

**MINUTES OF THE BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON WEDNESDAY 3rd OCTOBER 2007 at BISLEY WI VILLAGE HALL**

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

In attendance: County Councillor J Nash

No members of the public were present.

07.10 1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillors Mrs L Hemming, Mr P Dawes, Mr R Peyton, Mr C James and from District Councillor P Carrick.

07.10 2. **Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

07.10 3. **Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared by Councillors.

07.10 4. **Co-option of New Parish Councillor**

Following statutory advertisement of a Casual Vacancy in the Parish Council (Bisley Ward) and notification by Electoral Services at SDC of no applications, Mrs Ceri Nash was co-opted by the Council as a Councillor for the Bisley Ward. Mrs Nash was warmly welcomed to her first meeting by the Chairman and fellow Councillors.

07.10 5. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2007 had been circulated to all Councillors. County Councillor J Nash referred to Item 09.07 (8) 'Corporate Performance Assessment' and requested that the word 'Annual' be removed from Line 3 to reflect accuracy. This was done and the amended minutes were agreed by all Councillors and the Minute Book was signed by the Chairman.

07.10 6. **Matters Arising**

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

Following-on from the actions detailed at the last meeting, Mr A E Davis said that he had visited Stroud College to determine the possibility of the College conducting Adult Courses in outlying villages. Mr Davis indicated that the response from the College was encouraging but that any such undertaking would be very much dependent upon the number of adults interested in participating and on the subject matter of the Course(s) favoured. The first step would therefore be to canvass parishioners to determine the level of interest, type(s) of Course favoured and what individuals would be prepared to pay for 'outreach' education. Eastcombe Ward pointed out that some education classes were already held in the village. It was agreed that Parish Newsletters would be the best medium through which to canvass response and Mr Davis and Ms L Greene undertook to draw up a suitable questionnaire, following consultation in Wards. Mrs C Nash suggested that youngsters, and especially those who are unemployed, would also benefit from such courses.

As to the Village Design Statement, work on producing a 'skeleton draft' was underway.

b) **Energy Neighbourhoods Meeting**

The Chairman gave a resume of the meeting held at Rodborough Community Hall by Severn Wye to promote energy conservation initiatives in parishes. Severn Wye sought support from parishes to set up 'Energy Neighbourhoods' whereby 8 to 10 households within each Parish would participate in a programme of energy monitoring with a view to reducing energy consumption by some 8% over the period of the programme. A leaflet explaining the procedure was passed to each Councillor. As to cost, The Chairman said that each Parish would be required to subscribe £3,500.00 over a 3-year period to participate in the programme. Ms L Greene and Mr R K Brooks both considered that the Parish could achieve a better outcome by initiatives which benefited the whole community, rather than just a few houses. Ms L Greene said it would be worth determining through District Councillor P Carrick what funding/grants etc were already available for energy conservation and this view was supported by Mr A E Davis. Mr R N Budgeon said that whilst any initiative to reduce energy consumption/carbon emissions was welcome, he considered that the Severn Wye proposals needed to be better thought out and developed further before presentation to Town and Parish Councils. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask District Councillor Carrick to report to the next meeting on any funding/grants available at present.

c) Neighbourhood Warden Presentation/Neighbourhood Watch/Community Policing

Ms L Greene said that she had recently chaired a Bisley Neighbourhood Watch Meeting in the Village Hall, which, although well-advertised, had resulted in only 8 people attending. From discussions, Ms Greene said that whilst there was some evidence of 'hostility' towards a 'formally-organised' Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, residents did value the access it provided to safety devices, safety assessment and security signs. It was also suggested by residents that greater use of publicity in the Village Post Office about crime details, security threats etc would enhance awareness in the community. Ms Greene also recommended that information on Neighbourhood Watch, Rural Watch and Farm Watch should be included on the Parish website. Finally, Ms Greene advised that the Police Mobile Unit would attend and provide information to parishioners participating in the 'Big Breakfast' event in the Village Hall on Saturday 6th October 2007.

In reviewing the Neighbourhood Warden Presentation given to the Meeting in September, Councillors were generally of the view that there may be some benefit to the Parish from the Scheme. Mr R K Brooks said that he found the presentation quite impressive, although he considered that the services offered were perhaps of greater value to urban or semi-urban communities. Councillors also expressed uncertainty as to how the Scheme was integrated with Community Policing and Neighbourhood Watch. Mr A E Davis said that the Parish should take advantage of the 'free' survey of the Parish offered by the Warden Scheme. This would enable a better assessment to be made of the services on offer and their value to the community. It was agreed that the Clerk would invite the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme to carry out this survey.

The Clerk said that he had attended a Neighbourhood Policing Meeting in Chalford Parish Council Offices. The event was hosted by Karen Marks – the Community Police Officer for the area – with the aim of determining the issues which parishes wished addressed as a priority. This information was being gathered from all parishes throughout the Stroud District and would be used to devise the best policing strategy for the District. Delegates at the meeting had placed speeding, vandalism, petty crime and threatening behaviour at the top of the list. Karen Marks undertook to represent these views at a District-level meeting and would in due course advise on a revised strategy aimed at addressing priority matters. The Clerk passed Councillors a copy of the leaflet entitled 'Community Engagement – Working together to make our communities safer' which had been issued at the meeting.

d) Gloucestershire Highways Seminar – 10th October 2007

The Chairman advised the meeting that a strongly-worded letter had been sent to the Head of Gloucestershire County Highways Department in advance of the Seminar which focused on the two primary concerns of the Parish - the poor state of the roads and the poor quality/cost-ineffectiveness of repairs when carried out.

e) **Emergency Response Working Group/Flooding Emergency**

Mr P Thorp said that a meeting of the Group would be held on 30th October 2007 and that some useful feedback to inform the meeting was already coming in. The aim would be to develop a 'cascade system' in the Parish which would be capable of addressing all types of emergency and not only flooding and interruption to water supplies. Mr A E Davis pointed out that we had been asked to provide a Parish-based response to the Government and County Flood Inquiries and that this was a separate issue to the formulation of a Parish Emergency Plan. Mr P Thorp was asked to co-ordinate this response.

f) **Stroud District Council – Planning Meeting**

A date for this meeting had yet to be finalised and the Clerk had notified SDC of the Parish need to clarify a number of planning issues. The Chairman asked Ward Planning Sub-Committee Chairs to pass details of their concerns to Mr R N Budgeon. These would then be represented to SDC and a specific meeting date requested. It was also suggested that neighbouring parishes might wish to attend the meeting if they were experiencing similar planning problems and the Clerk was asked to notify them accordingly.

District Council Matters

- 07.10 7. In the absence of District Councillor P Carrick, no specific District-related matters were raised.

07.10 8. **County Council Matters**

County Councillor J Nash briefed the meeting on the following matters:

1. Social Services – GCC Home Care would now be known as 'STEPS' – Short Term Enabling Establishment. This service looks after patients discharged from hospital into their own homes and helps them to resume normal living.
2. Post-Flooding Road Repairs – A Government Grant of £10M had been given to Gloucestershire Highways for road repairs. It is hoped that additional funding will be given in due course to meet the total repair costs estimated at £25M. As a result of the emergency work, road improvement schemes for the coming year are likely to be delayed, but will be brought forward as further funding becomes available. Repairs to the A46 Trunk Road at Pitchcombe are a priority and work should be underway in November and completed in approximately 3 months.
3. School Attendance – Cabinet had approved a Paper on School Attendance. Holidays during school-term would not be permitted, save for exceptional circumstances and parents would be fined for unacceptable absence by pupils.
4. Severn Barrage – The County Council had welcomed the Government Study to examine the feasibility of construction a barrage across the River Severn. This news had followed a Symposium hosted by the County Council in November 2006 which had resulted in a submission being sent to the Government seeking action.
5. Scrutiny Inquiry – Flooding – A Scrutiny Inquiry into the July Flooding Emergency was underway. A report would be taken to the County Council in November and the result fed into the National Inquiry.

07.10 9. **Matters for Discussion**

a. **Clarification of Mandatory Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests**

Following concerns raised by a number of Councillors about application of the new Mandatory Code of Conduct, the Chairman read out a Statement to clarify on the matter. Copies of the Statement were passed to all Councillors present, together with attachments of correspondence in which the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer at SDC had given his view on a specific enquiry concerning possible personal and/or prejudicial interest.

Councillors were asked to study the correspondence and the Clerk was asked to include this item on the agenda for the November PC Meeting and to produce additional guidance on the matter. Mr R N Budgeon asked that clarification be given as to whether or not in accepting the new Code of Conduct the Parish Council had adopted paragraph 12 (2), which was optional. The Chairman confirmed that paragraph 12 (2), which dealt with the rights of a Councillor who had a prejudicial interest, had been adopted by the Parish Council in its acceptance of the new code.

b. **Parish Green Spaces**

The Chairman advised the meeting that Mrs Teresa Howes, the previous Parish Clerk, had been asked and agreed to carry out the considerable work needed to effect identification and registration of Green Spaces in the Parish. Mrs Howes would liaise with the present Clerk in carrying out this task.

c. **Comprehensive Performance Assessment Workshop – 23 Oct 07**

Councillors were advised of an invitation issued by Gloucestershire County Council to participate in a Focus Group for parish representatives to be set-up in conjunction with the Comprehensive Performance Assessment carried out by the Audit Commission. The Group would look specifically at the Council's Performance in areas such as community engagement, community leadership and customer care. After brief discussion there were 'no takers' for this event.

d. **Official Opening of the Thomas Keble Sports Centre – 11 Oct 07**

It was agreed that Mrs J Russell, Chair of Eastcombe Ward, would attend the formal opening of the new Thomas Keble Sports Centre on behalf of the Parish Council. Ms L Greene asked Mrs Russell to obtain details of the facilities available at this welcome new facility.

e. Re-Location of the Stancombe Stone

Ms L Greene said she had been approached by residents of Stancombe asking that consideration be given to moving the historic monument known as the 'Stancombe Stone' to a position within the boundaries of the hamlet. At present the stone was located at the side of the Stroud Road beyond the boundary of Stancombe and in a position where it could not be viewed easily by passing visitors. Ms Greene said that Bisley Ward supported this request, which had been raised in the past. The Chairman said that there should be some record in the Parish archives which covered the previous enquiry into re-locating the stone. The Clerk was asked to search archives for this information.

f. S137 Payments

Councillors approved unanimously the following payments under Section 137 of the Local Government Act:

County Air Ambulance - £100.00; Cotswold Care Hospice - £150.00; Citizens Advice Bureau - £75.00; Stroud Victim Support Group - £30.00; Cotswold Canals Trust - £20.00; Women's Royal Voluntary Service - £50.00; Stroud Volunteer Service £50.00.

g. Parish Precept 2008/2009

The Chairman asked Wards to consider their Precept requirements for the coming financial year since this information must be lodged with SDC in December. Mr A E Davis highlighted the requirement to continue increasing the Reserve for the provision of Parish Office facilities and suggested that a further £5000.00 should be earmarked for this purpose. Against this backdrop he recommended that Wards should aim to submit 'neutral' precept bids for the coming year. Mr Davis added that it would be worthwhile investigating the possibility of the Parish being able to borrow funds from higher authority to put towards the costs of office premises. It was agreed that Wards would present 'draft' precept bids to the November PC Meeting.

07.10 10 **Finance****Receipts September 2007**

Bank Interest	£101.77
Wayleave	£3.00
Cotswold Conservation Board	£137.50

Total Receipts **£242.27**

Payments – October 2007	£	VAT	Total
Bisley WI Village Hall - Hire	35.00		35.00
N Power – Bisley Pavilion	62.84	3.14	65.98
JNC Fire Protection – O’Ridge Pavilion	20.60	3.61	24.21
Toshiba – Photocopier fees	12.89	2.26	15.15
T W Hawkins – Grass Contract	687.83	120.37	808.20
Chalford PC – Grass Eastcombe	15.00		15.00
SLCC – Annual Subscription	120.00		120.00
GPFA – Annual Subscription	50.00		50.00
K Amos – Notice Board Oakridge	575.00		575.00
County Air Ambulance – S137	100.00		100.00
Cotswold Care Hospice – S137	150.00		150.00
Citizens Advice Bureau – S137	75.00		75.00
Stroud Victim Support – S137	30.00		30.00
Cotswold Canals Trust – S137	20.00		20.00
Stroud WRVS – S137	50.00		50.00
Stroud Volunteer Centre – S137	50.00		50.00
N MacLeod – September Salary	675.40		675.40
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/NI	334.15		334.15
I Trueman – Maintenance Bisley	75.00		75.00
Totals	£3,138.71	£129.38	£3,268.09

Petty Cash Payments – September 2007 **£49.59**

Cash Balance as at 30 September 2007 **£11,219.19**

Bisley Gift Balance as at 30 September 2007	£2,427.49
Bisley Lock-up Balance as at 30 September 2007	£2,067.57
Westbury Gift Balance as at 30 September 2007	£10,000.00
Parish Office Reserve as at 30 September 2007	£10,000.00

07.10 11 **Planning**

The following Planning Applications have been received during the past month and the Parish Council responses have been annotated.

S.07/1787/FUL – ‘Fysie, Oakridge Lynch – Erection of dwelling and single-storey extension to existing dwelling – **Object** – The application for the existing dwelling – ‘Fysie’ – makes it a two-storey dwelling, not a single-storey dwelling as the application states. The proposal for the new dwelling is more dominating because of its ‘street scene’ presentation square onto the road. The dwellings on either side of this plot are both traditional natural stone, smaller, low-profile buildings.

S.07/1804/FUL – ‘Greenways’, Far Oakridge – Erection of an extension to provide a garden room – **Support/Comment** – This extension cannot be seen from the public road, none of the neighbours will see it from their properties, so we consider this proposal will have very little impact on its surroundings. The proposal represents a very small increase in the building area. The materials are consistent with the existing building.

S.07/1930/FUL – 18 Bearsfield, Bisley – Re-submission following refusal of S.07/1026/FUL for demolition of single-storey garage and erection of single-storey extension, garage and porch – **Support**.

S.07/1963/FUL – ‘Acorn Cottage’, Oakridge Lynch – Erection of a two-storey extension – **Comments Only** – We see no reason to refuse this application but we have comments which need consideration. We would like to see the wall to the West clad in natural stone to be consistent with the character of this traditional cottage. The first-floor window to the West will look into the neighbour’s wall only a few metres away. More information needs to be given to ensure that the windows of the two dwellings do not detract from the dwelling’s privacy. The fact that they are not directly opposite could be enough to obstruct the line of sight but this is not clear on the plans presented. If these considerations were met we would support this application.

07.10 12 **Correspondence**

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

Gloucestershire Rural Housing Association – 2007 Annual Report.

DEFRA Magazine – ‘Ways to Tackle Climate Change’.

GRCC – Annual Report 2007.

GRCC – ‘Gloucestershire History’ 2007.

Gloucestershire County Council – Minerals & waste Newsletter.

GRCC – ‘Rural Regeneration’ Magazine September 2007.

07.10 13 **Ward Matters**

- a) **Bisley** – Ms L Greene reported that the residents of Stancombe had again urged that the speed limit through the hamlet be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. This matter had already been raised with Gloucestershire Highways Department and further action is needed.

b) **Eastcombe** - Mrs J Russell advised the meeting that Mr Rex Clack wished to retire from his position as Allotments Warden in Eastcombe and that a replacement Warden would be sought.

c) **Oakridge** – Mr A E Davis advised the meeting that the ‘Butcher’s Arms’ Public House had applied for an extension to licensing hours until 1.00am, 7 days a week. Mr Davis expressed concern about the potential impact of the extension but added that he believed the landlords wished to restrict late opening to cater for specific events. Mr R K Brooks said that even for restricted use it was normal to apply for a full extension and that, if approved, the license may include certain conditions to take account of the concerns of parishioners.

Mr A E Davis reported to the meeting that following the unsuccessful bid to the National Lottery for funding support for a Community Tennis Court in Oakridge he was considering the possibility of the project attracting Charitable Status. Were this feasible, it could open a route to greater funding support.

07.10 14 **Date and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 7th November 2007 at Bisley W I Village Hall. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2145 hours.