

# Wheathampstead Parish Council

**30 April 2009, 19.30h**

Present Councillors:	K Stammers	(Chairman)
	I Begg	
	A Brewster	
	J Burgess	
	G Clark	
	N Clements	
	D Hills	
	N Page	
	T Reason	
	J Turner	
	S Walford	
	A Waterfield	
	Julia Warren	(Parish Clerk)
	Press	0
	Public	1

## **230-09 APOLOGIES**

None.

## **231-09 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

Mr R Adams spoke of the beautiful parish of Wheathampstead and the need to limit disillusionment and better utilise the talents of councillors and parishioners. He suggested that it would be beneficial to the parish to focus on 1 or 2 major projects rather than many smaller ones.

He was concerned that the broken office fax machine had not been replaced and that with the installation of the security hatch parishioners stood to make enquiries rather than being comfortably seated in the Parish Office. He said that the 'devices' on the allotments were "lovely" and wished the piglets well. Council were asked to also note his concerns raised before the Annual Parish Meeting including the grant made towards the churchyard wall; the new Memorial Hall roof; the tree removed on Marford Road by the old presbytery; Standards Board complaints, NATS and the "presence of Gatso, AVRN and picture cameras" on the Lower Luton Road.

## **232-09 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Clark declared a personal interest in Minute 252-09 , as she is on Plans North of the District Council Planning Authority. The way she votes at Parish Council will not necessarily be the way she votes at District Council. She further declared a personal interest in Minute 252-09 and took no part in the discussions of plans .....

**233-09 MINUTES OF COUNCIL**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 26 March 2009 were approved

**Resolved:** To confirm the Minutes of the meetings held on 26 March 2009 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

**234-09 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The following committee reports were received and receipted:

Highways and Public Transport Committee	2 April 2009
Village Day Committee	7 April 2009

Rights of Way and Commons Committee	21 April 2009
-------------------------------------	---------------

In receiving the minutes of the Rights of Way and Commons Committee of 21 April Members noted and approved the recommendation at Minute 227-09.

Council was asked to approve a further spend upon maintenance treework (stump grinding) on Rectory Meadows, Bower Heath and Gustard Wood amounting to £270 by Webbs Treework as the committee had not discussed this.

- Resolved:**
- 1 To receipt the reports of the following committees:**

<b>Highways and Public Transport Committee</b>	<b>2 April 2009</b>
<b>Village Day Committee</b>	<b>7 April 2009</b>
<b>Rights of Way and Commons Committee</b>	<b>21 April 2009</b>
  - 2 To approve the recommendation at Minute 227-09 – that SQS be awarded the contract to form a new tarmacadam footpath along Waddling Lane, 1 metre wide and approximately 56 meters long with wood edges at a cost of £2,692.90 as an accrual in the 2008-9 budget And SQS to install concrete edging to strengthen wood edging at two bridleway sites at a cost of £337.94.**
  - 3 To approve maintenance expenditure from the Rights of Way and Commons Committee of £270 on stump grinding.**

**235-09 CiLCA**

Members were advised that Irene Casper has passed her CiLCA course. She was to be formally congratulated upon her success and would receive one additional salary point in recognition of this, payable above her scale salary. (As per her contract and recommended by NALC). In addition the Clerk was to purchase a bouquet of flowers (from the administration budget) to acknowledge her achievement

- Resolved:**
- 1 To note the report**
  - 2 Clerk to write to congratulate Mrs Casper**
  - 3 Clerk to purchase a bouquet of flowers for Mrs Casper on behalf of Council**

**236-09 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

At its meeting on 22 December 2008 (Minute 6) Council set as one of the Clerk's objectives a review of the Council's committee structure. The need to streamline the committees for efficiency was reiterated during the internal audit inspection in March 2009 (Minute 191-09, PC 26 March 2009). A report outlining the legal aspects of committees, Wheathampstead Parish Council's current structure and some options for change had been previously circulated. These options, including variations upon them and whether non-parish council committees, such as the Nomansland Joint Committee, should be included, were debated. Members thanked the Clerk and acknowledged that the objective had been met, but that a decision upon a revised structure would not be rushed into, councillors needed to further consider the need for evolution or revolution in terms of altering the familiar structure. The aim would be for the best solution for the parish. The role of committee chairmen and types of committees were also discussed.

- Resolved**
- 1 To note the report**
  - 2 To streamline and reduce numbers of committees and use working groups to advise and inform 'parent' committees**
  - 3 That a committee structure will be agreed for appointment at the May Annual Council meeting**
  - 4 That an agreed number of councillors, and any co-opted non-councillor members, be appointed to each committee and working group**
  - 5 That an odd number of members was preferable to minimise the necessity for the chairman's casting vote**
  - 6 That within the revised structure provision be made for consideration of internal grievances and complaints.**
  - 7 That the Clerk provide a detailed explanation of how option 4 (2 main committees) might operate for consideration at the May meeting.**

**8 That terms of reference of committees be then considered at the first committee meeting and agreed by Council.**

**237-09 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

**Resolved: 1 That there be no change prior to the Annual Meeting in May**

**238-09 ABBOTT JOHN MEWS**

WPC approved the change of name from Waddling name to Abbott John Mews in October 2008 (Minute 14) and payment was made to SADC for signage. When this matter was followed up, in April 2009, the Clerk was advised this payment had been used for a name change not signage, and that there remained a discrepancy in spelling of Abbott..

**Resolved:**

- 1 Councillor Clark, being also a district councillor, to follow this through for name change to Abbott John Mews and signage**
- 2 Clerk to write to Mr Hoare**

**239-09 BUTTERFLY PROJECT ON MARSHALLS HEATH**

A request had been received (details previously circulated) to conduct a study into the expansion of the habitat types of the Brown Argus butterfly on Marshalls Heath. This would form part of a PhD project quantifying relationships between habitat use and temperature at species range boundaries. Advice had been sought from the Hertfordshire Butterfly Recorder, Dr John Murray, who was supportive of the study. He said that the presence of the Brown Argus butterfly on the Heath had always been something of a puzzle, as its principal foodplant was not found there, suggesting that it may be surviving on something else. Some years it did not appear at all, despite regular monitoring. The fact that it only ever appears in the second generation was also curious, and he felt that to conserve this butterfly on the Heath we definitely needed to know more about its needs, which as yet were incompletely understood.

**Resolved:**

- 1 That the Council support the request to study the habitat use as outlined**
- 2 That Rachel Pateman contact Dr Murray directly for advice on specific locations**

**240-09 FISHERIES MONITORING**

A request had been received to conduct a survey of the River Lea as part of the National Fisheries Monitoring Programme. A copy of the previous year's survey had accompanied the request

**Resolved: That the Council support the request to conduct the survey.**

#### **241-09 NOMANSLAND CHARITY DOG WALK**

A request had been received from St Albans Priory Rotary Club to hold a charity dog walk on Nomansland in September/October 2009. They included the possibility of including dog agility, dog grooming and sale of snacks.

Members discussed the request and determined that permission could only be given for that part of Nomansland in WPC ownership, a further request may thus be necessary to the Nomansland Joint Committee. If the walk were planned to include areas used by the Wheathampstead Cricket Club the Club would need to be consulted. The suggestion was made that the use of Bower Heath or Melissa Field may be more appropriate.

**Resolved: That the Clerk clarify with St Albans Priory Rotary Club their requirements and suggest that they may consider alternative locations – Melissa Field or Bower Heath**

#### **242-09 CAR BOOT SALES**

At its meeting on 2 April (Minute 209-09) the Highways and Public Transport Committee supported WEB's request for a pilot scheme of monthly car boot sales in East Lane car park. Member's were asked to reconsider this in light of the response from SADC confirming its acceptability as landowner. The suitability had been questioned in regard to availability of parking space. Council considered that parking capacity was not usually at issue on Sundays, the car park being used far more on weekdays and Saturdays. Visitors' parking for Farmers' Market events, also held on Sundays, was adequate

**Resolved: That WEB be permitted to pilot monthly car boot sales on Sundays as requested subject to requisite insurances and liaison with WPC and the WI Mead Hall.**

#### **243-09 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT**

It was positively noted that both SADC and HCC had opted into the Sustainable Communities Act. This would enable them, as principle authorities, to drive central government action and policy.

#### **244-09 VILLAGE DAY**

It was reported that the police had discussed the process and possibility of a beer tent at Village Day with the Village Day Committee. Additional policing resources would be required, at a cost to WPC, should alcohol be made available for purchase at the Event.

**Resolved: That a beer tent would not be a feature of the 2009 Village Day.**

**245-09 VISIBLE STREET SCENE GRANT**

It was reported that £2,000 had been awarded towards the provision of new village entrance signs and a finger post from the 2009/10 SADC budget. SADC would discuss a potential future funding application in autumn 2009 to extend the project and continue the partnership working

**Resolved: To note the report**

**246-09 MARFORD PAVILION**

An offer had been received from the Wheathampstead Wanderers Football Club, who use the Marford Pavilion, to assist with clearing and decorating the pavilion in advance of the 2009-10 football season.

**Resolved:**

- 1 To accept Wheathampstead Wanderers' offer for the manpower to clear and decorate the pavilion, subject to insurance provision and agreement by other pavilion users.**
- 2 To allocate £2,000 from the Playing Field and Youth Committee budget**

**247-09 STANDING ORDERS**

**Resolved: To defer any review beyond May 2009**

**248-09 BINS**

**Further consideration was given the litter bin located at the top of the Mill Steps, as discussed at Minute 199-09.**

**Resolved:**

- 1 To ascertain whether SADC would continue to empty a relocated bin.**
- 2 That any further consideration of this be referred to the Highways & Public Transport Committee.**

**249-09 CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER CONSULTATION**

Under Government and English Heritage guidance consultation area character statements should be reviewed every 5 years to ensure that they are up to date. A response upon the statement and boundary was discussed and agreed at this initial consultation phase. A wider public consultation was expected following SADC's review.

**Resolved: That the Clerk respond to SADC as discussed.**

**250-09 BANK BALANCES**

It was reported that as at 31 March 2009 the balances, unadjusted for returned cheques which were to be written back as part of the year-end procedures:

Brocket View Drainage Account	4, 243.68
Current Account	5, 000.00
Premium Account	<u>162, 952.88</u>
	<u>172, 196.56</u>
Less unpresented cheques	25, 677.99
Cash at Bank	<u>146, 518.57</u>

**Resolved: To note the report.**

**251-09 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

The schedule of accounts for payment amounting to £45,915.10 had been circulated.

The need for authorisation of expenditure was discussed and Members agreed that their resolution of 29 January 2009 (Minute 42-09) should be clarified to avoid ambiguity. It read 'that purchase ordering be through the Parish Office.'

**Resolved: 1 To pay the accounts per February 2009 schedule amounting to £29,462.34 Nett**  
**2 That only purchase orders signed by the Parish Office would be honoured by the Council.**

**252-09 PLANNING**

**The following plans were considered:**

5/09/0612	Eight Acre, Mackerye End	Replacement dwelling (amendment to planning permission 5/08/1763 dated 26/09/08
5/09/0514	3 The Broadway, Gustard Wood	Two storey rear and side extension
5/09/0674	45 Necton Road	Single storey front & rear extension
5/09/0517	14 Mount Road -	single storey extension
5/09/0657	Ayres Barn, Ayres End Lane	single storey extension with internal alterations & alterations to openings

