

# GRINGLEY ON THE HILL PARISH COUNCIL

## **Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2006**

**Present:** Councillor J. E. Hargreaves, Chairman. Councillors Chambers, Dunkley, Foreman, Foster, Hargrave, Hilton and Taylor. District Councillor A. Simpson arrived at agenda item 25 (Crime Statistics) after submitting an apology for absence during the previous part of the meeting.

### **06/07/124    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Hargreaves declared a personal interest at agenda items 8 (Budget Monitoring – Chairman’s Allowance), 11 (NEBF Reports), being a member of NEBF and 12 (NALC Northern Area Committee Reports), being the Parish Council’s representative on the Committee. Councillors Foreman and Hargrave also declared personal interests at agenda item 11, being members of NEBF.

### **06/07/125    MINUTES**

Resolved:    That the Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the Council, held on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2006, be approved as a correct record.

### **06/07/126    MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

### **06/07/127    GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME**

The public had been invited to attend the meeting in order to discuss this issue, which had arisen out of the Parish Plan questionnaire exercise. Mr. Jonathan Dawson, Rural Officer at Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council, was also present to advise on procedures, and Councillor Hargreaves outlined the background and history to date.

After a constructive discussion a number of those present offered to form the nucleus of a core group to take the concept forward. Councillor Hargreaves would write an article for Beacon magazine, inviting expressions of further interest, and he would put a copy in the Post Office, by kind permission of Councillor Hilton.

**06/07/128 PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Mr. P. Kemm referred to planning application 23/06/19 (Mr. & Mrs. J. Turner - Alterations and extensions to existing property at Topsy Turvey, Little Lane, Gringley on the Hill). He queried why the Parish Council gave the application a "ringing endorsement" and said that it was unusual for the Parish Council to do this.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's observation to Bassetlaw District Council on this planning application said: "The Parish Council does not wish to make any adverse comment about this application. It is considered that the proposed development will enhance the surrounding area".

Members and the Clerk explained to Mr. Kemm the Parish Council's position regarding consideration of planning applications.

During the following discussion about the impact of the proposed development on the area, Mr. J. N. Biggam made a defamatory remark about Mr. G. Shepherd, former Chairman of the Parish Council. Cllr. Hargreaves warned Mr. Biggam as to his conduct, but Mr. Biggam indicated that he was unconcerned about any possible consequences of his remark.

**06/07/129 ACCOUNTS**

Resolved: That the September Accounts be approved for payment.

**06/07/130 BANK RECONCILIATION**

Members received the bank reconciliation statement to 29th August, 2006.

**06/07/131 BUDGET MONITORING**

(a) The Clerk submitted the September budget monitoring statement.

(b) That part of the agenda item relating to the Chairman's Allowance was overlooked.

**06/07/132 RISK REVIEW AND ASSET INSPECTION**

There were no matters to report other than a report on the Cemetery risk assessment, which was taken later in the agenda.

**06/07/133 CASUAL VACANCY**

The Chairman reported receipt at the start of the meeting of a letter from Mrs. T. Taylor, The Old Vicarage, High Street, Gringley on the Hill, which he had not yet had the opportunity to read. He added that Mrs. Taylor had told him some weeks ago that she was interested in serving as a co-opted member, but following several subsequent approaches by him to her, asking that she put her offer in writing to the Clerk, she had not done so.

The Chairman now asked Mrs. Taylor if she was interested in serving, and she said that he should read her letter. Note: The Chairman did not get the opportunity to read the letter at the meeting – see next paragraph.

At that point, Councillor Foster intervened and objected to the co-option of Mr. A. Turner without the opportunity being opened up to others. She had made enquiries and studied relevant material, and considered that, in the interests of democracy, the Parish Council should give everyone interested the opportunity to submit an expression of interest in serving as a co-opted member. She challenged the advice of the Clerk that it was customary in such cases to co-opt the unsuccessful candidate at the previous election who had polled most votes amongst unsuccessful candidates. She also said that the Clerk had written an Email to Mr. P. Kemm, which had discouraged him from submitting an expression of interest in serving as a co-opted member. The Clerk responded that he had no idea that Mr. Kemm was interested in serving as a co-opted member when he replied to an Email from him enquiring as to the procedure for filling casual vacancies. He had informed Mr. Kemm in good faith that he expected the Parish Council to follow the convention of co-opting the “next fastest loser” (traditional language) at the most recent election. Councillor Chambers then asked Mr. Kemm if the Clerk’s Email had put him off submitting an expression of interest, and he said that it had. Mr. Kemm also told the meeting that he was interested in being co-opted.

The Chairman reported that, at the current time, unless Mrs. Taylor’s letter indicated otherwise, there were no firm expressions of interest in serving as a co-opted member in respect of the current casual vacancy other than from Mr. Turner and Mr. Kemm. A letter from Mr. M. Daniels was read out in which, although he expressed an interest in serving as a parish councillor in the future, he said he was happy to defer to Mr. Turner on this occasion.

The Chairman, Councillors Dunkley and Foreman and the Clerk tried to explain the justification for co-opting Mr. Turner, who had submitted himself for election at the May, 2006 election, and polled 104 votes. He had stood for election, whereas others hadn’t. The method was long established, fair and certain, and was used for obvious reasons. It had previously been used at Gringley on the Hill. The Clerk also quoted from the letter on the subject from Bassetlaw District Council, which stated, inter alia, “There is nothing preventing Councillors from

approaching persons to offer themselves for co-option...” However, Councillor Foster argued that individual circumstances could have changed since May, and individuals who did not submit themselves for election in May were possibly interested in serving now. Councillor Chambers suggested that Mr. Turner’s failure to be elected in May might be taken as an indication that his candidature was unacceptable to the electorate.

Councillor Hilton said that she didn’t know either Mr. Turner or Mr. Daniels, and felt that, before any co-option took place, the Parish Council should briefly interview any persons expressing an interest. She proposed that a method be found to enable all interested parties to express an interest.

After a lengthy debate, the following resolution was passed, against the advice of the Clerk to co-opt the “next fastest loser”.

Resolved:

- (a) That the Clerk produce a leaflet for distribution by Members to every household in the Parish, inviting expressions of interest in serving as a co-opted member, and a copy be published on the village website.
- (b) That those individuals expressing an interest be interviewed by the Parish Council at its October meeting.

**06/07/134 NALC NORTHERN AREA COMMITTEE**

The Chairman submitted a brief report on a recent meeting of the Committee. The main business of the evening was firstly a Rights of Way presentation, and secondly a discussion on policing. Full minutes would follow in due course.

**06/07/135 NORTH EAST BASSETLAW FORUM**

The Chairman submitted a brief report on the meeting held the previous evening. The main business of the evening was firstly a decision to invite Mattersey Parish Council to join the Forum, and secondly discussion of the Transport Review where the Forum was to commit funding. Full minutes would follow in due course.

**06/07/136 PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP**

Councillor Hilton reported on action being taken regarding a waymarker sign at High Street.

## **06/07/137 PARISH COUNCIL CERTIFICATES**

Resolved: That, subject to the approval of the Village Hall Management Committee, the Quality Accreditation and 2005 Best Kept Village Competition certificates be displayed in the Village Hall.

## **06/07/138 DETENTION CENTRE SITE**

- (a) A report was submitted on the meeting with Home Office representatives on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2006. The Home Office was represented by Jay Everett (CBRE), James Podesto (Planner) and Nick Brown (Architect); the Parish Council by Councillors Dunkley and Hargreaves, advised by Mr. Chris Downton.

Mr. Everett made it clear that time was of the essence, and the intention was to produce a robust outline planning application in the very near future, which would deliver value for money for the Home Office. The proposal would include only the current site, with no green field development.

Mr. Brown produced various concept plans, which essentially provided for 45 mixed size dwellings (including defined affordable), with a 4000 square foot community centre at the favoured corner of Westwells Lane. The intention regarding housing was to achieve a social mix to integrate into the community. Viewed on a map, with the new housing shown, the concept looked excellent, with the community centre being integral to the village and not stuck out on a limb.

Construction of the community centre would be a planning requirement imposed on any purchaser of the site, with construction to be carried out after completion of a defined number of dwellings.

Councillor Hargreaves gave Mr. Everett his own drawing design for the new community centre, which was based on visits to other community centres and the steer provided by the questionnaire exercise raw data. He also gave Mr. Everett a copy of the questionnaire and the raw data. Mr. Everett said these documents were most useful. He could work up costs to be given to the Parish Council within a week.

Mr. Downton made it clear that the village's position had not changed from February, 2006 (Minute No. 05/06/297). Mr. Everett observed that it probably would be financially possible to accommodate an acceptable element of affordable housing within the housing proposals being put forward and a community building, although the sums remained to be done. He would communicate this and the Parish Council's views to the meeting with Planning Officers to be held later that morning.

Both sides expressed the view that the meeting had been most constructive.

Immediately after the meeting, the Home Office delegation went on to meet Planning Officers and District Councillor A. Simpson. On 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2006 an Email was received from Mr. R. Fidler which said: "*The 1998 application has been withdrawn and a new application is being prepared. At the meeting we emphasised the Council's policies in relation to affordable housing and open space and that as officers we could not set these aside for a community hall*".

An Email was subsequently received from Mr. Jay Everett, confirming that, in the circumstances, the Home Office was now preparing a planning application for residential development only.

Requests for a meeting with Bassetlaw Planning Department had fallen on deaf ears, so, with the approval of the Chairman, the Clerk had earlier in the day written to the Leader of the District Council, outlining the Parish Council's concerns and requesting a meeting.

Councillors Chambers and Foster asked whether a business plan had been prepared in respect of the management of the community building and whether running costs could be met. The Chairman explained that a village hall management committee would manage the building. Clearly a business plan had not been prepared at this stage, but he was satisfied that running costs would be met.

Councillor Chambers expressed the opinion that she would not wish to see affordable housing lost at the expense of a community building. Councillor Hilton agreed.

In view of the reservations expressed by Councillors Chambers, Foster and Hilton, the Clerk advised that a formal vote should be taken on the issue of continued support for the principle of a community building

Resolved:

- (i) Unanimously, that the Parish Council should continue to support the principle of building a community centre on the former detention centre site.
- (ii) That, if no satisfactory response was received from Bassetlaw District Council by the weekend, a press release be issued.

- (b) Pursuant to Minute No. 06/07/60(c) of June, 2006, a letter was submitted from Bassetlaw District Council regarding the condition of buildings on site, stating that there was no danger to the health of the public. There may be some risk to trespassers, and a letter had been sent to the Home Office, advising it of the need to have the buildings secured.
- (c) An Email was submitted from a landowner, Mrs. P. Thomson, expressing concern about the trees at the northern edge of the site. The Clerk confirmed that this matter had been referred to the Home Office, who were now in dialogue with Mrs. Thompson.

**06/07/139 GRINGLEY WHARF**

Pursuant to Minute No. 06/07/98 of July, 2006, the Clerk reported that Mr. Nic Wort, of the County Council Environment Department, had recently indicated that he was awaiting the Parish Council's thoughts on the draft concept plan. Councillor Foreman confirmed that, before this could be done, he needed to further pursue the case for moorings, as indicated at the July meeting.

**06/07/140 THE BUTTERCROSS**

Members confirmed their satisfaction with the stones provided by Councillor Foreman.

**06/07/141 THE VILLAGE BEACON**

Letter was submitted from Mr. J. Arguile, stating that there would be an annual fee of £500 for locating the beacon on top of Beacon Hill, plus a charge to the Parish Council in respect of legal costs associated with drawing up an agreement. The agreement would be for an initial five-year period. The proposal was subject to the agreement of English Heritage.

Resolved: That no further action be taken on this matter, and the Clerk proceed to obtain details of the cost of providing a new beacon at the playing field, for consideration at the January, 2007 meeting, as previously agreed, with the present beacon remaining in its present location.

**06/07/142 CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS**

Councillor Foreman, having had discussions on the matter, proposed that a Christmas tree at The Fairpiece be illuminated by providing an electricity supply from a nearby property, in order to overcome the new

licence application process required by Nottinghamshire County Council. A trench would be dug by volunteers, to house plastic ducting containing low voltage cables, linked to the existing well on The Fairpiece. The Parish Council's transformer would continue to be used.

Councillor Dunkley would acquire a tree as he did in 2005, although he intended to plant a live tree during the coming autumn.

Resolved: That the above proposal be accepted, and Councillors involved be thanked for their excellent work on this difficult matter.

**06/07/143 PARISH COUNCILS LIAISON GROUP**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2006 were submitted. The next meeting was at Retford Town Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2006.

Resolved: That Councillor Hargreaves represent the Parish Council.

**05/06/144 BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES**

Letter was submitted from Nottinghamshire County Council, inviting the Parish Council to consider submission of new schemes.

Resolved: That no action be taken.

**05/06/145 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

Correspondence, etc. was submitted as follows:

- (a) An invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting at Southwell on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 was noted.
- (b) A letter regarding long service nominations was noted.
- (c) An important report by the Chief Executive on Development of the Sector would be circulated.

**06/07/146 BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL CIVIC SERVICE – SUNDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2006 AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, GAMSTON**

Resolved: That Councillor Hargreaves, together with Mrs. Hargreaves, be authorised to represent the Parish Council at the above.

**06/07/147 BT TELEPHONE SERVICE PROBLEMS**

A discussion took place about BT telephone problems in the village, which had affected many people. Councillor Dunkley observed that he had been without a telephone service for some four weeks.

Compensation offered was derisory. It had also been extremely difficult to enter into a meaningful dialogue with BT over the issue.

Members were also told that the BT telephone kiosk on High Street had been out of action for seven months.

Resolved: That the Clerk lodge a formal complaint about these matters to BT.

**06/07/148 CRIME STATISTICS**

The July and August crime statistics were submitted.

**06/07/149 CEMETERY**

- (a) With 2007 maintenance in mind, the Clerk referred to a small number of complaints received earlier in the summer about grass cuttings adhering to gravestones and surrounds.

Resolved: That the Clerk enquire as to the contractual cost of removing such cuttings as necessary.

- (b) The Chairman reported that a number of Members had recently carried out a risk assessment of the Cemetery, when a small number of memorials had been found to be loose. Notices had been displayed on the notice boards asking relatives to come forward. Notices were similarly to be published in Beacon magazine and on the website.

**06/07/150 PLAYING FIELD**

- (a) Letter was submitted from Mr. C. R. Dunkerley, offering £50 to purchase the old, redundant gang mowers.

Resolved: That the offer be accepted.

- (b) A discussion took place on the recent site meeting at the playing field, when Members had expressed grave concern about vandalism at the western end, together with a large amount of litter including cans, bottles and broken glass actually on the football field. It had been reluctantly agreed that the viewing stand and associated storage buildings should be removed, as the viewing stand was an attraction to young people who used it for drinking, etc.

The Clerk confirmed that, as requested at the site meeting, he had obtained tenders for the necessary demolition work, including the former Gringley Celtic pavilion.

At the site meeting, consideration was given to the possibility of relocating two seats from the western boundary to the southern boundary. Mr. C. E. Milward had, however, requested that this not be done, because of the nuisance it would create near to his property. He and Mrs. Milward had since written, confirming the request.

Resolved:

- (i) That the tenders be considered in the absence of the press and public, being of a contractual nature.
  - (ii) That seating be not relocated to the southern boundary.
- (c) The Clerk confirmed that Retford Town Reserves were to use the football pitch in the 2006/07 season, and had offered to pay £25 per match. Members of the team were most impressed with the pitch, changing rooms and village in general, and were very happy to partake of the hospitality at the Blue Bell after games.

Resolved: That the offer be accepted.

## **06/07/151 HIGHWAYS**

- (a) A discussion took place about car parking arrangements for residents of Hunters Drive. District Councillor Simpson reported that a site meeting had been held earlier in the day when it had been agreed that the provision of six car parking spaces be costed. The proposal would not involve removal of any hedges or parking in gardens. Parking at Windsor Close would be permitted as an interim measure.

Members expressed acquiescence with the proposal.

- (b) Councillor Taylor gave details of ongoing discussions he was engaged in with the County Council to achieve better and more prominent signage at Beacon Hill Road, in the interests of road safety. Promises had been made, but the timescale for implementation could not be confirmed.
- (c) The Clerk confirmed that, at the request of Members, he had asked the County Council not to repaint the bus bay on High Street during road surfacing works.
- (d) The Clerk was asked to inform the County Council of the poor condition of the pavement on the south side of High Street, from North Beeches to the bus shelter.
- (e) Councillor Taylor made reference to resurfacing required in the Halls Road/Finkell Street area. The Clerk would discuss the matter with him after the meeting and take appropriate action.

**06/07/152 DONATIONS**

- (a) Letter was submitted from Beacon magazine, thanking the Parish Council for its recent donation and future financial commitment. The letter went on to report on the current good health of the magazine.
- (b) Letter was submitted from Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice, requesting financial assistance.

Resolved: That, in line with the Parish Council's policy of only funding village organisations, no action be taken.

**06/07/153 CLERK TO THE COUNCIL - RESIGNATION**

A letter of resignation was submitted from the Clerk.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his excellent service, culminating in the achievement of Quality Council accreditation.

Resolved: That, as the matter involved personnel issues, the question of a successor be discussed in the absence of the press and public.

**06/07/154 ELM RIDGE, HIGH STREET, GRINGLEY ON THE HILL**

Letter was submitted from Mr. M. Monk, asking that the question of fires at Elm Ridge be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

**06/07/155 HEDGE WORK**

Pursuant to Minute No. 06/07/96 of July, 2006, the Clerk reported on dialogue on this matter, and confirmed that the matter had been satisfactorily resolved.

**06/07/156 FORMER DISTRICT COUNCILLOR F. H. MARTIN**

District Councillor Simpson reported the excellent news that, earlier in the evening, former District Councillor F. H. Martin had been made an Alderman of Retford.

**06/07/157 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**23/06/33**

Mr. M. A. Sherwin

Demolish existing detached garage and erect two-storey extension and detached double garage at Shaw Lock, Shaw Road, Gringley on the Hill

The Clerk reported that, in view of the deadline for a response, a majority of Members had already informally considered this application and decided to make no adverse comment.

Resolved: That the abovementioned decision be affirmed.

**23/06/35**

S. Dobb, Esq.

Erect extension to first floor at The Stables, Horsewells Street, Gringley on the Hill

Resolved: That no adverse comment be made.

**23/06/37R**

Mr. B. D. Shepherd

Erect detached double garage at Mill House, Mill Hill, Gringley on the Hill – resubmission of 23/06/7

Resolved: That no adverse comment be made.

**23/06/39**

P. Pilton, Esq.

Erect single storey extension and alterations at The Coppers, High Street, Gringley on the Hill

Resolved: That no adverse comment be made.

**06/07/158 PLANNING DETERMINATIONS**

**23/98/16**

Home Office

Residential and employment development, land for a community building and associated car parking, public open space and millennium garden at Detention Centre, Westwells Lane, Gringley on the Hill

Application Withdrawn

**23/06/27**

Mr. K. Hogg

Erect lounge and porch extension and convert garage into kitchen at Woodcarr, Carr Lane, Gringley on the Hill

Permission Granted

**06/07/159 PLANNING APPEAL**

**23/05/20V**

Sedgemoor Ltd.

Change of use from office building and outbuilding to Class D1 (educational use) at Belle Vue, Carr Lane, Gringley on the Hill

Appeal Allowed

**06/07/160 ENFORCEMENT NOTICE**

Letter was submitted from Bassetlaw District Council, confirming that the breach of planning control on land adjacent to the A631 (siting of residential mobile home, shipping containers and wooden store) had been resolved.

**05/06/161 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

Resolved: That, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be excluded, and they are requested to withdraw.

**05/06/162 DEMOLITION WORK ON THE PLAYING FIELD**

Tenders were submitted as follows in respect of the demolition of all the buildings on the western boundary of the playing field:

Middlebridge Construction	£980
Hopkinson Plant Hire Ltd.	£1800
Bloom Plant Ltd.	£1950
GBM	£2390

Resolved:

- (a) That the tender of Middlebridge Construction be accepted.
- (b) That the Chairman would co-ordinate a working party on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2006, to empty the buildings concerned, and Councillor Taylor would remove heavy vegetation from the frontage of the former Gringley Celtic pavilion.

**06/07/163 CLERK TO THE COUNCIL – RESIGNATION**

Resolved: That the Clerk prepare a draft advertisement and personnel documentation, for approval at the October meeting, with a view to the vacancy being advertised in local newspapers, etc.

