

SCOTTER PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16th April 2007

PRESENT: Councillor M. Brown (Vice-Chairman and acting Chairman), Councillors J. Allen, M. Armstrong, B. Billam, D. Capes, J. Fillingham, S. Rayner and A. Sheardown, M. Brown (Clerk), J. Hoult (Legal Advisor) for Minutes 1 to 4, 2007/08, inclusive.

1 2007/08 : To receive and approve apologies for absence

An apology was received from Councillor Day, who is representing the Council at the Town & Parish Assembly meeting with WLDC. Nothing has been heard from Councillor Bullivent.

Proposed by Councillor Rayner, seconded by Councillor Sheardown and agreed by all, it was

RESOLVED : To approve the apology from Councillor Day. The Vice-Chairman will act as Chairman for the meeting.

An apology was also received from District Councillor Parry.

2 2007/08 : To receive declarations of interest

No declarations were made at this point.

3 2007/08 : To approve the notes of the Council Meeting held on 19th March 2007 as the Minutes of that meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Sheardown, seconded by Councillor Armstrong and with all agreed, it was

RESOLVED : To approve the notes of the Council Meeting held on 19th March 2007 (as circulated) as the Minutes of that meeting. These were signed by the acting Chairman.

In recognition of the presence of the legal advisor, who wished to comment on item 18 on the agenda, proposed by Councillor Sheardown, seconded by Councillor Fillingham and agreed by all, it was :

RESOLVED : That the order of business be amended to take Agenda item 18 as the next item of business and that, in consequence, and in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press should be temporarily excluded from the meeting due to the commercially sensitive nature of the following business.

With the public and press excluded :

4 2007/08 : To consider a proposal in relation to a Council-owned asset.

The Council considered the proposal received and the comments made in relation to it by its legal advisor. The Council acknowledged that it had insufficient information at this point to reach a decision. Proposed by Councillor Capes, seconded by Councillor Sheardown and with all in favour, it was :

RESOLVED : That the legal advisor take the steps necessary to protect the Council's position and engages the services of a valuation expert to value such assets. The valuation and possible consequent course of action will be discussed at a future Council meeting.

The legal advisor left the meeting at this point, with members of the public and press able to return. The Chairman reverted to the original agenda order and moved onto the next item of business.

5 2007/08 : To consider a request from Scotter United Football Club for a contribution towards the planning costs in relation to its proposed new changing facility.

The Clerk explained that the Club has been told by WLDC that planning costs associated with this development will amount to circa £3k. It understands that it can expect c. £1k of this via Parish Plan monies and asks the Parish Council to consider making an additional donation towards the total. This was not specifically included in the 2007/08 Precept and any donation would have to come out of the limited budget for community projects. Following some discussion and recognising that the financial year has only just commenced, proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Rayner and with all agreed, it was :

Initialed Chairman

RESOLVED : To ask SUFC to re-submit its request, together with substantiation of the planning costs and an updated set of annual accounts, in November 2007. This can then be considered against the funds available to the end of the year and against requirements for Precept 2008/09.

6 2007/08 : To approve the purchase of a two-bay notice board for Scotter cemetery.

The Clerk explained that WLDC has now confirmed that the Parish Council has been successful in its application for £765 towards the installation of a new notice board at the cemetery. The amount allows for the purchase and delivery of an Iroko board with oak posts at £715 (excluding VAT) and c. £50 towards installation. The board's price includes glazing with 4mm toughened safety glass. Considering the next item of business, this could be replaced with 4mm clear polycarbonate sheet at an additional cost of £76.48 plus VAT. Proposed by Councillor Sheardown, seconded by Councillor Fillingham and with all agreed, it was :

RESOLVED : To purchase the two bay notice board, glazed with polycarbonate sheet, and oak posts at a cost of c. £792 plus VAT. Once the board has been received and payment made, the Clerk will seek recompense from WLDC in the amount of £715 (the VAT being reclaimable).

7 2007/08 : To approve the emergency work necessary to repair the Susworth notice board.

The Clerk reported that she attended the Susworth notice board prior on 5th April 2007 and found that it had been vandalised. The polycarbonate sheets in both bays had been kicked or punched in with sufficient damage done to the surrounding woodwork that the key is unable to unlock one of the bays. The Clerk has reported the vandalism to the police and has asked Des's Joinery to assess the required repairs. As the polycarbonate sheeting was already marked prior to this incident, it is likely that it will have to be replaced. The cost of repairs is not yet known but is unlikely to exceed the amount delegated to the Clerk for emergency repairs. Proposed by Councillor Capes, seconded by Councillor Brown and with all agreed, it was :

RESOLVED : To approve the course of action undertaken by the Clerk and the cost of necessary repairs.

