

PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held at Porlock Village Hall on Wednesday, 8th. June 2011 at 7.30pm

Members Present:

Cllr. Keith Jacobs, Vice-Chairman
Cllr. Britnell, Cllr. Edward, Cllr. Mrs. Gable
Cllr. Mrs. Haynes, Cllr. McCoy, Cllr. Mrs. Palmer,
Cllr. Mrs. Russell and Cllr. Sage

Also present: Cllr. Frances Nicholson (SCC/ENP)
Cllr. Jon Freeman (WSC/ENP)
Cllr. Karen Mills (WSC)
Mrs. C. Fitzgerald, Clerk

1. **Apologies** for absence were received from the Chairman, Cllr. Alan Wright (holiday), Cllr. Latham (family commitments) and Cllr. Mrs. Rowe (work commitments). In the absence of the Chairman the Chair was taken by the Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Keith Jacobs.

2. The Chairman welcomed Mrs. Elizabeth Pinnington and Mrs. Anne Stoneham to the meeting to present a report to the Council on the Youth Achievement Award and the future of the Youth Group.

Mrs. Pinnington informed the Council that, owing to a substantial drop in numbers, the Youth Group sessions had been suspended until September when the situation will be reviewed. The Group remains affiliated to SRYP and is fully insured until March/April of next year, and would be ready to run again if the numbers increased to a viable level. In response to a question from Cllr. Frances Nicholson (SCC/ENP), Mrs. Pinnington confirmed the usual age range of the Group as 11-14, but that it could be as high as 17. Cllr. McCoy suggested that the Committee could possibly contact Graham Haw, District Scout Commissioner, to see if there could be liaison between the groups.

Mrs. Pinnington confirmed that the Committee had given further thought to the eligibility criteria for nominations for the Youth Achievement Award. It was suggested that the wording should be that **“the Award should be offered to young people aged between 11 & 16 who live in or near the parish of Porlock and for whom Porlock is their focus.”**

The Council unanimously agreed that this wording would be suitable and the Chairman thanked Mrs. Pinnington and Mrs. Stoneham for their involvement in the Youth Group and for updating the Council on the present situation.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4. The Minutes as previously circulated of the meeting held on 11th. May were confirmed and signed as a correct record with one amendment - Cllr. Sage had given his apologies for absence and his name was removed as having been present at the meeting.

Cllr. Mrs. Palmer asked whether in future an asterisk could be put against accounts for which the Council received re-charge funds e.g. Konica Minolta, to make it clear that this sum was not wholly payable by the Council. This was approved.

5. Matters for Report not on the Agenda

Cllr. Edward reported that he understood the Pantomime Society have now managed to find a Director and that a pantomime will be produced this year.

Cllr. Jacobs reported that ENP have been taking photographs of various sites in Porlock as part of a review of the National Park Plan. The sites all had to be assessed as potential affordable housing sites, but it had been confirmed that this was largely a paper exercise required by the government as part of the Plan procedure.

The meeting was adjourned for Public Participation.

6. Public Participation

Mr. Harris asked on behalf of himself and several other members of the public present, whether the Council accepted the show of hands at the Extraordinary Council meeting on 18th. May as being representative of the views of the community. His objection was that as the audience was limited to the size of the Hall this figure represented approximately only 1 in 7 of the population.

The Chairman explained that the meeting had been called as a form of local consultation to enable the Council to obtain the views of the community, and it had been made very clear that it was not a meeting at which decisions would be made. The meeting had been open to all, was well advertised and well attended and contained a good cross section of people. The show of hands had been called for from the floor, and the almost unanimous level of support in the response made it quite clear that those attending fully supported a rise in the precept to maintain public services. The results of this consultation will now enable the Council to make more informed decisions when setting the precept for next year.

The owner of The Eaves, Doverhay asked whether the Council did not feel it to be grossly unfair that the planning application for photovoltaic panels on his property should be refused, when other buildings such as the Village Hall and the Old School Centre had had applications allowed.

Cllr. Mrs. Russell confirmed that because the proposed plans meant that the entire roof would be covered by panels the Committee felt that the view of the village on entry from Dunster Steep was very much impaired. The Eaves is also part of the Conservation Area and this development would have detracted from this. ENP had been consulted on their policy and it had been confirmed that, amongst other things, community benefit was taken into account when allowing this type of development in a Conservation Area.

It was confirmed that there was a right of Appeal, and that a request could also be made for the application to go to ENPA Planning Committee for a decision.

7. Police Report - PCSO's Sue Hurley and Katherine Williams had attended to update the Council on recent criminal activity in the area. Since the last Council meeting there had been a spate of shed break-ins in Bossington Lane. There had also been a further break-in to a shed in Hacketty Way and an unsuccessful attempt in Old Lane.

Thieves had also been targeting vehicles in Car Parks and there had been criminal damage to a vehicle parked at Horner.

The police are trying to raise awareness amongst the public, firstly on properly securing their properties and cars, but also on reporting unusual circumstances and suspicious vehicles to the police however trivial the circumstances might seem.

The meeting was re-convened.

8. Somerset County Council and District Councillors' Reports

Cllr. Frances Nicholson (SCC/ENP) reported on the Children & Young People's Compact. Many schools are in the process of becoming Academies and SCC has set up the Compact to look after all schools, of whatever designation, to ensure that core facilities and services are maintained. All schools provision will eventually be directed through the Compact and there will be a greater emphasis on quality control.

Cllr. Nicholson also reported that the number of children in care has peaked at a new high of 474. Two years ago the figure was only 350. Provision of care, especially in the case of disadvantaged children can be very expensive, and since the County cannot raise the level of Council Tax this is putting very heavy pressure on funds.

Cllr. Nicholson concluded by confirming that the team responsible for the Coastal Pathfinder Project is still very keen to see the Porlock Weir Hall (Hut) available for use as an emergency centre in the case of flooding from rising sea levels. The matter is on-going with the Hall Committee but there may need to be further liaison with the Parish Council at some point.

Cllr. Jon Freeman (WSC/ENP) had very little to report as this is traditionally a very quiet time following an election. However he had been concerned to discover that WSC was involved with partnerships set up outside West Somerset which are able to issue documents on behalf of WSC, some of which are being delivered to vulnerable people. Cllr. Freeman confirmed that he will be monitoring this and will report further if necessary.

Cllr. Karen Mills (WSC) was attending her first Porlock Parish Council meeting following the election and confirmed that as yet she had very little to report.

9. Planning

The following applications were considered:-

6/27/11/114 **Proposed installation of 10 photovoltaic panels**
The Eaves, Doverhay.

It was confirmed that the Committee's view had been to

RECOMMEND refusal on the grounds that the number of panels would cover the entire roof and would be very prominent within the Conservation Area. On a proposal from Cllr. Mrs. Palmer seconded by Cllr. McCoy the Council **RESOLVED** to endorse this decision. Cllr. Britnell spoke in favour of the application and voted against the proposal.

6/27/11/118 **Lawful development certificate for the proposed construction of a two storey extension to provide studio, living room, bathroom and bedroom as approved under 6/27/91/108**
Westcott Farm, Toll Road/New Road, Porlock

Nothing had changed in the 10 years since the original application and it was **RESOLVED** to support the application and recommend approval.

6/27/11/117 **Proposed replacement of garage together with the enlargement of track to bottom of garden (retrospective)**
Anatta, Doverhay, Porlock

Since the garage is already built it was **RESOLVED** to recommend approval but with the further recommendation that the site be strictly monitored by the planning enforcement officer.

6/19/11/103 **Neighbouring parish consultation**
Proposed new kitchen window to previously approved extension (6/19/11/103) together with a relocated garage and attached shed
Luckbarrow Cottage, West Luccombe

Minor amendments to a previously approved plan. Unanimously **RESOLVED** to support and recommend approval.

10. Finance

10.1 Finance Committee Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th. June were confirmed and signed as a correct record. Each Councillor had received a copy of the Internal Auditor's report and Cllr. Sage reported on the matters which had been raised and confirmed that these had all been duly considered and addressed by the Committee.

10.2 The recommendations made by the Committee were considered and approved.

10.3 Annual accounts

Each Councillor had received a copy of the Annual Accounts and on a proposal from Cllr. Mrs. Russell seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Palmer these were approved and adopted. NB On the Supporting Statement to the Accounts page 3 item 4 – total earmarked funds £11,347 should be dated 31st. March 2010 not 2011.

10.4 Annual Governance Statement

The Members of the Council were able to answer each question on the Annual Governance Statement in the affirmative, and on a proposal from Cllr. Mrs. Russell seconded by Cllr. Britnell and Cllr. Edward this was approved.

10.5 The following accounts were approved and passed for payment:-

West Somerset Skip Hire, removal of night storage heaters	55.00
Mr. A. Binding, grass cutting contract ,repairs to fence & strimming	1070.00
SALC, training places for 3 councillors @£25	75.00
Brightside Cleaning (S.Oldfield), windows at Old School Inv 127	9.00
BT, Office Internet bill	38.78
Thorne Segar.legal fees –purchase of land at High Bank	1380.55
West Somerset Garden Centre, 3 hanging baskets	72.00
Brightside Cleaning (S.Oldfield) windows at Old School Inv.207	9.00
Mrs. C. Fitzgerald, Clerk’s salary less tax	858.05
Mrs. C. Fitzgerald, expenses, postage/telephone/internet	50.51
HMRC, tax & NIC due	227.40
Mr. B. Hammett, caretaker’s wages	60.66
Total:	3905.95

Bank Balances

At 31st. May 2011

Current Account	100.00
Reserve Account	64,506.47
Total:	64,606.47

Allotment Trust Account

Current Account	597.70
Reserve Account	7,135.45
Total:	7,733.15

Standard Life Account	21,505.33
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11. Matters Arising

11.1 Control of Rooks

A detailed response to the Council’s enquiry on the control of rooks and crows had been received from ENP – this reply also confirmed that they were not a protected species. The Council were in agreement that the matter of control lay with the landowner and Cllr. Mrs. Haynes will pass the information received on to the person who had made the initial enquiry.

11.2 Porlock Weir Signs

Cllr. Jacobs confirmed that the Porlock Weir Traders committee are now at the stage of liaising with Highways and Active Signs. The Committee knows what actions need to be taken and they are aware of budgetary constraints.

11.3 ZigZag Path

The Clerk confirmed that the Permitted Path Agreement had been received from ENP. It is understood that they hope to finish work on the path by 1st. July.

11.4 Trees on the bank of the Hawkcombe Stream

Cllr. Edward reported on the situation where a tree had fallen across the stream and on to the roadway. Highways had cleared the blocked road very quickly, but the branches had been left in the stream causing a potential flood risk. Some of the other trees on the bank look to be unstable and Highways had contacted the riparian owner who had removed the tree from the stream and had agreed to have the remainder of the trees looked at. Other than this there is little that Highways can do as the trees do not overhang the road. The matter had also been reported to the Environment Agency who will monitor the situation, but once again they have confirmed that the responsibility lies with the riparian owner.

12. Appointment of Parish Members to the ENPA

Each Councillor had received copies of the nomination papers and completed a copy of the ballot paper with their 4 choices. The Clerk collated the votes and the four candidates receiving the highest number of votes were as follows:-

Cllr. John Bray
Cllr. Ian Rigby
Cllr. Roger Webber
Cllr. Alan Wright

It was **RESOLVED** that the ballot paper be completed accordingly.

13. Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council

The minutes as previously circulated of the meeting held on the 18th. May were approved and signed as a correct record. There was one amendment to the notes accompanying the minutes – on the final page the figure of £30K was amended to read £30.

14. Library Closure

Cllr. Mrs. Haynes reported on the meeting of the Library Working Group and gave each Councillor a copy of the Group's recommendations. The options will be discussed in full at the next meeting and each Councillor was asked to make sure that they had read and considered the options ready for discussion and a decision at the July meeting.

15. Part Night Street Lighting

The feedback from the questionnaires completed at the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 18th. May had shown that a large majority of those present at the meeting were in favour of turning off the lights. The **No** vote had been 23 and the **Yes** vote 84. The Council felt that this feedback was an adequate reflection of the views of the community, and on a proposal from Cllr. Britnell seconded by Cllr. Sage it was **RESOLVED** that the Council should respond to SCC that Porlock was in favour of the Part Night Lighting scheme being adopted for the parish. This was carried with one vote against from Cllr. Mrs. Haynes.

16. SCC – Further Electoral Review of Somerset

A letter giving notification that Somerset is to be the subject of a Further Electoral Review had been received. The County Council have begun the scoping exercise and the Review itself will commence in early August.

Cllr. Frances Nicholson (SCC/ENP) confirmed that the result will almost certainly be a reduction in the number of County Councillors, and this will affect Exmoor since there will be far more emphasis on numbers and geography and less on sparsity and rurality issues. Rural areas such as Exmoor will be disadvantaged if the decision is to divide the area up and add to other areas just to equalise numbers. Cllr. Nicholson will be attending a meeting with the Boundary Commission officers on 4th. July and will be strongly advocating that Exmoor remain as one area.

17. Notice Board at Old School

A request had been received from the Arts Festival Committee for permission to place a notice board on the wall of the Old School to advertise their events. The Council carefully considered the matter but felt that this could set a precedent for other groups, and felt that it would be unfair to allow just one group to have a dedicated notice board. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** not to grant permission.

18. Correspondence

Exmoor Panel Meeting

An agenda for the meeting to be held on 23rd. June had been received. Cllr. Mrs. Palmer will attend in the company of Cllr. Karen Mills (WSC) and will report back accordingly.

SCC - Broadband Bid

Notification received that over £30M of government funding had been received to improve broadband across the south west area.

C.L.O.W.N.S

A letter of thanks for the £150 grant towards the summer playscheme had been received.

19. Reports from Outside Bodies

Village Hall

Cllr. Mrs. Haynes reported that a meeting would be held shortly. The Committee have now set up an online booking system at www.pvh.org.uk

Recreation Ground

Cllr. Mrs. Gable reported that the Tea@Three open afternoon to show off the new pavilion facilities had been well supported.

The Committee have revised the online booking system.

Once the ZigZag path is complete the Committee intend to improve the dog walking field to make it more user friendly.

More helpers are urgently needed to help with the Summer Fair on 14th. August.

Doverly Manor

Nothing to report other than the start of an excellent exhibition on Tea in the Museum.

School Governors

Nothing to report.

Highways

Cllr. Edward reported that it now seemed unlikely that the resurfacing of the western half of the High Street between the bottom of Parsons Street and the Toll Road would take place. He understood that this was because Highways were concerned that this would mean another road closure. The Council were in agreement that a letter should be sent to the Area Highways Manager supporting the re-surfacing if the money to carry this out was available.

There was concern that drivers are using the parking area outside Costcutter for long term parking – sometimes for several days at a time. The traders have been putting notices on the cars in an effort to deter this practice.

20. Items for Report

Representatives to Committees and Outside Bodies

The Clerk had provided a revised list and all entries were confirmed. Cllr. Mrs. Haynes was added to the Planning Committee.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 10.15pm