

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 6TH JULY 2016, 7:30pm, IN THE MEETING ROOM PUCKLECHURCH COMMUNITY CENTRE, ABSON ROAD.

PRESENT. B. Symons - Chairman (BS), G. Boyle - Vice Chair (GB), T. Symons (TS), M. Watson (MW), R Dunning (RD), L English (LE), L Putt (LP), C Stephens (CS), S Reade – District Councillor, J. Bailey (Clerk).

NO. 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

J Cotterell (JC)

Ben Stokes – District Councillor

NO. 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors GB, BS and TS declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6d as near neighbours to the planning application for 1 Cedar Way.

NO. 3. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting on 15th June 2016 were accepted as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

NO. 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were 9 members of the public in attendance to express their concerns over the lack of grass cutting in the village and question the process behind the parish council's decision. The lack of consultation with the village before this decision was made was highlighted and all the residents that attended were very unhappy with how the village looks since returning to SGC's core service.

ACTION: Agenda item 9a later this evening

A resident questioned the correct terminology for the hall at Abson Road. Some articles have referred to it as the Community Centre and others the Village Hall which is confusing to the residents and should be addressed. A question was also asked if the public can still write items for the Pucklechurch News as theirs had not been published.

ACTION: Clerk to speak to the editor of the Pucklechurch News regarding the public's articles being published.

A resident raised concerns over the process the parish council follows, on how we do things, how we record them and how the public can understand the decisions made. It was suggested sensitive areas should include public participation. The parish council have adopted a model standard for consultation. It was believed that this model was either ignored or the PC chose not to use it, in some recent decisions and that this was deemed as poor process.

ACTION: Clerk to make this an agenda item and invite the resident to attend the meeting.

NO. 5 CORRESPONDENCE

5a West of England Rural Network's AGM

4pm, Thursday 14th July 2016 Baptist Hall, Tunbridge Road, Chew Magna, Bristol, BS40 8SP. Circulated to community groups

Noted

ACTION: RD to attend

5b PRS for Music formal consultation

A newly proposed tariff to simplify the licensing of its members copyright music within premises owned and managed by or on behalf of local authorities and town and other councils ("local authorities").

The consultation will run from 22nd June to 17th August 2016.

Noted

ACTION: Clerk to circulate to community groups

5c South Gloucestershire Summer 2016 Newsletter

Noted

5d Forthcoming bus changes

Attached document detailing forthcoming bus service changes that will come into effect after 24/07 and 01/08.

Circulated to community groups.

Noted

5e SGC Transport to Health Project

The Transport to Health Project has reached the end of stage 1. A briefing note update is attached and has been circulated to community groups.

The baseline interim report and redacted bid submission are now publically available from the following webpage: <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/public-community-and-school-transport/transport-to-health/>

Noted

5f GPFA Newsletter

Noted

ACTION: Send to Huw Morgan

NO.6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

6a PK16/1047/RM Commercial Land at Emersons Green Urban Village Emersons Green South Gloucestershire

Erection of a parcel delivery distribution facility (Use Class B8) providing 6,642sqm of floor space with details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale with associated development. (Approval of Reserved Matters to be read in conjunction with Outline Planning Permission PK04/1965/O).

Notice of decision: Approve with Conditions

Noted

6b PK16/1481/F 11 Cherrytree Court Pucklechurch Bristol South Gloucestershire BS16 9BF

Erection of two storey side extension and front porch to form additional living accommodation

Notice of decision: Approve with Conditions

Noted

6c PK16/1664/RM Lyde Green Emersons Green South Gloucestershire - Re-consultation

Erection of community centre and outdoor changing facility, including car parking and landscaping. (Approval of Reserved Matters only to be read in conjunction with Outline Planning Permission PK04/1965/O)

Noted

6d PK16/3708/F 1 Cedar Way Pucklechurch Bristol South Gloucestershire BS16 9RN

Demolition of existing extension and removal of dormer. Erection of a single storey side extension and front dormer to provide additional living accommodation.

RESOLVED: No objection

ACTION: Clerk to submit no objection comment on SGC website.

NO. 7. REPORTS

7a To RECEIVE pre-submitted reports from Councillors

There were no pre-submitted reports from councillors.

7b. To RECEIVE Report from District Councillor(s)

Steve Reade reported that he has also been contacted by several residents regarding the grass cutting. A resident spoke at the ECS meeting and suggested that for the same cost, areas could receive, say 4 cuts a years rather than highways at two cuts and amenity at every two weeks which may be worth considering. Parishes should put together options and challenge SGC on the process as there seems to be a disconnection between various members in SGC. If the grass is causing a Health and Safety issue SGC would have to deal with it immediately, this can be reported in the normal way through fixmystreet. Suggestions were made that the parish council needs to seek the definition of highways and rural verges and seek clarity of what is our land and what isn't.

7c To RECEIVE and NOTE a verbal report from the Clerk

- Five copies of the dog fowling 'we're watching you' posters have been laminated at a cost of £7.50. Agenda 1st June item 9i.
- PK16/3414/F The Old Coach House - submitted no objection comment on SGC website 06.07.16. Agenda 15th June item other planning matters.
- Wrote to Chris Harris to have the 'under construction' sign removed from the multi user path 23.06.16. Agenda 15th June item 7a.
 - Received a response 24.06.16 informing me that he will have it taken down.
- Wrote to West of England Joint Spatial Team to chase up why PPC's comments haven't been published on the website 24.06.16. Agenda 15th June item 7c.
- Responded to email from AED Locator regarding our decision to opt for a Heartsine Samaritan 350p, where a quotation from AED was requested but never received 23.06.15. Agenda 15th June item 7c.
- Wrote to Gary Meddick SGC regarding the process and options available to PPC regarding acquiring land. Agenda 15th July item Grass Cutting
 - Response received 30.06.16 - The grass verges in scope are all highway verges so the PC cannot take them back as in ownership. Under the localism agenda set out by SGC parishes did have options, which I will set out below:
 - Accept the core service of a minimum two cuts per season.
 - Contract SGC to provide a standard enhanced service approx. 8 additional cut per season (your previous choice)
 - Contract SGC to provide a bespoke service with the PC dictating the number of additional cuts and at what sites.
 - As above using a third party contractor engaged and paid for by the PC but working within the contract perimeters set by SGC as landowners
 - PC employ their own workforce to carry out as above.

All of the above options currently reside across SGC

The majority use SGC to provide a standard enhanced service, two have a bespoke service, two employ third parties, one uses in-house workforce and three including the unparished area have a core service. Hope this helps but I would be happy to meet you and/or councillors to explain further.

Your next core service cut is September time the other areas of Public spaces are unaffected.

- Responded to residents regarding grass cutting and added the decision to the PPC website and circulated to community groups. Agenda 15th June item Grass Cutting.
- Email received from PC Ken Hill and PCSO Sam Derrick giving their apologies for non-attendance at the Parish Council meeting on 15th June. They were expecting to attend and were disappointed that they were unable to do so, but were assigned to a high risk missing person within the area, which took priority over any commitments for all officers on duty at that time. They have advised that they will do their utmost to attend the meeting scheduled for 3rd August. Agenda 15th June item 9a and 9f.
- Wrote to Amanda Deeks regarding the gipsy and traveller policy 23.06.16. Agenda 15th June item 9b.
 - Response received from Josie Matthews PA to Amanda Deeks 24.06.16 thanking me for my email to the Chief Executive, regarding the above issue and confirming that this has been received and we will be sent a response in due course.
 - Response from Andrew Griffiths received and made an agenda item tonight item 9b.
- Wrote to all interested parties in the Neighbourhood Plan 24.06.16 informing them of the next steps and that a meeting will be held in September. We have received three new enquiries bringing the total to 9 people. Agenda 15th June item 9c.
- Circulated link to the member awarded funding consultation to council 24.06.16. Agenda 15th June item 9e.
- Action Tracker, actions from agenda 15th June item 9f:
 - Item 28 – sent a reminder email to GB regarding writing a letter for right to bid for Assets of community value.
 - Item 46 – chased Instant Landscapes for a date when the trees at St Aldams will be crowned
 - Response received informing me that this will be carried out in the next couple of weeks.
 - Item 56 – chased doctors surgery regarding notice board 24.06.16
 - Response received informing me that they do not have a suitable sized board so this is something that I will need to purchase and get Huw Morgan to erect.
 - Item 60 – Chased Chris Harris to remove under construction sign.
 - Chris replied 24.06.16 informing me that they will get it removed
 - Item 61 – Chased two allotment holders for agreements by letter 24.06.16
 - Item 64 – Chased SGC Alison Richards for SGC's policy on dog fouling signs on lampposts and if we can source them from SGC
 - Response received from Alison Richards 27th June informing us that in principle we wouldn't have a problem with the Parish Council doing this.

We currently purchase our road signs through Resolution Signs in Bristol. As we would have to have the signs made up specially, there is little advantage in you purchasing these from us, rather than direct from a sign manufacturer. If you are having your own signs manufactured we would need to check the fittings on the signs are suitable so they don't cause damage to the lamp columns.

ACTION: Clerk to find out costs for signs

- Item 76 – PC Ken Hill invited to a future meeting on 3rd August 2016.

- Amended website to show that we have cancelled the meeting on 20th July. Agenda 15th June.

- Huw Morgan has replaced the lock at the allotments 27.06.16.

- Received a response from Avon and Somerset Police Strategic Digital Services team informing me that there was a change in the crime recording system around October time which may account for those that say 'Status Update Unavailable'

- We have added an accounts tab to the website and moved last year's annual return, the audit notice for this year and budget spreadsheet to this page 24.06.16.

- Circulated Andrew Griffith's response to council 29.06.16 regarding the Gipsy and Traveller policy.

- Instant Landscapes have confirmed that they are already using a Nylon strimmer cable to trim around the play area in St Aldams, therefore he will take extra care around the equipment not to cause any further damage.

- I have received a report from Huw Morgan and Anna Chelmicka informing me that the bin opposite The Bridge Inn is broken, we are currently paying SGC to empty this bin on a monthly basis.
ACTION: Open Spaces Working Group to pick up this item and merge with the dog bin project.

- Overgrown hedges/trees have been reported at the allotments. Huw Morgan looking into this 30.06.16.
 - This has now been sorted by Huw Morgan 03.07.16 and the tenant informed.

- AON Insurance has confirmed that they will make a payment of £549.10, net of excess for the replacement defibrillator ref: 5016497.

- Reported hedge on path between Hillview Road and Abson Road needs cutting to fixmystreet 06.07.16.

- Reported helium/nitrous oxide gas canisters by subway on Oaktree Avenue to fixmystreet 06.07.16.

- GPFA Membership Renewal is £50.00 per annum. Do we wish to renew our membership?
 - This is a pre authorised spend that is already in our budget
ACTION: Clerk to renew the membership

NO. 8. FINANCE

8a TO AGREE and sign cheques

The following cheques were agreed and signed by two signatories.

Name	Details	Amount	Chq No.
South Gloucestershire Council	Bins	£1493.57	2321
Greenfields Services	Cantilever Swing Repairs St Aldams	£117.60	2322
Huw Morgan Landscapes	Maintenance Contract and Materials	£1151.53	2323
Anna Chelmicka	Litter Picking	£360.00	2324
Ensign Print	Pucklechurch News	£440.00	2325
Instant Landscapes	Grass Cutting May/June	£1600.00	2326
EDF Energy	Electricity Parkfield Defibrillator	£6.33	2327
Wages/HMRC	Wages/NI	£1338.88	2328/2329
	Total	£6507.91	

ACTION: Councillors CS and RD to attend the meeting on 3rd August 2016 at 7.00pm to go through the Finance with Councillor TS.

NO. 9. Agenda Items

9a Grass Cutting: To CONSIDER the correspondence received and AGREE any actions if any.

Pre reading complaints and responses to them, by our MP and SGC and to consider other points raised in communications.

The below report was read aloud at the meeting by Councillor Boyle:

Grass Cutting: to cut or not to cut, that is the question..... or is it?

Background:

1. The Parish owns and cares for a number of areas of amenity land which it pays independent contractors to maintain. The cost of this is met from the Parish Precept
2. SGC has a statutory duty to maintain its land under the highways act – the level of service has been set at the minimum required to meet these duties. SGC defines its land as either amenity or verge – amenity grass is cut more often than verges. The definition of amenity and verge is not clear.
3. Some householders have chosen to cut grass owned by SGC and have been doing so for a number of years – they are also entitled to apply for a license to maintain.
4. PPC is charged by SGC for grass-cutting and bin emptying under contract – the contract negotiations have not been without some difficulty or clarity and were prolonged.
5. PPC pays SGC to cut grass and empty bins
6. Householders pay Council Tax for SGC services and Parish Precept for PPC to deliver services
7. Grass cutting costs accounts for a huge % of PPC's annual spend

Gary Meddick SGC's StreetScene Operations Manager has summarised the situation as follows:

“Back in 2012 South Gloucestershire Council as part of its Localism agenda made the decision to revert its highway grass services to a core service with the option for parish councils to provide an enhancement in the service level. Until recently South Gloucestershire Council has been cutting the grass on behalf of your parish council as part of this original agreement made under the localism agenda. From April 2016 the parish council decided not

*to continue with this service leaving South Gloucestershire council the option to revert to the core service, currently **two or three cuts per growing season.**"*

This is SGC's interpretation of Localism as what Gary fails to mention is that this action aimed to reduce SGC costs by providing a minimum 'core' service with regard to its own land and expected Parish Council's to make up the shortfall by paying for an enhanced service – PPC's view of this was that in essence this was a form of double taxation and that SGC should be providing the service. PPC has also been mindful of the level of precept it levies – the cost of the services offered by SGC are not capped, there is no benefit to buying in a 3 year deal for example and once locked in no guarantee of prices remaining the same. The result of deciding not to pay for an enhanced service is plain to see and has caused unrest amongst parishioners especially those who are most immediately affected. However, this has highlighted that SGCs core service is not capable of delivering the expectations residents have regarding the upkeep of the highway verges. It has also highlighted that there is a lack of clarity about which authority maintains what.

Pucklechurch Parish Council works to serve the needs of the local community.

The Council is responsible for good governance, accountability and transparency in the delivery and improvement of public services and to ensure that its public business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards. It must also ensure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. Its members are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of their affairs and the stewardship of the resources in their care.

Options include:

1. Do nothing
 - Unsightly Parish
 - Unhappy residents
 - Stay in line with budget and responsibilities

2. Pay SGC for an enhanced service for the rest of this financial year and beyond
 - Tidy Parish
 - Happy residents
 - Overspend on this year's budget, stay in line with responsibilities
 - Increased precept 2017 onwards – incremental increases unknown

3. Pay for a one off cut using 3rd Party contractor
 - Tidy Parish (short term)
 - Happy residents (short term)
 - Provides time to discuss and agree a longer term sustainable future (see 4)
 - Overspend on this year's budget, stay in line with responsibilities

4. Apply for 'licence to maintain' SGC land*
 - Tidy Parish
 - Happy residents
 - Control of costs and quality using 3rd party contractor
 - reduces spend with SGC, could result in rebate from SGC
 - transparency of service provision

*This would involve defining which pieces of land we wish to opt to maintain, i.e. those that affect immediate residential amenity rather than those which do not

It would be good to step back and think about these options in light of the draft vision statement I wrote for the forward plan template:

Vision

Our vision is to secure a successful and sustainable future for Pucklechurch Parish as well as to ensure the continued health and well-being of the local community and to enrich its residents' quality of life.

Our aspirations as a Council are to:

- *Provide a high quality service*
- *Be a well-managed accessible, inclusive and effective resource.*
- *Develop Pucklechurch as a great place to live and work.*
- *Be an asset to Pucklechurch and the wider community.*

All councillors were given the chance to speak and express their views on how the council should move forward on this subject. Many views were expressed to cut or not to cut, as it is a budgetary decision by SGC who decided to change the number of grass cuts not the PPC. Issues of road safety, the overall aesthetic quality of the village, the number of complaints received with regard the number of residents and the point of double taxation for parishioners who should not be paying twice for this service were raised. Costings were provided by the clerk for a one off cut from a contractor at £550.00 and to re-instate the grass cutting through SGC at a cost of £1302 for the rest of the season.

A proposal to re-instate the cuts for this year and then negotiate a way forward was seconded. A vote took place where 5 councillors were in favour of the proposal and 3 councillors against.

RESOLVED: To reinstate the extra cuts through SGC at a cost of £1302 which is to be endorsed using the project spend allocated in the budget for bio diversity.

ACTION: Clerk to inform Gary Meddick of the decision and find out when the next cut will take place.

9b To REVIEW the response from Andrew Griffiths – SGC Solicitor regarding the Travellers Policy and briefing note and AGREE next steps

The email from Andrew Griffiths was read aloud during the meeting. There is no date on the policy and the parish council have not seen the original policy to be able to compare the changes made in this amended version.

RESOLVED: to write back to Amanda Deeks informing her that Andrew Griffiths reply does not answer the questions raised by the parish council and that clarification on the status of the policy is needed.

ACTION: GB to write a letter to Amanda Deek's for the clerk to send with a copy of Andrew Griffith's email.

9c Pedestrian Crossing Westerleigh Road: To CONSIDER the report from Chris Harris and where its sits in the previously agreed priority list. To CONSIDER part funding if appropriate.

It needs to be identified what is more important Shortwood Road or Westerleigh Road as Westerleigh Road appears to have jumped up the priority list due to the school children needing a crossing. As the cost of a suggested crossing maybe in the region of £15,000 a public consultation would be needed as this will affect the precept. More information is required on the Shortwood crossing so that a clear cut decision can be made by the public on what is more important and how we can fund it. A suggestion was made that funding may be provided for crossings when the Neighbourhood Plan is underway.

RESOLVED: To go to public consultation after all the information is received from Chris Harris on the Shortwood Road crossing.

ACTION: Clerk to write to Chris Harris to gently remind him to send the plan for the Shortwood Road crossing.

9d To REVIEW the email from a resident regarding the planning process and AGREE a response

ACTION: Clerk to write to SGC enforcement informing them that a resident has concerns over a business being operated from the Day Room.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to the resident's letter as below:

- Near neighbours are informed of planning applications however this depends if it is a minor or major development and where you are situated from the site e.g. 30 meters. Clerk to forward the 'Who gets consulted and when?' link to the resident which will provide more information on the process.
- If there is a breach of planning this should be reported to SGC enforcement as this is not within Pucklechurch Parish Council's remit.
- All current planning applications are detailed on the SGC website and included on our agenda which is posted on the PPC website and notice boards.
- The minutes of meeting are up to date on the website, the delay in June was due to the clerk being on holiday.

9e To CONSIDER the impact on SGC's decision on the Devolution bid

The results of the devolution bid are to opt in, with Bristol and BANES voting for and North Somerset voting against.

RESOLVED: For individual councillors to complete the consultation.

ACTION: Clerk to circulate to consultation to community groups.

9f To REVIEW the report received regarding parking in Pucklechurch and AGREE next steps. Report attached. Already forwarded to PC Ken Hill

As this report has already been sent to PC Ken Hill who is attending the next council meeting on 3rd August it was resolved to bring this report up at this meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to add police and crime stats to the agenda on 3rd August and invite the resident to the meeting.

9g To CONSIDER responding to the Oral Health Promotion Strategy Consultation and AGREE next steps

The draft strategy is a new plan to improve the region's oral health to tackle the problem of tooth decay and diseases of the mouth. Comments welcome between 8th June 2016 and the 20th July 2016.

Already circulated to community groups.

Noted

9h To REVIEW the collated responses from councillors regarding the Replacement of Community Grants with Member Awarded Funding Consultation and AGREE a response for submission. Deferred item from 15th June 2016.

Comments were circulated prior to the meeting by councillors TS and BS. These were added to at the meeting and it was resolved to submit these as a response from the parish council.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to consultation on behalf of the council.

10. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 3rd August 2016 at 7:30pm in the Meeting Room, Pucklechurch Community Centre

The Council meeting closed at 21.40