

**MINUTES OF THE BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON WEDNESDAY 6th JUNE 2007 at BISLEY WI VILLAGE HALL**

Mrs J Russell	A/Chairman
Mrs L Hemming	} Bisley Ward
Mr P Thorp	
Mr R K Brooks	} Eastcombe Ward
Mr R Peyton	
Mr C James	
Mr R N Budgeon	} Oakridge Ward
Mr A E Davis	
Mr P Dawes	
Mr N M MacLeod	Clerk

In attendance: County Councillor J Nash

No members of the public were present

07.06 1. **Apologies for Absence**

The Chairman Mr R S Bryant was unable to be present following his sudden admission to hospital. Mrs J Russell Chairman of Eastcombe Ward was appointed Acting Chairman for the Meeting. She echoed the views of the whole Parish Council in wishing Mr Bryant a speedy recovery from illness. Mrs Russell also advised councillors of the death of David Taylor, former Clerk to the Parish Council. He was warmly remembered and Mr R S Bryant, Mrs J Russell and Mr N MacLeod had attended his Memorial Service in All Saints Church, Bisley. Apologies had also been tendered by Ms L Greene and Mr S Trinder of Bisley Ward and by District Councillor P Carrick.

07.06 2. **Public Participation**

No members of the public were present.

07.06 3. **Declaration of Interests**

Mr R N Budgeon declared an interest in an invoice payable to one of his companies for goods obtained by Bisley Ward.

07.06 4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd May 2007 had been circulated and Mr A E Davis proposed and Mr R Peyton seconded their acceptance. This was approved by all councillors and the Chairman signed the minute book.

07.06 5. **Matters Arising**

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

Mr P Dawes said that short-term actions contained in the Parish Plan had now been completed and that effort would now be focused on medium term actions, with a target completion date of March 2008. Councillors were advised that the first of these issues would cover Education and Schools with particular emphasis on transport and travel to and from the various schools in the Parish.

County Councillor Nash informed the meeting that each of the schools was required to submit Travel Plans to the Road safety Department at GCC for approval. She believed that Eastcombe School had now completed its plan. Plans for Schools in Bisley and Oakridge would follow and Councillor Nash added that Eastcombe School would be content to assist other schools if necessary.

Mr R K Brooks questioned as to whether or not it was the responsibility of the Parish Council to publicise matters relating to these Plans. On balance it was agreed that it would be worthwhile for an entry to be made in each of the Ward Magazines to publicise this issue and Mr P Thorp agreed to produce a draft submission for consideration by councillors.

Moving on to the Village Design Statement (VDS), Mr Dawes outlined the meeting held with representatives of Stroud District Council. He said that this had proved a useful exercise and he was pleased to report that work on producing the VDS would not be affected by changes to the SDC Local Development Framework. Mr Dawes added that SDC would wish to be kept involved at regular intervals during the VDS work and had provided a copy of a 'Specimen VDS' prepared by Cottenham Village in Cambridgeshire as a possible 'template'. Mr A E Davis enquired if any progress had been made in attracting interest from the University of Gloucestershire in assisting in project work associated with the VDS. Mr Dawes said that there had been no positive response to date despite written request for assistance. He concluded that it was now down to the Academics at the University to decide if the opportunity was sufficiently attractive to students. Finally, Mr Dawes said that the next meeting of the VDS Steering Group would take place later this month.

b) **Freight Management Survey**

Mr P Thorp briefed councillors on the Freight Management Survey Meeting he had attended in Painswick. The event was presented by the GC Contractors – W S Atkins – and concentrated on two primary areas of interest – the Freight Industry and the concerns of Parishes. Overall, the objective was to restrict HGVs to Trunk Road travel wherever possible, with the A419, A417 and A46 being the focus for this Cotswold area. Mr Thorp said that much of the discussion was held in ‘Workshops’ where there was unanimous concern expressed by Parishes about issues such as noise, emissions, safety, vibration, preservation of grass verges, damage to walls and buildings and size intimidation. It was the aim of W S Atkins to gather information from a series of such meetings to inform future freight management policy. The process had started last January and a draft policy was expected to be devised by the end of the year.

Mr R K Brooks asked if there had been mention at the meeting of a scheme currently in place between Naunton and Andoversford which is actively trying to manage HGV movements with new and informative signage to drivers. Mr Thorp said that this had not received mention and undertook to find out some details as what was happening.

