

MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

www.minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk

Email: clerk@minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk

Tel: 01452 849178/07792989212

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday, 11 April 2011 in Minsterworth Village Hall.

PRESENT:

Councillors - Richard Few – Chairman
Steve King
Lynda Simms
Cathy Thomas
Borough Councillor Davies
County Councillor Awford

Mrs F Wallbank – Clerk

Parishioners: approx 14

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone and pointed out the Fire Exits.

Apologies: Councillors Bourne, Crisp and Ruffley and PC Sharon Duberley.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday, 12 April 2010 were agreed and signed.

3 Matters arising from the minutes:

The Chairman reported on the following matters:

Bus Stop – Hygrove Lane: The bollards have been erected – one was knocked over and he reinstated it with his tractor. Did ask for a bollard on the Gloucester side but Richard Gray had refused.

A48 Hatchings outside Linton Lodge – These will be staying – it would appear that the traffic is not so bad worst time is around 8am but cleared by 9am. County Councillor Awford said that the County were looking at using the bus lane for multi-occupancy vehicles.

Planning Applications – Hygrove Lodge and Starcroft Lane – Following refusal of these applications by the Parish Council and TBC the applicants went to appeal and unfortunately the Inspector allowed the appeals.

Planning Policy – Following the motion passed at last year's APA the Parish Council consulted with Martin Hutchings of GRCC about carrying out another Housing Needs Survey. It was agreed that with the current Planning Policy for Minsterworth, the change in Government and possible changes to the Planning Policy the Parish Council would hold off carrying out another Survey for the time being.

School Lane – This problem had been rectified.

Severn Bore – Some very good work had been carried out by Dr Lynch with advertising the fact that the boat traffic spoils the Bore. It was felt that “things” had improved.

Finances – The Parish Council was pleased to make a donation to the fund raising appeal for the works to the Village Hall and delighted that everything is now completed.

4 Phil Awford, County Councillor said that as his report had been circulated he was willing to take any questions on his report or any other matters.

Q Mobile Library Service – will this be stopped?

A There is potential that the mobile service will go but the decision has not been finalised. Every book lent via the mobile service costs £7.50. GCC have stated that the Service User must not be disadvantaged and may offer a direct delivery service.

Q Will the Church Lane be repaired by the Church wall?

A Major cut back in the Highways budget but there is some work scheduled for Minsterworth but he would look into this.

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Q A48 – no accidents for 3-4 months now but is there going to be any further safety measures taken?

A Plans for safety cameras have been shelved – some resurfacing works have taken place. The matter is not off the agenda.

Q Turning into Church Lane off A48 – extremely dangerous situation accident waiting to happen.

A This has been looked at a number of times with Richard Gray but it would seem that unless there is an accident or fatality it is felt that there is no real hazard. When the School Safety Zone was put in the second part of the scheme was abandoned due to funding so he felt that there may be some leverage to get something done at Church Lane. He would speak to Richard Gray again.

Q Will the speed cameras be decommissioned and if so would the Parish Council be consulted?

A There is a good argument with the number fatalities along the A48 that these should be kept operational. He would ensure that GCC consults with the Parish Council if the cameras are to be decommissioned.

The Chairman said that County Councillor Awford sits on the Flood Defence Committee and managed to get Anthony Perry from the EA to come along to the March meeting of the Parish Council and answer questions about the EA's Consultation document the "Managing Flood Risk on the Severn Estuary". This document states that by 2030 Cornham will flood annually. Subsequently he has had a meeting with Mark Harper MP and took him to Glos tip and showed him what a major impact it has for landowners in Minsterworth. It looks as if the EA might rethink their plans re the floodbanks.

5 Derek Davies, Borough Councillor said that his report had also been circulated and was willing to take any questions.

Re paragraph 1 of his report if people thought things were tough now it was going to get even tougher as the country is in a financial mess. Main object of TBC is to get services running smoothly with an excellent service and there are no planned redundancies.

Re paragraph 2 regarding the Localism Bill with previous governments everything was dictated from the top down to parish level now with this Bill some matters will be dictated from the bottom up. Plans to involve local people and if they are not interested nothing will get done. The Localism Bill will carry more changes to planning.

