

Bridgerule Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 16th September, 2009 at 8.00 p.m. in
Bridgerule Village Hall

Present:

Chairman: Cllr. K. Davey

Councillors: Cllrs. K. Chilton, J. McDougall, A. Linney and C. Seymour-Smith

In Attendance: Parish Clerk

As Cllr. James was not present, Cllr. Davey took the Chair.

198. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Cllrs. James, Abbott, Stoneman and Giles sent apologies.

199. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chairman requested that interests be declared as matters arose.

200. PUBLIC OPEN QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

201. TO RECEIVE CLLR. GREGORY COOPER'S RESIGNATION AND DISCUSS THE CO-OPTION OF A COUNCILLOR

Cllr. Davey read out a letter received from Cllr. Cooper, tendering his resignation. Cllr. Davey went on to say that Cllr. Cooper's work on the Council will be missed. The Clerk will inform Paula Hunter, Electoral Services Officer at TDC. The Clerk informed the Meeting that she had prepared co-option notices which would be placed in the notice board and the village shop, should co-option be necessary. Cllr. Seymour-Smith will place one on the website, if necessary.

202. POLICE REPORT

A Police Report was not available. Cllr. McDougall, through his role as a Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, told the Meeting that he had been informed that there had been 11 crimes in total for the whole of Torridge in the last month. One of these was the Theft of a Motor Vehicle, in Bridgerule, between 12 noon and 2.30 p.m. on 27th August.

203. COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th August 2009, had previously been circulated. Cllr. McDougall proposed that the Minutes be approved. Cllr. Chilton seconded the proposal which was carried. (Vote 4 For. 0 Against. 1 Abstention).

204. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

205. ACCOUNTS DUE FOR PAYMENT

No accounts had been presented for payment.

206. TO DISCUSS AND AGREE GRASS CUTTING FOR THE YEAR 2010/2011

The Clerk informed the Meeting that the Football Club had not sent a written request for a contribution towards the purchase of a grass cutting machine (Item 187 minutes 19.08.09) and therefore the Item on the Agenda was only to discuss grass cutting for the year (2010/2011). It was agreed that the purchase of machinery would be placed on the Agenda for the October Council Meeting.

As Cllr. Stoneman was going on holiday and could not attend the Meeting, he had left, in writing, his views on this Item with the Clerk. She read this out.

The Clerk circulated a breakdown of the total number of cuts, area and cost, of grass cutting for the year 2009/2010. She informed the meeting that Mr. Williams had confirmed that he would not be increasing his rates for the work for the year 2010/2011. After a lengthy discussion Cllr. Seymour-Smith proposed that the Council instruct the Clerk to write to Mr. Williams confirming that they would like him to carry out the grass cutting for the year 2010/2011; the charges to remain the same - £50 per cut for the Playing/Football Field; £40 per cut for the Village Hall/Recreation Area and £40 per cut for the Riverside/Open Space (Southfields). The number of cuts per area to be placed on the Agenda for the October Council Meeting and confirmed to Mr. Williams after that date. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Chilton and unanimously agreed. (Vote 5 For. 0 Against. 0 Abstentions).

Cllr. Davey proposed that should further cuts to the Football Field, over and above the number decided by the Council, be requested by the Football Club, the Club should organise and meet the costs of such cuts. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. McDougall and unanimously agreed. (Vote 5 For. 0 Against. 0 Abstentions).

207. TO DISCUSS THE CONDITION OF MR. ORCHARD'S PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE POST OFFICE AND TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM CLLR. JAMES AND THE PARISH CLERK.

The Clerk read out an e-mail received by Cllr. Seymour-Smith from a resident of Bridgerule, detailing concerns regarding the condition of the properties owned by Mr. A. Orchard, adjacent to the Post Office. The Clerk informed the Meeting that she had been in touch with TDC regarding these concerns and Mr. Chris Charles, Housing Renewal & Strategy Manager, had then inspected the site on 15th September, 2009. He had sent two short e-mails; one commenting that the properties were 'in a general state of disrepair, some areas are in a very poor condition. Some of the eaves gutters are defective, but I could not ascertain the extent as the weather was dry at the time. There is no evidence of active rodent infestation'; the other, received a day later stating 'I am proposing to bring to the attention of the owner the matter of security and the fact that render has fallen from above the door of one of the properties. Could you clarify the matter of the ceiling and stairs at PO cottage? In any case the properties are secure and should not present any risk to the general public as presumably the stairs and ceiling are inside the cottage'.

After discussion, Cllr. Davey proposed that the Clerk e-mail Mr. Charles, stating the Council are still concerned about falling rendering being dangerous to pedestrians and that Cllr. Ken James would be continuing to liaise with TDC regarding Mr. Orchard's properties. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Linney and unanimously agreed. (Vote 5 For. 0 Against. 0 Abstentions).

