

## RAMSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at 8.00pm in Ramsden Memorial Hall

**Members Present:** Mr Clive Cowen (CC), Mrs Holly Deans (HD) (Chairman), Mrs Sally Miller (SM), and Mrs Sarah Wiggins (SW)

**Others Present:** Cllr Simon Hoare, the Clerk and 3 parishioners

Item	Subject	Action
26.	<b>Apologies</b> Mr Tony Shuker (TS) <b>Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda</b> Heath House Nursery – no representation was made. Speeding – Mr John Biggs (JB) expressed concern at the speed of vehicles on the High Street, particularly when the road was wet. JB proposed pedestrianising the area between the Royal Oak and the War Memorial so that traffic would have to filter round it at considerably reduced speed. He offered to assist in monitoring traffic speed. The PC responded that a village square with seating had been one of the Millenium proposals, and the details would be found from the file to look at again. Traffic flow had previously been monitored with a pressure pad as there was a surprising amount of through traffic. There were a number of options that needed to be worked through. Speed Watch signs were being trialled. Other options were the possible hiring or purchase of a speed VDU and speed monitoring by the police. Monitoring had taken place on Jordans Close. Oxfordshire Highways (OH) needed to be involved in advising and implementation.	HD Clerk
27.	<b>Approval of minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Wed 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008</b> The minutes were approved and signed as a true record of the meeting.	
28.	<b>Declaration of interests</b> None relevant to the business of the meeting.	
29.	<b>Matters of report arising, not elsewhere on the agenda</b> a) Code of Conduct HD had attended a training session at WODC on 12 <sup>th</sup> June and drew attention to the following points: registration of interests – register any organisation that comments on or seeks to influence public policy and to which a Cllr pays a subscription. An allotment or a reserved plot in the cemetery should be declared in the land ownership section. Planning – every application must be looked at afresh, even if it was a re-submission. b) Speeding The Chairman thanked CC and JB for putting the new Speed Watch signs up and moving them regularly as appropriate.	CC
30.	<b>Transport survey results</b> These were not yet available.	
31.	<b>Report from Councillor Simon Hoare (Cllr SH)</b> Comments held to Item 33, Planning.	
32.	<b>Highways and Footpaths</b> a) Flooding i. Update on flood defence reports and activities An appointment with HD on the morning of 18 <sup>th</sup> June had not been kept as the work of the Ramsden flood defence report was being transferred to another person. HD would be told who by 19 <sup>th</sup> June and a new appointment made for the following week. In the meantime the Chief Engineer urgently requested that no digging be undertaken until the	

consultation had taken place. Cllr H apologised on behalf of WODC for wasting the Chairman's time. 5 households had been flooded again recently. No water had been coming off the AH site. Water appeared to be coming up each side of the bottom of Hilltop Garden Centre's drive, streaming across the B4022 and down into Ramsden. Cllr H had reported this to Laurence King. The PC would order more sandbags. Sir Mark Norman had agreed to construct a 15'x15' pit, dug down to the cornbrash to enable it to drain, with a ditch to protect houses in Wilcote Lane and Lower End from the flooding caused by the run-off of rain water from the Normans' land above Wilcote Lane. Local people would need to share responsibility in contributing to works in the village that would help them, and where there were no riparian rights or duty of responsible discharge, the PC could consider assisting with funds.

**HD**

A letter would be sent to Mr Mark Walford asking him to restore the setts that were damaged during work on his property as this was contributing to the problems.

**Clerk**

ii. Ditch Information for WODC

The only ditches owned by the PC were round the Playing Field. This was being looked at in the PFC plan. There had never been a ditch along the upper part of the High Street.

**HD  
Clerk**

b) Footpath 327/3, top of Wilcote Lane

A pathway had been cleared away from the pond and boggy area, and clearance had been done at the other end of the path. SW was thanked for her work on this.

c) Little Lane and Footpath No 1

The PC was awaiting a quote for putting down hardcore on the surface at the boggy patch. It was felt that some mud and boggy areas were inevitable in a rural area.

### **33. Planning**

a) Applications received from West Oxfordshire District Council  
08/0959/P/FP Single storey rear extension

Pond House  
Mount Skippett  
Applicant: Mr R. Bigwood  
No objection.