Re paragraph 3 re Council Tax the average in the England is £165.83 and TBC is at £99.36

Re paragraph 4 Phil and he make a good team

Re paragraph 5 feels the Chairman, Richard has done a magnificent job along with his fellow Councillors and the Clerk.

He urged people to vote in the Referendum on the voting system for the UK parliamentary elections – at present the UK uses the "first past the post" system to elect MPs to the House of Commons. People are to vote on whether there should be an "alternative voting" system used instead. Roger Dauncey said there was a very good document been delivered about this matter that people should read.

Tony Pearson wanted to express his personal thanks to Derek Davies for his hard work in getting the funding organised and sorted and paid in good time. Derek thanked him for his vote of thanks as he was disappointed that the Officers at TBC did not behave in an appropriate manner regarding this matter.

Q John Jenner said that although some other Councils Council Tax was double TBC they offered more services eg FODDC have Street Wardens and Pest Control Officers. He had telephoned TBC on several occasions but had never had any success re collecting dead animals. Why do the Police not organise collection when they see these dead animals?

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A County Councillor Awford said that dead animals are collected and he has reported 7 dead badgers which have been collected - the longest taking 48 hours to be removed. Derek Davies asked him to personally telephone either Phil or himself and they would ensure the dead animals removed. Phil Awford said he would take this up with the Chief Constable.

John Jenner said what a fine job the TBC refuse collection people did and that people really did appreciate their work.

The Chairman felt that the Localism Bill could get confusing. He feels that he certainly is not an expert on planning and this should be left to professionals. However, he felt that the planning team at TBC were not up to scratch, especially Enforcement

Derek Davies said that Authorities have to have a forward plan for 5-6 years with a series of policies and he is currently involved in the Joint Core Strategy Plan. The Localism Bill will mean that if Minsterworth wanted to do something regarding development that was not strictly in line with TBC's Policy then if the Parish had 50% support via a referendum then the development would be granted. Currently house building is at all time low with figures similar to that in 1924. There must be more Affordable Homes built.

6 Police Report

The Clerk reported that PC Sharon Duberley was unable to attend and the Clerk read out the crime figures for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011:

Offences against a person 8; Burglary non-dwelling 1; Fraud 1; Theft from a motor vehicle 3; Theft other 1; Criminal damage 2.

County Councillor Awford said that warnings have been made by the police that there is an increase in rural crime with the theft of machinery ie quad bikes, etc and heating oil.

7 Matters Raised by Electors:

Tony Pearson reported that the 3 green wheelie bins at the Village Hall had been stolen however TBC had replaced these at no cost with 2 larger bins and these had now been chained to the wall.

The Chairman reported to mark the 90th Birthday of the British Legion parishes had been encouraged to hold a celebratory event. The Minsterworth British Legion is holding an event on Sunday 29 May from noon until 5pm with sausages and mash and music from the Second World War. People could dress up if they wanted – tickets available from Minsterworth Garage. He encouraged everyone to support this event.

Mrs Pearson reported that there is still a smell of gas in Pound Lane. It would appear that some repairs have been carried out but obviously not satisfactorily. Parish Council to report.

8 Close of Meeting – The meeting closed at 8.27pm.

Refreshments were served.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Richard Few

The Parish Council meetings have been generally well attended, with two new Councillors being appointed this year, Roger Blowey and Nigel Garbutt.

A Housing Needs Survey was conducted with a good response from parishioners. It showed that there is a need for more housing in the village, and the council hope, in the coming year, to identify a suitable site.

The River Severn flood strategy document published in the summer was poorly constructed and showed many errors in its report. This is now being redone, hopefully with a more sensible policy coming from it.

Again, we were dismayed by some of the planning decisions from TBC, and we still struggle to keep the roads in the village in good repair.

My thanks for all the support given to me by the Clerk and my fellow Councillors.

Ham & Calcotts Green Report

Councillor Cathy Thomas

The regular cutting of the Greens by Messrs Dowding, Watkins & King is much appreciated by the whole village, both Greens are looking much improved for this regular maintenance, to the enjoyment of more villagers. Please continue to be vigilant to report fly tippers etc so that we can all continue to enjoy these facilities.

As we are aware the new water main will be moled across Calcotts green this year, we have met with the contractors and have been assured that there will be minimal disruption to the Greens. Unfortunately we will be diverted to use different lanes for the duration of the work, depending on where the new pipe has progressed – but at least we will then hopefully be 'water leak free'!

