

Pertenhall and Swineshead Quality Parish Council

Clerk: Garry Telling [Mrs]
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Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 22nd January, 2009,
in Swineshead Village Hall at 8.00

Present were Councillors Herdan, [JH], Bates, [TB], Kingham, [TK] and Pollard, [SP], Borough Councillor Ian Clifton [IC], and 7 members of the public. The new correspondent for Honeycomb for Pertenhall, Chloe Reid, was welcomed to the meeting.

Councillor Stevens, [BS], was in the chair.

09.01 Apologies – Neil Pateman [NP], Michael Whitlock [MW], and County Councillor Tom Wootton, [TW].

09.02 Minutes of Nov meeting – already circulated. These were signed as approved.

09.03 Declarations of Interest in any agenda item – none.

09.04 Brief discussions of matters arising from previous meeting

- Smartwater. A meeting had been arranged, by Iain Johnston the Homewatch coordinator, for Pertenhall residents in the village hall on 28th February, 2009 from 11 till 12. A police representative would be there and SmartWater would be explained and distributed. A similar meeting would take place in Swineshead, arranged by the Homewatch coordinator Jean Constant, on March 7th, also from 11 till 12.
- Sewage system in Swineshead – how many homes should it be able to support? The clerk had been unable to obtain the required information but JH had contacted someone different within Anglia Water and might be having more success.
- Date of Bletsoe appeal is 12/13th February and it will be held in the Harpur Suite. Clerk to write to Bletsoe Parish Council copying the letter to the Head of Planning.

09.05 Correspondence – A. Requiring decisions or for information

- Letter from Louise Ashmore at Beds RCC saying that Pertenhall and Swineshead re-accreditation attempt had been successful and that they would be a Quality Parish Council for the next four years, with certain provisos. It was agreed to invite the chairman of the Accreditation Board to the Meeting for the Electors in March. BS to contact Louise Ashmore at BRCC.
- Recycling – improved programme – noted.
- Farewell reception from BCC – 10.03.09 – 7.00 to 9.00 – County Hall – JH to attend if possible and SP to attend if free.
- Letter from Shaun Field – BBC, Chief Exec. – read out and noted.
- Card from Councillor Ian Clifton [IC] – Thanks were offered.
- Freedom of Information – adoption of F of I Template – Clerk explained that under the new model publications scheme the councillors would need to acquaint themselves with the new Freedom of Information Act, section 20. Then copies of the two documents: a complete guide to information and a copy of the model scheme should be adopted without modification. These documents should be put on web sites [the minutes of this meeting are in any case published on the web site and on the notice boards] and notice boards to signify that the councillors have adopted them. **09.05.01 The freedom of information template was unanimously adopted. BS/JH.**
- Buckingham Palace – **There was approval for putting forward Michael Whitlock's name in the draw. JH – unanimous.**
- Bridleways in Pertenhall/Swineshead SP No further action at the moment. Next agenda – discussion of the footpath map which had been laid aside till certain FP decisions had been made.

Correspondence – B. Available for those interested – see table at back of hall

09.06 Planning

- Swineshead FP diversion, No 12. Approved.
- Manor Farmhouse, Swineshead – Alterations and refurbishment of existing outbuilding to form recreation room – Listed Planning Consent refused. John Willcock, [JW], the consultant architect for the application, came to explain the situation to the councillors. He said that the barn in question was very small and the alteration minor. However the planners had turned the application down on all three counts, without consultation with the architect and against the informed opinion of the local councillors. On all three points very subjective interpretations of planning rules had been made.

TK said that he felt that the listed building and conservation planners were contradictory in their approach. JH made the point that the planner who visited was rude and monosyllabic, when a useful perspective on the application could have been made available to her.

JW was to meet this planner soon and asked that no approach be made by the Parish Council till he had completed what he hoped could be an amicable and helpful discussion.

The question was asked as to what would happen to this barn if permission was refused and the owners could not use it for the purpose they had thought appropriate. In all probability the barn would just fall into disrepair, which is not conservation in any sense of the word.

However BS and other councillors felt that after that date, and especially if the above meeting had not had a helpful outcome, the clerk should write expressing the increasing concern which was being felt by the Parish Council. It seemed as if no attempt was ever made to contact the councillors about applications, and the councillors wished that some effort could be made to liaise with them. If an application had been approved by the Parish Council and was about to be turned down by the planners, some effort should be made to explain why the planners had made a decision different from that made by those with local knowledge. The councillors were of the opinion that ignoring the information supplied by those who knew the area and the circumstances could not lead to satisfactory conclusions.

The clerk was therefore asked to say that

A] the councillors were disappointed by the decision and feared for the barn if the application was refused. SP asked to abstain from agreement with this point because as a Pertenhall councillor he was not involved in the original decision making by the Parish Council.

B] and that if the planners disagree with this Quality Parish Council, there should be some discussion before final decisions are made. This need, in most cases, be no more than a telephone call.

- Bird Brothers. All three applications had been approved.
- TB at this point stated that he thought that if the application were an important one then all councillors, not just the councillors from the village involved, should see the plans and be part of the decision making process. **09.07.01 This was agreed unanimously**, with BS stating that this had been the intention when the 2 planning committees were set up. However, in the case of Bird Bros, only the Swineshead councillors had been shown the plans.

09.07 Finance –

A.

- Clerk's expenses – telephone and Broadband - £20.00
- Swineshead Village Hall rental - £10.00
- Clerk's salary for final quarter year = £891.80
- SmartWater - £3,008.00 [a cheque has been received from BCC, and banked, for £2560 from BCC and £448.00 is VAT to be reclaimed.
- To BATPC - £80.00 affiliation fees.
- To NALC, QPC registration fee - £57.50. Already paid by GT. To be reclaimed.
- BATPC - £6.00 – notice of meetings posters

09.07 01 Approval was granted for all of the above JH/SP/

B. Annual review of Clerk's salary – **09.07.02 It was unanimously agreed that the clerk's salary should be increased by 4%. TB/SP**

C. Precept – Alan Constant [AC] from the public asked about dipping into reserves, e.g. for grass cutting if there were changes under the new Unitary Authority. The clerk said she thought that if

the grass cutting grants were withdrawn then probably the grass would be cut and paid for by the Borough Council, possibly by DSD. IC said that for the moment the payment of this grant would probably carry on. **09.07.03 There was a resolution to keep the Precept at £5000 for the year 2010/11 This was agreed unanimously.**

09.08 Highways – to include update on Highways Partnership money.

- For Swineshead – MW
 - met Alastair Rundall from Amey and he agreed to do the following after April
 - Footpath by War memorial, lower granite sets to improve wheelchair access
 - Repair road edges on Melchbourne Road 150 m beyond speed limit
 - Repair road edges on Pertenhall Road where previous repairs were faulty
 - Unblock several verge gullies
 - Repair bend sign on Pertenhall Road.

Also the ditch has been cleared out at the top end of Swineshead village to stop the water running down the High Street,

The bollards provided by the Rights of Way Dept. are in place. For emergency access the keys are with Mark Hanson, Dukes Cottage, or Michael Whitlock.

- For Pertenhall – TB
 - road between Swineshead and Pertenhall –letter written by Clerk to TW – no reply.
 - TB said that he is always told there is no money for improvements.

09.09 – First Aid courses – Rodney Tate to report.

£200 had been laid aside for this expenditure. There are 13 contacts interested in this course i.e. 15 people. Courses are normally for 12 people. RT to contact everyone, including the St John's ambulance tutor, to fix a mutually suitable date.

09.10 – Parish Plan review with reference to chapters on Health. Actions already taken

09.10.01 Section 2.6, Housing Needs Survey to be reconsidered every 5 years.

09.11 – Arrangements for Meeting for the Electors in March.

09.11.01 Suggestion that the Meeting for the Electors start at 7.30

Agenda to include Charities reports, Chairman's report, Financial report, Highways report, Parish Plan report and planning report.

The Chairman of the QPS Re-accreditation Board will be there, formally to present the certificate. See 09.05

09.12 – Newsletter will be ready for distribution soon.

09.13 Open Forum – at which points may be raised by councillors or members of the public. Note that matters to be discussed should be communicated to the clerk before the meeting.

IC – There have been many break-0ins and the BBC are having meetings with then police, especially Andy Stewart, to discuss ways of combating this.

Rural grants, which had been removed from proposed budgets, are now back in the budgets.

There will be elections for Borough Councillors on June 4th. There will be only 37 councillors elected, to replace all the Borough and County councillors now in office.

AC asked about the Swineshead Village Hall Notice board and was told that matters were in hand.

RT commented that the archivists have a long term plan: a history of all settlements and villages in North Beds. He wondered if the parish council wished to take part.

The meeting finished at 9.30.

The next meeting will be in Swineshead Village Hall on Thursday, March 12th, 2009 at 7.30.

This is the Meeting for the Electors which will be followed by the Parish Council meeting.

This is an open meeting and everyone is welcome to attend.