

# FECKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of 146<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2007 at 7.30pm in Feckenham Village Hall

**Present:** Councillors:

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| J. Matthews (Chair) | A. Henson   |
| J. Hooker           | J. James    |
| P. Lincoln-Lewis    | J. Roundell |
| T. Smith            |             |

**In Attendance:** Ian Bellion (Acting Clerk).

- 1. Apologies:** Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Philip Gretton & Cllr. Barry Gandy (Worcester County Council); Sue Hanley (Officer, Redditch Borough Council).
- 2. Welcome:** The Chairman opened the Meeting and welcomed Cllr James and Cllr Lincoln-Lewis following their co-option at the last Meeting. Cllr Matthews suggested that the style of the Meetings could be changed to achieve a lighter tone whilst moving on business faster. It was PROPOSED that the Public Access part of the Meeting should be moved earlier to follow Item 3 (Declarations of Interest) and the visiting Councillors from other authorities should be allowed to speak earlier (at Items 4 and 5). It was AGREED that this should be done and the Clerk was instructed to publicise the change in Feckenham News.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
  - a) To declare any Personal Interests in any item on the Agenda  
None
  - b) To declare any Prejudicial Interests in any item on the Agenda  
None
- 4. Approve Minutes of 142<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2006**

It was noted that the Minutes of this Meeting had not been completed due to the absence and subsequent dismissal of the Clerk (Mrs L Morrisson-Allsopp). The Minutes had been reconstructed using Councillors' notes. Where no record existed a note to this effect had been inserted.

Councillor Smith PROPOSED that the Minutes of the 142<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 having been previously circulated, be taken as read, and be signed as a correct record of the proceedings of that Meeting based on the facts available.

Councillor Henson SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously. (*The Minutes were signed accordingly.*)
- 5. Approve Minutes of Annual Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2007\***

Councillor Smith PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2007 having been previously circulated, be taken as read, and be signed as a correct record of the proceedings of that Meeting.

Councillor Henson SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously. (*The Minutes were signed accordingly.*)
- 6. Approve Minutes of 145<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting and Parish Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2007\***

Councillor Smith PROPOSED that the Minutes of the 145<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting and the Parish Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2007 having been previously circulated, be taken as read, and be signed as a correct record of the proceedings of that Meeting.

Councillor Henson SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously. (*The Minutes were signed accordingly.*)
- 7. Approve Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2007\*.**

Councillor Smith PROPOSED that the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2007 having been previously circulated, be taken as read, and be signed as a correct record of the proceedings of that Meeting.

Councillor Henson SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously. (*The Minutes were signed accordingly.*)

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## 8. Matters Arising from the Minutes of 145<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting

- 8.1 Calor Gas Village of the Year  
Defer to next Agenda. Councillors would try to find out about other competitions. (Action: Cllr Hooker)
- 8.2 White Lines at Ham Green  
Had still not been repainted. Clerk to write to Highways Department re. progress.
- 8.3 Flower Tubs  
Defer to next Agenda. No action required at this time
- 8.4 Trust : Charity Commission  
To be tackled when the new Clerk is in post

## 9. To consider the new Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils

including Section 12(2), with a view to adopting it at the next (September) Council\*  
It was AGREED that the Finance Committee would check over the proposed Code.  
Councillor Hooker PROPOSED that the Council should move to Adopt the Model Code of Conduct (2007) at the next Meeting subject to the findings of the Finance Committee  
Councillor Henson SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously.

## 10. Clerk to the Council

- 10.1 The Staffing Committee reported that a suitable candidate had been found subject to references and agreement on salary. An appointment would not be made until the Staffing Committee had concluded these processes. It had been emphasised to the candidate that, because of the unsatisfactory outcome of the appointment of the previous Clerk, there would be a rigorous programme of performance reviews at three and six months before confirmation in the post. The candidate had agreed to this.  
Councillor Hooker PROPOSED that the staffing Committee should be authorised to make a probationary appointment subject to all necessary checks and agreements being concluded satisfactorily.  
Councillor Smith SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously. (Action: Staffing Committee)  
The Staffing Committee would meet as a matter of urgency with a view to having the new Clerk in post as soon as possible (by mid-August ideally). Given her professional expertise in the field of recruitment it was suggested that Cllr James should join the Staffing Committee  
Councillor Hooker PROPOSED that Cllr James should become a member of the Staffing Committee.  
Councillor Lincoln-Lewis SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously.
- 10.2 To consider salary and conditions  
Subject to confidential negotiations. It was, however, thought that the salary would have to be higher than that budgeted for and that there may have to be a precept rise to compensate for this.
- 10.3 Arrangements for hand over.  
It was suggested that the new Clerk would have to be in post by mid-August if a hand over was to be achieved in time for the September Meeting. The Acting Clerk would not be available to prepare that Meeting but would be able to assist until the end of August.  
Councillor Henson PROPOSED that Ian Bellion should be asked to continue as Temporary Clerk on a freelance basis and on the same terms until August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007.  
Councillor Roundell SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously.

## 11. Parish Plan Update.

- 11.1 Working Groups Reports:
  - a) Speeding Traffic & HGVs  
Planning to meet within 14 days. Cllr.Lincoln-Lewis would attend

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b) Shop or Post Office

Rep: Cllr Matthews

Had met and was working on several possibilities. There was a farm shop opening at the top of Astwood Hill. It was hoped to arrange for a "satellite" of this to open in Feckenham for 2 days a week as an experiment. Premises : 4 possibilities were being looked at – The doctors' surgery; The Catholic church; Village Hall Back Room; Portable building. The VIRSA grant organisation was to visit. There were start up grants available of up to £60,000. It was also reported that the milkman was looking to start a mobile shop service.

c) Parking

Rep.: Cllr Hooker

The group had walked the streets to see exactly what the problems were. It was seeking to ascertain which of the yellow lines were legally enforceable and which were invalid. When this had been done the lines needed to be painted properly. The group had been told that this information could not be given unless the Parish Council asked for it. AGREED that the Clerk should be instructed to write to the Highways Department to ask for their co-operation. Cllr Roundell raised the possibility of the introduction of residents' parking permits. *Action: Clerk*

d) Flood prevention

Rep: Cllr Smith

There had been two meetings and a third would take place on 24<sup>th</sup> July. The group was currently identifying the locations and causes of problems. They were learning and making contacts. Permission was awaited to walk the watercourse going through Dunstall Court's land where there is thought to be a constriction. It was suggested that an appeal for information and concerns should be placed in Feckenham News. *Action: Clerk*

e) Village Watch / Police Presence

It was reported that the beat officer's surgery had not been well attended and that he was considering using the pubs and various groups as meeting places. It was suggested that he might like to attend Council meetings as a point of contact. Clerk to contact him. *Action: Clerk*

## 12. Standards Committee

Rep: Cllr Hooker

The Committee would meet at Redditch Town Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Cllr Hooker had written to Steve Skinner (Head of Democratic Services) about two matter raised at the last meeting: Training sessions for new Councillors and the position of Parish Plan "activists" as members of the Parish Council. No reply had been received and Cllr Hooker would press for answers at the meeting. *Action: Cllr Hooker*

## 13. Traffic Forum /Scrutiny

The state of the roads continues to be of great concern. It was suggested that Councillors should "adopt" sections of road to monitor in order that faults could be forcibly reported to the Highways department. AGREED to develop this idea ahead of the next Meeting.

## 14. Report from County Councillor

Did not attend

## 15. Report from Borough Councillor

Did not attend

## 16. Financial:

### 15.1 Audit: approve accounts for submission for external audit.

Cllr Roundell reported the situation regarding late submission of accounts for audit. This was caused by the absence and later dismissal of the former Clerk (Mrs L Morrison-Allsopp). The books for much of the periods covered had been withheld by Mrs Morrison-Allsopp and so the accounts had been reconstructed from minutes and bank records by former Chairman Tricklebank and Richard Maxwell Fletcher (Internal Auditor). Mr Fletcher had

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provided an explanation for the accounting deficiencies for submission with the Audit Returns which were now ready to be submitted to Clement Keys (External Auditors). In addition a Chairman's statement had been prepared to explain how the Council was acting to rectify the situation. There was a problem relating to the need for the Responsible Finance Officer to sign the Returns. For much of the periods covered by the accounts the RFO had been Mrs Morrison-Allsopp and she a) could not be located and b) was no longer associated with the Council. It was agreed that Cllr Roundell had been closely involved with the preparation of the returns and had a good knowledge of their inner workings

Cllr Hooker PROPOSED that Cllr Roundell should sign the returns as Responsible Finance Officer.

Councillor Henson SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously.

15.1a **Consider and approve the accounts, returns and notes for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2006**

Councillor James PROPOSED that the accounts, returns and notes for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2006 be approved by the Council and submitted for external audit.

Councillor Smith SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously. *Action: Clerk*

15.1b **Consider and approve the audited accounts, returns and notes for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2007**

Councillor James PROPOSED that the accounts, returns and notes for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2007 be approved by the Council and submitted for external audit.

Councillor Smith SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously. *Action: Clerk*

15.2 To authorise payment to Redditch Borough Council in respect of their invoice 2000353528: Election Administration\*: £129.93

15.3 To authorise payment to the Temporary Clerk in respect of his invoice FPC01070719 : £400.25

15.4 To authorise payment to WCALC in respect of their invoice 4221: Supply of Model Standing Orders\* £14.98

15.5 To authorise payment to the Internal Auditor (Richard Maxwell Fletcher) in respect of his invoice 2903\* : £300.00

15.6 To authorise payment to Feckenham Village Hall in respect of their invoice received for Hire of the Hall for Meetings: £54

Councillor Roundell PROPOSED that the payments detailed in items 15.2 to 15.6 should be authorised.

Councillor Hooker SECONDED the motion and on being put to the Meeting it was CARRIED unanimously *Action: Clerk*

## 17. Provision of Parish Council Notice-Board

Deferred to next Meeting

## 18. Spatial Strategy\*

The letter received from Mr A Bedford-Smith was discussed, It was AGREED that the Clerk should write to Mr Bedford-Smith to thank him for his insight and to assure him that the Council was watching the situation closely.

It was further AGREED that the Council needed to be better briefed on this developing matter. Clerk to invite one of the Officers of Redditch Borough Council to attend the next Meeting. *Action: Clerk*

## 19. Library Services Review\*

It was AGREED that this was of great concern to parishioners. Clerk instructed to write to County Councillors to ask for explanations and briefings. *Action: Clerk*

## 20. "Old Folks" Survey

Redditch Borough Council had asked for help in distributing questionnaires about housing needs for the elderly. AGREED that help could be given. *Action: Councillors*

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## 21. Correspondence Received

- 20.1 WCALC: Notice of Bromsgrove Area Meeting\*
- 20.2 WCALC: The 4 Essentials Course information\*
- 20.3 RBC: Model Standing Orders/Freedom of Information\*
- 20.4 RBC Housing: Notice of Engrossment – Affordable Housing\*
- 20.5 RBC Elections: Acknowledgement of notice of co-option
- 20.6 WCC: Notice of Redditch Area Forum/Highways Surgery 26/07\*
- 20.7 A. Bedford-Smith: Spatial Strategy\* (See Item 18)
- 20.8 WCC: Environmental Services Structure\*
- 20.9 WMRA: Speaking Out Newsletter\*
- 20.10 RBC: Parish Council Toolkit\*
- 20.11 WIC: List of Courses\*
- 20.12 WCC: Diversion/ Creation of Footpaths\*
- 20.13 CALC: Advisory Note re Code of Conduct\* (See Item 9)
- 20.14 CALC: Model Code of Conduct (2007)\* (See Item 9)
- 20.15 WCC: Consultation Dingleside School
- 20.16 RBC/BT: Change to payphone on The Square\*  
AGREED that this was preferable to total removal – monitor.
- 20.17 Complaints about Moors Lane hedge\*  
AGREED that this was dangerous. Clerk instructed to raise with Highways Dept. *Action: Clerk*
- 20.18 Request from WCALC for assurances that Councillors would abide by their conditions for access to the Members Areas of their website. Passwords would be issues upon such assurance being received. AGREED  
*Action: Clerk*

## 22. Planning Applications & Notifications

- |       |                   |                          |              |
|-------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| 22.1  | 2007-143-FUL      | Cross Lanes Farms        | PERMITTED    |
| 22.2  | 2007/153/LBC      | 47 High Street           | PERMITTED    |
| 22.3  | 2007/147/LBC      | The Old Courthouse       | PERMITTED    |
| 22.4  | 2007/148/FUL      | The Old Courthouse       | PERMITTED    |
| 22.5  | 2007/159/FUL      | 11 High Street           | PERMITTED    |
| 22.6  | 2007/160/FUL      | 13 High Street           | PERMITTED    |
| 22.10 | 2007/113/FUL      | Meadow Farm, Alcester Rd | PERMITTED    |
| 22.11 | 2007/253/LBC      | Brickhouse Farm Barns    | CONSULTATION |
| 22.12 | 2007/254/FUL      | Brickhouse Farm Barns    | CONSULTATION |
| 22.13 | WCC 407699        | Bradley Green Sewage     | CONSULTATION |
| 22.14 | Also of interest: |                          |              |
|       | 2007/061/FUL      | Astwood Farm             | PENDING      |

## 23. Items for next Agenda

- Parish Lengthsman – Cllr Smith to report
- Parish News Letter / Plan Update

## 24. Dates of meetings for 2006/7

- 20 Sept
- 22 Nov INCLUDES TRUST MEETING
- 17 Jan '08
- 20 Mar
- 15 May AGM + PARISH MEETING
- 17 July
- 18 Sept
- 20 Nov

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.40pm

\* Documents copied to councillors.

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|---|
| THIS MEETING WAS FOLLOWED BY A MEETING OF<br>THE FECKENHAM VILLAGE AMENITY TRUST. |
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