208. TO DISCUSS AND AGREE A COURSE OF ACTION REGARDING PROBLEMS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE ROSPA REPORT WITH REGARD TO THE OLD SWINGS IN THE PLAY AREA ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE HALL

An e-mail sent to the Clerk by ex-Cllr. Cooper had previously been circulated. The Clerk informed the Meeting that prior to the Meeting, Cllr. Stoneman had volunteered to carry out repairs to the swings. After discussion, Cllr. Davey proposed that he, Cllrs. Seymour-Smith and Abbott would dismantle the swings as soon as possible; Cllr. Seymour-Smith would make a poster explaining why and the Clerk would order the parts required to repair the equipment. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Linney and unanimously agreed. (Vote 5 For. 0 Against. 0 Abstentions).

209. PLANNING

There were no applications and the following permission:

1/0593/2009/FUL Proposed new garage
1 Littlebridge Cross
Bridgerule

210. TO DISCUSS THE ONGOING PROBLEM THE RESIDENT OF 'THE STEPS' BUNGALOW IS SUFFERING.

As neither Cllr. James or Stoneman were present the Item will be placed on the Agenda for the Council Meeting in October.

211. HIGHWAYS

The Clerk brought to the Meeting's attention concerns expressed, in writing, by Cllr. Stoneman regarding overgrown hedges from the village road to Borough Cross. The Clerk confirmed that she had reported this to DCC Highways. Cllr. Stoneman also suggested weedkiller was needed along the road/kerb from the village road 30mph signs to the Post Office, on both sides and to include a large area at the back of Southfields bungalows, just past the Telecom station on the right side of the road to the Post Office. The Clerk had included this in her request to Highways.

The Clerk informed the Meeting that the kerb at the Post Office (Item 191 Minutes 19.08.09) had been repaired and thanked Cllr. Seymour-Smith for the photos which, she felt, had clearly demonstrated to DCC how dangerous the kerb was. She has been informed that the concern about the damage to the kerb by the bridge has been passed to the Bridge Inspector.

212. TO RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence Received – 20th August – 16th September

1. DCC – Car Free Day 22nd September
2. Devon Rural network – 2009 Profile – worth reading
3. DAPC – AGM 26th September - £15 lunch/£5 without
4. DAPC Newsletter
5. DAPC – AGM subscription increase (2% suggested – to £141.48)
6. DCC – Damaged Kerbs – standard reply
7. Clerks & Councils Direct magazine
8. Cllr. Cooper – resignation
9. Cllr. Cooper – e-mail re. playground equipment (KJ and KD informed)
10. S. Dawe – DCC Highways – (e-mailed to Cllrs) 7 day order on kerb, bridge to Bridge Inspector
11. Cllr. Seymour-Smith forwarding Rose Hitchings concerns re. AO property
12. CCD (Community Council for Devon) – 2008-2009 Review
13. M. Bailey – AO's property
14. Liz Steele- AO's property
15. Chris Charles – AO's property
16. B. Williams – confirmation of price re. grass cutting 2010/2011
17. C. Preece TDC – adopting open space re. Littlebridge Meadow
18. Primary School – acknow. Of phone call – dates required from Cllrs
19. e-mail – Mike Norton – TDC council tax base
20. C. Charles re. visit to AO property
21. C. Charles up date on AO property

Correspondence Sent – 20th August – 16th September

1. S. Dawe – DCC Highways' Management Officer – kerbs with photos.
2. B. Williams – grass cutting extra cuts.
3. Peter Peter & Wright – Deeds
4. TDC – Empty Homes (see Item 192 of Minutes August)
5. B. Williams – estimate of charges 2010/2011
6. M. Bailey/L. Steele/C. Charles – AO's property various
7. C. Charles – visit to AO property
8. Change of address letters – Community First, RoSPA, Audit Commission
9. M. Norton – requesting council tax base figure

The Clerk brought the highlighted items to the attention of the Meeting.

Item 17 – Cllr. Davey told the Meeting that Cllr. James would be speaking to C. Preece about this.

Item 18 – Cllr. Chilton and, previously, Cllr. James offered to carry out the visit; Tues – Thurs. p.m. The Clerk will e-mail the school, asking for dates convenient to them on this basis.

213. PARISH PLAN

Cllr. Seymour-Smith reported that a meeting had taken place on 10th August. The questionnaires were being circulated. The next meeting will be on 6th October at 7.30 p.m. The first edition of

'Bridgerule Buzz', the newsletter, had been distributed with the questionnaires and copies are available in the village shop. The Clerk would attempt to put an article together regarding the Council for the next edition.

214. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A report was not available.

215. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk circulated copies of the draft budget for 2010/2011 she is working on. She asked Cllrs. to consider this and bring to her attention any points they wished to make, prior to her presenting it to the Meeting of the full Council in October.

216. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION.

There was no exchange of information.

217. TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE PARISH CLERK'S SALARY FOR THE YEAR 2010/2011

The proposed increase in the salary rate for the Clerk for the year 2010/2011 had previously been circulated. Councillors did not feel it necessary for the Clerk to withdraw. Cllr. Chilton suggested that it might be expedient to allow, in the budget for 2010/2011, for extra hours the Clerk might have to work. The Clerk will take this into account when preparing the budget. Cllr. Davey proposed that the Clerk's hourly rate be increased to £9.02 per hour. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Chilton and agreed unanimously. (Vote 5 For. 0 Against. 0 Abstentions).

218. CLOSE

There being no further items of business the Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and declared the Meeting closed at 10.02 p.m.

Signature

Date