

**MINUTES OF THE BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON WEDNESDAY 1st AUGUST 2007 at BISLEY WI VILLAGE HALL**

Mr R S Bryant		Chairman
Ms L Greene	}	Bisley Ward
Mr P Thorp	}	
Mrs J Russell	}	Eastcombe Ward
Mr R K Brooks	}	
Mr A E Davis	}	Oakridge Ward
Mr R N Budgeon	}	
Mr P Dawes	}	
Mr N M MacLeod		Clerk

In attendance: County Councillor J Nash
District Councillor P Carrick

One member of the public was present.

07.08 1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs L Hemming, Mr R Peyton and Mr C James.

07.08 2. **Public Participation**

The Chairman welcomed Mr David Flook from Oakridge Ward as a spectator to the proceedings.

07.08 3. **Declaration of Interests**

Mr R K Brooks, Mr R N Budgeon and Mr R S Bryant declared interest in payments at Item 06.08 (10).

07.08 4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2007 had been circulated to councillors. Queries were raised about the accuracy of the Policy Statement on Sustainability at Item 07.08 (8d) contained in the Minutes. This related to the inclusion of the terminology 'environment and climate change'. Some councillors considered that 'environment' included 'climate change' and that the latter should be deleted. Following discussion and a vote the continued inclusion of both terms was agreed, but subject to review as further policies developed. No other points were raised and the Chairman signed the Minute Book.

07.08 5. **Matters Arising**

a) **Parish Plan/Village Design Statement**

Mr P Dawes advised the meeting that the medium-term actions dealing with School Transport were nearing completion and that the actions would be finalised at the start of the new School Year.

Turning to the Village Design Statement (VDS) Mr Dawes said that clarification of the current draft Government White Paper on Planning was required in order to determine how the proposals covering Public Consultation on important planning issues would be implemented. A letter to Stroud District Council (SDC) seeking this clarification had been sent. In the meantime, the Steering Group would work to its current agenda.

Looking ahead, Mr Dawes said that the Steering Group hoped to produce a 'skeleton' draft VDS which would be presented for review with SDC. This should then help to inform the Steering Group on how best to carry out the Public Consultation processes in the further development of the VDS.

Mr A E Davis asked how many 'sample' Statements from other parishes has been examined before determining the recommended format for the Bisley-with-Lypiatt VDS. Mr Dawes said that several had been viewed on the Internet. These had been of variable quality and some did not warrant direct comparison with this Parish. In the end it was considered that a VDS produced by Cottenham in Cambridgeshire offered the best framework on which to base the Bisley-with-Lypiatt VDS.

b) **S137 Payments**

The Clerk had circulated a document setting out the scope of S137 Payments in the Parish, with recommendations as to how best to ensure that organisations and parishioners were aware of the financial assistance that might be available for specific projects. Concern was expressed that publicity on the Parish Website might attract a 'raft' of applications. Mr R K Brooks said that each Ward was well-aware of projects and causes which could benefit from assistance and that widespread publicity was unnecessary. Mr Brooks added that there were other sources of funding available such as the SDC 'Community Grant Scheme'. After further discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk would draw-up a draft 'overview' statement for consideration by Wards on the funding of projects, for possible inclusion on the Parish Website.

c) **Bisley News Magazine**

The Clerk read out a letter received from the Editor of the 'Bisley News' thanking the Council for the generous financial assistance given and informing the Council that the magazine was moving constructively towards a firm financial 'footing'. The Chairman asked Ms L Greene to write to the Editor to congratulate her on 'turning round the fortunes' of this important community magazine.

d) **Neighbourhood Wardens**

The Clerk reported that arrangements had been made for the Stroud District Neighbourhood Warden Scheme to give a 30-minute presentation to the Parish Council at the beginning of the September Meeting. It was considered that there could be merit in examining the potential for combining a Neighbourhood Warden with Neighbourhood Watch, particularly in the Bisley Ward. It was agreed that an invitation to attend the presentation would be extended to the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

07.08 6. **District Council Matters**

District Councillor P Carrick gave councillors an overview of the Stroud District Council involvement in the management of the water emergency during the past couple of weeks. She said the SDC had been extremely busy in manning a 24-hour response cell and that work had been carried out in conjunction with Severn Trent Water, Parishes, RSPCA and the Farmers' Union.

Whilst Councillor Carrick considered that operations had SDC had, in general, run well, Parish Councillors held the view that some of the methods used by SDC to communicate with parishes had added confusion to an already confused situation. Furthermore, the use of Village Halls as points of contact had served to by-pass the Parish Clerk and Councillors thus leaving them without a proper picture of events as they developed. It was agreed that these and other matters would be gathered together in a Parish Council response to feedback on the emergency. This response would also include recommendations for the management of similar events in the future.

07.08 7. **County Council Matters**

County Councillor J Nash reported to the meeting on the following topics:
Flooding – A huge amount of time, effort and resources had been devoted to the extraordinary flooding which hit the County on Friday 20th July. The threat of the Walham Power Station being put out of order had continued until 24th July, when it was finally declared safe, following the efforts of the Army and Fire and Rescue Services. Had this Station fallen, the entire County would have been left without power. The next stage for the County is to formulate a Recovery Plan and to discuss how such unprecedented events should be handled in the future.

Rural Speed Conference – This Conference is to be held at Cheltenham Pump Rooms on 11th September 2007 and will involve Parish and County representatives in discussing the problems and possible solutions to speeding in the County.

Climate Change Agenda – Following the signing of the ‘Nottingham Declaration for Tackling Climate Change’ a campaign had been launched to reduce carbon emissions by 10% by 2012. This campaign is a long-term project and climate-change actions covering Energy, Transport and Waste will be developed by the County and publicised over the coming months.

New Rail Franchise – In July 2007 it was announced that the Cross-Country Rail Franchise had been taken from ‘Virgin Trains’ and awarded to ‘Arriva’. This company would take over in November with new timetables being published in December.

Gloucestershire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – This Trust was approved on 2nd July 2007. The Trust, which specialises in mental health, learning difficulties and substance abuse, will result in fewer central controls and more direct accountability to the community. This would include the facility at Weavers Croft in Stroud.

a) **Water Emergency Response**

The Chairman opened the discussion on the water emergency by thanking all the councillors and members of the community who had contributed substantially to ensuring that the most damaging effects of the water shortage were minimised. It was agreed that this appreciation should be expressed by Ward to the individuals most involved.

As to the overall management of the emergency by Severn Trent Water, County Council and District Council there would clearly be lessons to learn. Primarily, there was little evidence of a cohesive emergency response plan which resulted in a lack of effective communication on some issues and as far as this Parish was concerned, little appreciation of its rural nature and limited access routes. As a result, emergency supplies of water were slow to arrive, the size of vehicles used was inappropriate for the narrow road conditions and control headquarters and drivers had scant knowledge of the geography of the Parish.

When water supplies eventually arrived, they were occasionally delivered to the wrong location. Bisley, example, had at least 6 bowsers spread throughout the village, whereas Oakridge Lynch had only one bowser and Far Oakridge none at all. On the other hand, Waterlane with only a few houses had 2 large bowsers. These problems arose because locations for bowsers were selected without any reference to the Parish Council Offices and it appeared that Severn Trent Water failed to draw distinction between the Stroud District and Stroud Town.

A number of other problem issues were discussed and it was agreed that the Parish Council would produce a comprehensive response to the Higher Authorities involved in the management of the emergency. The overall aim of this would be to ensure that, should a similar event occur in the future, Higher Authorities would be able to liaise directly with the appropriate points of contact at Parish level. It was also agreed that the Parish would produce an Incident Plan for the management and co-ordination of activities in the villages and surrounding hamlets.

b) **Contractors – Public Liability Insurance**

The Chairman said that when engaging contractors to carry out work for the Parish it was important to ensure that they carried the appropriate level of Public Liability Insurance against the potential for claims. The Parish Council itself had such protection but the Clerk was asked to check the Insurance Policy to determine that its cover included work carried out by handymen, for example, who were essentially self-employed but engaged by the Parish to carry out maintenance tasks.

- c) **Highways Seminar**
The Clerk advised the meeting that Gloucestershire County Highways would hold its Annual Seminar in October 2007. It was agreed that the Chairman, Mr P Thorp and the Clerk would attend.
- d) **Speed Management Conference**
The Chairman advised the meeting that a Speed Management Conference sponsored by the Gloucestershire Safety Camera Partnership would be held in the Pittville Pump Rooms, Cheltenham on 11th September 2007. It was agreed that speed management was an important issue in the Parish and the Chairman and the Clerk would attend the Conference.
- e) **Commitment to the Gloucestershire Charter**
Councillors had been previously given a copy of 'The Gloucestershire Charter'. The Parish Council had decided that its acceptance of this document should be deferred until it became clear that some benefit would accrue and that the undertakings offered by The Charter were of substance.
A further invitation to subscribe to the document had now been received which indicated that 100 Parish/Town Councils had now accepted the Charter. It was agreed that from the evidence now available, acceptance of the Charter offered Parishes increased access to meetings and consultation.
Ms L Greene proposed and Mr A E Davis seconded the motion that the Parish should now become a signatory to the Charter. This was agreed unanimously and the Clerk was asked to notify Gloucestershire County Council of the acceptance.
- f) **Management of Allotments**
The Chairman advised the meeting that Bisley Ward had some concerns about the Terms and Conditions of Allotment Holders as they affected the production of surplus produce by individual allotments. Ms L Greene said that she had written to the National Allotments Association to seek clarification on the issue and that she would wish to defer reporting further on the matter until advice had been received.

07.08 9 **Finance**

Receipts July 2007

Bank Interest £108.96

Total Receipts £108.96

Payments – August 2007

	£	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Total</u>
Mark Townsend – Stile Oakridge	275.00		275.00
Hogarth Skip Hire – Bisley	105.00	18.38	123.38
Bisley WI Village Hall – VDS	14.00		14.00
P Hayward Berry – Grass Oakridge	20.00		20.00
JSM Signs – Dog Signs Bisley	30.00	5.25	35.25
Auro UK – Maintenance Bisley	29.38	5.14	34.52
N MacLeod – July Salary	675.40		675.40
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/NI	334.15		334.15
T Bryant – Maintenance Oakridge	117.00		117.00
ST Water – Oakridge Pavilion/VH	76.43		76.43
P Thorp – Water Buckets etc - Bisley	16.25		16.25
Ian Trueman – Maintenance (B & E)	146.50		146.50
Felix Brooks – Maintenance E’Combe	61.86		61.86
Totals	£1,900.87	£28.77	£1,929.74

Petty Cash Payments – July 2007 £20.00

Cash Balance as at 31 July 2007 £20,390.83

Bisley Gift Balance as at 31 July 2007 £2,427.49

Bisley Lock-up Balance as at 31 July 2007 £2,056.51

Westbury Gift Balance as at 31 July 2007 £10,000.00

Parish Office Reserve as at 31 July 2007 £10,000.00

07.08 10 **Planning**
The following applications have been received during the past month and the Council's responses indicated where received:

S.06/1518/FUL – Fourwinds, Middle Hill, Eastcombe – Erection of single-storey side extension and demolition of detached garage. – **No Observations.**

S.06/1445/FUL – Brown Cottage, Eastcombe – **No Observations.**

All planning decisions where indicated were ratified by the whole meeting.

07.08 11 **Correspondence**
The following correspondence has been received during the last month and was on the table for inspection.

CPRE	Annual Report 2006-2007
Cotswold Conservation Board	Minutes of Annual Meeting
Parker's Wholesale Flower Catalogue	Autumn 2007
Bago	Handyman Equipment Catalogue
SLCC	'The Clerk' Magazine – July 2007

07.08 12 **Ward Matters**

a) **Bisley**

Ms L Greene asked the Clerk to clarify where responsibility lay for the maintenance of the gate on the path leading from the Persimmon Homes in Windyridge to the Stroud Road. Ms L Greene also asked the Clerk to check the status of Notes on Discussions prepared following Ward Meetings.

b) **Eastcombe**

Mrs J Russell reported to the meeting that the newly repaired dry stone wall on the Eastcombe Recreation Ground had been demolished by vandals. The Clerk confirmed that this incident had been reported to the Police and that the Insurance Company had been contacted to determine if this property was covered under the Parish Policy.

c) **Oakridge**

Oakridge Ward had no points to raise that were not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

07.08 13 **Date and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 5th September 2007 at Bisley WI Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2140 hours.