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COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Phil Awford – Severn Vale

The County Council continues to deliver on its pledge of no increase in precept this year understanding that many families are facing financial hardship in these challenging times. The Administration is on target to meet the Governments target of saving £118 million over the life of this Council; however, this has meant some tough decisions have been made as to the priorities for continued spending. Protecting the most vulnerable in Gloucestershire remains the key aim of the Council and this has brought about reductions in budgets for some service areas.

The impacts of savings having to be made by Gloucestershire Highways, for instance may mean that some expectations may not be to the fore. Despite the savings, the Administration is investing in the future, grant aid from Government and partnership working is enabling many projects to come forward, investment in Broadband, the potential Park and Ride at Elmbridge Court, stimulation for business and help for first time buyers all feature , however, there is no sign of any potential for a west of Severn Park and Ride on the near horizon.

I have continued to work with the Parish Council in particular relation to the Severn Estuary Study and the EA proposals an ongoing issue for both local residents and those involved in Agriculture. I have again talked with the EA about the impact of the landfill site and how it could be negated; this followed a tour of the area with the Parish Chairman and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee that investigated the EA proposals. I continue to campaign for using the bus lane on the A40 and the removal of the hatching at Linton in order to mitigate traffic delays, however the Highways Agency are not supportive and this is proving difficult to resolve .

I know that this is going to be another tough year; however, as always I am grateful for the support of the Parish Council and local residents and am happy to listen to all concerns and attempt to resolve them.

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Derek Davies

Tewkesbury Borough council is now in the middle of the Joint Core Strategy Preparation which is work being carried out by three Authorities, Tewkesbury, Gloucester and Cheltenham. This arrangement is to satisfy the Government under the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF; which states that under the Act of Parliament Authorities have a duty to co-operate with one another thus avoiding cross border disputes when forming their strategies.

The first stage was to produce a vision for the next twenty years 2011- 2031. This combined with an evidence base on economic growth including job prospects, past and future trends in housing, infrastructure to cope with future development, all this used to be done centrally, now under the “Localism Bill” it is the responsibility of District Councils to ensure that robust Plans and Strategies are secure for the next twenty years.

The gathering of all this information is a massive task undertaken by our Planning staff and a lot of the evidence is now available on line, <http://www.gct-jcs.org/EvidenceBase/>

The first Consultation ended on the 12th February; receiving 2500 responses which will now be reviewed for consideration. The next stage will be the “Preferred Options” Schemes which again will be placed for

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Consultation with the wider stakeholders. Subject to that Consultation, robust Plans and Policies will be prepared for examination by the Planning Inspector acting for the Secretary Of State.

It is thought that the bulk of Housing will be near the urban areas of Gloucester and Cheltenham with some overflow in the Tewkesbury areas due to lack of capacity difficulties within the urban Districts. Included in the Housing figures is a suggested figure of 2400 dwellings in the rural areas over the next twenty years. This will enable some Parishes to have some growth appropriate to its size and need.

Included in this report is an article published in the Citizen May 2011 from Mark Harper our very popular Member of Parliament. It is certainly relevant to the village of Minsterworth at this moment in time.

Good news on the Council Tax front, Tewkesbury are maintaining the same Tax rate for the second year running which is at £99-36 is still the lowest in the County and the fifth lowest in the Country.

OPINION

www.thecitizen.co.uk

Playing fair on traveller rules

BRITAIN'S 100 largest councils pledged to reform the planning regime for travellers who are set to arrive in the new Government's series of planning changes that streamline local planning and control a third of its unauthorised development, protecting the integrity of the planning system and community interests and limiting the interests of the majority of travellers who arrive in the rules.

A number of my constituents in the Forest of Dean are concerned, particularly with respect to the unauthorised sites in Suckwell Lane, Newent, and also in Minsterworth. I am pleased that the new proposed planning rules have been published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in the form of a consultation document, which can be taken into account when a material consideration is given.



Mark Harper

Conservative MP for Forest of Dean



View from Westminster

Agency training for councillors regarding their leadership role in the planning system and in examining and planning applications for sites.