8 2007/08 : To receive a verbal report from Councillor Capes on the Annual General Meeting of the Scotter Drainage Authority, held on 3rd April 2007.

Councillor Capes reported that he had been asked to attend an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Scotter Drainage Authority on 3rd April 2007. Recent correspondence from the Environment Agency and JBA Consulting concerning the proposed abolition of the authority were considered. It was agreed to recommend that the course of action proposed by the Environment Agency (which would lead to the abolition of the authority and adoption by DEFRA) be accepted at the Annual General Meeting of the Authority on 30th April 2007.

9 2007/08 : To approve the renewal of the Council's insurance policy with the incumbent supplier.

The Clerk explained that Allianz Cornhill has submitted a renewal quotation for 2007/08 in the amount of £1472.41, an increase of £49 or 3.45% over 2006/07. As premium rates have been left unchanged, the increase is purely as a result of the increased asset holdings resulting from the new office and the index linking of the fixed assets. The excess payable for property damage remains at £125. Proposed by Councillor Sheardown, seconded by Councillor Allen and with all agreed, it was

RESOLVED : That the insurance policy be renewed with Allianz Cornhill in the amount of £1472.41. The Clerk will prepare the cheque for signature at the May Council meeting.

10 2007/08 : To consider a request from the Village Person to review the sourcing of petrol.

The Clerk explained that Village Person had reported a large price differential between the incumbent supplier and the nearest most competitive supplier. The Clerk had evaluated the potential saving which would be offset by travel time and costs (as the other supplier is further away) and found that savings are minimal on the current differential, which is wider than normal. Against this background, Councillors agreed that no change to supplier should be made at this time, with the Clerk to continue

to monitor the differential and report back if more robust savings could be achieved. The Council did note that the purchase of an additional jerry can (at £16.70 plus VAT) would enable fewer trips for petrol to be made, allowing an annual saving in travel time and costs assessed at c. £27. Proposed by Councillor Fillingham, seconded by Councillor Billam and agreed by all, it was :

RESOLVED : To purchase an additional jerry can if it can be legally and safely stored.

11 2007/08 : To receive a report from the Cemetery & Allotments Working Group on its recent safety inspection of the cemetery.

The Working Group reported that the cemetery was attended on 15th April 2007 to carry out the monthly safety inspection and all was found to be in good order. The recently planted hedge plants are suffering due to lack of rain and the Clerk will ask the Village Person to water them.

12 2007/08 : To receive the Clerk's Report.

The Council noted the following report presented by the Clerk :

75a 2004/05 : Public open space adoption and maintenance

The Clerk has written to Stamford Homes, copied to the Council's legal advisor, to request that the damaged fencing running along the footpath be removed. She also raised again the issues associated with aspects of the landscaping. A response is awaited. The Council's legal advisor has now been notified of the firm of solicitors acting on behalf of Stamford Homes and is making contact to progress the completion of the necessary contract.

The Council's legal advisor reports that slow progress is being made in bringing this matter to a conclusion, with a copy of Beal Homes' title deeds to the second parcel of developed land having now been received. The Clerk has made the legal advisor aware of the Council's concerns as to the quality of some of the landscaping work and has also raised this with Mr Costall of Beal Homes during a recent telephone conversation. The latter promised to look into the matter.

As the deadline given to Popcourt Ltd by Mr Dickinson, WLDC Planning, in relation to the public open space on Waggoners Close expired on 2nd April 2007, the Clerk wrote to Mr Dickinson to ask what the next step will be. He has responded that he is now passing the file to the Enforcement Officer, who will seek the necessary authority to take action to ensure compliance with the outstanding conditions. Mr Dickinson has also now confirmed that his department has no information on the long term maintenance and care of the public open space on Site B of The Rookery. In consequence, he is contacting the owner/developer to clarify the position.

88 2006/07 : Parish Council Website

The website received 97 visitors during March, with a significant increase in visits during the last week as the result of the circulation of the Eau Valley Advertiser. Some visitors used the "Feedback" page to comment on the website and all comments received were very favourable. Councillor Sheardown commented that the site is now ear-marked from other sites associated with commemorating fallen servicemen during the World Wars.

