

## MINUTES OF IRON ACTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2011

North Road School Hall

Commencing at 8.00pm

The Annual Parish Meeting for Iron Acton was held in North Road School Hall commencing at 8.00pm.

Councillors Present – Councillors Sheppard (Chairman), Bellis (Vice Chairman), Gawler, Heal, Blanchard, Huish, Tillotson, D. Hockey (South Gloucestershire Councillor) and Mrs. P. Evans (Clerk).

Parishioners Present – J. Bond, R. Marchant, J. Merrick, J. Driver, T. Driver, A. Kiermasz, J. Kiermasz, M. Keenan, L. Allen, A. Jastrzebska, R. Jastrzebska.

### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Dave Taylor and Pat Hockey.

### 2. Minutes of 2010 Meeting

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting, held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2010 had been distributed, read by all and agreed to be correct and Signed. Proposed Councillor Bellis and seconded Councillor Gawler.

### 3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and introduced two new Parish Councillors – Peter Huish (Councillor for Iron Acton Ward) and Andy Tillotson (Councillor for East Ward). The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the two retiring Councillors Rachel Weldrake and Ann Aplin. The Parish Councillors undertake a great deal of work behind the scenes and the Chairman wished to thank them for all their help and support.

Parish Meadow:- Following representations by Acton Aid to erect a multi-functional open structure, the Parish Council agreed by a majority decision to waive Byelaw No. 7 at their meeting in October 2010. However, no further development has taken place. There was continued vandalism in the play area during the course of the year with the decision taken by the Parish Council to remove the vandalised slide and replace with a climbing net.

Works Around Parish:- The Parish Council has undertaken some general tidying-up work in the Meadow, tennis courts and village generally. The Cassey has been weeded, the cemetery footpath has been swept and the footpath to the Parish Meadow has also been weeded and swept. A number of compliments have been received from parishioners.

Village Green:- There continued to be problems with cars being parked on the village green. New 'no parking' signs were purchased by the Parish Council at a cost of £900, and erected on the green. The installation of these new signs appear to be having the desired affect, however there is still a problem with cars being parked in the 'hammer head'. Unfortunately when this occurs, delivery lorries are forced to go onto village green as they swing round the bend. This damages the village green and the cobbled edging.

Grasscutting:- Following the appointment of a new provider for the grasscutting contract a considerable number of complaints were received regarding the poor standard of cut. This was unacceptable to the Parish Council, and following discussions the original landscape contractor was asked to resume the contract in order to rectify the situation and in particular make good the village green in readiness for the May Day celebrations.

Frampton End Road:- The Parish Council was approached by a delegation of residents of Frampton End Road regarding dangerous traffic along, what is in reality a country lane. The Frampton End Road Action Group had also approached Westerleigh Parish Council and

Frampton Cotterell Parish Council in order to gain support for their concerns, and for South Gloucestershire Council to devise a solution to the speeding traffic and inappropriate vehicles using the lane. South Gloucestershire Council proposed that Frampton End Road be closed to through traffic by the erection of gates at either end of Frampton End Road. This proposal has been placed on the South Gloucestershire Task Register for due consultation.

Allotments:- Due to the abuse of the water supply at the Nibley Lane allotment site, the Parish Council decided to remove the existing trough and install two standpipes. The water bill for the previous year had been in excess of £500 with rents gathered totalling some £285. The Parish Council called a meeting with the tenants to discuss various issues concerning the Nibley Lane site, as well as the issue of the water supply. There is actually no obligation for the Parish Council to supply water to the allotments. The Parish Council is investigating the cost of clearing away the large pile of rubbish that has accumulated, once again, at the top of the Nibley Lane allotments. This pile not only contains allotment rubbish but also cemetery spoil. The projected cost of dealing with this problem is in the region of £600.

Engine Common:- In connection with the proposed development by Bloor Homes, the Chairman had contacted Mr. Freed of Sydney Freed Holdings and invited him to attend one of the Parish Council meetings. To date no response has been received from him. The Parish Council is not aware of any further developments regarding this proposal.

North Road:- A new gas supply will be installed along North Road as far as the Primary School. Unfortunately this will only benefit residents up to that point.

Latteridge Road:- The Parish Council was approached by the Latteridge Road Action Group in connection with their concerns at the number of lorry movements along this road, in particular Morrisons lorries and their wish to have a weight restriction imposed on the road. The Parish Council were unable to support the Action Group as they had to balance up the implications of a weight restriction and the fact that Wotton Road also runs through the parish. There has been no firm decision as to what is going to happen to the Morrisons depot once they vacate the site, and a date for vacating has still not been decided.

Traffic Management Review - High Street:- The results of the traffic management review undertaken by South Gloucestershire Council of the High Street, Park Street and the Village Green had just been received, and would be fully discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

May Day Celebrations:- The May Day Celebrations took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> May this year. The event seems to get bigger and bigger each year and it is a credit to all those involved in organising the event. The Parish Council understand that somewhere in the region of £6,500 was raised.

Royal Wedding Celebrations:- Organisations within the Parish got together, at short notice, and organised an excellent day of activities to celebrate the Royal Wedding on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

New Beat Officer:- PC Finbar Simmons has taken over as the new Avon & Somerset Police Beat Officer for Iron Acton Parish.

That concluded the Chairman's report.

#### 4. **Other Reports**

##### South Gloucestershire Councillors - Pat & Dave Hockey

This year we both have continued to chair Select Committees which fulfil the dual role of advising on policies and scrutinising the work of the Executive Members and Council Departments. Dave chaired Communities Select Committee and Pat Planning Transport & Strategic Environment.

Dave is delighted that all the work he has done to get improvements in the amount of waste recycled, including kerbside collection of plastic bottles and weekly collection of food waste, has to come to fruition. The downside has been that the implementation of these improvements by SITA has meant extra collections and cardboard escaping while awaiting collection. Special bags for cardboard are on order and should soon be available for collection locally by those who want them.

Pat has been closely involved in the completion of the Draft Core Strategy which has now been submitted for an Examination in Public by a Government Inspector. This is now expected to be held in September or October. Although the new Minister announced the scrapping of Regional Spatial Strategies and promised local communities more say in the future development in their areas, it remains unclear how far this will go. Since this announcement a High Court Challenge by Volume House Builders concerning the legality of the Secretary of State's announcement, has been upheld. In addition the Budget speech promoted increased development and a strong presumption in favour of it. The developer aspirations for Engine Common make these very important issues for Iron Acton.

The Select Committee work includes leading Reviews of a particular service, chosen by Councillors as being important. Dave was involved in a review on Tackling Childhood Obesity. Pat lead a review which is looked at how Green Infrastructure and Urban Design can compensate for the loss of countryside and lack of private gardens in providing for biodiversity, healthy living and a sense of community. This was concluded in time for its recommendations to be considered and accepted by the Cabinet before the start of the Local Election period.

As we have reported in last year, although no longer involved in the administration of South Gloucestershire Council we fully participate in its partnership working with representatives of the business sector, other public bodies and voluntary organisations. Pat has served on the West of England Joint Scrutiny Committee. This looked at the work which was being carried out by the 4 Unitary Authorities working together as the West of England Partnership. It included the Joint Local Transport Plan which led to the Government Funding for the "Showcase Bus Routes". One of these is between Yate and Bristol which is why we have the new bus shelter and the kerb build-outs at the bus stops.

The series of Service Reviews embarked on to deal with the need to reduce expenditure is leading to many reductions in staff. The aim of these is to cut back, largely through the use of IT and new working practices, on the staff needed to provide services, thus avoiding as far as possible, any reduction in "front line services". There are also proposals to reduce the number of Directors by amalgamating current departments.

Councillors were allocated sum money from the sale of the Council Houses to Merlin to spend on local projects. We decided that the extra parking bays which we knew were wanted in Chilwood Close would be an appropriate project for the Iron Acton allocation. Because of the need to remove a telegraph pole it took rather longer than anticipated but we are pleased to see that they are now in use.

The heavy lorries associated with the distribution depots in the Yate area continue to cause problems for residents of Latteridge Road and Wotton Road. The land slip repair gave a short period of relief to the former. The monitoring of the routes taken by the lorries during this period indicated that the majority of the lorries associated with the Morrisons' depot did not chose to use Wotton Road. This led to the responsible South Gloucestershire Executive Member to accept Officer advice to agree to the request of the Latteridge Action Group to remove the requirement for these lorries to use Latteridge Road. On the information available all the Local Councillors involved supported this. The basis of this decision has been challenged by very unhappy residents of Wotton Road and it is being given further consideration. Meanwhile Pat and Howard received support for their proposal to South Gloucestershire Council to request Officers to report on the feasibility and implication of changing the planning consents for the distribution depots when they are becoming vacant. We anticipate this report in July.

The new Council Offices at the junction of Stover Road and Badminton Road, have brought together parts of the Council's departments that were previously housed in various parts of South Gloucestershire and appear to be running successfully. Leases have not been renewed on several expensive offices. Nibley Court has been retained for a while longer while the Kingswood Civic Centre is being refurbished. The Police have already moved in there as part of their rationalisation. The Police Station in Thornbury will also be closing and the local Police

Team there will be located in the Council Offices there.

Following the presentation of this report, Councillor Dave Hockey addressed the meeting and added that the Bloor Homes bid for 350 new houses and industrial units for the Engine Common area would be a major change for Iron Acton and would have a profound impact on the parish. Councillor Pat Hockey had played a major part in writing the Core Strategy document and working out where some 23,000 new homes for South Gloucestershire would have to go. Bloor Homes could submit a planning application at any point in time, but that it was likely it would be turned down flat by South Gloucestershire Council, at which point Bloor Homes could take their application to Appeal. The Core Strategy document will be open to public consultation which would probably take place in October 2011. During the public consultation companies such as Bloor Homes would have to book a slot in order to address the Inspector, as would those who wish to oppose the proposal. This would be an important issue for Iron Acton over the coming years.

In connection with the Latteridge Road Acton Group and the Wotton Road Acton Group, Councillors Pat Hockey and Howard Gawler will be putting a proposal forward on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2011 to see what could be done to change the status of the Morrison's site. Currently there is a distribution licence attached to the depot and an investigation is requested to look at the implications and costs of changing it from distribution to smaller units. Councillor Dave Hockey confirmed that there would most likely be cost implications involved in any change, but on the other hand the number of lorry movements on Latteridge Road, Wotton Road and Badminton Road is growing and the number of complaints received by South Gloucestershire Council is unbelievable.

Councillors Dave and Pat Hockey knocked on every door in their ward, being some 3,300 homes and asked people to complete a simple survey asking what was good about the area and what needed sorting out. All of that information has now been captured and over the next four years, Pat and Dave will be working through the list. One of the areas mentioned that needs improving is facilities for children and young people. The Frome Side Youth Centre in Frampton Cotterell actually covers Iron Acton. It may be possible for an Outreach Worker to visit Iron Acton and let the young people know that the centre is available for them to enjoy. Fly-tipping was another subject that was highlighted in the survey. The South Gloucestershire Environmental Crime Team is aware of problems in the area and will take steps to prosecute those responsible. Another issue was speeding and the volume of traffic on Nibley Lane. Since the South Gloucestershire Council Badminton Road offices opened there has been a notable increase in traffic. Nibley Lane is narrow, with blind corners and does not have a speed limit. The concerns of residents were understandable and South Gloucestershire Council will be looking into this issue. Finally, dog fouling was a real issue across the parish. South Gloucestershire Council is looking into the possibility of implementing a 'Green Dog Walker' Scheme. This scheme encourages dog owners to wear an armband stating that they are a responsible owner. Similar schemes have been set up in Scotland and have worked extremely well.

#### South Gloucestershire Councillor – Howard Gawler

In connection with the Core Strategy, Councillor Pat Hockey has put far more work into this document than any other Councillor, and wished to pass on his thanks for her major input.

The Manor Road footpath, heading towards Rangeworthy has now been completed. It has taken nearly twenty years to complete, but the results were well worth the wait.

In connection with the Engine Common Action Committee, Mr. Keenan had distributed leaflets – Is this the end of Engine Common? – to most of the parish, asking parishioners to show their objection to the proposed Bloor Homes development by signing an on-line petition. This development would more than double the size of Iron Acton Parish and has been referred to as 'a carbuncle on the side of Yate'. All of the Councillors are of one mind in opposing this proposed development.

Regarding the rumours circulating that the blanket TPO for the North Road area has been lifted, Councillor Gawler confirmed that this rumour was incorrect. The TPO is in force and will remain in force, and South Gloucestershire Council has no intention of removing it until the area has been surveyed. Once the survey has been completed South Gloucestershire Council may well look into the possibility of individual TPO's.

Councillor Gawler is a Governor at North Road Primary School. The school has recently gone through a chequered period of staff changes. The new head teacher is Jo-Marie Williams who has come from Rodford primary school and is leading the school forward. The children thoroughly enjoy being at school and it now has a happy atmosphere. Next September there is a full intake of 15 children anticipated and the total number at the school has gone from 90 to 95. The schools' good reputation is beginning to spread. The school will soon have a complete new roof, rewiring and gas heating system at a cost of some £375,000.

Councillor Gawler is Chairman of Yate Community Transport based in North Road. Unfortunately the site has had a few issues recently with the new tenants in the Clarks operation causing a number of problems. It was discovered that Unique Systems did not have an operators licence. VOSA are aware of this and will be dealing with it.

**5. Audited Accounts for 2009/2010**

Copies of the Audited Accounts for 2009/2010 had been circulated. Councillor Gawler proposed and Councillor Heal seconded that these accounts be adopted. All agreed.

**6. Unaudited Accounts for 2010/2011**

Copies of the Unaudited Accounts for 2010/2011 had been circulated for consideration and discussion. No observations were received.

**7. Charities Accounts**

The Chairman informed the meeting that the secretary of the Charities Committee, Bridget Bennett had resigned due to work commitments. The Chairman reported that there had been no movements on the accounts and an advertisement would be going into the parish Focal Poyntz magazine asking if anyone is interested in applying for the position as secretary.

**8. Any New Business**

Mr. James Bond enquired when the new cardboard recycling bags would be available for distribution. Councillor Dave Hockey explained that the bags would be available in July. South Gloucestershire Council Waste Management section is currently organising distribution points. The distribution point for the Frampton Cotterell end of the parish would be at the Brockridge Centre. Additional distribution points for the parish would be organised and advertised to parishioners.

Councillor Peter Bellis addressed the meeting regarding the work that is being done to facilitate a walk-way from Iron Acton village through to the Frome Valley Farm Shop. There are a number of verges particularly along the Bristol where vegetation has been allowed to grow and overhang the verge therefore making the verge un-walkable. Councillor David Hockey said that South Gloucestershire Council Streetcare department should be contacted as they are the section who deals with roadside verges.

Mr. Keenan referred to the new gas main along North Road, and said that he felt this may be happening in readiness of the proposed Bloor Homes development. Councillor Gawler informed the meeting that the cost of the installation is being split 50/50 between the gas company and SGC (£40,000 each). Councillor Gawler also said that one of the main issues concerning the Bloor Homes development is that the current sewerage system is completely full and in order to accommodate any new houses a completely new sewerage system would have to be installed. Councillor Dave Hockey concurred that a new sewerage system would be required as currently Frampton Cotterell get all of the sewage when the rain is bad. Councillor Hockey has had a 10-year battle with Wessex Water and the Environment Agency regarding

the inadequate sewerage system. As a result, if more than 1500 new homes are to be built in the Yate, Sodbury and Doddington area, then a relief sewerage system will have to be built which would take the sewage from Cog Mill straight to Avonmouth. Mr. Bond mentioned that phosphorous is essential for growing crops and the Soil Association are having a major rethink on what to do with sewage. Mr. Keenan enquired whether a new sewerage system would be a pre-requisite prior to the 1,500 new homes proposed for the Brimsham Park area being built. Councillor Dave Hockey emphasised that the Core Strategy is a 15-year plan and will depend on market conditions. Mr. Kiermasz informed the meeting that he had recently seen official looking people in the Mission Road/Engine Common area taking photographs.

Councillor Heal informed the meeting that Hansons' are now loading at Tytherington Quarry and transporting the stone along the railway line. Unfortunately when the first train went through the level crossing on Latteridge Road, the warning barriers did not operate and a collision with a car was narrowly avoided. Engineers attended the level crossing to fix the problem.

Mr. Keenan wished to pass on his thanks to Councillors Pat and Dave Hockey and Councillor Gawler for all their support in connection with the Bloor Homes proposed development. Mr. Keenan said that Steve Webb MP had also been a great support.

9. There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.55pm.