

**SHIPTON GORGE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9 MAY 2007**

Present:

Cllrs Mrs Mary Boughton (Vice-Chairman) (MB), Mrs Jean Ayers (JA), Charles Errington (CE), Robert Langran (RL), David Smith (DS), Mrs Amy Steele (AS), Derek Vowles (DV), Robert White (RW).

In attendance:

Parish Clerk Ernie Thomas, County Councillor Ron Coatsworth (CC), District Councillor Mark Parsons (MP) and four parishioners. These latter included Richard Cunningham who, following his co-option, joined the meeting as a Parish Councillor.

Open Forum:

In the absence of RH, MB took the chair and welcomed those present to the meeting, including CC and MP. She explained that she remained in office until election of a new Chairman, after which she would stand down as a member of the PC. No matters were raised under this item.

416. Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Colin Green (on holiday) and Richard Hewlett (RH) and these were accepted.

417. To elect the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Parish Council

Cllr David Smith was unanimously elected as Chairman (proposed by RL, seconded by AS). At this point DS took the Chair and MB stepped down. Cllr Charles Errington was unanimously elected as Vice-chairman (proposed by DS, seconded by RL). DS said that CE was a past Chairman and his support would be invaluable.

418. To consider the vacancy for a Parish Councillors and, if thought fit, to co-opt a candidate to fill such vacancy

Richard Cunningham (RC) was unanimously co-opted to serve as a Parish Councillor (proposed by JA, seconded by RW). The declaration of acceptance of office and undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct was duly signed. A Declaration of Interests form was provided which RC was to complete and return to the Clerk in time for it to be sent to reach the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of his co-option. DS welcomed the new Councillor. In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that a co-opted Councillor had the same rights and responsibilities as an elected Councillor, except that he believed he could not hold office as Chairman or Vice-chairman.

419. Matters relating to newly-elected Councillors, including declarations of acceptance of office and disclosure of interests

The Clerk reported that all elected Councillors had signed declarations of acceptance of office and undertakings to abide by the Code of Conduct before the meeting. JA, CG and RW had provided Registration of Interests forms and this meant that the only outstanding matter remaining was for DV to complete a Registration of Interests form and return it to the Clerk in time for it to be sent to reach the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of his taking up office.

420. To appoint committee chairs and members and fill positions of responsibility

The following appointments were made by unanimous resolutions:

Playing Field Chair – Cllr Mrs Amy Steele (proposed by CE, seconded by RL).

Playing Field Vice-chair – Cllr Robert White (proposed by DS, seconded by JA).

Planning Committee Chair – Cllr Colin Green (proposed by RW, seconded by AS).

Planning Committee Vice-chair – Cllr Richard Cunningham (proposed by RL, seconded by JA).

Members of the Planning Committee (additional to Chair and Vice-chair) – All other members of the Parish Council apart from the Chairman with Pam Graham as lay member (proposed by CE, seconded by DS). Agreed to defer appointment of second lay member until the July meeting. Representative on Village Hall Trust Committee – Cllr Jean Ayers (proposed by AS, seconded by CE).

Members of the Playing Field Committee – Cllr Jean Ayers (proposed by DS, seconded by CE). Cllr Derek Vowles (proposed by AS, seconded by DS). Grayham Rosamond to continue as lay member.

DAPTC Area Committee representative – Cllr Jean Ayers (proposed by DS, seconded by CE).

Rights of Way Officer – Cllr Robert Langran (proposed by CE, seconded by AS).

Highways Officer – Cllr Derek Vowles (proposed by AS, seconded by DS).

BLAP representative – Cllr David Smith (proposed by CE, seconded by RW).

Internal Auditor – Simon Cleveland (proposed by RW, seconded by CE).

Web site to continue to be led by the Clerk.

CE mentioned that the progression of the Parish Plan needed to be addressed and it was agreed this matter should be on the agenda for the July meeting.

421. To authorise the appointment of additional signatories to the Parish Council's bank accounts and the removal as signatories of those who have ceased to be Parish Councillors

The Clerk suggested that all new Councillors should become additional authorised signatories to the PC's bank accounts and that former Councillors Mary Boughton, Robert Cornish and Richard Hewlett should cease to be authorised signatories. John Epplestone had not been an authorised signatory. CE said he felt that the new Parish Councillors should not become authorised signatories until they had been in office for a period of time. It was however proposed by DS, seconded by AS and carried by a majority vote (7 votes for and 1 vote against) that JA, CG, DV and RW be appointed as authorised signatories to the Parish Council's bank accounts with Lloyds TSB and that the former Councillors cease to be authorised signatories. **Clerk** to implement this resolution by arranging completion of the appropriate bank mandate forms.