Finally, Mr Thorp said that Rural Seminars were now being held around the County to consider the merits or otherwise of vehicle-activated speed signs.

c) **Rural & Community Grants**

The Chairman advised Wards that the closing date for submitting any bids for grant assistance was 14th July 2007. Any bids should be passed to the Clerk for processing. Councillors agreed to consider any possible opportunities for assistance but held the view that the requirement placed on a Parish to fund 75% of any cost was a significant constraint.

d) **Site Meeting – Fennells Home Farm**

Mr R K Brooks pointed out that a report on the Public Footpath Site Meeting at Fennells Home Farm had been omitted from ‘Matters Arising’ on the agenda. The Chairman agreed that notwithstanding this omission the matter could be introduced. Mr P Thorp said that he had attended the meeting which was mainly concerned with considering the best means for the footpath to travel on a short but steep slope on the proposed re-routing. He advised that there was general agreement to the re-routing on the basis of affording reasonable privacy to the occupants of the property but that final proposals had yet to be presented to all interested parties.

07.06 6. **District Council Matters**

Mr A E Davis enquired if District Councillor Carrick had provided a list of other Parishes who employed Neighbourhood Wardens. The Clerk confirmed that a list had yet to be supplied. It was decided that the Clerk should contact SDC directly to obtain this information. County Councillor J Nash added that she believed that it was possible for Parishes to 'share' Wardens and that this might be beneficial in cost terms.

07.06 7. **County Council Matters**

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

Planning – GCC will be responding to the Government White Paper proposals on planning. The County was responsible for strategic planning, leaving Districts to decide on individual applications. There is a new commitment to protect the 'Green Belt'. Parks and green spaces will be protected, with previously developed 'Brown Sites' being the priority for building. For major infrastructure decisions a new system will replace more than eight different planning regimes, saving £1Billion over a 10 year period. For the first time planning policy would place 'Climate Change' at the heart of building new communities.

Fire and Rescue Services – The Services will introduce the first 'Community Safety Advocate' to provide lay support and help to people at risk in their own homes.

The Elderly – Cabinet had approved the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People to confirm the joint working with Gloucestershire NHS Primary Care Trust and County Council.

Traffic Congestion – There had been delays in the Joint Rail/Parking scheme at Elmbridge Court in Gloucester and it had been decided, therefore, to make a revised bid for the Park And Ride Scheme to reduce congestion in the city.

Carbon Management Strategy – GCC had approved a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan. Work will be carried out with Staff, Buildings and Schools across the County. The County had also signed-up to the 'Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change', one of more than 200 authorities nationally to have subscribed to this scheme.

Civil Parking Enforcement – From October 2007 the responsibility for enforcement of unauthorised parking will transfer from the Police to District Council. Interest had been shown in 'Shared Space Schemes' for parking and this will be examined further. The concept is to change layout and design to reduce the speed of traffic.

Schools – Falling rolls in Schools continue to present problems, with 1100 surplus places in Reception Classes for the coming academic year. On a more positive note, Gloucestershire would benefit from the Government Scheme to provide paid one-to-one tuition of up to 10 hours per week for pupils who are falling behind in their work. Schools in all 3 Wards of the Parish will be able to benefit from the scheme.

Road Kill of animals – SDC will now take responsibility for removing road-kill animals such as foxes and badgers and this facility can be accessed through the Rubbish Collection Department at the Council.

a) **'Bisley News' – Report on Financial Difficulties**

Mr P Thorp briefed the meeting on the current financial difficulties experienced by the Bisley News Magazine. The immediate problem was to 'bridge' a projected deficit of some £750.00 between expected revenue and expenditure, resulting in the main from a significant drop in advertising income for the coming year. Without some measure of interim support it was clear that the Bisley News would have to be produced less frequently or be of reduced size or close altogether. Following the sad death of Nick Riches – the previous Editor – Mrs Susan Vesey had undertaken to provide editorship for the time being and would explore every avenue to increase income, including possibly parishioner subscription or individual purchase of future magazines. In the past, the magazine has been freely available to residents. Mrs Vesey had requested that the annual S137 Payment made to village magazines be increased – on a 'one-off basis' for this year – from £100.00 to £144.00. Councillors agreed that the Bisley News should benefit from some 'breathing space' to allow Mrs Vesey to re-organise finances. Mr C James suggested that the Bisley News could make use of the Internet to publish the magazine, thereby reducing production costs.

Mr R K Brooks proposed that the Parish Council make a payment of £150.00 for the current financial year. The proposal was seconded by Mr R N Budgeon and carried unanimously.

b) **Bisley Community Composting Scheme (BCCS)**

The Chairman referred to a recommendation put forward by Mr R S Bryant that the Parish Council should enrol as a member of the BCCS. Such membership would enable the Council to dispose of Parish green waste arising from the work of handymen employed by the Wards as well as providing both income and compost to the benefit of the BCCS.

Mr R N Budgeon proposed that the Parish Council should apply for membership at the current cost of £15.00 per annum. The proposal was seconded by Mrs L Hemming and carried unanimously.

c) **Planning Seminar at SDC**

Exchanges of correspondence between Planning Sub-Committee Chairman had highlighted the need for the Parish to ensure that there was general uniformity between Wards in the categorisation of planning decisions submitted to SDC for approval. It was opportune that a Planning Seminar would be held at SDC on 18th June 2007 during which clarification could be sought on a number of issues. It was agreed that the seminar would be attended by Mr R S Bryant, Mr R K Brooks, Mr R N Budgeon, Mr S Trinder and the Clerk. The Chairman said that planning procedures would be included as a main agenda item at the July PC Meeting.

- d) **Play Area Management Training**
The Clerk had circulated information on a Play Area Management Training Session to be held at Stratford Park, Stroud on 4th July 2007. Unfortunately, the timing of this event clashed with the July PC Meeting. Nonetheless, it was agreed that that it was important for the Parish Council to gain benefit from this training and Mrs L Hemming volunteered to attend.
- e) **GRCC Seminar at Maisemore – 24th May 2007**
Mr P Thorp had attended this seminar entitled 'Creative Community Consultation' and briefed the meeting accordingly. Mr Thorp described the 2 main presentations covering 'Engagement versus Consultation' and 'Feasibility Studies'. He then outlined the Workshops which covered topics such as 'Games and Activities' to encourage participation, especially among the young; 'Use of Questionnaires' with guidance on good and poor examples and 'Use of Media in Consultations' which gave innovative examples of how to engage with the community.
Overall, Mr Thorp said the seminar had been of good value and particularly relevant to some of the issues currently being addressed by the Parish, for example the Village Design Statement. GRCC had indicated their willingness to assist Parishes who wished advice on how best to communicate and engage with their communities.
- f) **New Mandatory Code of Member Conduct**
The Clerk provided each councillor with a copy of the new Code put forward by the Standards Board for England for adoption by Councils on or before 3 October 2007. SDC indicated that it wished all Town and Parish Councils in the District to adopt a uniform date to bring the Code into force, this being 1 September 2007. On this basis the Parish Council would require to accept the new Code at the August PC Meeting.
The Chairman asked councillors to study the Code during the month ahead and be prepared to raise any issues or concerns at the July PC Meeting. This would provide time for further consideration and discussion before the Code was put forward for adoption at the August Meeting.
- g) **Chairman's Annual Allowance**
The Clerk advised the meeting that a sum of £550.00 had been provided for in the 2007/2008 Parish Precept for payment to the Chairman – Mr R S Bryant - to assist in defraying costs necessarily incurred in meeting the work of the Parish Council. Councillors agreed that payment of this sum was fully justified. A proposal to this effect was made by Mr A E Davis, seconded by Mr R K Brooks and carried unanimously.

h) **Parish Council Workload/Priorities – ‘Back to Basics’**

The Chairman distributed a list of the current major projects or activities in which the Parish was actively engaged as a backdrop to discussion. The Chairman then described to the meeting the ever-increasing demands being placed upon Parish Councils to become involved in wide-ranging issues and consultation processes. These, in turn, were leading to protracted Parish Council Meetings while issues were discussed and were raising concern amongst some councillors that commitment to the role of Parish Councillor was becoming too onerous and too far removed from basic duties pertaining to the Parish. The Chairman then invited each councillor to express views about how best to address the workload problem.

There was unanimous agreement that Parish Council Meetings should not extend beyond 9.30pm whenever possible. It was considered by some that this could be achieved by prioritising those issues which were directly Parish-related as against those which, although important, did not necessarily affect the day-to-day running of the Parish. The latter was especially true on subjects of a national or even global importance where policies would be drafted and devolved by higher-level organisations for consultation and subsequent implementation. Councillors who had busy primary jobs said that they could only devote very limited time to Parish matters and wished therefore to focus on the more localised elements of their responsibilities. Others with more available free time still felt that wider issues could be dealt with, perhaps by smaller groupings.

There was feeling expressed that the Council spent too much time talking about some issues without aiming towards the earliest opportunity for decision or conclusion. A view was also expressed that the absence of Parish Policy on some matters led to uninformed and unfocused discussion without arriving at a decision. Where major issues arose of importance to the Parish and likely to lead to lengthy discussion, it was suggested that these be dealt with at additional ‘one-off’ meetings. This means could also be employed when visiting speakers were invited to address the Council.