103 2006/07 : Potential Pedestrian Crossing – A159

The Clerk wrote to Councillor Underwood-Frost to ask whether there was anything else he could do to progress this matter. A response has not, as yet, been received.

124 2006/07 : WLDC's Local Councillor Initiative Fund.

The two Scotter-based applications for monies from the fund have been approved. The purchase of a notice board for the cemetery is a separate agenda item. The tennis club has received its requested amount for the purchase of two sets of nets and posts for the new tennis courts.

142b 2006/07 : Mobile library service to Susworth

Initialed Chairman

Councillor Armstrong had nothing further to report on the matter.

147 2006/07 : War Memorial web page

Councillor Sheardown has made significant progress in the development of the tribute to the servicemen who lost their lives during the two World Wars. The main web page has been created and from this it is possible to access pages specific to many of the servicemen.

152 2006/07 : Annual Parish Meeting, 2007

Replies to invitations and reports are now being received for the 2007 APM. Councillors were provided with a copy of the notes of the 2006 APM for information.

165 2006/07 : Invoice query with Duet

Nothing has been heard from Duet in relation to the Council's query regarding its VAT status. The Council's cheque for the undisputed element of Duet's invoice has been cashed.

169 2006/07 : Funding for new tennis courts

Groundworks Lincolnshire has confirmed that the application for £10k towards new tennis courts has been made to Sita, with the promise of third party funding from the Council in the amount of £1055.70 should the application be successful. Sita has acknowledged its receipt and stated its intention to consider the application at its board meeting on 24th April 2007. Sita will write to Groundworks Lincolnshire within two weeks of this date with the outcome.

173 2006/07 : Title deeds for Council-owned land

The Council's legal advisor has confirmed that the approaches to the local firms of solicitors, to the banks and to a previous clerk have failed to produce the missing deeds. The legal advisor has now received a full copy of the file that the Council lodged with the Land Registry and a more recent conveyance of some cemetery land may result in access to a copy of the cemetery deeds. Beyond that, there now seems little option other than to progress a statutory declaration.

177 2006/07 : LALC questionnaire on how the Council sees the future of its community

The Clerk completed the questionnaire in line with the Council's comments at the March meeting and submitted it to LALC.

178 2006/07 : West Lindsey Local Strategic Partnership Transport Theme Group's questionnaire on the transport needs of older people.

The Chairman has discussed this questionnaire with Scotter Good Companions and the local disability group. These groups are aware of the Dial-A-Ride scheme and do not believe that there are any local elderly people with significant problems accessing transport. The groups have been assisted by a local person who has previously co-ordinated their transport needs and advised them of available local services. The Chairman is making contact with this individual to obtain his views prior to completing the questionnaire.

182 2006/07 : Planning application for a mobile radio base station on Kirton Road.

Following receipt of verbal and written presentations from parishioners, the vast majority of which were against the proposal, the Council's Planning Committee lodged an objection to this application. Notification has since been received from WLDC that the applicant has withdrawn it.

189b 2006/07 : Footpath on Butterwick Road, Susworth

The Clerk reported to LCC Highways that the footpath on the Trent bank side on Butterwick Road, Susworth, had become very overgrown and asked for remedial action to be carried out. She has since received a telephone call from Mr Darley at LCC, who confirmed that he has instructed the County Council's contractor to carry out this work.

Initialed Chairman

189c 2006/07 : Signposting to new roads off Elizabeth Close

The Clerk contacted Mr Radley at WLDC to ask for his support in the erection of a signpost at the entrance to Elizabeth Close showing the streets that run off it, as an aid to emergency services and deliveries. Mr Radley has agreed to inspect the site but informed the Clerk that WLDC changed its policy some six years ago and normally will now only erect such "leading to" signage where an important facility (e.g. hospital, school) is on one of the subordinate streets. In consequence, it is unlikely that such a sign will be provided in this instance but he will let the Clerk know formally once the inspection has been carried out.

191 2006/07 : Contract for flail mowing & bank strimming, 2007

The Clerk carried out a negotiation with the incumbent contractor explaining that, whilst the Council understood the reasons for the proposed increase in the hourly rate, the lack of any prior warning of the magnitude of the increase had not given the Council the opportunity to properly provide for it when setting its Precept. Following some discussion, the contractor agreed to stagger the application of the increase, with half of it to apply during 2007 and the other half (with the addition of a small inflationary element) to be applied in 2008. This will result in a cost avoidance of c. £72 plus VAT during 2007. On this basis and on receipt of a revised quotation, the Clerk placed the contract with Serviceteam.

