

RAMSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wed 20th February 2008 at 8.00pm in Ramsden Memorial Hall

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

Others Present: the Clerk and 5 members of the public

Item	Subject	Action
104.	<p>Apologies Cllr Simon Hoare (SH)</p> <p>Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda Mr Richard Lord (RL) spoke of three main priorities: erection of a practice wall and hard standing area, landscaping works (avoiding extensive work in the potential second tennis court/multi-user surface area), and upgrades to playground equipment. The practice wall would be of wood and appropriate for a rural PF. Costs were being investigated prior to fund-raising. Advice was being sought on whether planning permission was required. Longer-term proposals of a basic pavilion or shelter (cost and potential vandalism were issues), and of a second tennis court/multi-user surface were under discussion with the Tennis Club to agree a long-term goal. Toilet facilities would then need to be considered. A solution to the drainage issues jointly agreed between all parties concerned was also being sought. The Chairman thanked RL for attending. Lord Rotherwick thanked Cllrs for attending the presentations at Cornbury Park (CP). He confirmed that Brize's Lodge would not be included in CP development plans. The previous holiday lodges planning application had been withdrawn but the proposed site was a brown field site. An advisor from Batsford Arboretum would be carrying out a programme of thinning the forest and of removing dangerous trees from near the roadsides. It was hoped to return part of the area to heath land, to return the woodland to an attractive high canopy forest for leisure use and restore the derelict houses on Finstock Heath. Plans for diversification included biomass fuel pellet production and a small HEP project by the lakes, which would create 2 or 3 permanent jobs. The PC's concern was the potential increase in traffic. CP would be producing a twice yearly newsletter to be sent by e-mail and could be posted on the village website. The Chairman thanked Lord Rotherwick for attending. Mr John Biggs asked about the origin of the proposed amendments to the Standing Orders. Response: It was in accordance with advice received from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to reflect the public participation session now being regarded as part of the meeting in law, and to reflect the changes brought about by the new model Code of Conduct for local authority members in England.</p>	
105.	<p>Approval of minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 16th January, Wednesday 6th February and of the General Risk Assessment A potential misunderstanding in 99b was noted. Intended meaning: it was unlikely that there was anything going on in Ramsden that would qualify for an Arts Grant. The minutes of both meetings were then approved and signed as a true record. The General Risk Assessment was checked and signed.</p>	
106.	<p>Declaration of interests None relevant to the business of the meeting.</p>	

- 107. Matters of report arising, not elsewhere on the agenda**
Affordable Housing (AH): CC had made it clear in the Newsletter before his election that he considered this an appropriate development for Ramsden. He would not wish to remain on the PC if the development did not go through.
AH Legal Agreement on neighbouring parishes: In the unlikely event of there ever being insufficient people with local connections to occupy the AH, applicants from an ‘inner ring’ of neighbouring parishes would be considered, then from an ‘outer ring’. It was agreed that the inner ring would comprise Finstock, Leafield and Hailey and the outer ring North Leigh, Crawley and Fawler.
- 108. Report from Councillor Simon Hoare**
AH : Dialogue was on going between Cottsway and WODC on the issues raised at the last meeting - namely drainage, sewerage and flooding / flood risk assessment.
SH would be asked to keep the PC up to date with any information. **Clerk**
- 109. Highways and Footpaths**
- a) Flooding
- i. Update
A flooding dossier had been submitted to WODC. Oxfordshire Highways (OH) would be sending a team to jet the drains near the Royal Oak in the week beginning 25th Feb. **TS**
A survey request on run-off and gully pots had been logged with OH for the upper part of the village. HD offered to assist. OH had requested the help of the PC in establishing ownership and encouraging landowners to clear ditches. **HD Clerk**
- ii. Footpath by pond at top of Wilcote lane.
Recent measures with hardcore were only temporary. It would be necessary to contact the Footpath Officer to organise raising the level of the path. **Clerk**
- iii. Drainage ditches at top of Wilcote Lane & Norman's land.
Run-off was bad because many hedges had been removed and the ditches had gone with them. **HD**
- iv. A quote for putting hardcore in the triangle at the top of Little Garden Wood would be obtained but work could not be authorised until the new financial year. **HD**
- b) Transport review and Oxfordshire Public Transport Guide
The PC agreed that a needs survey should be carried out in Ramsden and accepted ORCC’s offer of help with this. The possibility of distributing the twice-yearly Oxfordshire Public Transport Guide with the Newsletter would be investigated. **Clerk**
- 110. Planning**
- a) There were no applications received from WODC.
- b) Decisions received from West Oxfordshire District Council
07/2049/P/FP Conversion of stables at Ramsden House, Akeman Street. Granted
07/2146/P/FP Two storey side extension at Hartsop Farm. Granted.
07/2074/P/FP Erection of new dwelling with new access at Hilltop Garden and Leisure Centre. Refused. (no newt survey, siting in ANOB contrary to Policy NE4)
07/2220/P/FP Change of use of land to provide animal attraction & children's play area at Hilltop Garden and Leisure Centre. Refused.
ER: 08/0005 The Skippett, 16 Mount Skippett : the lack of newt survey constituted a breach of planning regulations.
- c) Cornbury Park
The PC welcomed the idea of returning the potential development site to heath land but noted that a smaller development there had not been ruled out. Cornbury Park needed to diversify but the PC would continue to monitor the situation carefully.

