

FECKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 20 September at 7:30pm

- Present Councillors:
- J. Matthews (Chairman)
 - A. Henson (V. Chairman)
 - J. Hooker
 - P. Lincoln Lewis
 - J. Roundell
 - T. Smith
- In Attendance
- Bor Cllr M. Chalk
 - Co Cllr P. Gretton
 - J. Wormington (Flood Prevention Committee)
 - J. Staniland Head of Planning & Building Control RBC
 - S. Mullins Monitoring Officer, Legal & Democratic Services RBC
- Apologies and reasons Cllr James on holiday
- 09/09/01 **Declaration of Interest**
Cllr Hooker declared a Personal Interest concerning the matter of the I. Bellion invoice.
- 09/09/02 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
The Minutes of the 19 July 2007 Meeting were approved.
- 09/09/03 **County Councillor Report**
*Dingleside M.S. is currently in consultation concerning its closure. One of the main issues is where the students will attend school next Autumn.
*The Co Council is looking to save £25 million over the next three years.
*The Cllr is hopeful that the Highways reorganization will begin to perform better over the coming months. Spending on roads has been in decline and the Co Council realize that a crisis point could soon be upon us. A plan to invest in urban roads is being formulated.
*A waste disposal system is being organized to ship rubbish to a site in the south of England. There is mounting pressure on the Co. Council to reduce the amount of waste.
*The Library Review is aiming to save £250,000 by reducing management and frontline staff. Cuts in the Mobile Library are also being considered.
Cllr Hooker raised the concern that the Mobile Library doesn't necessarily visit Feckenham every month. Chairman Matthews confirmed this observation by stating that on two occasions this year the Mobile Library didn't visit and that a breakdown was the cause of at least one incidence.
- 09/09/04 **Borough Councillor Report**
*In an effort to save £180,000 this year and £130,000 next year, the One Stop Shop will close in June 2008. Until that date, the opening hours will either be morning or afternoon depending on the day.
*£26,000 was granted to RBC to be used for flood mitigation. It has not been decided how to best utilize the money. There will be more pressure placed on landowners who have a responsibility to maintain ditches.

PROGRESS REPORTS

- 09/09/05 **Calor Gas Competition:** The Council decided that the Calor Gas Village of the Year Competition is not something that would benefit the Parish. Cllr Hooker suggested that the Britain in Bloom contest may be more suitable. Cllrs Hooker & Lincoln Lewis will informally approach Kathy Fisher about the matter. Perhaps a mention in the Feckenham News is appropriate.
- 09/09/06 **White Lines at Ham Green:** The lines have been painted. The matter is resolved.
- 09/09/07 **Charity Trust Commission:** No update.
- 09/09/08 **External Audit:** The Clerk phoned J. Bates of Clement Keys to inquire about an update. The accounts look to be in order and should be posted to the Clerk next week.

09/09/09 **Parish Council Notice Board:** No update on a Council Board, however, Cllr Hooker objected to the Clerk covering up notices on the Village Hall board. The Clerk responded that the posting of the entire Agenda is a legal requirement. He was instructed to post on both boards in the village and that a gentleman who lives across the street from the Village Hall helped him post the Agenda. It was decided that in the future the Agenda will only be posted on the board near the green.

09/09/10 **Library Services Review:** See Co Cllr Report.

PARISH PLAN WORKING PARTY REPORTS

09/09/11 **Flood Prevention:** Cllr Smith reported:
*29 Aug. letter posted to WCC Dir. of Environmental Services & Special Projects, RBC, The Environment Agency and Severn Trent requesting support to reduce the risk of flooding to properties within Feckenham.
ACTION: Clerk to draft a letter of support.
*2 Sept. letter posted to Ruth Poulter, Dir. Of West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy highlighting the parishioners' concern that any decision to build extensively in the Redditch area should take into account the low-lying areas such as Feckenham which may be badly affected by water run off due to increased hard standing.
*The group has identified three main areas of concern. 1) Culverts under road near the Cider Mill on Droitwich Road need improving. 2) The pipe along Astwood Lane is inadequate and needs to be replaced. Drains and culverts should be cleared. 3) The Plack Brook needs clearing and possibly widening from Swansbrook Lane to The Whirleyhole.
*The Flood Group would like to invite J. Biggs of WCC, C. Wilson of RBC and P. Garrard of The Environment Agency to walk with the group and review the three main areas identified above.

09/09/12 **Village Watch:** No update.

09/09/13 **Speeding/Traffic:** There has been no meeting yet. However, Cllr Lincoln Lewis attended the Inkberrow Parish Council Meeting on 19 September and managed to include Feckenham in mobile speed control device scheme. It is not known if there are any financial implications, but funding may be available. The Council agreed that Cllr Lincoln Lewis should represent FPC on a Speeding Sub Committee.

09/09/14 **Parking:** There has been no meeting yet, but it seems that the double yellow lines throughout the village are enforceable.

09/09/15 **Village Shop:** Cllr. Roundell reported that there have been two meetings held since the last Council Meeting. The Group is still very much in the fact finding stage at the moment. Points of discussion thus far:
*Possibility of a temporary shop considered as a way to open fairly quickly and minimize risk.
*Principle of issuing £10 to parishioners was agreed.
*Consideration to local competition.
*Location: many options considered and the meeting with Barretts opened up the possibility of a temporary building in their car lot.
*Would like to develop, distribute and analyse questionnaire to further develop the information gathered in the Parish Plan survey.
*Prepare for the "Village Hall Test", a trial shop in the Village Hall on a Friday afternoon and weekend in November with the aim of learning more about the customer base and desired products.

CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS

09/09/16 **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY**
Mr. J. Staniland, Head of Planning and Development Control at RBC gave a concise account of the procedure and likely outcome for Redditch. The main points are as follows:
*Given the options available, RBC supported an option for 4300 dwellings to be built in the district by 2026.
*It is likely that 6600 dwellings will be built in the area. 3300 in Redditch and 3300 shared among Stratford and Bromsgrove areas adjoining Redditch.

*The vast majority of this new dwellings are to be built on green field/green belt sites.

*The decision is to be taken on 22 October. The Secretary of State will review in December to be followed by Consultation Meetings in January.

*Examination in Public is due to take place in Sept 2008 with the final decision taking place in early 2009.

*In addition to housing, employment land must also be identified.

09/09/17

STANDARDS COMMITTEE AND LEGAL

Ms Sue Mullins, Monitoring Officer, Head of Legal Services and Democratic Services of RBC explained that there is an attempt to revamp certain standards procedures to meet current needs. Ms Mullins agreed to attend the 1 November Meeting to provide Code of Conduct training.

09/09/18

CODE OF CONDUCT

Chairman Matthews proposed that the Council adopt the new Code of Conduct including 12-2. Cllr Lincoln Lewis seconded the proposal and the Council voted unanimously to adopt.

09/09/19

REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

Chairman Matthews proposed to form a Working Party of Cllrs Henson & Roundell. The terms of reference are to develop new Standing Orders and make recommendations to the Council. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Henson and carried unanimously.

09/09/20

CLERK'S DELEGATION SCHEME FOR PLANNING

Cllr Hooker suggested the Delegated Scheme items may be better handled within the framework of Standing Orders. The Clerk pointed out the delegation schemes are not part of Standing Orders. Cllr Smith proposed the adoption of the Clerk's Delegation Scheme for Planning. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Henson and carried unanimously. The Clerk is responsible for delivering Planning Applications to Chairman Matthews unless otherwise stated. Chairman Matthews then ensures that applications are circulated to Cllrs Hooker, Smith & Henson for comment. The applications are then delivered back to the Clerk within a reasonable time frame (approximately two weeks) so that Council comments can be posted to RBC.

All delegated decisions must be included in the next Agenda and minuted. Furthermore, if the Clerk or Chairman believes an application is controversial then either can delay decision-making until the next Council Meeting or call an Extraordinary Meeting to allow full Council debate. Councillors in the scheme are expected to declare any Personal or Prejudicial Interests.

09/09/21

CLERK'S DELAGATION SCHEME FOR URGENT DECISIONS

Cllr Smith proposed to adopt the Clerk's Delegation Scheme for Urgent Decisions with a cap of £300 VAT inclusive. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Roundell and carried unanimously. If the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman believes that an urgent decision must be undertaken before the next scheduled Meeting then the scheme allows for up to £300 to be spent without prior consent of the Council. The Clerk must get the signature of Chairman Matthews and Cllr Henson. All delegated decisions must be on the next Agenda and minuted.

09/09/22

CHAIRMAN'S ALLOWANCE

Cllr Smith proposed that the Chairman be given an allowance of £100 per annum on a reimbursement basis. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Lincoln Lewis and carried unanimously. Any expenditure will be minuted.

09/09/23

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES

Cllr Henson proposed that Councillors be allowed to claim expenses for Council expenses incurred while on Council business. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Lincoln Lewis and carried unanimously. Councillors are required to seek Council permission before spending money on the Council's behalf. All expenses will be minuted.

ACTION: The Clerk will consult the District Independent Remuneration Panel to seek recommendations. Once recommendations are received the Clerk will post a notice of the Council's decision in the parish. Until this time, Councillors may not be reimbursed.

09/09/24

LENGTHSMAN

The Clerk commented that the Lengthsman scheme is based on reimbursement rather than a grant and that the Council should note the possible cash flow problems a service contract could incur.

Cllr Smith proposed that the Staffing Group commence the recruitment process for a Lengthsman and draw up a service contract for the Lengthsman. Cllr Roundell seconded the proposal. The proposal was carried by a vote of 5 to 1 with Cllr Hooker voting against. Cllr Hooker was concerned about the state of the Council's finances and in particular the possible implications for cash flow. Additionally, the Clerk suggested the Footpath Officer, Angela Fletcher, be a member

of the Lengthsman Working Group (when/if it is formed) as an adviser without decision making powers.

09/09/25

PARISH NEWSLETTER

Chairman Matthews proposed that he would organize the Parish Newsletter and that it would be distributed in January. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Roundell and carried unanimously. Cllr Smith noted that the budget for one newsletter is £300 and surmised that much of that cost is due to postage. Cllr Smith went on to suggest that perhaps the 150 homes in the immediate village could receive their newsletter by hand and the outlying 200 homes by 2nd class post.

09/09/26

EMERGENCY COORDINATION

Ms. Mullins kindly volunteered to make enquiries and report back concerning the role of the Parish Council in an emergency crisis such as this past 20 July.

09/09/27

PARISH COUNCIL GRANTS

Cllr Henson pointed out that according to Summary Expenditure Tabulation for Period 1 April 2007 through 27 July 2007, the grant budget for this current year has only £30 remaining. Two grants totalling £620 were already paid out this April. Cllr Hooker commented these payments were late and in effect were meant to be paid in the last fiscal year. The Clerk stated that he hasn't seen a budget for 2006/07 to confirm that grants were actually budgeted. Furthermore, because the Parish Council works on a cash in/cash out accounts system, that payments made this year are part of this year's accounting.

Cllr Roundell proposed that the Council wait for Draft Budget to be presented to the Council on 22 November before committing to further grants. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Hooker and carried unanimously.

ACTION: The Clerk and Cllr Roundell will liaise with the aim of completing a draft budget by the 22 November Meeting.

09/09/28

CLERK'S CONTRACT

Chairman Matthews reported that the matter was still under review.

CLERK'S UPDATE

09/09/29

Schedule of Correspondence Received (not otherwise noted) – available at Meeting

Vitalise request for funding
WCALC Worcestershire Mail
WCC Partnership Matters
RBC Notification of Review of Polling Station facilities
WCC Notification of Dingleside Surgery (19/07/07)
Feckenham Village Hall: Hire Charge increase
RBC: Development Plans – Database query
Emergency Co-ordination (by e-mail)
A. Bedford-Smith: Spatial Strategy
WM Planning Aid Newsletter
RBC: Agenda 13th Aug, 2007
WCALC (by e-mail): Risk Assessment & Budget Planning course*
RBC Sue Mullins (by e-mail): Advice about additional councillors*
Community First: Newslines
CALC: Autumn Bulletin
RBC/Standards Board: Bulletin 33
WCC: Flooding & Public Rights of Way
WCC: The Worcestershire Warden (Newsletter)
WCC: Ms D. Degge: Response to Aug 6 Highway Matters letter
RBC: Reminder of Code of Conduct

09/09/30

Schedule of Correspondence Sent (not otherwise noted)

J.Vernall: Thanks
A.Bedford-Smith: Spatial Strategy
RBC/Sue Hanley: Spatial Strategy
RBC/Development Plans: Confirmation of Interest
D Degge, Highways WCC: Request for action
PC Waterhouse, Local Police: Invitation to attend
J. Matthews: Lengthsman & insurance documents

PLANNING MATTERS

09/09/31 **Parish Council Consideration**
2007/317/FUL Priory Barn (garages) NO OBJECTION
2007/320/FUL Upper Beanhill Farm NO OBJECTION
2007/335/LBC Stoners Farmhouse NO OBJECTION

09/09/32 **Approvals**
WCC 407699 Bradley Green Sewage
2007/277/COU St John the Baptist Church

09/09/33 **Refusals**
None

09/09/34 **Pending**
2007/253/LBC Brickhouse Farm Barns
2007/254/FUL Brickhouse Farm Barns
2007/294/LBC Church Cottages
2007/295/FUL Church Cottages
2007/301/LBC Perry Mill Farm
2007/302/FUL Perry Mill Farm
2007/308/LBC Old Court House
2007/061/FUL Astwood Farm (not in Parish)

FINANCIAL MATTERS

09/09/35	Schedule of Invoices	
	Outgoing Clerk Stipend & Expenses Aug & Sept	£374.76
	Parish Insurance	£293.32
	New Clerk Stipend & Expenses Aug 20 -31	£106.37

Chairman Matthews proposed that he use the Chairman’s Allowance to purchase a small gift for Mr. Bellion, the outgoing Clerk, as a token of the Council’s gratitude for his hard work and perseverance. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Lincoln Lewis and carried by 6 votes to nil. Cllr Hooker recommended a bottle of Jamieson.

COUNCILLOR REPORTS & Future Agenda Items

09/09/36 None

Date and Venue of Next Meeting

09/09/37 **Extraordinary Meeting 7:30 on 1 November 2007 at the Feckenham Parish Hall**

The Meeting closed at 11:00pm

Signed Date
Chairman

NOTES OF OPEN FORUM

09/09/38 None