**Clerk**

Frustration was expressed over bureaucracy in planning applications that wasted time and energy. Advice on pre-submission consultation would go in the Newsletter to help applicants be aware of all the documents and reports needed for a particular application.

**Clerk**

b) Decisions received from West Oxfordshire District Council

08/0604/P/FP Construction of swimming pool & pool house at The Skippet. Granted and Enforcement file E08/0005 closed.

08/0611/P/FP Extension to garage at The Paddock, Mount Skippett. Granted.

c) Ramsden Conservation Area Documents

Mr Dick Williamson had finalised these. HD would be seeing Mr Wheeler at WODC to discuss them and suggest including the proposed enlargement of the Conservation Area.

**HD**

d) Heath House Nursery

08/0920/P/FP Retention of existing extended building for use as agricultural workers dwelling for a temporary period of three years. {retrospective} Applicant: Mr R Power  
This second new application had been received. No newt survey had been carried out and no business case advanced. The PC discussed various objections to the proposal. The Chairman allowed Heather Smith to make representations at this point. Submissions or advice to the PC from any source have to be considered in the light of fairness to all. After more detailed discussion, it was agreed to send a strongly worded letter of objection.

**Clerk**

*(Cllr H left the meeting at this point.)*

### **34. Committees**

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Tennis Court Committee were received. The

- position regarding the PC's public liability insurance would be double-checked. **Clerk**  
 Memorial Hall Committee (MHC)  
 TS had inspected the insurance schedule and the MHC had been grateful for his advice.  
 The PC had received a copy of the approval by the Charity Commission of the change  
 in representation on the MHC constitution.
- 35. Financial matters**
- a) Financial summary  
 With unbudgeted income from cemetery fees, the current account balance was  
 £1997.93. Allianz had matched the lower insurance quote and their proposal had been  
 accepted. The Insurers required a doctor's letter confirming fitness for task for HD. **HD**
- b) Discussion of the internal audit report  
 The report was very good and the PC congratulated the Clerk on her work. It was  
 agreed to order a new interment receipts book and not to re-start the burial fees register. **Clerk**
- c) PAYE  
 HMR&C had confirmed by reference to its website that as the Clerk's salary was below  
 the threshold for tax the PC should not register for PAYE.
- d) Clerk's salary underpayment in 2007/8  
 TS had checked the figures and it was resolved to pay the sum owed.
- e) Bank account for Playing Field Committee (PFC) Development project  
 A formal request had been received to set up a separate bank account for this project.  
 PFC funds could not be transferred into this account, and the Clerk/RFO would send a  
 letter clarifying how the PC would operate it on their behalf.  
Resolved:  
 To launch the Playing Field Project Fund, setting up a current and a deposit account in  
 the name of Ramsden Parish Council – Playing Field Project Fund  
 To transfer a grant of £300 to open the deposit account  
 That HD, TS, SW and SM should be signatories, with any 2 to sign **All**  
 To send a letter to the PFC detailing how the fund will be operated. **Clerk**
- f) Accounts for Payment  
 It was resolved to pay the following accounts: KopyRite (Newsletter) £40.00; Clerk  
 (Salary and expenses) £270.14; Clerk (Underpayment) £47.82
- 36. Correspondence and Consultations**
- a) Consultation on the Thames Water (TW) draft Water Resources Management Plan  
 Swindon and Oxfordshire (SWOX) was one of two TW areas predicted to have an  
 increasing water deficit from 2009-2035 if nothing were done. The draft Management  
 Plan looks at demand management, leakage reduction, metering, water efficiency and  
 programme appraisal as ways of reducing the projected deficit to a small surplus by  
 2015, and an increasing surplus after 2024. The PC wished to comment about the need  
 for far greater improvements in leakage reduction. **Clerk**
- b) Police Authority – Given the size of the village and the low level of crime, the PC  
 declined the invitation for this time to be represented at the workshop on 21<sup>st</sup> July.
- 37. Any Other Business**  
 Bill Miller was following up the removal of the Fête Rams by OH.  
**The meeting closed at 10.25pm**  
**Dates of Next Meetings:**  
 Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July in St James' Church **All**  
 Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September in Ramsden Memorial Hall