

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING OF
IRON ACTON PARISH COUNCIL
Monday 16th May 2011**

The Annual Meeting of Iron Acton Parish Council was held in North Road School Hall commencing at 7.30pm.

Present:- Mr. Sheppard (Chairman), Mr. Bellis (Vice Chairman), Mr. Heal, Mr. Huish, Mr. Lomas, Miss. Blanchard, Mr. Gawler (Councillor and South Gloucestershire Councillor), Mr. Taylor and Mrs. Evans (Clerk)

Action

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Six members of the public were present. Mr. Mike Keenan, a resident of North Road enquired whether there had been any further developments regarding the Bloor Homes planning application for Engine Common. Mr. Keenan also enquired whether an Ecological Survey would be carried out as it was thought that there may well be rare orchids in the area. Councillor Lomas referred to a survey that had been done some ten years ago in connection with the previous planning application. The Clerk was asked to enquire of SGC as to whether a similar survey had recently been done, as SGC have their own ecologists. Councillor Gawler confirmed that SGC would be undertaking an ecological survey as this type of information plays a large part in planning considerations. Any developer would have to submit a report to SGC for them to confirm. Mr. James Bond asked whether an agricultural soil map was available for the area to be developed in order to ascertain what kind of soil the developers intend to build on. Councillor Gawler reassured the North Road residents present that there will be a public enquiry where everyone will have their say.

Mr. and Mrs. Getvoldsen, the current owners of Canary Cottage, Wotton Road addressed the Parish Council in connection with their planning application to extend the property. Mr. and Mrs. Getvoldsen felt it was important to attend the Parish Council meeting in person in order to explain the application. The cottage has been in their family for some 90 years and they have owned it personally for 25 years. They have always wanted to come back to the village, but unfortunately the cottage is very small, approximately 52 sq metres, which is too small for their purposes, hence the planning application. If the application was successful they would use building materials that are in keeping with the rest of the village and incorporate environmentally friendly lighting and heating and generate their own electricity. The extension will allow four bedrooms and a sitting room which would still be within the size of the plot. Mr. and Mrs. Getvoldsen hoped that the Parish Council would support their planning application. Councillor Sheppard enquired whether the drawings had been done in consultation with SGC, to which Mr. and Mrs. Getvoldsen confirmed they had. **It was agreed** that this planning application would be discussed immediately following agenda item 7.

Mr. Jonathan Sandy addressed the Parish Councillors in connection with the annual grasscutting tender that had been awarded to N.T. Sandy Estate & Field Services. Mr. Sandy expressed his bewilderment regarding the current status of the grasscutting agreement as he believed the previous contractors, Landscape Services, had been brought in to do additional cuts. Councillor Sheppard referred to the number of complaints that had been received from parishioners in relation to the standard of cut; that tractor tyre tracks had rutted the village greens; that trees had not been strimmed around; that area of grass had not been cut; that the earth had been exposed because the mowing unit used had scraped the top off lumps and bump. Councillor Sheppard went on to say that Landscape Services had been brought in to do additional cuts on the village green in particular as May Day had been fast approaching and the state of the village green had not been acceptable. Mr. Sandy complained that the tender had been let too late and the grass had grown too

long and he had in fact spoken to the Clerk about flaying the village green and parish meadow. The Clerk responded that she had written to Mr. Sandy on 28th March 2011 and hand delivered the letter, confirming that his prices had been accepted by the Parish Council and requested a copy of their public liability certificate before any work could commence. Mr. Sandy had not supplied this certificate until the 8th April 2011. Mr. Sandy accepted that there had been a time lapse, but suggested that there had been faults on both sides in that the tender had been awarded too late in the growing season. In connection with the flaying of the village green and parish meadow Councillor Sheppard said that it would not have been appropriate to take this course of action. In order to achieve the standard of cut that the Parish Council expected, equipment that picks up the grass, or has a multi-cut function is needed, not a tractor and mowing unit that was used by Mr. Sandy. Further, the minutes of the March and April meetings relating to complaints received about the standard of grasscutting were read out to Mr. Sandy. Mr. Sandy went on to say that he had endeavoured to speak with Councillor Sheppard on four occasions on their mobile phones but the connections had been poor, and at no time had he been informed that the contract with N.T. Sandy Estate & Field Services had been terminated. Councillor Huish queried the content of the April 2011 minutes which stated it had been agreed with Mr. Sandy the contract would be terminated. Mr. Sandy confirmed that in his opinion the grasscutting tender had not been terminated, and he was of the opinion that he could claim payment from the Parish Council for the remainder of the grasscutting contract in its entirety as the Parish Council had defaulted on the contract. It was agreed that there was a difference of opinion and disparity within the agreed minutes. Councillor Taylor referred to the numerous complaints he had received regarding the standard of the cuts. Councillor Taylor had visited the village green shortly following the first cut and had seen strips and tufts of grass that had not been cut, no strimming had been done around the trees, in three or four places the grass had been cut back to the soil and patches of the village green had not been cut at all. Councillor Taylor added that he had supported awarding the grasscutting tender to a local company and had been disheartened at the standard that had been delivered. Mr. Sandy referred to the exposed soil and said that in his opinion this was mud spread from the numerous mole hills on the village green and in the parish meadow. In connection with the cemetery cut, it had been brought to Councillor Sheppard's attention that Mr. Sandy had used a sit-on mower and that a child had sat on the mower with him as he worked. Mr. Sandy said that he had not received any complaints from other parish councils that he had undertaken work for - Severn Beach and Pilning - although Mr. Sandy is not currently working for other parish councils at the moment and is concentrating on the farm business. Councillor Sheppard brought the discussion to a close and apologised if there had been any perceived mis-communication on behalf of the Parish Council, but the Parish Council could not accept such a poor standard of grass cut as the village greens and parish meadows are important and highly visible open spaces. Following these discussions, Mr. Sandy accepted the comments and was prepared to treat the contract as mutually cancelled providing that all invoices for work so far undertaken were settled by the Parish Council. Councillor Sheppard also confirmed that Mr. Sandy would not be excluded from tendering for subsequent grasscutting contracts. Mr. Sandy was also asked if he could provide a quote for removal of the rubbish heap at the top of the Nibley Lane allotments.

01-05-11 **SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

All Parish Councillors present signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms in the presence of the Clerk.

02-05-11 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Bellis proposed and Councillor Gawler seconded that Councillor Sheppard be elected Chairman for the forthcoming year. **All agreed.**

03-05-11 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Sheppard proposed and Councillor Blanchard seconded that Councillor Bellis be elected as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. Councillor Bellis said that he was happy to stand as Vice-Chairman only if nobody else wished to put themselves forward. **All agreed.**

04-05-11 **ELECTION OF PARISH HALL REPRESENTATIVE**

Councillor Taylor was asked if he was happy to continue as the Parish Hall representative. Councillor Taylor confirmed that he was. Proposed Councillor Sheppard and seconded by Councillor Bellis. **All agreed.**

05-05-11 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pat and Dave Hockey.

06-05-11 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Gawler wished to declare an interest in agenda item 13, in particular planning application PK11/1066/R3F - North Road Primary School. Councillor Gawler is a Governor at the primary school.

07-05-11 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2011 had been previously circulated. Proposed Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Blanchard that these minutes be accepted and signed. **All agreed.**

08-05-11 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman reported that over the past couple of months a number of complaints had been raised by parishioners over the general untidy state of various aspects of the village including rubbish in the cemetery, vegetation overgrowing on footpaths, the tennis courts and parish meadow. To this end, the Chairman has spoken with some of the other Parish Councillors and it was agreed that Mr. and Mrs. Jastrzebska (who are a husband and wife gardening team) be sub-contracted at £7.00/hr on production of invoices, and asked to undertake a general tidy up of various areas. To date they have cleaned the bus shelters, weeded the Cassey rails, path and cemetery footpath. Following the weeding of the Cassey, a number of parishioners have now said how tidy the High Street looks and what a good job has been done. Mr. and Mrs. Jastrzebska will also be asked to weed and sweep the tennis courts and clear away the undergrowth behind the tennis courts. Once the tennis courts have been tidied, the boards can then be treated with creosote. The Chairman asked that the Parish Councillors take some time to have a look at the work that Mr. and Mrs. Jastrzebska have done. Another job that needs to be done is the painting of the inside of the bus shelter opposite the Lamb.

The Chairman has asked Mr. Chris Wright to look at the small trees and saplings growing out of some of the graves in the cemetery and advise on the best method of removal.

The Chairman reported that there has been considerable flooding on Station Road, in front of the bus stops following the recent rain. Upon investigation this was probably due to the fact that the gutters are completely clogged up with debris and unable to drain. The Chairman has contacted SGC (Keith Falkingham) and asked that the drains be un-clogged and make sure that they are running freely.

The Chairman also reported that the broken drains outside Mrs. Hinders on North Road have finally be repaired. Hinders finally done.

09-05-11 **CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk apologised to the Parish Councillors that a written report had not been submitted prior to the meeting due to family illness. The Clerk confirmed that all the urgent actions from the April meeting had been undertaken.

Allotments:- The Clerk had received a letter from Mrs. Starkey, a tenant at Nibley Lane, concerned about the increase in allotment rents for 2012/2013 and the phasing

out of pensioner and non-pensioner rates and application of new parishioner and non-parishioner rate. Mrs. Starkey is a pensioner, but not a parishioner and rents two allotments therefore her bill for next year will be £70, an increase of £50. The Parish Council appreciated that this was a substantial increase, but mainly because Mrs. Starkey rents two allotments. The Parish Council reiterated that the increase for 2012/2013 had been decided upon due to the abuse of the water supply by other allotment tenants, and the Parish Council cannot continue to subsidise the Nibley Lane allotments.

A letter had also been received from Mrs. D. Jones who rents an allotment at Nibley Lane informing the Parish Council of a change of address. In this letter Mrs. Jones complained about another allotment tenant, Mr. Kennett, who threatened to 'cut her throat in front of witnesses'. Further Mrs. Jones stated that she had reported this incident to the Police.

A further letter had been received from Mr. Collett in connection with the change of water supply to the Nibley Lane allotments. Mr. Collett had approached other allotment tenants and provided a petition with some thirteen signatures on it. The petition states "we the undersigned are all allotment holders at the Nibley Lane Allotments and are disappointed at the lack of proper consultation on the changes recently made to the water supply at our allotment site. The solution recently imposed to rectify the acknowledged problem of the cost of the water supply is, in our opinion, both inappropriate and unsatisfactory. We would like to meet representatives of the Parish Council at their earliest convenience to discuss the water supply and other issues with a view to setting up regular dialogue between the Council and the allotment holders'. The Clerk pointed out to the Parish Councillors that there are 28 allotment tenants at Nibley Lane therefore 13 signatures is less than half. Also there were two names on the petition who are new tenants this year and the change of water supply had been explained to them by the Clerk prior to letting the allotment. They had been happy to accept the allotments on that basis and understood why the Parish Council had taken such action. **It was agreed** that the Clerk would write to Mr. Collett acknowledging his letter and suggest that the allotment tenants come along to the regular monthly Parish Council meetings to air their concerns. Proposed Councillor Sheppard and seconded Councillor Taylor. **All agreed.**

Clerk

The Clerk informed the Parish Councillors that the cost of the dog bin collections will be increasing by 4.5% as from 1st June 2011. The cost of emptying the two additional bins will now be £4.08 per bin, per empty.

Finally the Clerk informed the Parish Councillors that she had informally met with the new Avon & Somerset Police Beat Officer for our area, PC Finbar Simmons. During their meeting the Clerk had invited PC Simmons along to the Annual Parish Meeting on 23rd May 2011. PC Simmons had said he would make every effort to attend however it was not one of his scheduled work days. The Clerk also mentioned to PC Simmons the incident on the allotments with Mrs. Jones and another allotment tenants. PC Simmons was not aware that this had been reported, however he took the details of the incident and the names and addresses of those involved.

10-05-11 SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Unfortunately Councillors Pat and Dave Hockey were unable to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment.

Councillor Gawler reported that following the results of the elections on 5th May 2011 the administration of South Gloucestershire Council will be finalised shortly. Councillor Gawler also reported that far more people came out to vote than at the last elections.

Councillor Gawler reported that Wotton Road is scheduled to be closed for two days (week commencing 23rd May 2011) in order for surface dressing work to be undertaken, although not the whole length of the Wotton Road is affected by this work. Some patching work will

be undertaken along the Rangeworthy section.

Councillor Gawler is endeavouring to find out about whether the TPO in the North Road/Engine Common area has been lifted or not.

11-05-11 **PARISH COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS**

Councillor Taylor reported that he had been informed that the Nibley Lane allotment tenants have already managed to work out how to by-pass the standpipe. Therefore the Parish Council need to keep an eye on the amount of water being used.

Councillor Lomas asked that the Clerk write to SGC regarding the dangerous footpath at 199 North Road (Hinders overflow yard). There is a large pothole that needs to be rectified.

Councillor Heal asked the Clerk if anything further had been heard from SGC in connection with the possible breach of planning permission at Cherry Lodge. The Clerk confirmed that nothing had been received from SGC.

Councillor Sheppard reported on the withdrawn planning application PK10/2470/F in connection with the erection of a replacement shed at 235 North Road. Although this planning application was withdrawn, there is evidence that foundations are being dug beside the house. Councillor Sheppard has spoken with SGC Enforcement Officer who has confirmed that nothing can be done until the building of the structure actually starts.

Councillor Gawler reported that information had come to light that the company operating out of the Clarks yard on North Road do not actually have an operators licence. **It was agreed** that the Parish Council would send a letter to the Transport Commissioner informing them of this breach. The Clerk would liaise with Councillor Gawler.

12-05-11 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Clerk reported balances as at 11th May 2011 of:-

National Westminster Current Account	£11,171.34
National Westminster Reserve Account	£160.72
National Savings Accounts	£16,498.38

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council accounts and books had been independently audited by Mr. Iain Selkirk and signed off as complying with the requirements stipulated by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 and CIPFA guidelines.

Annual Governance Statement:- The Annual Governance Statement was presented to the Parish Council for approval and adoption. Proposed Councillor Bellis and seconded by Councillor Taylor. **All agreed.**

Financial Risk Assessment:- The Clerk had re-checked the value of the total fixed assets held by the Parish Council. The new total of £33,740 as valued by the insurers covers the two bus shelters (£10,251), play equipment (£7,314), Chain of Office (£2,132), computer and software (£3,097) and ground surfaces (£10,946). Also the Fidelity Guarantee Cover was confirmed at £40,000 and not £2,000 as previously reported by the Clerk. The Financial Risk Assessment for 2011/2012 was therefore presented to the Parish Council for approval and adoption. Proposed Councillor Bellis and seconded Councillor Taylor. **All agreed.**

13-05-11 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

PK11/1066/F - North Road Primary School, North Road, Yate - Erection of containerised boiler plant room. No objections.

PK11/1206/F - Land off Mission Road, Mission Road, Iron Acton - Erection of 2 no. stables, 2 no. tack room/storage of animal feed and 1 no. storage unit (retrospective). No objections, however to request that any planning permission be made personal to the applicant.

PK11/1265/F - Lot 2, Mill Farm, Nibley Lane, Yate - Construction of a ménage and erection of 1.4m high post and rail fencing. No objections.

PK11/1370/F - One Pool Farm, Dyers Lane, Iron Acton - Change of use from Business Use (Class B1) to Day Nursery (Class D1) as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). To object -

traffic movements, parking and access.

- PK11/1380/F - Canary Cottage, Wotton Road, Iron Acton - Two storey extension of existing cottage. No objections.
- PK11/1384/F - Rock View, Engine Common Lane, Yate - Erection of 1 no. detached replacement dwelling with access and associated works. No objections.
- PK11/1422/F - 10 Plover Close, Yate - Erection of single storey front extension to form additional living accommodation. No observations to make, as this application was outside the parish boundary.
- PK11/1023/F - Iron Acton Sub Station, Larks Lane, Iron Acton - Erection of electricity substation. No objections.

14-05-11 **PLANNING - CONSENTS**

PK11/1081/ADV - Unit 61, Beeches Industrial Estate, Waverley Road, Yate

15-05-11 **PLANNING REFUSALS/WITHDRAWALS**

None received.

16-05-11 **PLANNING - APPEALS**

None received.

17-05-11 **PLANNING - ENFORCEMENT**

None received.

18-05-11 **VACANCY - EAST WARD**

The Clerk reported that a letter had been received from Mr. Andrew Tillotson applying for the vacancy on the East Ward. Mr. Tillotson lives in the North Road area and has done for the past 25 years. Following discussion **it was agreed** that Mr. Tillotson be co-opted on to the Parish Council for the East Ward. Proposed Councillor Bellis and seconded Councillor Sheppard. The Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. Tillotson informing him of the Parish Council's decision, and provide him with all the relevant information and documents.

Clerk

19-05-11 **VILLAGE GREEN**

The three additional 'no parking's signs have been erected. However certain vehicles are still being parked on the village green, and during a recent visit a yellow mini-bus type vehicle was directly in front of the 'no parking' sign. Following discussion, **it was agreed** that the Clerk would speak with PC Simmons to find out what action can be taken in order to enforce the 'no parking' signs. Proposed Councillor Sheppard and seconded Councillor Taylor. **All agreed.**

Clerk

20-05-11 **GRASSCUTTING**

Following on from the discussion regarding the grasscutting tender and tender process, **it was agreed** that the Parish Council would send out tender invitation letters in October of each year to ensure that the contractor is in place in good time in order to commence cutting of the open spaces for the start of the growing season. Proposed Councillor Sheppard and seconded Councillor Blanchard. **All agreed. It was also agreed** that a formal written contract would be entered into for future grasscutting contracts. Proposed Councillor Bellis and seconded Councillor Sheppard. **All agreed.**

21-05-11 **ANNUAL INSURANCE**

The Clerk informed the Parish Councillors that an additional quote had been received from Zurich Town and Parish Council insurance for £922.77, being some £337 cheaper than Aon. The Zurich quote had increased public liability cover of £10m; increased Fidelity Guarantee of £50,000; additional cover for personal accident; additional legal expenses of £50,000; additional Officials Indemnity of £10m; and the property damage excess was reduced to £100. A further quote had been requested from Bribek Insurance. Following discussion, **it was agreed** that the Clerk be given authority to accept the cheapest quote, following receipt of the Bribek quote. Proposed Councillor Sheppard and seconded Councillor Lomas. **All agreed.** The Parish Council's insurance is due for renewal on 1st June 2011.

Clerk

22-05-11 RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

The Clerk informed the Parish Councillors that renewal of membership to Avon Wildlife Trust was due at a cost of £48.00 for the year. Councillor Sheppard proposed and Councillor Lomas seconded that this membership would not be renewed. **All agreed.** The Clerk was instructed to respond accordingly.

Clerk**23-05-11 VISIT TO NGC IRON ACTON SUBSTATION**

The Clerk informed the Councillors of an invitation from National Grid to tour the NGC Iron Acton Substation on Thursday 26th May 2011 at 3.30pm. The Parish Councillors accepted this invitation and requested the Clerk to circulate a reminder nearer the date. Proposed Councillor Sheppard and seconded Councillor Blanchard. **All agreed.**

Clerk**24-05-11 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

ALCA	New Councillor Packs	£17.99
Ross Office Supplies	Stationery	£35.94
Iron Acton Parish Hall	Room Hire	£18.00
All Signs	No Parking Signs - Village Green	£936.00
N.T. Sandy	Grasscutting	£405.29
Landscape Services	Grasscutting	£458.35
Mr. Iain Selkirk	Annual Independent Internal Audit	£90.00
Mr. D. Hurley	Bus Shelter Cleaning (6 months)	£58.00
Mrs. P. Evans	Clerk's Salary, Broadband x 1, New Receipts & Payment Book, Mileage (40 miles @ 40p/mile), Telephone Bill	£745.34

Proposed Councillor Gawler, seconded Councillor Sheppard, all agreed that the above accounts be paid.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Monday 20th June 2011 in Iron Acton Parish Hall, commencing at 7.30pm.

Following a request from Councillor Blanchard the Clerk agreed to prepare a proposed list of meeting dates for the remainder of 2011 and issue to Councillors for their comment/approval.

Clerk

Councillor Blanchard made an additional request that, whilst appreciating the current family circumstances of the Clerk that consideration is made to the circulation of the draft meeting minutes to Councillors earlier than the current seven calendar days before the next meeting. The Clerk confirmed she would investigate the re-prioritising of her workload in order to achieve an earlier distribution date.

Clerk

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Signed:

Dated:
