs. C Whatley from the council. He will move forward with advertising the vacancy.

**03/08 Declaration of Interest.** No declarations of interest were made.

**04/08 Clerks Job**

Cllr Jonik asked for the council's support in asking Mrs Anita Whittle (existing clerk to Bratton Parish Council) to help with the vacant clerk post especially for the meeting this evening for minute taking and advice as required. The council supported Cllr Jonik's request but asked for the vacant clerk's position to be placed on the next agenda to decide a way forward for with filling the vacancy. Mrs Whittle then joined the councillors at the meeting table and introduced herself briefly as a Parish Council clerk with 7 years experience and a total of 20 years local government experience.

**05/08 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2007.**

After the changes listed below the minutes were unanimously accepted.

**120/07** – Deferred to next meeting - added.

**121/07** – Para 3 - WW amended to Community First.

**124/07** – Cllr Gilbert also asked for the letter to be discussed – added.

**125/07** – The first Para altered to read as follows:

Cllr Smith advised that the chairman of the council had given permission for the cricket club to park on the Secret Garden but it should have been made by all the council not solely by the chair. The Chairman stated that the Cricket Club had been welcome to park there by the Council since he had been elected in 2002 and this has never been an issue in recent years. In fact the Cricket Club had used the Secret Garden for overspill parking for 15 years, this year was no different. The Chairman in good faith had no reason or mandate to stop the Cricket Club using the Secret Garden, but did put the item on this agenda for discussion.

**128/07** – although the Parish Council were concerned - added.

**132/07** – The first line amended to read:

Cllr Smith apologised for any upset caused by his letter to the Cricket Club.

**06/08 New Councillor Mrs Doreen Oram**

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Oram back to the council.

**07/08 Vice Chairman Election**

It was resolved to forward this to the next meeting as there was not a full council present.

**08/08 Precept 08/09 – to be decided by 11 Jan 2008**

The Chairman had circulated a draft copy of the budget for 2008/09.

Cllr Pinnington addressed the council regarding the cost of grass maintenance to the village. He had been in contact with Mr Moon and Mr Davis from Erlestoke Prison who had offered to cut the areas on the village in question at the Prisons cost. At this point it was resolved by the council to defer setting the budget until the next meeting but to set the precept at this meeting.

The temporary clerk addressed the council explaining that she had worked on some figures for the precept and put to the council the following conclusion. In financial year 07/08 the number of Band D % of houses in Erlestoke had been 81.8, and a precept of £3525 had been set giving an average cost per household of £43.09. The forthcoming financial year of 08/09 has a Band D % of houses in Erlestoke at 89.8 due to the new houses built by the Village Hall. By keeping the average cost per household at £43.09, so not raising it, the council can actually raise £3870 in revenue from the precept. A proportion of these extra monies will be required to appoint a permanent experienced clerk to the Parish Council. After discussion a precept of £3870 was proposed by Cllr Jonik, seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by a vote of 4 in favour and 1 against.

The Chairman will notify Kennet District Council of the amount before the 11<sup>th</sup> of January.

**09/08 Post Office and Shop Closure**

Cllr Jonik explained that he had received correspondence from Michael Ancram MP regarding the closure of the Post Office. Cllr Jonik read out various minutes from April 06, June 06 and November 06 regarding the closure of the village shop and Post Office. Cllr Oram said that the village would welcome a satellite Post Office if nothing else could be arranged which perhaps could visit the

village twice a week at a fixed time. Cllr Jonik explained that he had spoken to the new landlords at the village pub who had expressed an interest in finding out about having the Post Office relocated to the pub. Cllr Rugg (WCC) commented that it will be very inconvenient for the village if the Post Office is lost permanently, especially as the bus service is very poor to nearby towns and villages. It was proposed by Cllr Oram and seconded by Cllr Pinnington that the Chairman write to Michael Ancram MP and Wiltshire County Council expressing the villages view on the closure and also to pursue the possibility of the relocation to the Post Office. This was resolved unanimously.

#### **10/08 Section 106 Funds Sub Committee Update**

It was resolved to defer this until the next meeting.

#### **11/08 Sustain the Plain Funding**

The Chairman explained that he intended to apply to Sustain the Plain to help with the costs of cleaning up the village lake.

#### **12/08 Training for Councillors and Clerk**

The Chairman asked if any councillors would be interested in attending the training session for new Councillors on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March being organised by WALC. It was resolved that due to the cost involved the council would not send any members but Cllr Pinnington would ask Katie Fielding to arrange a training session in the village hall for approximately an hour either the last Thursday in January or First in February.

#### **13/08 Copy of all Correspondence must be sent to Clerk**

Cllr Jonik advised the council that all correspondence which is to be included on the agenda for the Parish Council meetings must be sent direct to the clerk or at present to himself as Chairman. Items of correspondence had been added to the circulation file without the clerk/chairman's knowledge recently.

#### **14/08 Code of Conduct and Standing Orders** It was resolved to defer this to the next meeting.

#### **15/08 Cheverell Parish meeting in February**

The Chairman had received a letter of invitation from Great Cheverell Parish Council for any members of Erlestoke Parish Council to attend their Parish meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February. It was resolved that Cllrs Jonik and Pinnington would attend.

#### **16/08 Matters Arising:**

- a) **Skips** - Cllr Pinnington will arrange with KDC for the skip to visit the village as soon as possible and will advertise the date.
- b) **Pavements needing repair** - Cllr Smith reported that he had met Rod Gibbs from WCC on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October when they had walked the footpaths. Having contacted Mr. Gibbs just before New Year he confirmed that in 2008 highways would be doing a surface treatment to the road with a material called Crum rubber and bitumen. They will also be replacing the drain covers on a two by two basis, these he has photographed for the record.
- c) **Police representative and response to local crime** - PC Landin had responded to an invite from Cllr Smith to attend a meeting of the council, but Cllr Pinnington advised the council that the officer had sent apologies for not being able to attend tonight's meeting.
- d) **Action 74/07 Land Registration** - It was agreed to defer this to the next meeting.
- e) **CPRE membership fee** - It was proposed by Cllr Gilbert, seconded by Cllr Pinnington and resolved by a unanimous vote that the council renew its membership to CPRE at a cost of £27.00.
- f) **Mazars Audit fee** - It was proposed by Cllr Gilbert, seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by a unanimous vote to pay the invoice for Mazars Auditors for £58.75
- g) **Finance Report - Current/Reserve Balances** - Cllr Jonik advised the council that it had a balance of £4864.25 in the bank. The council resolved to pay the Temporary clerk Mrs. A Whittle £40 towards her costs for this meeting and subsequent typing of the minutes.

#### **17/08 Planning - Tree pruning Pollards** - No further information to report.

#### **18/08 Correspondence received**

Cllr Oram asked the temporary clerk to obtain a copy of the WCC Recreation Development Plan available from Mark Russell and the WCC Corporate Plan available from Carol Small.

#### **19/08 Village Rep. Reports**

**Cllr Pinnington** advised the council that he had recently sent a letter to Great Cheverell Parish Council regarding the traffic going to and from Erlestoke Prison from the B3098 as requested. He also commented that he was disappointed to find that yet another structure at the prison had been built which is on the sky line. He had however had a conversation with Mr. Moon and Mr. Davis regarding 760 fast growing trees due to be planted around the prison boundary.

**Cllr Grundy (KDC)** wished everyone a Happy New Year.

#### **20/08 Date of Next Meeting**

The Chairman thanked Cllrs Rugg and Grundy for attending the meeting and the next meeting was confirmed as **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008 at 7.15pm at the village hall.**

**The meeting closed at 10.30pm**