The Government is taking measures to support councils in providing suitable sites and has secured the million of additional funding for local authorities over the spending review period, with the new Localism Bill providing a further increase. Local provision of traveller sites for the needs of unauthorised travellers will be introduced, allowing travellers on official council sites to benefit from the same protection against eviction as residents on other council housing sites.

The Government is being clear that it will not tolerate abuse of the planning system by a small minority of travellers. The reforms will therefore be made by providing a series of reforms to the planning system. Support for the Forest of Dean MP House of Commons London. 0203 835 8355 www.thecitizen.co.uk

HAVE YOUR SAY: Do you agree with Mark Harper's Views? Write to The Editor, The Citizen, 5-8 The Quadrant, Gloucester GL1 1RZ or email editor@thecitizen.co.uk or on www.thecitizen.co.uk

This is the right place to say that I have had the enormous pleasure of serving you the villagers of Minsterworth for more than twenty five years making more friends than I could possibly name, so can you please read this as a personal "THANK YOU" to each and every one of you. My thanks also go to Richard Few and the members of the Parish Council not forgetting Fiona our hard working Clerk.

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Flood and Snow Warden Report 2011 – 2012 Councillor Cathy Thomas

Not wishing to attract adverse weather conditions in the coming months, I am sure everyone in Minsterworth has marvelled at the mild winter we have enjoyed, with some wonderful ‘balmy’ days. We have (so far) enjoyed only a sprinkling of snow and no flooding this year, we know that nature has a way of evening up our weather, but with the ground so dry at the moment some gentle rain can only do good – let’s hope this is not ‘speaking too soon!’

As always we must thank our Snow contractor Mr Gordon King for being prepared for any issues we may have had.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY ADVISER AND HOME GROUP REPORT

Whilst, with Tony Pearson, we intend to keep the "Welcome to Minsterworth" handout up-to-date for passing to new residents when they arrive, it does not seem sensible for me to continue to keep an up-to date register of all residents which, as Community Emergency Adviser (CEA), I did also with Tony Pearson's assistance.

The CEA is no longer an official post, which it used to be; now in any emergency it could (and should) be the parish Councillors who would have any necessary information about the residents in their "areas of responsibility".

As to matters concerning Minsterworth's history and heritage (in recent years provided by Terry Moore-Scott) the following is his report:

- Old photographs continue to be added to the Minsterworth In Old Photographs archive and, but for the lack of a sponsor, a second publication of such material would now be entirely feasible. In the meantime, another small book is about to be published entitled ‘A Minsterworth Miscellany’. This is a collection of historical real-life tales from Minsterworth’s distant past right up to the modern times. As the existing publications have both shown, such publications do much to put Minsterworth more ‘on the map’ and are sought world-wide by family historians with Minsterworth connections.
- Another initiative during the past year is the setting up of a link between Minsterworth and the recently-formed F W Harvey Society. Because of the poet’s close associations with, and obvious fondness for the village, the Society is keen to promote the link by holding various Harvey-associated events here, attracting Harvey enthusiasts from all around. In addition, the Appletree Inn now has a permanent display of Harvey pictures.

R.M.Dauncey
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PAROCHIAL CHARITIES

Allan Selwyn

HIETTS' CHARITY, FOUNDED BY WILL DATED 1719

The aim of this charity is:-

"To assist persons who have not attained the age of 25 years, resident in the ancient Parish of Minsterworth, who are in need of financial assistance and are preparing for, entering upon or engaged in any profession, trade, occupation or service by providing them with outfits or paying fees, travelling or maintenance expenses, or by such other means for their advancement in life, or to enable them to earn their living as the trustees think fit"

In other words promoting the education (including social and physical training) of such person. At the time of going to print no grants have been made in the current financial year.

The most recent bank statements show:-

30 day account £812.23

Current account £327.52

Total: £1139.75

WINKLES CHARITY FOUNDED BY WILL DATED JUNE 1722

This charity issues small grants towards heating costs to persons of state retirement age who live alone.

December 2011 saw four payments, being given making a total of £100.00. As at 28 February 2012 there was £307.37 standing in the Lloyd TSB bank account.

Further information on grants can be obtained from the Trustees

Mrs. Jane Fraser-Hook 01452 750288

Mr Gerald Savage 01452 750401

Mr Allan Selwyn 01452 750384