d) Heath House Nursery

The Enforcement Officer's letter indicated that the site owner was in discussion with the Area Planning Manager and had been given until 4th June 2008 to resolve matters.

111. Committees

a) Playing Field and Tennis Court - Development plans

There was no further discussion.

b) Memorial Hall (MH) - Minutes and financial update

February was year-end for the MH. The financial update would be forthcoming for the March PC meeting. A reminder would be sent.

Clerk

112. Financial matters

a) Financial summary

The financial summary and bank reconciliation were considered. Newsletter accounts were presented and the figures were satisfactory. A good amount of advertising revenue had been received for 2008, only 2 payments were outstanding.

**TS
Clerk**

b) Review of Standing Orders

The Standing Orders (SOs) were reviewed. The changes recommended by NALC regarding public participation and reflecting the new Code of Conduct by replacing model SOs 58 and 70 with new model SOs 70A and 70B were formally approved. The wording of new guidance leaflets for parishioners attending PC meetings was approved. A copy would be placed on the website.

Clerk

c) Review of Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations were considered and approved without change.

d) Appointment of auditors

The Audit Commission had appointed BDO Stoy Hayward as external auditors. The PC agreed to reappoint Mr Brian Rollerson as internal auditor at a fee of £25 per hour.

Clerk

e) Grass cutting for 2008 season

A quotation from Mr Kevin Grant of £1235.00 had been received, excluding disposal of grass cuttings. This was still less than the second quote for 2007. The PC felt very frustrated by the bureaucracy surrounding the disposal of grass cuttings. The Clerk was enquiring whether Mr Grant had the required Environment Agency registration. The PC agreed to ask WODC to quote for the work.

Clerk

f) Accounts for Payment

It was resolved to pay the following accounts: Sarah Wiggins (footpath repairs) £48.90; Ian Winter Design (Newsletter) £41.13; Nick Wiggins (website fees) £12.50; Clerk £268.03.

Clerk

113. Consultation on the Code of Conduct

As the PC was normally advised by WODC on these matters, the PC would delegate this to WODC.

114. Correspondence

a) Heritage grants

The only eligible village organisation had already decided not to apply for these grants.

115. Any Other Business

SW would be attending the OU's Environmental Change Institute's meeting in Wolvercote on 26th February on ways of saving energy.

The hedge bordering the Halls' land needed cutting. A letter would be sent.

Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Dates of Next Meetings:

Wednesday 19th March, Wednesday 16th April, Annual meeting Wed 21st May