422. To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March

The minutes of the PC meeting of 19 March 2007 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

423. Clerk's Report

1. Blair Turner had attended a site meeting on 28 March with the Clerk, MB and RL regarding Burbitt Lane and flooding in other parts of the village. Remedial works were already in progress to address the problem areas identified.
2. The site meeting with Phil Hansford of WDDC took place on 19 April with the Clerk, MB and AS. He agreed to install a waste bin, with a notice saying it could be used for bagged dog waste, near the junction of Burbitt Lane and Shipton Lane and arrange for it to be emptied regularly. He did not feel he could justify another bin at the foot of the resurfaced path between the Church and Brook Street.
3. Clerk had paid in the three donation cheques, sent a letter to DAPTC confirming the PC's support for the Shipton Gorge Limited project and sent a cheque for the £121.38 to the Company.
4. Following submission of the account opening form to CAF Bank, the Bank had stated (contrary to the Clerk's previous information) that the PC could not after all open a Playing Field account in its own name. Any account opened must be in the name of the King George's Field charitable trust and contain only funds belonging to that body. This has serious implications for both the PC and the charity which the Clerk wished to discuss with the Chairman and the Chair of the Playing Field Committee. A report would be made to the PC at its meeting in July. Meanwhile, the Playing Field funds remained invested with Lloyds TSB.

5. The annual Parish Meeting had duly taken place on 25 April. Draft minutes had been agreed by RH but these would be presented to the next Parish Meeting for adoption and signature, which is the correct procedure. CE asked that the **Clerk** should nonetheless circulate the draft minutes to Councillors to give the opportunity for points of accuracy to be raised whilst the proceedings were still fresh in people's minds.

424. Other matters arising from the minutes

CE said that as regards the potential grant aid for a playing field project, he discovered that the deadline for applications had already passed and so no grant application could have been made.

425. To review risk assessments and revise as thought necessary

The Clerk proposed to read out the text of the existing risk assessments rather than distribute copies, as the Risk Register contained a direction that it was not to be copied or placed on the web site. (At this point CC and MP left the meeting). After discussion, it was agreed to defer this matter until the July meeting and the Clerk was authorised to provide copies of the Risk Register to Councillors before that meeting endorsed with a requirement that they were to be treated as strictly confidential and returned to the Clerk before the close of that meeting.

426. To set terms of reference for review of internal audit procedures and appoint a working party to carry out the review

The Clerk circulated a briefing note on the requirement for the PC to carry out a review of the effectiveness of its systems for internal audit and control. The proposed terms of reference were as follows:

1. To carry out an objective and thorough review of the effectiveness of the Parish Council's systems of internal control and audit.
2. To present a written report of the result of the review to the Parish Council at its July meeting, including an opinion on whether or not these systems are effective. Any areas for development or change should be identified in the report and an action plan produced, setting out any proposed remedial actions, the people responsible for delivering them and the suggested deadlines for completion of the actions.

It was proposed by JA, seconded by AS and resolved unanimously agreed that the review be carried out on the above terms by **DS and CE**.

427. Reports.

Planning

The spreadsheet of all the recent planning applications had been circulated. As regards tree-work application CA/07/00134, the Clerk reported that the PC had previously resolved that consideration of such applications should be undertaken by the Planning Committee, but only where the chairman of that committee considered it necessary to respond. Robert Cornish had decided whilst still Chair of Planning that this application needed to be considered by the Planning Committee. It was agreed that a meeting of the Planning Committee be held on Wednesday 16 May to consider this and planning application 1/W/07/000745 re. Brook House.

General Finance

The latest financial statements for the past and current financial years were circulated. The matter of the Clerk's duties and appropriate salary was raised and CE confirmed that the extent of the Clerk's duties and remuneration was a matter that had previously been considered at the time of the new PC taking up office after the four-yearly election. It was agreed that an appropriate review be carried out. It was also agreed that the appropriateness of the Playing Field reserve funds should be considered with **AS and the Clerk** reporting back to the July meeting. From the floor MB confirmed that the previous Playing Field Committee had drawn up a 5-year action plan that listed the various requirements that had to be funded. The Clerk said

that cheques issued since the last meeting were shown on the financial statements and these were as follows:

CHEQUE No	RECIPIENT	AMOUNT
417	Shipton Gorge Ltd	£121.38
418	Contract Monitoring Services Ltd	£14.86
419	Bride Valley Team Council	£30.00
420	PCC of Shipton Gorge	£100.00
421	Shipton Gorge Village Hall Trust	£150.00
422	Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance Trust	£30.00
423	Bridport & District CAB	£30.00
424	GetDotted.com	£18.79
425	J Fisher (postages)	£6.06
426	G Rosamond (playing field maintenance)	£134.10
427	OHE Horticultural Ltd (playing field items)	£48.94
428	DAPTC (postage)	£4.00
429	E S Thomas (clerk's salary)	£540.00

Those cheque payments that had not been specifically authorised at the previous meeting were ratified.

Playing Field

AS said that the playing field was looking good and she would like to arrange for the Playing Field Committee to visit it. She confirmed that she was still carrying out the periodic inspection. AS to contact Grayham Rosamond to confirm her appointment as Chair of the Committee and to discuss the next playing field maintenance day.

DAPTC

No report.

BLAP

Nothing to report as DS had been on holiday.

Rights of Way

RL reported the clearance of two footpaths at Shipton Hill.

Village Hall

A new kitchen was being fitted and the floor was being renewed. Various events were to be held. A cleaner was still required and DV said he would telephone Eddy Buck regarding a possible candidate for this post.

Highways

RL confirmed a productive meeting had been held with Blair Turner of DCC and remedial works were progressing well.

Web site

The Clerk said that the next periodic update would be carried out shortly, to include material from the Village Society as well as details of the new PC including appropriate photographs.

428. Correspondence

The correspondence log had been distributed and specific items were considered as follows:

Item 1. It was proposed by DS, seconded by CE and resolved unanimously that payment of the renewal insurance premium of £317.62 be made to Allianz Cornhill.

Item 12. Draft Empty Property Strategy document passed to **DS** to review.

Item 16. No action to be taken regarding the Iron Man Triathlon.

Item 17. It was proposed by CE, seconded by DS and resolved unanimously that payment of the annual subscription of £89.12 to DAPTC be made.

Item 18. **CE** to pursue the matter of the PC's involvement in the Connecting Dorset Project with DAPTC.

Items 19, 31, 40 and 41. **Clerk** to provide Councillors with copies of relevant correspondence and documents before the July meeting to enable the matter of the new Code of Conduct to be considered at that time.

Items 25 and 37. Agreed that the proposed informal meeting between members of the PC and representatives of Magna should be held at 7.00 p.m on Thursday 24 May. **Clerk** to inform RH who had been invited to attend and also confirm the arrangements to Magna and Andy Lloyd.

Item 38. It was proposed by JA, seconded by AS and resolved unanimously that the Clerk should join the Society of Local Council Clerks and that his first annual subscription of £55 be met by the PC. After a year the benefits of membership should be considered and a decision made on whether or not to renew membership for a subsequent period.

Item 43. It was agreed that a decision on the request for a notice on the playing field gate should be made by the Playing Field Committee. **AS** to discuss this matter with Sally Parker and also ensure that appropriate insurance cover was in place.

It was agreed that the Clerk should cease circulating the periodic reports on the MSC Napoli.

429. To confirm the dates for subsequent meetings

The next meeting to be held on Wednesday 11 July. **Clerk** to investigate the availability of the Village Hall with a view to subsequent meetings being held on a Thursday if possible. Failing that, the existing pattern of Wednesday meetings would continue. [*Post-meeting note: The Village Hall is not available on Thursday evenings.*] CE asked that the agenda for the next meeting should include reconsideration of the PC's authorisation procedures for tree-work applications and initial consideration of a strategy for the four-year term of the PC. DS circulated a list prepared by the Clerk of matters that the PC had to consider in the course of a year. He also said that the PC had lost four experienced members who had not sought re-election and should acknowledge their valuable contribution. **DS** proposed to write letters of thanks to Mary Boughton, Robert Cornish, John Epplestone and Richard Hewlett.