12a 2007/08 : Village Person's worked hours during 2006/07

Analysis shows that the Village Person worked 1168 hours during 2006/07, some 70 hours less than the maximum allowable and 12 less than worked during 2005/06.

12b 2007/08 : Affordable housing status

The Clerk has written to the Senior Rural Housing Enabler for the district to query the status of some of the recently erected affordable properties in Scotter that are not being managed by a Registered Social Landlord. The query resulted from advertisements placed in the property section of the local newspaper, where three such properties on Waggoners Close are for sale again only months after they were first sold and at a price and description that suggest that their affordable status may be lost. The letter also queries the position in respect of another affordable property on The Rookery, the advertisement for which states that non-Scotter residents will be considered and that a section 106 agreement will be required. The latter is confusing as WLDC did not enter into such an agreement with the developer. A response is awaited.

13 2007/08 : To receive new correspondence not already included above

The acting Chairman explained that the following are for the attention of Councillors and (where appropriate) will be circulated after the meeting. If the need arises to take action on any piece of circulated correspondence, it will become an agenda item at a future Council meeting.

13a WLDC, informing the Council that the next Parish, Town & District Council Assembly will be held on Monday 16th April 2007. The purpose of the event is to enhance WLDC's relationship with the parishes. The Chairman is attending on behalf of the Council.

13b WLDC, informing the Council that the candidates for Scotter Ward in the District Council Election (Thursday 3rd May 2007) are Messrs J.P. Burtenshaw (Liberal Democrat) and C.J. Underwood-Frost (Conservative). Posters have been enclosed for the Clerk to post on the notice boards.

13c Moore Stephens, confirming that it has been appointed by The Audit Commission as the Council's external auditor for the 2006/07 annual return. The audit will be carried out by Moore Stephens' Peterborough office, as the Leicester office (which conducted the previous audits) ceased to be part of the Moore Stephens network on 31st March 2007.

Initialed Chairman

13d LCC, informing the Council of two temporary road closures for essential maintenance work. Firstly, Kirton Road between Riverside and Gravel Pit Road for a period of c. 10 days commencing 16th April. Secondly, Kirton Road between Riverside and the junction near Low Farm. This latter work will take two or three days and will be carried out some time during May. The County Council also informs the Council of the temporary closure of Blyton Lane, Scotton (from High Street, Scotton, to the A159 near Laughton Wood Nurseries) again for a few days some time during May. During this period, traffic will be diverted through Scotter, via High Street.

13e The Standard Board for England, enclosing a copy of its Town and Parish Standard newsletter, March 2007.

13f The East Midlands Development Agency, enclosing a copy of its emda news magazine, March 2007.

13g The Community Council of Lincolnshire, enclosing a copy of its Rural Links magazine, Spring 2007.

The following items of correspondence were noted by the Council and will be filed by the Clerk :

13h WLDC, informing the Council that the owner of no. 34 The Rookery wishes to incorporate the house name "Hundal Grange" into the address.

13i WLDC, informing the Council that the owners of a new property on Elizabeth Close intend to name it "Casa Serena". The house will also have the postal number 5.

14a 2007/08 : To receive the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings published since the last Council meeting and adopt the recommendations contained therein

The Council considered the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 5th March 2007 and the Extraordinary Planning Committee Meeting held on 28th March 2007. Proposed by Councillor Armstrong, seconded by Councillor Allen and with all agreed, it was :

RESOLVED : That the Council concurs with the actions taken by the Planning Committee and adopts the minutes of the Committee meetings held on 5th March 2007 and 28th March 2007.

14b 2007/08 : To note the receipt of results from the planning authority

The Council noted the following result received from the planning authority :

120033 51 HIGH STREET, SCOTTER – a planning application to demolish existing garage/store and erect a replacement garage/store.