There was a recommendation that list of activities be scheduled on a spreadsheet, with a line drawn to place those requiring priority attention above the line and less pressing issues below. There was also a suggestion that discussion on some issues could be conducted by ‘e-groups’ in advance of meetings, so reducing the discussion necessary at the formal meetings.

From the variety of issues raised by councillors it was evident that there was no unanimity on to how best to deal with the onerous workload, particularly at PC Meetings, other than by all being aware of the problem and ensuring that whatever the issue it is dealt with as expeditiously and crisply as possible.

07.06 9 **Finance**

Receipts May 2007

Bank Interest	£78.36
Allotment Rents	£59.00
Grazing Right Fee	£50.00

Total Receipts **£187.36**

Payments – June 2007

	<u>£</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Total</u>
T W Hawkins – Grass Cutting	687.83	120.37	808.20
Bisley WI Village Hall Hire	21.00		21.00
British Telecom – Office Telephone	96.78	16.93	113.71
N MacLeod – Refund of Printer Cost	98.00	17.15	115.15
N MacLeod – Salary May 2007	675.40		675.40
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/NI	334.15		334.15
Ian Trueman – Maintenance Bisley	78.75		78.75
Auro – Paint for Bisley Maintenance	58.76	10.28	69.04
Ian Trueman – Eastc’be Maintenance	17.00		17.00
R Bryant – Chairman’s Allowance	550.00		550.00
T Bryant			
– Maintenance Oakridge & Eastcombe	343.40	0.74	344.14
Totals	£2,961.07	£165.47	£3,126.54

Petty Cash Payments – May 2007 **£71.48**

Cash Balance as at 31 May 2007 **£25,443.79**

Bisley Gift Balance as at 31 May 2007 **£2,427.49**

Bisley Lock-up Balance as at 31 May 2007 **£2,046.55**

Westbury Gift Balance as at 31 May 2007 **£10,000.00**

Parish Office Reserve as at 31 May 2007 **£10,000.00**

07.06 10 **Planning**

The following applications have been received during the past month and the Council's responses are recorded where applicable:

S.07/0930/LBC – Drakes House, High Street, Bisley – Retrospective application for conversion of bedroom 5 to a kitchen and shower room – **Support/Comment** – Fine, except both the shower room and kitchen should have adequate ventilation/extraction specified.

S.07/0943/FUL – Fysie, Oakridge Lynch – Erection of dwelling and alterations to existing dwelling Fysie – **Object** – There is no indication of the comparative height and proportion of the proposal in relation to the existing building and the neighbouring buildings; the drawings indicate that the new building will be considerably higher. The visual impact will be considerable because of the height and scale of the proposal. We are concerned about the access and the vehicle movements from the new dwelling.

The plan indicates that foul water will be disposed of via the main sewer; there is no main sewer available in Oakridge so a separate sewage disposal system must be provided.

The design of the proposed buildings are neither in Cotswold stone vernacular to integrate within the setting nor interesting contemporary design which would make a contribution to the architectural heritage.

We feel that both of the proposed buildings add to the numbers of dwellings of this same size available in the village and do not contribute to increasing the range of dwelling sizes.

S.07/0947/FUL – 16 Windyridge, Bisley – Erection of conservatory – **Support**

S.07/0970/FUL – Througham Slad Manor, Bisley – Erection of courtyard link to connect existing manor house to existing cottage building, complete with external works – **Support.**

S.07/0952/LBC – The Old Vicarage, George Street, Bisley – Internal alterations to kitchen – **Support/Comment** – Improves usability of building as long as it remains architecturally in keeping.

S.07/0908/FUL – 2 Swedale, Limekiln Lane, Waterlane – Retention of existing garage (amendment to original approval S.05/2364/FUL) – **Support.**

S.07/1026/FUL – 18 Bearsfield, Bisley – Demolition of single-storey garage and erection of two-storey extension with new garage – **Support.**

S.07/1064/FUL – Ansteads Farm, Catswood Lane, Stancombe, Bisley – Erection of 15kW wind turbine on a 15 metre tower – **Support.**

S.07/1063/FUL – The Cottage, Oakridge Lynch – Erection of a single-storey extension – **Support.**

S.07/1054/FUL – The Shooting Ground, Limekiln Lane, Waterlane, Oakridge – Construction of planted grass mound, acting as a sound barrier to the Shooting Ground – **Support/Comment** – We support this application but we would like to see this as the first stage of a plan to noise screen the Shooting Ground; this only deals with the Waterlane/Far Oakridge direction – it does not help in any way with the Bisley direction. We would like to see a condition worded such that this is the first stage of a noise screening strategy that within the next 5 years will include the Bisley direction. We would like the bulk material used in the mound to be approved by SDC before the work starts.

S.07/0943/FUL – Fysie, Oakridge Lynch – Revised plans for erection of dwelling and alterations to existing dwelling Fysie – **Object** – This is the second comment on the revisions of this application. The height of the buildings – This issue has not been satisfactorily addressed – the new proposal for Fysie shows large blank walls above windows giving an illusion of height to the roadside and the west end shows a large blank wall. The buildings either side both have dormer windows at eaves/roof height softening the elevation. We have no concerns with the redesigned access. We have 2 copies of a revised location plan; the one we support is the one with the new dwelling in the south-west corner of the plot, NOT with the dwelling against the Fysie boundary. The design – We prefer the visual appearance of the original Fysie plan with dormers but we felt the roof ridge height should be lower. The new proposal gives one bedroom with only a dormer window giving light from above in the south elevation, a master bedroom with an obscured glass window to the west and another window in the north elevation also with a blank south wall where a window would improve visually the exterior elevation and also the interior light level. The living room not having a window to the west will limit the enjoyment of the room and will visually present a blank unattractive wall to south-west with only an obscured glass on the first floor level. Whilst we accept the design of the current building is not Cotswold vernacular the proposal for the alteration does not enhance the appearance and in our view the revision is less attractive and less ‘occupant-friendly’.

S.07/1089/LBC – The Hayloft, Hill House Farm, Tunley, Sapperton – Conversion of attached stable building to residential accommodation – **Support.**

All planning decisions were ratified unanimously by the meeting.

07.06 11 **Correspondence**

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

CPRE	Fieldwork Magazine June 2007
Clerks & Councils Direct	Magazine May 2007
Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association	Spring 2007 Newsletter
The Society of Council Clerks	May 2007 Journal
Gloucestershire Training Partnership	Councillor Training July 2007
CPRE	Countryside Voice Magazine

07.06 12 **Ward Matters**

a) **Bisley**

Mrs L Hemming advised that a letter had been sent to the Charity Commissioners seeking to retain the charitable status vested in the King George V Playing field at Bisley. Mrs Hemming also confirmed that the recommendations contained in the RoSPA report were being addressed by the Ward.

b) **Eastcombe**

Mr C James advised of a complaint made by an Eastcombe parishioner concerning refusal by a gentleman at Oakridge to permit parking in the authorised area adjacent to the Recreation Ground. In the absence of more detail it was agreed that the parishioner should be asked to contact Mr P Dawes directly with more information about the occurrence. In the meantime, Mr A E Davis asked Mr James to offer apologies from the Oakridge Ward for this apparently unjustified incident.

Mr R Peyton reported that the village handyman had carried out some excellent work in 'strimming' grass verges in the Ward. However, some complaints had been received about strewn grass on the roads. Mr Peyton recommended that a 'grass-blower' be purchased by the PC for use in all Wards to gather up loose 'strimmings'. Councillors felt that this was a wise suggestion but said that past experience had shown that with regular 'strimming' the problem was minimised. It was agreed that the matter would be reviewed following the next 'strim' and that a blower would be purchased if the problem persisted.

c) **Oakridge**

Mr A E Davis said that a reply had been received from County Footpaths concerning the re-surfacing of a tarmac footpath in Oakridge. The reply had proved both inaccurate and unhelpful and had stated that the Parish would require to assume liability for the footpath should it choose to self-authorise and pay for the re-surfacing. The Clerk was asked to raise this issue with the Parish Insurers to determine the liability and cover conditions of the Parish policy.

Mr Davis then advised that consultation would soon be carried out to determine which Post Offices would close under the proposals to 'cull' 2500 offices from the national network. He suggested that a letter be sent by the Clerk to David Drew MP to seek advice on how this process would be conducted.

Following a request from an allotment holder at the Far Oakridge Allotments for a water supply to be installed, Mr Davis produced a document which indicated that not only was it mandatory for the Parish to provide this facility, there was also mention of a requirement for Parishes to install toilet and disabled facilities. The Clerk was asked to contact the South West Allotment Organisation to confirm the statutory requirements vested in Parish Councils.

07.06 13 **Date and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 4th July 2007 at Bisley WI Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.40 hours.