GRANTED

15 2007/08 : To approve payments to be made

The Council examined the accounts to be paid for supplies and services received since the last meeting. Proposed by Councillor Sheardown, seconded by Councillor Armstrong and with all in favour, it was :

RESOLVED : That the following payments be approved in settlement of the accounts to be paid.

| <u>CHEQUE NO.</u> | <u>TO WHOM PAID</u> | <u>PARTICULARS OF PAYMENT</u> | <u>NET VALUE</u> | <u>VAT</u> | <u>TOTAL PAYMENTS</u> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 401717 | HM Revenue & Customs | PAYE & NI, Month 12 | 342.05 | - | 342.05 |
| 401718 | Mrs M. Brown | Wages | 490.02 | | |
| | | Postage | 57.70 | | |
| | | Mileage | 10.80 | | |
| | | Stationery | 8.05 | 1.41 | 567.98 |
| 401719 | Mr. J. Lyon | Wages | 430.56 | - | |
| | | Bin sacks | 10.18 | 1.78 | 442.52 |
| 401720 | Thompson Waste Mgt | Skip service -St Peters Rd (07/03) | 151.00 | 26.43 | 177.43 |
| 401721 | Spencer's Garage | Fuel | 47.14 | 8.25 | 55.39 |
| 401722 | SMP Playgrounds Ltd | Replacement rope climber | 915.71 | 160.24 | 1075.95 |
| 401723 | Playing Fields | PL&EL Insurance for yr from 01/03/07 | 750.00 | - | 750.00 |
| 401724 | Village Hall Association | Office rent & meeting room hire, 2006/07 | 373.00 | - | 373.00 |
| 401725 | Memsafe Ltd | Memorial inspections | 49.50 | 8.67 | 58.17 |
| Direct Debit | Tiscali | Broadband/phone calls, Feb 07. | 16.78 | 2.94 | 19.72 |
| 401726 | LDTBF Ltd | 6 months rent for Parsons Field | 5.00 | - | |
| | | 6 months rent for access way | 0.50 | - | 5.50 |
| 401727 | CPRE | Entry fee to BKV competition | 10.00 | - | 10.00 |
| 401728 | West Lindsey CAB | Donation | 100.00 | - | 100.00 |
| TOTAL PROPOSED PAYMENTS | | | 3,767.99 | 209.72 | 3,977.71 |

16 2007/08 : To note income received during March 2007 and to approve the year end cash book and its reconciliation to the bank statements

The Council noted the following income received during March 2007.

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>PAYER</u> | <u>DETAILS</u> | <u>RECEIPTS</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---|-----------------|
| 05.03.2007 | Co-operative Bank | Interest - Current A/c | 3.33 |
| 05.03.2007 | HM Revenue & Customs | VAT repayment | 346.52 |
| 26.03.2007 | Mrs M. Brown | Cash receipts (rents,etc) from Scotterthorpe allotments | 176.38 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | | | 526.23 |

It then examined the cashbook as at the end of the 2006/07 financial year and its reconciliation to the bank statements. Proposed by Councillor Capes, seconded by Councillor Billam and with all agreed, it was :

RESOLVED : That the cashbook as at the end of the financial year 2006/07 should be signed by the acting Chairman and Clerk as a true record.

The Clerk is now preparing the paperwork to go to the Council's internal auditor, R.N. Store, prior to completion of the Annual Return for 2006/07.

17 2007/08 : To take any points from members, identify items for the next agenda and to note urgent items of interest.

17a Councillor Capes reported that two fine, mature, trees on the verge at the corner of Sands Lane and Poplar Grove had been removed that morning by contractors. The trees had been cared for by the Council and the Tree Warden for the last 20 years. Councillor Capes asked that the Council send a letter to the appropriate personnel within WLDC to ask why these trees have been removed, by whom and on whose authority. He is concerned that other such trees, planted by the Council or donated by parishioners, could suffer the same fate and that the Council's efforts to maintain a pleasing rural environment will be wasted. All were in agreement with his proposed approach and the Clerk will write accordingly.

Initialed Chairman

18 2007/08 : To resolve whether, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press should be temporarily excluded from the meeting due to the commercially sensitive nature of the following business.

Proposed by Councillor Fillingham, seconded by Councillor Brown and with all agreed, it was :

RESOLVED : That, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press should be temporarily excluded from the meeting due to the commercially sensitive nature of the following items of business.

With the public and press excluded :

19 2007/08 : To consider the appointment of a legal representative in relation to the recommendations from the Cemetery & Allotments Working Group adopted under minute ref. 192 2006/07.

The Council considered the report from the Clerk related to the above. Proposed by Councillor Fillingham, seconded by Councillor Capes and with all agreed, it was :

RESOLVED : To appoint Bradbury, Roberts and Raby as legal advisor to act for the council in the matter.

The Clerk raised the issue of an application recently received for approval and prior to the appointment of a legal advisor to act. It was agreed that the application should be held in abeyance at this time.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.57pm.

Clerk:

Chairman:

Date: